

EDITORIAL PAGE OF THE SUNDAY CALL

HOW WAR MENACES CAPITALIST PROPERTY.

THROUGH the mouth of Mr. E. G. Grace, President of the Bethlehem Steel Company, the government has been notified that if it persists in its scheme to establish a government-owned armor plant the three privately-owned armor plants—Bethlehem is one of them—will go out of business. And then, says President Grace, "the country might find itself in an unfortunate position in the event of war."

In the first part of the notification there is nothing that calls for any particular comment. Obviously the advocates of the government-owned plant knew this beforehand and calculated on it. Indeed, it is not too much to say that such was their precise object—to put the privately-owned plants out of business by producing armor-plate, not for profit, but at the cost of production. It is the second part of the threat that is important.

It means, if it means anything, that these private armor-plate makers, in case of war, if the government plant could not produce enough armor-plate for such an emergency, instead of reopening their plants, would keep them closed and let the national defense fail, instead of trying to help out. Their patriotism can only be kept alive by profits.

But, if all this really did take place, it is only too obvious that the government would immediately take over those plants and operate them as government factories. It would be compelled to do so, just as it has been compelled to similar action in European countries. But Mr. Grace talks as if this were a contingency not at all to be calculated upon; that no matter how hard pressed the government might be in fighting for national existence it would always respect "sacred property," even though the property was lying idle, and no use being made of it, though it could turn out the identical commodity that was so pressingly needed.

But the really strange thing about the matter is that not one of the advocates of the government-owned plant would dare even to hint the possibility of this procedure to Mr. Grace. Like him, they are careful to conceal it. But both understand thoroughly that it would take place, though both dread the mention of such a thing as "confiscation of property."

But in the eyes of the Socialist it is the sole merit of this sort of "government ownership" that it infallibly leads to the denial and abolition of capitalist private property, though its advocates never intend any such result, and must pretend that it doesn't. And to this instinctive recognition on the part of the capitalists generally is due the strenuous opposition they display toward this form of government ownership. It is not by any means altogether the fear of losing profits or the opportunity to make them; the fear of ultimately losing the property itself by which profits are made is the chief factor that determines the opposition.

There is some satisfaction, at least, in understanding that if our ruling classes do push the country into war, or that ruling classes of other

Swedish capital, where the harpies of business are busily engaged in profit making, and at the same time fomenting the friction between the two countries:

The Stockholm international "agency's" work consists in capturing for Germany part of the British goods. The goods sold to Russia cannot be booked to Russia direct, as there is no through bill of lading. They are sent to the Stockholm representatives of the Russian firms, and the representatives' work is to send them on. The representatives take the bills of lading to the "exchange" in the Grand Hotel and sell them to the highest bidder. When the goods are cotton, or something else which the Germans need badly, the highest bidder is a German, or his agents. The goods are re-freighted to Germany. The vast difference between the price paid to the English exporter and the price paid by the German is pocketed by the parties to the deal. The Russian merchant does not get his goods. He is put off with the explanation that during the war goods take months to arrive; that the goods may have been lost in transit, or that they were never exported from England, owing to the fact that all the transit licenses issued by Sweden were taken up by prior applicants.

England has at last taken measures against this system. She has formed in Sweden a transit company which will handle all the licenses, and keep control over goods in transit from the day they reach a Scandinavian port until the day they reach Finland. Sweden's press is making an outcry against the company as an interference in the kingdom's internal affairs; and Premier Hammarskjöld has made a speech foreshadowing new legislation to prevent the operations of the company.

Capitalism generates war. Capitalism brings about the conditions that make war unavoidable. These are Socialist commonplaces. But will any one who reads the above statement—from a capitalist source, too—deny it for one moment? There is nothing here but buying and selling and profit making; yet out of these things grows the menace that may plunge another six million people into the maelstrom of war.

Perhaps, though, a people that will tolerate such a system deserve all they get out of it.

BRYAN'S UNANSWERED QUESTION.

THE Anti-Militarist Committee at Washington in attacking the "high silliness of militarism" makes the statement that no one has yet answered Bryan's question of why it is that, "if a small army and navy were sufficient to enforce the Monroe Doctrine when the Latin-American countries were suspicious of the United States, we need an increase when that suspicion is removed and the republics of Central and South America are willing to co-operate with us in the support of the Monroe Doctrine?"

It is quite true that no one has answered that question, but it is not because it could not be answered. It is because the militarists dare not answer it, and, curiously enough, they dare not because they know it is not true. But it is far better for them to let Bryan go on asking questions in which things that are false are assumed to be true than to expose their falsity and have the truth come out in consequence. That is why Bryan's question remains unanswered.

It is simply not true that the small army and navy of the United States were sufficient to enforce

the suspicions of the South American countries somehow rendered the task of maintaining the Monroe Doctrine and asserting it as a purely American policy more difficult, but that our "small army and navy" preserved it by their puissance, and prevented the South American countries from repudiating it and backing up the repudiation with their own "small armies and navies."

And his statement that these suspicions are now removed is, in plain language, a lie. The ruling classes of the South American republics are quite as suspicious as ever they were of some sinister designs on the part of the United States, and good reason they have to be. Bryan, however, would have us believe that, because they enter into Pan-American conferences, these suspicions have disappeared, when that fact lends itself just as much to the theory that they have increased, instead.

To answer Bryan the opposition would have to tell these things, and they dare not and will not, and Bryan knows they dare not and will not. Hence he feels perfectly safe in asking his questions, knowing they will not be answered, and trickily leaving the impression that, therefore, his advocacy of pacifism is unanswerable.

Neither Roosevelt militarist nor Bryan pacifist dares look the truth in the face and announce it boldly. Perhaps it is not incumbent upon them. But it is on us. We must both announce and face the actual facts, and deal squarely with them, whatever they may show, and the position we assume must be based wholly on the deductions we draw from them. That it is which differentiates Socialism from either militarism or pacifism.

PORK AND "PREPAREDNESS."

A FLORIDA Representative named Clark has just made a most sincere and impassioned address in the Congress in the interests of "pork"—not the literal stockyards product, but the meat on which State Caesars feed—the graft that is derived from Congressional appropriations for local postoffices and other Federal buildings, dredging of creeks and waterways, and other activities that drain the National Treasury, and bring money and employment to the various States. His position was that not one cent of public money should be devoted to "preparedness" until all the "pork" available for distribution had been extracted from the Treasury. Then, if any was left over, the militarists might have it.

Mr. Clark magnanimously stated that he was seeking nothing for himself; that every town and hamlet in his district had its public building. But there were still many other places which had been left without their proper ration of "pork," and he stood for their "rights" in the matter unalterably. It was the first thing needful that this should be attended to; the rest could come afterward.

As the New York Herald puts it, "His singleness of purpose in the matter of Congressional pork leads him to a heroic disregard of subtleties." But, curiously enough, the Herald does