

ITEMS OF NEWS FROM ALL PARTS

THE LAWYERS BAR THE WAY.

Kilmarnock Equitable Co-operative Society, which some time ago decided to affiliate with the National and Local Labor Parties, has been confronted with a legal obstacle in the carrying out of its decision.

The Society altered its rules to conform with the proposed affiliation, but the Assistant Registrar for Scotland has so far declined to sanction the alteration. The Scottish section of the Co-operative Union has sent an appeal to the Chief Registrar on the subject, but that official has maintained a dignified reticence on the point. Apparently the various sections of the democracy are not to be united if capitalist laws can prevent it. But it is as well to have the battle lines clearly drawn. Those who are earnest for the progress of the co-operative movement will not be slow to take up the challenge.

FREE RUSSIA AS A REFUGE.

With the overthrow of the Russian autocracy, the Committee of the Group of Political Refugees from Russia, formed last summer to protest against the threat of the British Government to deport them to the Russia of the Czar if they refused to enlist, has now joyfully dissolved itself, with hearty thanks to all those who helped them in their hour of need.

There is grim irony for the citizens of Great Britain and Ireland in the concluding paragraph of their letter to the press on the subject:

The late Russian political refugees feel joyous and proud in thinking that henceforth their own country will offer the safest asylum to all foreign citizens who, in their honest efforts to better the life of their own country, may come into conflict with their Government of the day. They not only hope, but are perfectly convinced, that no Russian democracy will ever wish to lay hands on this sacred principle—the right of asylum.

BRITISH N.A.C. RESOLUTION.

Peace by Negotiation.

That this Conference, believing that any further continuance of this terrible and insane slaughter of human life would be useless and futile, and would constitute a great danger to the future security and well-being of the people of this country, calls upon the Government, in conjunction with its Allies, to open up negotiations with a view to concluding a just, honorable and lasting peace, and of bringing to an end this horrible and futile carnage.

BARROW AND FIUME.

We have every reason to believe that both King-Emperor George and Emperor-Karl have united in one common sentiment during last week. The bond of sympathy between the warring monarchs was their natural and heartfelt gratitude to the firm of Vickers, Ltd., Barrow and Fiume. It was, indeed, remarkable that Saturday's papers should come out with the Royal telegram to that interesting gentleman, Albert Vickers, chairman of the Barrow armament firm, and in the same issue chronicle the destruction of 14 British drifters and the damage to two British cruisers, one of them built at Barrow by Vickers, by Austro-Hungarian torpedo craft and submarines. Albert Vickers, at the outbreak of the war was a director of a Vickers' subsidiary company, building submarines and making torpedoes at Fiume, whence these Adriatic raiders issue forth. Perhaps, Vickers will yet receive, in an even more cordial fashion than a telegram, the appreciation felt by the Emperor-King of Austria-Hungary for "further

efforts . . . in these important works to increase the fighting force of my Navy and Army." Earlier in the war, a submarine originally built to the profit of Albert Vickers, sunk a French cruiser, the "Leon Gambetta," with six hundred seamen on board. It would be interesting if Sir Edward Carson would publish a return of all Allied transports, foodships, and war-vessels torpedoed by the Whitehead submarines since the outbreak of the war.

The Call, England.

Professor Sprague, of Harvard University, has a most interesting article on "The Conscription of Income," in the March quarterly number of "The Economic Journal." It is useless to commend a study of the conclusions of the distinguished economist to Mr. Bonar Law—we remember Mr. Bonar Law's plaintive reply to Mr. C. H. Norman that he could not even understand the point of view of those who advocated conscription of wealth for war purposes—and even if Mr. Bonar Law thoroughly understood it, and proposed it, we are not mad enough to suppose that the financial exploiters of this country would relax their hold on our throats. They control the House of Commons, and any Chancellor who proposed conscription of income would probably meet the fate of Jean Jaures.

But it is necessary, nevertheless, that the Democracy should know that a great economist has lent the weight of his name to the Socialist proposal. Professor Sprague shows how great State borrowings at interest involve an expansion in the volume of credit, and how that expansion in turn occasions "a rapid rise in prices, thus enhancing the money cost of a war." He shows how there has been in France and Germany a three-fold increase in the note issues of the central banks of these countries, and in Britain a corresponding increase in nominal deposits in the Bank of England. How prices have risen, he shows from the index figures of the "Economist":

116.6 in July, 1914.
153.2 in October, 1915.
217.1 in November, 1916.

To obviate this, he says: "Conscription of men should logically and equitably be accompanied by something in the nature of conscription of the current income above that which is absolutely necessary," and he proposes a special war tax of 5 per cent. on incomes of £300, and 10 per cent. on incomes of £400; incomes between being taxed at the higher rate. And so on; until all incomes above £20,000 are taken by the State.

We know not whether "Sprague" is a name of German origin, but we are fairly certain that, being unable to answer his arguments, the Capitalist-Financial organs will defend their robber nests by attacking the Professor's birth certificate, and proving that his brother-in-law's cousin was an agnostic.

These, it is well known, are the arguments that weigh with "the intelligent working man."

Glasgow Forward,
May 26, 1917.

A POLITICAL REVERSION.

I have just been released from Wandsworth to hear the joyful tidings that my brother, sentenced to three years in Siberia for an offence similar to my own, is now on his way back to Russia, a free man.

It is strange to feel that in a country to which my parents came to escape religious persecution I should be awaiting further punishment for refusing to do what to me is wrong. I remember my brother being in England as a delegate to the conference of Russian Revolutionaries at the Broth-

erhood Church; they chose England because it was the only country where they could confer freely. He told me then how thankful I ought to be for having freedom of speech, democratic control, and voluntarism. Years after I, too, attended meetings at the Brotherhood Church, presided over by Clifford Allen, to protest against militarism and bureaucracy in England.

Now, while I am beginning to appreciate what suffering is involved in the fight for liberty, while I am beginning to understand what Russianism means, he goes back to realize the greater freedom we have lost.

I feel now that the Revolution will greatly stimulate the movement towards internationalism, and a people of Europe sick of war will be given a real lead in constructive reform. That will be the real peace movement.

—Labor Leader.

THE "BULLETIN" RAIDED.

The "Sydney Bulletin" has dared to expose the details of what it avers to be wasteful administration at Australian military headquarters in London. As a result the "Bulletin" office has been raided under the War Precautions Act, and all documents seized that could help to trace the person responsible for the exposure of the scandal.

WALL STREET AND THE WAR.

"In the last two and a half years Wall Street (U.S.) has sold two and a half thousand million dollars' worth of war supplies to the Allies. But the Allies are now, to a large extent, making their own supplies, and Wall Street must find a new market. War with Germany would be the surest means of selling these products to the U.S. Government." From a leaflet issued by New York Committee for Democratic Control.

According to the "Berliner Tagwacht," Hoeglund, the Swedish Young Socialist who called upon the Swedish soldiers to refuse to fight should war be declared, and was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment, has just served his sentence. As he was leaving the prison he was greeted by several Reichstag deputies and by a crowd comprising several thousand people.

IS WILSON A RENEGADE?

"The man who last December warmly favored peace has now become an apostle of war, leading on the New World to a participation in the greatest massacre that has ever afflicted old Europe."—The Pope on President Wilson.

LABOR AND THE BRITISH EMPIRE

William Hard
(In the British Magazine.)

British capitalism, British machine industry is the oldest in Europe or America. It is also the ripest. Even before the war, everybody felt that something was going to break it, under the pressure of labor, and that something new was going to emerge, gradually, perhaps, but powerfully. Then with the war came England's first real national recognition of labor as an estate of the realm. England as a nation, in order to get its new industrial efficiency was forced to sign a treaty with labor, as an estate, in the treasury agreement and in the munition act. In order to retain that efficiency—and it has to retain it—England will be forced to sign another treaty with labor, as an estate, when the war is over.

But what is the ultimate aim of British labor? Its ultimate aim is thoroughly Socialistic. It wants better hours, of course, and it wants better wages; but, more and more, it wants a greater control of industry. It begins to think about control sometimes even more than it does about hours and wages. It is much more radical.

THE GEM OF THE WEEK.

The following gem was culled from the New York World, where it appeared in the form of a letter to the editor. We had almost forgotten there were "brains" like that:

"There is no such thing as 'the problem of poverty' any more than there is a problem of bow-legs or blue eyes. There are a thousand problems of poverty, as numerous and as widely sundered as the types of character and the fates that produce them.

"Put two men right beside each other in the same ditch, with the same sun and sky overhead, identically similar picks and shovels in their hands, the very same pay; one will get ahead, his nextdoor neighbor will fall behind. In view of the self-evident, every-day fact, it is hardly necessary to go so far afield for 'solutions' as our 'reformers and uplifters,' and all the rest of the pestiferous gang of preachers of discontent and anarchy would have us do.

"If rum and shiftlessness were taken out of the world there would be little poverty left in it. The ghost of Henry George, the spirit of the almsgiver, the pauperizer, the protagonist of sedition and Socialism, can be laid by a little attention to plain, humble, unornamental fact. Allow me also, while on the subject, to record one little opinion more:

"The greatest, most needed reform of this age is the abolition of 'reformers.'"

"Sammy" Gompers and his henchmen in the American Federation of Labor have always charged the Socialists with being dreamers. Gompers now seems to be dreaming, however, about Wilson's "world democracy," while the American junkers are wide awake trying to wipe out every vestige of democracy in the United States.

The whole Romanoff family, that recently lost out in Russia, father, mother, son and daughters, are said to be working in the gardens of the Tsarkoe Sela palace, in Petrograd, planting and hoeing potatoes. They are thus on a level with King George V. of England, who has voluntarily taken up the same work. He is probably preparing for the time when he, too, will lose his present job.

Japanese imperialists are getting nervous. The same crowd responsible for the hanging of 12 Socialists before the war started now assert in an effort to save themselves, that while Japan is imperialistic it is also democratic. They claim that the Japanese people look upon their masters with reverence and love. That is what the Romanoffs said about the Russian people shortly before the recent revolution.

...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.

Riverdale Local No. 87 (Toronto) meets at 82 Wroxeter Ave. (off Pape) every second and fourth Friday of the month, at 8 p.m. Everybody welcome. Address enquiries and communications to the Secretary, Charles M. Thompson, care 82 Wroxeter Ave., Toronto. (1)

The Dominion executive committee meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month at 363 Spadina Avenue, Toronto, secretary, I. Bainbridge.

The Ontario provincial executive committee meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month at 363 Spadina Avenue, Toronto, secretary, I. Bainbridge.

Locals and Executive Bodies may have their Ads. in the Directory for the sum of \$3.00 per year.