

PREFACE

To the Fourth Edition

Since the first issue of the Manifesto, many events have transpired of more or less importance, but all to be dwarfed into insignificance by the outbreak of the most colossal and destructive war of all time—a war which has all the appearance of being the opening of a new chapter in human history, not on account of those of its aspects which loom largest in the popular eye, but for the underlying social and economic changes it is hastening, and the valuable lessons it has already writ large for the workers' reading. Yet it is precisely these latter features which are practically neglected, while the former are given an attention altogether beyond their merits.

This war is not being waged because an Archduke was assassinated in Bosnia, nor because a treaty was violated in Belgium. The issue is greater than that. It is a war for the world markets. The "place in the sun" the Teutons seek is a place to sell their wares. The British outcry against the peril of Prussian militarism, is inspired by the fear of German commercial competition. The German military machine, like the British naval machine, is but the jemmy wherewith the capitalist pries his way into his neighbour's domain. The World market calls for world mastery. Without the latter, the former is a dangerous ambition.

As a war for world markets, it is a matter of concern only for the various capitalist interests involved. Yet the workers of each country have flung themselves into the conflict, regardless of the consequences to themselves. They have been stampeded by the two faces of the one bogey that has been conjured up before them all. The Teutons have rallied to the defence of the Fatherland from Russian barbarism; Briton and Frank, Slav and Roman have risen to breast the onrush of Prussian militarism, regardless of the fact that the foe the most to be feared by each is already within the gates—the master class whose battles each is fighting; regardless of the fact that they have more to lose by victory than defeat. For, in any war, the victorious state has ever been the stronger to oppress its own workers; the defeated state ever the weaker to resist their demands.

Also, at the first blast of war's trumpet, fell the walls of our "International" Jericho—an event of no little import to the working class. Justifying the S. P. of C.'s long resistance to any movement to join the International Socialist Bureau, on the ground that it was neither international nor socialist, it points the val-