

ITEMS OF NEWS FROM ALL PARTS

A WAR DESPOTISM.

THE MENACE TO MANKIND.

Constitution for Europe as the Alternative.

The outstanding characteristics of modern war, according to Mr. Thomas H. Black, M.A., B.Sc., LL.B., who lectured on Wednesday to the Fitzwilliam Street (Huddersfield) Social Union, are:—

(1) The amount of material that can be used is infinite and the number of men that can be used is enormous;

(2) There will be a deadlock so long as there is a sufficient defence per unit length of the line to be defended, and if there are equal resources on each side the war must end in the utter destruction of both sides;

(3) The small state counts for nothing; it is dependent on its powerful allies.

It followed, said Mr. Black, that there was no limit to the preparations that must be made if a nation was to drive war into its enemy's territory. It was, therefore, probable that the energies of nations would be much more directed upon preparations for war than they had been in the past. That was the condition of the large State. As to the small State, to speak of the independence of a small State if that independence had to be defended by war was to speak of a phantasm. The outlook for subject nationalities was equally as gloomy as that of the small States. It was probable, too, that individual citizens would find very little regard for their rights and liberties when these great preparations for war were found to be necessary.

A Constitution or the Sword.

Thus the natural development of the present international situation was what the lecturer called war despotism, meaning a condition of things in which the final arbiter would be war. The only alternative to war despotism was to abolish war, and the only means of abolishing war was to establish a constitution. They must have constitutional rights, instead of so-called international rights that had to be secured by the sword of the individual nation.

A constitution always consisted of two parts. First of all it defined who held the powers of government, and, secondly, it defined what were the rights of individual subjects against the government. The British constitution, for example, assigned the law-making right to Parliament, the judicial right to the judges and the executive right to the administration. But the important part of the British constitution in modern times dealt with the rights of the individual subject. The individual had personal freedom and must be convicted of offence by proper trial before he could be legally restrained. Of course, these rights had been suspended during the present war, and it would be a question of how they were to be restored and to what extent after the war. A constitution for Europe would first define who should hold the supreme power, and who should decide disputes, amongst nations. But the principal part of it would set up the constitutional right of individual States. There would follow a sort of Habeas Corpus for nationalities, and the tendency would be towards the freeing of States and subject peoples on a progressive scale.—Huddersfield Worker.

The grain growers of Manitoba pass a sensible resolution:—

Whereas, the British Empire and her Allies are engaged in a life and death struggle in which we believe the interests of civilization are at stake; and whereas the Canadian Government in order that Canada might render more

effective service in the prosecution of the war has undertaken to make a census of the man power of the Dominion with the expressed view of organizing it to the highest possible point of efficiency; therefore be it resolved that this convention endorse the action of the government in this regard; but while endorsing it, it desires to urge in the strongest possible terms our abhorrence of private profiteering on the part of those engaged in the manufacture or furnishing of war supplies of any kind and also urges that a census of the wealth of Canada should be immediately taken with the view to imposing upon it the full share of the burden it should bear in this time of national sacrifice. And further, that these resources can only be organized to their full efficiency by a National Government in which the interests of political parties shall be made entirely subservient to the interests of the state.

DENMARK SOCIALISTIC AS A RESULT OF WAR.

Cabinet Minister Points Out Government Controls Vital Industries Since War.

Fixes the Standard.

Measures to Prevent Excessive Profits are Now Being Attempted.

T. H. Stauning, leader of Denmark's social democracy, member of the Zable Radical Cabinet, and the first Scandinavian Socialist to become a Cabinet Minister, boasts that the war has transformed Denmark into a Socialistic state, says a Stockholm despatch to the New York Evening Post. The monarchy still exists, but the State Socialistic measures taken as a result of the war transcend the program of Karl Marx, and next year will be realized a dozen other extreme Socialistic plans of a kind never dreamed of by Marx, he says.

Already the Danish State has taken control of all vital industries. It regulates production and consumption; expropriates excessive profits for public use; enforces a living wage; and guarantees a minimum standard of comfort for all classes. Stauning promises that these measures will be developed in still more drastic forms, and Prime Minister Zable agrees.

State Fixes Standards.

Stauning at the end of November delivered an exposition of Denmark's war Socialism to a meeting of Swedes at Malmo. He declared that the chief Socialist measure of 1917 will be the standardization of products in the interest of economy. Already standard foods exist; it is forbidden to sell more than two kinds of flour, the composition of which is fixed under penalty of imprisonment. Next year, says Stauning, there will be "standard shoes" and "standard clothes." Already rigid Government measures prevent leather and textiles from rising unduly in price; but this does not prevent scarcity, and there will soon not be enough leather or textiles to go round.

This makes inevitable the standard shoe. State experts will evolve a model shoe, which will require the least possible material. The shoe will be of absolutely uniform kind, and will be sold at fixed prices according to size. It will be a penal offence to buy or sell any other kind of shoe.

If the textile famine gets worse, State tailoring artists will produce a standard suit of clothes for men. Probably there will also be a standard costume for women, containing mostly absolutely necessary material of cheap quality.

Denmark's newly-founded State necessities commission and price regulations commission have complete auto-

cratic power. Through the necessities commission, the Danish State is now the chief import merchant for wheat and corn. Already the necessities commission controls the import of colonial wares, and next year it will itself import on a vast scale. The price regulations commission has established its control over all factories and workshops, also over farming. The commission demands from the farmers and from all the great industries exact tables, showing the cost of production. On this basis the commission fixes prices. All Denmark's productive industries have now accepted State control.

To Prevent Excessive Profits.

Producers and distributors are no longer allowed freely to determine their mutual relations. The State lately discovered that exporters of fish to Germany were making large profits; and that, owing to war conditions in the North Sea, the fishermen were in difficulties. It threatened to prevent altogether the export of fish unless the exporters paid to the fishermen a bonus of 10 per cent. of the prices charged Germany. The exporters had to agree.

After a year of war, sugar rose to 11 cents a pound. Six months of State restriction and control of consumption brought it down to 6 cents. Eight other important food products have been reduced in price between 15 and 30 per cent.

Prime Minister Zable declares that the State must accept full and direct responsibility for the health and welfare of every citizen. His Cabinet is taking measure after measure to embody this principle.

The Minimum Income.

First of the principles insisted on is "the minimum income." The State declares that a family with earnings under a fixed sum cannot live without outside help, so the State pays it a war supplement. At present the minimum income is \$500. All families with less than \$500 a year are subsidized in money according to number of children, and further relief is given in kind. The State sells them goods at less than cost price. All persons drawing old age, sickness, or unemployment pensions are allowed thirty per cent. supplements. The Government promises that if living conditions become worse, supplements will be increased.

Many storekeepers find it impossible, as a result of the severe regulation, to make a living. On condition that they observe the maximum prices, the State pays them allowances. This practically turns traders into salaried officials who are guaranteed a fixed wage.

The State finances are badly hit, and the problem of finding money grows harder every day. The mass of the people, being already supported by the State, cannot be taxed. Finance Minister Eduard Brandes lays the whole burden on the rich, in particular on citizens and foreign settlers who profit from the war. For the next year are proposed prohibitive taxes on luxuries, in the spirit of Prof. Adolph Wagner, who seven years ago laid before the German Emperor a plan for preventing excessive expenditure by making it a criminal offence.

This article appeared in the Toronto Star Jan. 20, 1917, which we are pleased to publish in this issue.—Editor.

Nowadays a workingman enters a restaurant for a plate of soup and is handed a damp plate. If the working man has a good supply of imagination he convinces himself that his damp plate is soup, but he can never convince that most stubborn of debaters—his appetite.

It's a heap better to know less and know it is so, than to know a lot and know it isn't so.

The workers are in the majority. If they fail to get what they want, whose fault is it?

THE SPICE BOX

What a queer world this is, Bill,
Where us blokes do get about,
What queer things we does and says—
I can't make the muddle out;
First, they teach us when we're kids,
Bill,

Of a Good Gawd up above,
Full of gracious love and mercy,
Who acts tender like a dove.
Why I mention this 'ere point, Bill,
Is because the other day,
At a sermon in the trenches,
I heard the bloomin' parson say
As 'ow every one who has doubts, Bill,
In those Bible stories tall,
He'll be burnt right up in Hell,
Be he good or great or small;
Yer mustn't dare to think to question
Where the Good Gawd's been o'
late,

Fer to leave His loving kiddies
Ter their own infernal fate;
It seems ter me He must be blind, Bill,
If He doesn't see the blood
That's been flowing over Europe,
Jest like a mighty roarin' flood.
Blood o' innocents it is, Bill,
Fer the blokes wot made the game
Never finger with the fire,
Though their hands lit up the flame;
They jest order and they scheme, Bill,
Eat their fill and dress quite gay,
Go ter church most every Sunday,
Where they kneel to Gawd an' pray,
That He may be with their gang, Bill,
While they murder, rape and shoot
The ones who ups and tries to stop 'em,
Grabin' gold an' land an' loot;
It suits 'em, does this cursed game,
Bill,

Fer it stops the common herd
From puttin' two an' two together.
But this Gawd, He seems ter me, Bill,
Not only blind, but deaf as well,
Or He'd hear the mighty wallin'
That would shake the depth o' Hell,
As it comes from kids an' women
As in agonies they twist,
On the rack an' in the fire,
In the poison gasses' mist;
They hasn't done no bloomin' harm,
Bill,
But lived peaceful lives an' prayed,
And believed the bloomin' Prayer-
Book,
An' its teachin's they obeyed;
An' this is all the thanks they gets,
Bill,

Fer their worship an' their love;
He jest cocks a deaf ear to 'em
From His Throne that's up above;
So yer see it makes one think, Bill,
If there was a Gawd at all,
He'd manage this 'ere place quite dif-
ferent,
There'd be peace an' goodwill to all.
—J. S. C.

One often hears it said of some millionaire: "He added millions to the wealth of the community." And a lot of people actually believe it. The facts are that a few thousand workingmen produced millions in wealth and made this man rich while making a bare living for themselves. The rich man himself produced nothing. If he added millions to the wealth of the community he holds the title deed to it.

We are informed that the Rockefeller Foundation has many experts at work trying to discover why hungry babies cry. Bet you a million the Rockefeller Foundation wouldn't employ one expert to find out how hungry babies may be fed. The Foundation will leave that for the crazy Socialists who have a loony idea that hungry babies will stop their crying if only they are fed.

...PARTY ANNOUNCEMENTS...

ALBERTA PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Meets on the First Wednesday in each month, at 8 p.m., at Mrs. A. Martin's, 10528 98th Street, Edmonton, Alta.