

Liberty!

Equality!!

Fraternity!!!

THE WORD

To Rouse The People, To Combat Fascism, and To Speed Commonweal.

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TOWARDS PEACE: WHAT CAN BE DONE?

TO ALL MANKIND

A Letter Answering Many Readers from
The Duke of Bedford

Dear Aldred,—

I should like to make a reply to the many loyal friends, some of whose letters have appeared in *The Word*, who feel that I have a contribution to make towards the establishment of a better world. Conscious as I am of my own shortcomings and limitations, I think perhaps I *may* have some such contribution to make, even if it be only on the principle that among the blind the one-eyed man is king. I certainly have a confidence which does not, I think, spring from mere conceit, that if I had the political power to do so, I *could* give this country the two things it so greatly needs—lasting peace and prosperity; the latter, not by reason of discoveries for which I myself can claim credit, but because (unlike the majority of M.P.s) I have, by the mercy of God, at least sufficient sense to know a good thing when I see one! If to the blessings of peace and prosperity, those who look to me for guidance desire to add the crown of the fullest happiness that this life can give, I can assure them, if they have not already made the discovery for themselves, that it may be found in a Christian faith based on a living fellowship with God and on a rational and wholehearted obedience to His commands.

There is one thing that I should like to make plain at the start, even at the risk of causing some disappointment or giving some offence. While I shall always welcome the suggestions, the advice, and the constructive criticisms of my friends, I cannot, as some leaders of political movements do, go against my convictions or alter my policy to avoid alienating possible supporters. If, after careful reflection, I feel that a certain course of action is useless, mistaken, or morally wrong, I cannot undertake it merely out of deference to those who are of a different opinion.

I want, now, to share with you my views as to the task which lies before us and the methods by which it can be accomplished. Our ultimate task is the establishment of prosperity and social righteousness, and the first step to prosperity is the setting-up of a system which removes all barriers to trade and adopts a financial technique which enables the members of the nation, not forgetting any who are unemployed, to consume and avail themselves of all the goods and services which industry and commerce, working to full capacity, can produce and import. The political leaders of all Parties have in the past failed to give the country the economic prosperity which they promised in their election addresses because, from corruption, mental laziness or over-pre-occupation with other ideas and theories, they have ignored the one thing that really matters most from the point of view of removing the needless evil of financial poverty. I pledge myself, as soon as I have political power to



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Edith Louisa Cavell was born, December 6, 1865, at Swardston, Norfolk. She settled as a nurse in Brussels in 1907, and was executed there by the German military authorities, on October 12, 1915. Her heroic story shall be told in our next issue. As early as 1888, she endowed a Free Hospital in Bavaria. When war came to Belgium, she tended friend and foe alike. Whatever its technical justification in military law, the execution of Edith Cavell for helping 200 French and British fugitives to escape, was a grave error in judgment; for it served to perpetuate hatred and so further war. True moral understanding would not have permitted the execution. Such understanding would have been of tremendous healing value to the wounds of mankind. In her last interview with the British Chaplain, Edith Cavell uttered the immortal words that F. W. Jowett, in 1924, had placed on her statute. They redound to her glory. To Jowett belongs the credit of remembering and engraving them on stone in the heart of London in such a way that the stone record transcribes itself on the living hearts of humanity. To-day, Edith Cavell's words are a vital call to all mankind. We must honour her memory with loving attention that peace may arise throughout the world and war be abolished for ever.

enable me to carry out the necessary reforms, to make it my concern as a first instalment of good things to come, to raise well above the line of crippling and degrading poverty all who have suffered so long and so needlessly. I make this promise with the utmost confidence because, unlike many others who have made it, *I understand the measures which must be taken in order to give it practical effect.* One thing, and one thing alone, could seriously hinder and delay me, and that is the continuation of the present war until, by the destruction of our working population and industrial plant; the sinking of our merchant shipping; and the loss of our foreign trade to other countries, the very sources of real wealth are crippled and destroyed. If that point were reached, then, while financial reform would still be necessary, it could give, for a time at any rate, but a meagre return, for the reason that the whole country would be poor in the real, as distinct from the financial, sense, money being of no value when the power to produce goods has been destroyed.

This, therefore, brings me to our immediate task—the ending of the war *before* our resources have been further wasted by senseless destruction in an effort to attain right ends by wrong means.

There was a time—and such a time will doubtless return and may even return shortly—when a policy could most usefully be promoted by speeches in Parliament; by public meeting; and by conferences.

Under the abnormal conditions which exist at the present moment, however, all these methods are, in my opinion, of small utility. Let us first take speeches in Parliament, a matter to which I wish to give very thorough attention, partly because Parliament and the Government are undoubtedly the crux of the whole situation, and partly because many of my friends obviously still attach great value to the effect of Parliamentary speeches.

It is, however, exceedingly important to realise the present strange mental condition of Members of Parliament, a condition which exists to an almost equal extent in both Houses, as may be gathered from reports one receives from the few individual M.P.'s who have managed to retain their sanity. The plain fact is that the vast majority of the members of both Houses have come to resemble the ostrich of the Book of Job, in that God (or perhaps the Devil?) "hath deprived them of reason"! They are completely filled with war hysteria and emotionalism because they believe what they read in the National Press whose Editor-in-chief in these days must surely be Beelzebub the Father of lies and hatred! The result is that, to borrow a phrase from the religious field, they are completely "gospel-hardened" as far as arguments in favour of a negotiated peace are concerned. Every plea that can be put forward in favour of peace has already been brought to their notice times without number, sometimes by the minority of intelligent Members already alluded to and sometimes by a great variety of outside agencies, among which I can include myself: *but the effect has been nil.*

The propaganda value in the country of anti-war speeches made in Parliament is also now universally small, for the warmongers' Press either ignores such speeches or reports them briefly and perhaps inaccurately, giving undue prominence to hostile replies in order to discredit the peace effort.

Two things, and two things alone, can make the slightest impression on Parliament in its present state of mind. The first is a further succession of military disasters, shipping losses, and disappointments with regard to help from Allied countries; the second is a change in public opinion towards the war. I will return to this point later on.

Though I would not for a moment suggest that they should be abandoned by those who believe in them and find that they are able,

even in a quiet way, to do effective work through them, I feel that public meetings are now of comparatively little value because, owing to black-out and air-raid hindrances, audiences tend to be even smaller than before the war and more strictly confined to those who are already converted. If by any chance the appearance of some speaker of unusual eloquence, or a change in public opinion, did bring large and receptive audiences of people hitherto indifferent to peace, the Government would quickly take steps to suppress the hindrance to their war effort, either by imprisoning the too-eloquent speaker for causing "despondency and alarm," or by the indirect but equally effective method of issuing, on the quiet, instructions to all owners of halls forbidding them to let their premises for meetings where the speaker to whom the Government took exception was likely to appear.

In regard to conferences, the conditions which now obtain have made the issues on which effective action can be taken so simple and so few that there is really nothing much to confer about! It is better to get on with the job than to talk. Some people think that conferences are helpful for the planning of the post-war world, but if we already know the spirit which should animate international policy in the post-war world and understand the financial and foreign trade technique necessary to give practical effect to our desire for neighbourliness, it does not seem to me that there is much point in trying to work out a detailed scheme when only wishful thinkers can imagine that we alone shall possess the deciding voice in the post-war settlement and when we do not know, and cannot get in touch with, the other important contributors whose decisions will carry quite as much weight as our own.

We come now to the point—and, in my opinion, almost the only point—at which practical effort can, and should, be applied on the material, as distinct from the spiritual, plane. I have said just now that the only thing, with the exception of disaster, that will make the slightest impression on the mentality of our war-hypnotised Parliament is a change in the outlook of an adequate number of British citizens. Militarist Members of Parliament have repeatedly defended their attitude on the ground that the majority of the nation are in favour of continuing the war, and we have got to face the unpleasant fact that as long as they are able to say this with truth the war is going to continue. Our first task, therefore, is to increase by every means in our power the number of people whose attitude towards the war is reasoned and intelligent. Each one of us has his own contacts and his own opportunities, and of these he must train himself to make the best possible use. All that is needed in the way of mental equipment is now available for him, since he can obtain at the cost of a few pence literature containing reasoned arguments against every idea that can be put forward in defence of the war and its continuation. In *Peace News*, also, he can find up-to-date comments on recent happenings which are of extreme shrewdness and interest.

A working knowledge of the reforms needed in the monetary and foreign trade system, if the economic causes of war are to be removed and prosperity is to be made possible, is a very useful asset to the worker in the cause of peace. People are much more likely to become keen on an early peace if they can see that there is a chance of really good times ahead, and they will become especially impatient at the prolongation of the war if they realise that every day of its continuance makes the chances of a rapid entry into prosperity less good. It is particularly necessary to be able to convince those who are lukewarm about peace because they have well-paid war jobs, that there is not the slightest reason why, if they can do a useful job well, the cessation of hostilities should involve them in a lowering of their present standard of living. They should

also be helped to realise the selfishness and shortsighted folly of their outlook. Just because they are all right does it really not matter to them that thousands of other people should be killed or ruined? And just for the sake of a few months', or at most a few years', comparative prosperity, is it worth while tolerating a war which, by its continuance, may bring disaster upon the whole country and, in the long run, involve them also in a protracted period of acute distress?

But the extension of an enlightened attitude towards the war is not the only task. *It is of the utmost importance to drive home into the public mind the responsibility of the Government and of Parliament for the continuation of the war.* A hazy idea is common that Hitler is entirely responsible for the continuation of the war, but unless, and until, Hitler rejects reasonable peace terms not deprived of all practical value by foolish clauses such as the unilateral disarmament proposal in the Eight Points, it is our Parliament and Government and not Hitler, who are responsible for the continuation of the conflict.

Our third, and perhaps in some ways our most important, task is to convince those who are opposed to the war of the duty, value and necessity of making their views known continually to members of the Government and of Parliament, not necessarily only their own Members, though these should, of course, receive special attention. Anti-war constituents of a militarist Member of Parliament commonly feel that it is quite useless to write to him, and therefore refrain from doing so. If by "useless" they mean that their individual letters will not convert him to an anti-war position they are probably right, but this is not the point. *Their action is needed to give volume to the popular demand for a negotiated peace,* regardless of what the personal views of the Member of Parliament may be. Experience with regard to other issues has proved again and again that a government will always alter its policy, even against its own wishes, as soon as it has evidence of a sufficiently strong popular feeling against the plan which it proposes to follow or alternately in favour of some other plan. At the present time it is numbers, and numbers alone, that count, anyhow in a very important field, and it is those numbers that we must create and mobilise, for apart from numbers there is no hope.

There is an old legend of a waggoner whose vehicle got stuck in the mud and who, in his agitation, prayed to the god Mercury for assistance. Mercury appeared, but instead of performing some miracle to assist the waggoner, he suggested that he should put his shoulder to the wheel in the right place. He did so, and, with this assistance, the oxen managed to drag the waggon on to firm ground. Now our "waggon" is Parliament, and the Government, deep in the mud of war hysteria and the sticky, evil-smelling slime of Press dope. The toiling oxen are our good friends Maxton, McGovern, Rhys Davies, Stokes, Sir Ernest Bennett, Lord Ponsonby, and others like them, who have neither lost their heads nor sacrificed their principles. The situation demands pressure from the rear. Our job is to put our shoulders to the wheel and shove, and as soon as enough of us get shoving, out she'll have to come!

There is another reason why I would impress upon my friends the need for personal effort and personal initiative. *They cannot afford to rely too much on the help and guidance of one or two men.* At any time illness, or accident, or the action of powerful enemies may deprive them of Guy Aldred's help, or of my own, or perhaps of that of both of us. If this should happen, seeing the great task which is committed to them by God for the service and salvation of humanity, can they afford to become a disunited and dispirited mob without purpose, plan or initiative—mere

sheep without a shepherd? Certainly they cannot afford to do this! Each one must himself develop a capacity for leadership and, if we should fall by the wayside, he must be ready to carry forward the gospel of truth and peace, certain alike of the goal at which he is aiming and the methods which he must employ to reach it.

These are dark days, with much in them to discourage and depress us. Let us not forget, however, that the greatest forces in the world are on our side, the forces of God and truth. We have also another and more grimly, one whom in a sense we should rather be without, yet from whose aid our cause may greatly benefit. That ally is the inescapable nemesis of events which brings disaster upon those who seek good by methods of evil; put their trust in blind guides and frail alliances; and, refusing to learn the lessons of experience, prefer to continue, if one may quote in all seriousness lines from a famous classic in light humour, "to madly force a right-hand foot into a left-hand shoe." Perhaps also we may, just for a moment, allow ourselves the luxury of a calculation which errs on the side of optimism. Although ordinary daily papers are apt to be destroyed when only one person has read them, experts say that journals of the character of *The Word* commonly get into the hands of from five to ten different individuals. If, then, we could assume that *The Word* has half a million readers, each of whom decides to devote himself to the cause so thoroughly that every week he gains one other to be as keen a missionary as he is, how long will it be before the day of peace dawns when the new order of hope and happiness can begin? Not long indeed!

Yours sincerely,

BEDFORD.

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SOCIALISM AND THE BANKS

LORD KINDERSLEY MAKES AN
ADMISSION

By F. W. JOWETT

[The following article by our comrade, F. W. Jowett, appears in the "Bradford I.L.P. News" for September 5, 1941. Jowett was First Commissioner of Works in the 1924 Labour Government. See reference in another column. In consequence he is a Privy Councillor, and in the P.C. list his name follows that of Thomas Johnston, M.P. Jowett remains an uncompromising Anti-Militarist and opponent of war, notwithstanding his one-time membership of the Labour Government. Lord Kindersley has been a Conservative M.P., a soldier, and stockbroker. Finance and politics have landed him in the House of Lords. He believes in finance and Jowett believes in Socialism. Thus is the issue joined.—Ed.]

The National Debt, which at the beginning of the war was £8,494 millions, is now £12,561 millions, so that we are borrowing at the rate of five and a half millions a day (W. J. Burt, City Editor, *Daily Herald*).

Lord Kindersley, leader of the national savings campaign, is complaining that well-to-do savers only invested less than £3,600,000 last week in Government loans although there is £3,000 millions in the banks on deposit and in current accounts.

This very ugly fact of the rapidly increasing public debt whilst a very large amount of money is in the banks in deposit and current accounts of investors has compelled Lord Kindersley to recognise at last that banks only inflate currency, which increases prices, when they create credit for paper loans to the Government. These bankers' loans, Lord Kindersley has found it necessary to admit, are MERE BOOK-ENTRY LOANS.

Lord Kindersley's trouble with the well-to-do people who keep their money in banks ready for more profitable investment or speculation, is that they excuse their refusal to lend the Government the money they have in the bank by a fallacy—a false argument. The false argument is that there is no need for them to lose control of their money by lending it direct to the Government until it suits their convenience, because the banks lend it themselves to the Treasury.

This false argument which has so often been exposed in the *I.L.P. News*, Lord Kindersley blows sky-high, although by a little verbal subterfuge he shows how reluctant he is to expose the bankers' bluff.

Appealing to the class of people who at present have £3000 millions in banks and are keeping it there "to withdraw their money and put it into Government war loan," Lord Kindersley said: "You can't lend money by proxy," and went on to explain why. This was the way he explained the procedure, as we have done on so many occasions:—

"When a private individual invests his money in a Government security, Lord Kindersley explained, he transfers command over goods and services from himself to the Government.

But when a BANK LENDS PART OF A DEPOSITOR'S MONEY to the Government, not one depositor transfers his purchasing power to the Government.

He can still spend his money, and if he does so, his purchases are added to the expenditure of the Government instead of the Government expenditure being substituted for his. This leads to inflation."

The little verbal subterfuge (which does nothing more than show how reluctant Lord Kindersley is to make his long-overdue open admission that bankers' credit loans are NOT REAL LOANS AT ALL but just increases of currency causing inflation) is in the words I have put in capitals. These words are "when a bank lends part of a depositor's money."

Lord Kindersley's own explanation of bank credit loan procedure makes pure nonsense of these words, for if, as Lord Kindersley admits, "not one depositor transfers his purchasing power to the Government" to enable the bank to make such a loan, how can it be possible that "a bank lends part of a depositor's money" for the transaction?

It is helpful to have this tardy admission of

the root causes of inflation from the officially appointed whipper-up of savings for investment in Government loans. Because, however the war ends and whenever it ends, this money question will have to be effectively dealt with if the vast majority of the people are to emerge from the horrible experience that still lies before us all free from financial dictatorship. And I see no sign on which to found any belief or hope that the leaders of the Labour Party have any intention of dealing effectively with the money question.

This is a most amazing thing to have to say after the experience of the last war which has left us with nearly £8000 millions of unpayable debt, and the first two years' experience of the present war which has already increased the debt to £12,561 millions which is being added to at the rate of £5½ millions a day.

One prominent Labour M.P. who claims to be an authority on financial and money questions, Mr. Arthur Woodburn, goes so far even now as to assert that the public credit which is being issued by banks is being "issued without inflation." "The banking system," says Labour M.P. Arthur Woodburn, "IS ONE OF THE CLEVEREST INVENTIONS OF MODERN MAN," and he doesn't think that a big war debt at the end of the war will be a serious burden for the community to bear. If Mr. Woodburn had been an appointed agent of the financiers who control the banking system of this country, he could not have been more industrious and persistent in defending their nefarious and anti-social activities.

Soon after the war began, I expressed the opinion that at the end of it the national debt would not be less than £20,000 millions. A very large proportion of the £20,000 millions or whatever the amount of the debt may be, will consist of bankers' credit loans such as Lord Kindersley has described which are duplications of real money which alone has value representing goods produced and services rendered.

Being money created by banks it is in substance COUNTERFEIT MONEY as well as being one of the greatest of all sources of inflation.

If this method of issuing the nation's money is going to be continued after the war then all Arthur Greenwood's Government sponsored after-war reconstruction schemes and Professor Harold Laski's Labour Party reconstruction Committee's schemes can give no more substantial promise than Lloyd George's "homes for heroes" promise made nearly 25 years ago.

If, as it is assumed, not only by the Tory and Liberal party, but by the Labour Party so far as can be ascertained from its official publications costs of after-war reconstruction and all the measures necessary for the social security which has been promised are to be met by more borrowing and additional taxation, then Messrs. Greenwood, Laski and Shinwell may as well roll up their blue-prints of the new social order and put them away, for the new social order cannot be built on borrowed money and additional taxes. What alone will be possible after the war on the borrowing plus taxation plan will be a VERY MUCH WORSE DEVELOPMENT OF THE OLD SOCIAL ORDER.

And the pity of it is that there need be no such blockade as the present money system constitutes against the new social order. This much at all events has been made perfectly clear by experience in this war. THE ONLY LIMIT TO WHAT THE NATION CAN HAVE FOR ITS USE OR MISUSE—for the public well-being or for destructive warfare—IS THE LIMIT OF WHAT CAN BE OBTAINED FROM LABOUR AND AVAILABLE NATURAL RESOURCES.

But to think of starting after-war reconstruction for a new social order with a debt of, say £20,000 millions on more borrowing and more taxation, is sheer madness.

After all, the experience of the past two years, and Lord Kindersley's admission that banks are issuing duplicated supplies of money which, although it is bank-created credit money, is being added to the national debt, proves that the nation could issue its own money not as debt but as

national credit for whatever purpose it needed money.

The State could (as I see is explained in a circularised statement by the Duke of Bedford) issue its own money and:—

"Earmark for its own use whatever percentage of an annual debt-free creation of money was needed for an adequate financing of its services. It would not borrow any money at all and it would USE TAXATION ONLY AS A MEANS OF COLLECTING FOR DESTRUCTION SURPLUS MONEY FOR THE PREVENTION OF INFLATION."

Can anyone find a reasonable objection to this straightforward proposal? It would give the Government the power it professes to need, to limit private spending: it would drive right through the tangled thicket of City and Treasury pacts and understandings (and incidentally set free some thousands of executives and their staffs for more useful work) and it would set the nation free, at the end of the war, to make the best it can of the real wealth (goods, labour, natural resources) then at its disposal.

THIS WE CAN DO!

By OSWELL BLAKESTON.

Pacifism is not worth the things which pacifists are enduring if it is without political and economic significance. That is so obvious many people keep it well at the back of their minds. They can be startled out of their complacency only by such direct statements as: Is your privilege of "peace" to be purchased at the expense of your neighbour, and do you really enjoy claiming a share in the exploitation of man by man?

The pacifist is he who is opposed to aggression (not just war) and, therefore, to imperialist politics, predatory economics, and aggressor.

How, then, is the pacifist to obtain the world of abundance for all, which, logically, is the world of peace? How indeed! were it not for non-co-operation? Thank goodness (which has everything to do with it) that non-co-operation has shown a way! for without it pacifism would be—passive.

Pacifists have not been slow to pay lip-service to non-co-operation. Faced with the pertinent "How would you deal with the evils of the Nazi system if the Germans conquered?" we have come back pat with "We would co-operate with whatever is good in the system (certain matters of social justice, etc.) and refuse to co-operate with whatever is bad (Jew-baiting, etc.)." We have explained how, by the positive moral force of non-violence, we would win in the end, just as Gandhi wins, on the higher plane where conflict may be resolved. Our enemies would become our comrades!

And often our questioners have curled their lips and said they couldn't see us doing it. We have replied valiantly that we would be only too willing to make our "battle" sacrifice on the field of non-violence, offering ourselves constructively for peace where we have refused to offer ourselves destructively for war. And sometimes our questioners have pushed it further and asked for proof, have even suggested that we might be getting on with the job. We have told them that we are preparing ourselves for the historical moment, for the Gandhi who will be ready to lead us when we are ready for him.

Well, we have reached a new stage in the exercise. The tragic thing is that so many pacifists seem unaware of it.

Why is so little stress laid on the really important part of the conditionally exempted C.O.'s refusal to accept the new conscriptions? The National Service Act and Industrial Conscription have brought about a totally new situation—if only we could realise it. For here, for many of us, is the opportunity to show our witness that this thing is possible in spite of legal compulsion.

We know that the "absolutists" of the last

war have, by their heroic stand, made many things much easier for the pacifists of this war. Many of us accepted the conditions of exemption almost as a tribute to them. But the authorities have chosen to regard our compromise as a surrender, as weakness rather than a reasonable pacifist gesture. They have increased the pressure. Resistance to this pressure now takes on its full heroic stature.

The pacifist who refuses now has a profounder significance than the pacifist who refused in 1914-17. This is because the idea of non-co-operation has reached a more general consciousness. It is, as they say, in the air. To-day the pacifist who refuses does more than protest against the principle of compulsion, he gives evidence that the power exists which alone can make pacifism a policy as well as a blue-print for personal conduct. By indirect propaganda (always the most potent kind) he demonstrates that pacifism can be a living creed for the fiery blood of the young idealist as well as for the calm mind of the meditating sage.

To-day the individual pacifist, by his willingness to take the consequences of refusal helps others to understand that men could be found to stand shoulder to shoulder in a campaign of non-violence. Individual example can show that the things pacifists promise are not all talk, that pacifism can be, as it must be, politically and economically effective, that pacifism can mean real peace.

There are many who have scorned pacifism as passive, but who have their fill of proof that "war wins nothing, cures nothing, ends nothing." Once they realise that a non-violent struggle for an age of abundance is not an escapist's dream, they may become the men among whom we may look for our Gandhi. It is the refusal of the pacifist to co-operate with the new conscriptions, his willingness to bear the penalties of civilian and military punishment (and the stories are grim enough in the little left-wing papers), which will effect the wholesale conversion.

Only the exceptionally strong-minded are without any twinge of shame when declining to render some useful service to the community in the hour of need. Often the best pacifist has moments of wondering if he is not unreasonable in refusing some job as being a fire-watcher for the crops. Yet the pacifist need feel no guilt if he reminds himself of what he is doing positively by saying "No."

Of course there is a lot of "hedging" in the ranks. It is necessary for each to find out for himself how much of this is an attempt to rationalise our fears. If the editor will allow me, I should like to examine the main objections in another article. For the moment it is enough to remember—enough to live or to die for—that pacifism can be enough!

Why, why, why do we not say all this more often, more fervently, to our comrades, to ourselves?

NON-MILITARY WAR SERVICE CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION DUKE OF BEDFORD'S PROTEST

The *Catholic Herald*, London, for September 26, published the following valuable and powerful letter from the Duke of Bedford:—

Sir,—The Government's refusal to recognise the conscientious objection of men and women to forms of non-military war service imposed by the State marks another step in the direction of complete totalitarian tyranny. The treatment even of conscientious objectors to military service is steadily becoming more harsh and unjust and if nothing is done to remedy abuse I have just referred to our prisons will be filled still further with high-principled and perfectly sincere people whose only crime is that they refuse, like the heroine of a modern anti-Fascist play, to admit that "The State is all"!
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THE ROOSEVELT-CHURCHILL STATEMENT

Is It An "Honest-to-God" Declaration?

by Alexander Ratcliffe

The opinion freely expressed in Britain from the Premier down to the humblest of citizens is that Hitler is not to be trusted: that Hitler could not make an honest statement, and that Hitler's word is not worth a brass farthing. Away back in December last when Mr. Churchill made a war statement before the House of Commons, he said, "Certainly it would be very convenient if Herr Hitler or the important chiefs in Germany were to give us every fortnight or so an honest-to-God statement (laughter) if they were capable of it." (*Glasgow Herald*, 20/12/40). It was truly typical of the mentality of our Parliamentarians that they should titter at the very suggestion that anything honest could emanate from Germany: especially it was the time for hearty laughter when the suggestion was made that Hitler and Co. could make an honest-to-God statement.

My purpose now is to deal with the Statement of President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill on the "Peace Aims" of Britain and her Allies. Everybody has heard of the famous Eight Points: but does anyone see through them? Is this Statement of the two leading Democrats of the civilised world an honest-to-God declaration? Can there be found any substantial and valued opinion upholding the vague and inconsistent and utterly worthless platitudes that constitute the Atlantic Ocean Declaration? I am inclined to the opinion that Roosevelt and Churchill were at sea in more senses than one, as they drew up that mess of mendacious meanderings. The reception which these Eight Points has got has not been an encouraging one. The press was at its wits end to explain away these silly sea sayings. The point to note, however, is that that Statement is not an honest-to-God declaration: it is merely a smoke-screen to hide the real purpose of that Oceanic Overture, so ably performed by these versatile voices.

The first thing to note particularly is that the Eight Points begin thus: No. 1, "Their countries seek no aggrandisement, territorial or other." It is to be observed that No. 1 and the other Seven Points do not constitute the basis for Peace with Germany. It is definitely stated in the Preamble that these Points are the "common principles in the national policies of their respective countries, on which they base their hopes for a better future for the world."

The Declaration, then, is merely an Agreement between one country at war and another country not at war: an Agreement between Neutral America and Warring Britain.

I do not think any purpose is to be served dealing with each of these Eight Points, for all of them savour of hypocrisy and smug complacency. No. 1 was the foremost Point for Peace with the Germans at the last war, and we all know the result, how after solemnly promising the Germans and her Allies that no territory would be filched from them if they accepted President Wilson's Fourteen Points as a ground for Armistice, Britain and her Allies tore up the Agreement and treated it as a Scrap of Paper; Britain subsequently benefiting by the gain of nearly a million and a half of enemy territory, most of it German. Of course, it may be safer this war to urge No. 1 Point, for at present it would seem that there is little hope of us adding to our territory after this war.

No. 2 Point is also suspect: it solemnly declares that there are to be no territorial changes "that do not accord with the freely-expressed wishes of the peoples concerned." That also was stated solemnly at the last war, the result being that again Britain and her Allies betrayed the Germans and her Allies by forcing the peoples of one nationality to live under the despotism of another nationality. One might here note that had Roosevelt and Churchill made these Declarations before the present war commenced, and agreed with the Germans and Hungarians, etc.,

to right the great wrong that caused hundreds of thousands of one nationality to live, against their express wishes, under the rule of another nationality, the present war would not have taken place. For it was with a view to setting free the peoples of one nation from the peoples of other nations that Hitler invaded Czechoslovakia and Poland. None seek to deny that fact to-day. Notwithstanding, neither Mr. Roosevelt nor Mr. Churchill has seen fit to make any reference to the injustices prevailing on the Continent of Europe before the present war started, injustices which, if swept aside *before Hitler was even heard of*, would have obviated the rise of Hitler, and the war we are suffering from to-day.

Point No. 3 is another piece of mendacity, for it coolly states that the people of any Nation must be at liberty to choose their own form of Government. Notwithstanding, Point 6 declares that the "Nazi Tyranny" must get its "final destruction." The Germans have chosen Nazism as *their* form of Government, for Messrs. Roosevelt and Churchill know, the latter especially, that in 1937, two years previous to the declaration of war, the Germans voted for Hitlerism 99 per cent.; this because of what Hitler had done for Germany in four years of rule. So, it would seem that every country but Germany, and probably Italy, is to have the choice of its own form of Government. But there must be no Fascism or Nazi-ism for foreign countries. Britain and America evidently are to be at liberty to dictate to other countries what form of Government they must enjoy!

The other Points are all likewise reeking of hypocrisy and inconsistency, so having dealt briefly with the few, the others can be passed over.

As for the Statement that Hitler is not to be trusted, and that Hitler always breaks his word. We are not excusing any man breaking his word, but every politician who is honest (if there is such an one!) must admit that where Hitler has broken his word, he has been driven to it by this country and our allies. But why point the finger at Hitler? Did not our respected and honoured political representatives *break their word* in 1919, when they foully betrayed the Fourteen Points of President Wilson which constituted the basis for the Armistice of 1918? Our politicians, our leading and honoured Cabinet-members, agreed to tear up an Agreement once they got Germany to lay down her arms. Once the Germans were disarmed and an Allied Army marched on to German soil, Britain and her Allies *broke their word* by tearing up the Armistice Terms, and they continued to *break their word* till they had reduced Germany to starvation, want and abject misery. What did that get us? We have heard some silly and stupid people say that "we must *finish* Germany this time." As if Germany could ever be finished *this* time as Germany was *last* time!

And if the boot is on the other foot, *this* time, what reason have we to squeal? If Hitler were to deal with us, were he to procure a victory, as we dealt with the Germans at the last war, could we blame him? If Hitler is the base rascal that he is said to be, then if Hitler were to break his word given at any Peace Conference, could we blame him? If Hitler and the Germans are the "scum of the earth" and beyond redemption, then let us just be prepared for what is coming to us. But sane and sensible men and women know that all that talk about Hitler and the Germans is mere war propaganda. They know that, what time it is urged that we never could talk with Hitler or discuss matters with him, our political advisers to-day are the very men not only to *talk* with Hitler, but to *side* with Hitler *if it will serve their own personal ends*.

THE ATLANTIC CHARTER

Miss Ruth Fry, whose labours for peace are well-known, has sent us a very detailed analysis of the Atlantic Charter, in which she puts forward a more conciliatory approach than that adopted by Mr. Eatcliffe. Owing to an accident in going to press we will be unable to publish this important analytical essay until next month.

LEACH AND WAR

Criticism of a Labour Militarist
By The Duke of Bedford

Dear Aldred,

In my letter in the September issue of *The Word*, I mentioned the difficulty I had in understanding how Labour M.P.'s, at one time sensible on the war issue, could change their outlook in the astonishing manner of which some have proved themselves to be capable.

A letter by the Labour M.P., Mr. William Leach, in the issue of *Forward* of September 6th, seems in some measure to answer my difficulty for me.

Mr. Leach tells us that he was an inveterate opponent of the last war, but he is an ardent supporter of the present one by reason of the antipathy which he feels to Hitler and Hitler's policy.

Mr. Leach is doubtless quite sincere, but it is evident from what he writes that his anti-war feeling of earlier days rested, not on and fundamental principles, but on prejudices and emotion.

People of my school of thought have a conviction that war is indefensible on Christian grounds because Christ, by precept and example, forbade the use of destructive violence against people who believe that they are doing right, even in cases where they are mistaken. They feel equally strongly that war is indefensible on grounds of justice and common sense, because, in the attempt to strike at some objectionable individual or group of individuals, correct their faults and restrain their wrong-doing, it kills and ruins millions of more or less innocent people, while the real offenders usually escape. On these two grounds we are finished with war under all circumstances, and no matter how much we may object to a Dictator's character and policy, we are convinced that war cannot possibly be a right or sensible method of dealing with him. Mr. Leach, however has no such settled convictions about war but, setting on one side both religious considerations and all consideration of war's fearfully clumsy and unjust method of operation, he supports or condemns it according to the feelings he entertains for the statesman at the head of the country with which we are engaged in hostilities.

Mr. Leach's attitude towards the persecution of minorities by the State also appears to be based on emotional feeling and personal preferences and not on fundamental issues. He is moved to the keenest indignation against Hitler because of what he has done to Jews, Socialists and Communists, presumably because he has a soft place in his heart for Jews, Socialists and Communists; but, as is evident from other passages in his letter, he is more than ready to condone and forgive the cruelties inflicted by the Soviet Government upon their political enemies, presumably because these enemies have consisted, among others, of landowners and aristocrats for whom Mr. Leach has little use.

People whose attitude towards State tyranny and persecution is based on fundamental principles but is at the same time understanding, condemns equally the harsh and unjust persecution of all large classes of people, realising that all large classes are composed of the good, the bad, and the indifferent, or in other words of the innocent, the guilty and the partly guilty and that in this respect, there is probably little to choose between Communists and Jews in Germany and aristocrats and landowners in Russia. Bearing in mind, however, the widespread weakness which induces numbers of people of all nationalities to persecute indiscriminately, once their passions and resentments have been aroused, while they may be deeply moved by the horrors and injustices of State tyranny, they avoid hysterical anger and emotionalism and seek to remedy the evil by methods which, unlike war, are not calculated to accentuate them. One may, indeed, say that the man who fiercely condemns the persecution of one large section of a nation while he thinks nothing of the persecution of another large section of another nation,

himself suffers in no small degree from that harsh and one-sided outlook which is a characteristic of the tyrant whom he opposes.

Yours sincerely,

BEDFORD.

Newton Stewart, Sept. 5.

[The case against Soviet Russia, that is, to-day, Stalin, is not the persecution of former landowners, but the bogus trials, terrorism, and persecution AFTER THE REVOLUTION of fellow Socialists, Communists, and Anarchists. All genuine pioneers and fighters in the social struggle. Leach was condemned in detail for his attitude towards the Arabs in Iraq in our work "At Grips With War." His 1924 speeches are disgraceful in one who was once a Socialist and a conscientious objector.—Ed.]

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD

We have received a further heavy correspondence from all over the country, urging the Duke of Bedford to become the leader of a United Pacifist and Socialist Movement. Selections will be published next month. The tone and style of the letters vary considerable but their import is the same, except here and there for some note of academic criticism. References to the duke's attitude from other journals will be reproduced.

The editor has received much correspondence on other matters. Some of this will appear in November also.

Send us your opinion. Make the *Word* known. Order November issue now.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND PEACE SOCIETY.

Glasgow Region.

Chairman: Rev. G. Gordon Cameron.

Hon. Secretary: Miss Betty Meikle, 82 Coplaw Street, S.2.

Monthly Services in Y.W.C.A., 80 Bath Street
On First Saturday of each month at 3 p.m.
October 4, 1941—June 6, 1942.

GLASGOW AND DISTRICT GROUPS.
Meetings or Secretaries.

Bearsden and Milngavie—Meets fortnightly at North Manse, Bearsden.

Cathcart—Secretaries: Miss Agnes Anderson, 5 Greenock Avenue; Mr. A. E. Meikle, 15 Largie Road, S.3.

Carntyne—Meets at 14 Gartcraig Road. Sec., Miss Olive Nicholson, 162 Gartcraig Road, E.1.

Central—Sec., Mr. James Montgomery, 37 Dorset Street, C.3.

Giffnock—Sec., Mr. Wm. Sinclair, Jr., 8 Elliot Drive, Kings Park—Mrs. Todd, 43 Ashcroft Drive, S.4.
North—Cowliars Parish Church, every first Tuesday, 8 p.m. Sec., Miss Chrissie Newton, 78 Endrick Street, N.

Paisley—Mr. George McFarlane, 52 Duchray Drive, Ralston.

Rockvilla—Rev. A. S. Mair, 27 Lacrosse Terrace, W.2.

West—Rev. W. J. Smith, 15 University Gardens, W.2
North West—Sec., Miss Marion White, 58 Gardner Street, W.1.

OTHER SCOTTISH GROUPS

In conjunction with the Fellowship of Reconciliation.
ABERDEEN—Mr. J. Macleod Scott, 16 Cairnroy Terrace.

AYR—Mr. Alexander Handyside, 28 Belmont Avenue.
BARRHEAD—Rev. A. May, Congregational Manse, Paisley Road.

DUMFRIES—Miss M. A. Hogg, Balvaig, St. Cuthbert's Avenue, Maxwelltown.

DUNDEE—Dr. C. A. Coulson, 6 Somerville Place.

DUMBARTON—Rev. A. G. Jackson, Rockview Manse, Bonhill Road.

DUNFERMLINE—Rev. A. J. Armour, 139 Grieve Street.

EDINBURGH—Mr. Dennis Duncan, 148 Ferry Road, Edinburgh, 6.

EAST KILBRIDE—Rev. D. H. McMahon, 24 Harrington Road.

GALASHIELS—Mr. Angus F. Stewart, Langlands, Melrose Road.

GREENOCK—Mrs. MacKay, Duntrune, Gryffe Road, Kilmacoll.

METHIL—Meets Innerleven East Manse. Sec., Miss Christine Foster, 46 Omar Crescent, Buckhaven, Fife.

PERTH—Rev. H. Erskine Fraser, Bridgend Manse.

ST. ANDREWS—Mrs. Williams, The Roundel, 1 South Street.

STIRLING—Miss Miriam Jocelin, Inglewood, Alloa.

U.S.M. Meetings

106, GEORGE ST., GLASGOW, C.1

MONDAY: - - Group Meeting

THURSDAY: - - Study Circle

SUNDAY: - - Lecture

Meetings Commence at 7-30 p.m.

THE EDITOR'S TRIALS IN THE DOCK

II.—GLASGOW SEDITION TRIAL, 1921

(Continued from page 19)

[Last month we published W. Gallacher's and H. McShane's reports of our Glasgow 1921 trial. We intended to conclude the record in this issue. This is impossible.—Ed.]

III. P. J. DOLLAN REPORTS.

The *Daily Herald* faithfully followed and reported every stage in the proceedings against us. In this chapter we wish only to record the reports sent in by P. J. Dollan, who was, at that time, Glasgow correspondent to the *Daily Herald*. Dollan displayed sympathy and solidarity. He may have expected to be Labour Lord Provost some day but he did not face the fact that he would be a war-time Imperialist Lord Provost, and he did not feel at enmity with the extreme sections of the Socialist movement. He was even indignant at our suggestions that Imperialism was the logic of parliamentarism.

We precede the Dollan reports with the date of the issue of the *Daily Herald* in which each report appeared:

Friday, March 4, 1921.

SEDITION TRIAL.

Sequel to Article in the "Red Commune."

From Our Own Correspondent.

Glasgow, Thursday.—A sedition case was opened here to-day, when three persons, one a woman, were remitted to the sheriff for trial in connection with an alleged seditious article published in "The Red Commune" in January.

The accused are Andrew Fleming, a printer; Douglas McLeish and Jane Hamilton Patrick, alleged to be the joint authors of the offending article.

The article, the police allege, was calculated "to excite popular dissatisfaction, commotion and violence to popular authority."

Tuesday, March 8, 1921.

GUY ALDRED IN COURT.

Sequel to Article in the "Red Commune."

From Our Own Correspondent.

Glasgow, Monday.—A further stage in the charge against Guy Aldred, Andrew Fleming, Douglas Melluish, and Janet Hamilton, of Partick, was reached to-day, when they appeared for a declaration before the Sheriff and were committed for further inquiry. Bail was refused, and all four were returned to the prison.

The charge has arisen in connection with an article in the "Red Commune" containing an appeal to the Glasgow members to organise its anti-Parliamentary activities so as to give concrete expression to its principles, which article, it is alleged, was calculated to promote disaffection and resistance to lawful authority.

The court was crowded, many being refused entrance.

Aldred, in response to the charge, stated he had nothing to say. He will conduct his own defence.

Councillor Rosslyn Mitchell appeared for the other three persons.

Earlier in the day Aldred was brought before the police court and was formally remitted to the Sheriff.

Monday, March 21, 1921.

ALDRED REFUSED BAIL.

Three Other Communists Granted Bail.

From Our Own Correspondent.

Glasgow, Sunday.—Three of the prisoners charged in connection with an alleged seditious article in the "Red Commune" were liberated on bail yesterday. The bail for Andrew Fleming, the printer, was £200; and for Jane Patrick and Douglas McLeish, £150 each.

The Lord Justice Clerk, however, refused to allow bail for Guy Aldred, who is under arrest on the same charge.

Aldred has been in prison fully two weeks, and it is stated that his trial will not come on for another six weeks yet. Aldred is detained in Duke-street Prison.

Wednesday, May 11, 1921.

HUSBAND PENALISED.

Sequel to Raid on Offices of "The Spur."

From Our Own Correspondent.

Glasgow, Tuesday.—In a recent raid on "The Spur," the paper edited by Guy Aldred, the name of a woman was found on the list of subscribers.

The information has evidently been conveyed to the employers of her husband, who has been dismissed in consequence.

The matter is receiving attention, but it is doubtful if the man will be reinstated.

Thursday, June 2, 1921.

GUY ALDRED'S TRIAL.

To be Held at Glasgow on June 10.

From Our Own Correspondent.

Glasgow, Wednesday.—The trial of Guy Aldred and three others on a charge of publishing an alleged seditious article in "The Red Commune"—which was originally intended to be held at Edinburgh—has been fixed for the High Court, Glasgow, on June 17. A pleading diet will be held on June 10.

Bail has been refused for Aldred, who has been in prison for almost three months.

Wednesday, June 22, 1921.

GUY ALDRED'S SENTENCE.

Eloquent Appeal for Free Speech.

From Our Own Correspondent.

Glasgow, Tuesday.—Guy Aldred, Douglas McLeish, Jane Hamilton Patrick, and Andrew Fleming were to-day found guilty of acting in concert to print and publish the "Red Commune," the official organ of the Glasgow Communist Group and affiliated bodies, containing alleged seditious articles.

Aldred was sentenced to one year's imprisonment, Miss Patrick and McLeish to three months each, and Andrew Fleming, the printer of the paper, to three months, plus a fine of £50, or a further three months.

Persecution!

In continuation of his defence, Aldred spoke for a further hour this forenoon and in an eloquent plea for free speech said Communism might be wrong, but a free Press was always right. He reminded the jury that Liberals had threatened to destroy the House of Lords and were not persecuted. If that was proper advocacy it was equally proper to urge the destruction of the Commons as an agency of Government.

Very telling was his reminder of the persecution of Catholics because of their religious beliefs. As it so happens, the judge, Lord Sherrington, is a Catholic.

Aldred also referred to the speeches of Carson and Lord Birkenhead, who, he said, prevented a peaceful solution of the Irish problem, and were responsible for Irish murders. Now these men were Judges!

Aldred also pointed out that he had been 100 days imprisoned, awaiting trial, which was longer than the sentences imposed on some convicted of sedition in other courts. He was to some extent their main writer, and on that account he pleaded for leniency for his comrades.

The jury included eight women, one of whom was the forewoman.

We have omitted from the last report only details of sentences included in the reports published last month. To-day Dollan identifies himself with the class that rejoiced in our prosecution.

IV. CONCERNING GUY ALDRED.

By JOHN S. CLARKE.

[Reprinted from "The Worker," the organ of National Workers Committee, Glasgow, for October 8, 1921. Clarke was editor at that time. Subsequently Clarke returned to the Labour Party, became M.P. for Maryhill for a while, and then adapted himself to Capitalist journalism. We have attacked Clarke bitterly at times and have resented his developments. We hold that he has wasted or dissipated his ability and knowledge. Clark has answered our attacks by maintaining an attitude of undiminished friendship. Recently he presented us with a rare copy of Cartwright's "Legislative Rights of the Commonalty Vindicated," published in London in 1777, presented by the author to the Committee of Sussex, inscribed in the famous Radical's bold writing, and dated "3rd March, 1780." Also the exposure of the spy system, pursued in Glasgow, 1816-1820, with the original letter of Andrew Hardie, published in 1833. Clarke sent a letter of warm friendship with these gifts, accepting our attacks as facts, and commending our discipleship of Richard Carlile. In "The Worker" article reproduced in part below, Clarke recalls the appeals he wrote and published in "The Worker" for March 12 and March 26, 1921, and later appeals issued by the Anti-Parliamentary Group itself. The unnecessary details are omitted. Clarke cites them only to deny the suggestion that he was wanting in solidarity. We reproduce the rest of his signed editorial reviewing the trial and sentence. The title was used by Clarke in the original articles.—Ed.]

There is a feeling in some quarters that we have not been as sympathetic toward the Aldred-Patrick-McLeish case as we might have been. Because we did not make any comment when sentence was passed, we are suspected of being callously indifferent. . . .

But the lock-out began and E.P.A. commenced to operate. Our readers know the result. Some thing like one hundred Communists were arrested in different parts of the country and sent to jail. Aldred and his friends were tried at the time that scores of others were being similarly tried. For us to have commented on each case would have necessitated turning the *Worker* into a kind of Prison Bulletin or Police Budget. . . .

With this explanation (an Editor has to be continually apologising for his existence) let us make some, if belated observations on the case against Aldred. Whatever savagery a vindictive hatred prompted the ruling class bullies to inflict upon our E.P.A. victims, it apparently inspired them to be outrageously severe on Aldred. They kept him in confinement for four months prior to his trial, refused him liberty on bail. *They gave him a longer sentence than anyone else.* Aldred not only gets no remission of sentence but will not enjoy the reduction of the four months which he suffered previous to his trial. For the trivial offences he was found guilty of this punishment is positively monstrous. Not justice, but blind, bitter hatred sent him to endure the horrors of a Christian prison. Such martyrdom it has been his unfortunate lot to bear on several occasions in the past.

From our point of view—from your point of view—his political opinions may be hopelessly wrong. This is a point which must carry no weight whatever in our consideration of his case and our judgment of his splenetic tormentors. Such opinions are not only held by many, but have been held in the past by the loftiest spirits of the race. We may not agree with them, but we have got to agree that their right of expression is as legitimate as our own. Only bigots think otherwise, and a bigot is always a tyrant. As for his "crime," it is one that every self-respecting man has committed and intends to commit time and time again—an attempt to stir up the people until they realise that the common heritage of Nature and Society is deliberately and systematically thieved from them by a small section of gilt-edged scoundrels and rascals who hire a swarm of flunkeys and brutal bullies to keep the people from realising their own sordid subjection. This is the long and the short of the capitalist-landlord system and the comfortable hogs who thrive upon it. They are to-day as their predecessors were in the time of Christ, a gang of whitewashed sepulchres mouthing their stinking hypocrisy while their carnivorous fangs are dripping with the blood of women and little children. His alleged crime was that he advocated "the preaching of sedition." We say "alleged" because we are as certain as we are that light follows day that his persecutors only made that excuse to get him.

Those who saw the original paragraph which constituted the chief count in the indictment will recollect that the word "sedition" was printed in quotation marks—"sedition." Such marks are employed by all literary men and women in cases like this one as determinatives. They are intended to point out to the reader that the word they embellish is only used in a derisive sense. Every cultured person in the court knew this little point as well as Aldred, but when the wolf has the lamb at its mercy ignorance becomes a virtue and legal technicality as sacred as the Sermon on the Mount.

When one remembers the speeches and actual deeds of Carson and Smith and the subsequent immunity these creatures enjoyed, it makes one vomit to think that the people who sent Aldred away for sixteen months, for a triviality, profess to have assimilated the teaching of the man who spoke of his own ruling class as those "who strain at gnats and swallow camels."

Aldred committed only one crime—he tried to awaken the working class. That is a villainy beyond forgiveness in the eyes of the lechers and lickspittles who manipulate the machinery of coercion on behalf of the filthiest ruling class that has ever plundered a quiescent proletariat.

We are not in favour of petitioning even Labour M.P.'s to move in a matter of this kind, for if they were really one hundredth part of

what they profess to be—the representatives of the working class—they would have fought a case of this kind long ago, even though the principal victim is uncompromisingly anti-parliamentarian. . . .

A man who bravely spoke for the dispossessed and browbeaten, is eating his heart out in a prison cell and his friends are powerless to help him because they lack the means. Gallacher once assured me that instead of "getting used to it," to adopt the familiar expression, prison life becomes more horrible each time one returns to it. Aldred has already suffered over *three years* and has been in prison now for seven months on a ridiculous charge. What kind of a hell, physically and mentally, must it be to an active minded, cultured man? Try to conjure it for yourself. Try to be sentient for any sake, to feel what others feel, and *do* something to save further suffering on his part. Don't shake your heads and piously commiserate, and don't take pity on Aldred the Martyr. Aldred can dispense with pity, he can keep *his* back up, and pity is for those who can't. . . .

As a penalty for active service in the class war we might excusably ignore the loss of a warrior. As the phrase goes, "he only got what he dared for." But Aldred's case is different. He got more than he dared for. In his case it is a fact of utmost importance to remember that the punishment does not fit the offence. As long as men like Carson are loaded with honours instead of being shot as traitors to the realm, the persecution of Aldred is transparently an act of revenge on the part of the animated carrion who control the capitalist system. . . .

Forget everything but the fact that your enemy has got a comrade down; a comrade who has fought valiantly for you for many years; one whose hands bear not the smutch of corruption; one who suffers because—

"The people is a beast of muddy brain
That knows not its own strength."

(To be continued)

OUR PRISON SYSTEM

An Essay intended to be of interest to
Socialists and "Conchies"

Last month we published an essay written in August 1918, at Deepcut, whilst in detention awaiting our fourth Court Martial for resisting military service. The following essay was planned at the same time but was not written actually until we were released, for the first time, under the "Cat and Mouse" Act. Just after writing it we proceeded to Wandsworth Common to speak, where we were re-arrested and returned to Wandsworth for more hunger striking and prison discipline resistance. The story of the Wandsworth Prison C.O. revolt is told in "The Word" for April 1940 and February 1941.

Study of the courageous work of Richard Carlile caused us to be interested in constitutional law and the prison system before we experienced prison hospitality. From that time on, we studied, placed, and debunked Blackstone, whose ridiculous and unworthy ghost stands too often besides judges of the King's Bench, dictating over their shoulders, against the liberty of the citizen, and conferring powers on the executive intolerable to the believer in the rights of man. We studied the prison system, in England and Scotland, in person, at first hand, always as the victim, and with no desire to become the jailer. The nature of our study was revealed in our 1916 essay on "The Military Cell," published in "The Word" for May 1940.

The present essay was published in "The Spur" (Vol. V, No. 11, page 125) for April 1919. We have added (1941) the last two paragraphs.—Ed.]

We are a goodly but apathetic folk. Prison revelations disturb and surprise us. Most distinctly, we are not our brother's keeper. Of course, we will discuss his immoralities quite gladly. Scandal is our recreation. It spices our piety. But to concern ourselves with his sufferings, to protest against his being outraged—that is quite another question. The problem is one for which we have no taste, since the consequences may prove unpleasant. Smugly do we atone for our neglect by questioning, if not actually denying, the reality of another's sufferings. We are sceptical from indifference not

from anxiety. We suspend our sense of duty not our judgment. It satisfies our humour, because it suits our interests, to believe that prison life is being reduced, surely if slowly, to a humane system of detention. There is an optimism abroad, which is ever ready to defend authorised iniquity. Most cheerfully does this spirit of glowing progress persuade us that huge improvements were witnessed in our prison system from the time of Godwin to that of Dickens, and between the age of Dickens and the present time. If this was true, one should shudder to think what it must have been like when Godwin wrote his *Caleb Williams*. That work must have been a very poor indictment indeed.

It happens, however, that optimistic sentimentalism is not only wrong, but hypocritically so. Instead of our prison system improving, it is rapidly becoming worse. To-day, the Prison Commissioners place a premium on despotism—that Englishmen would not have tolerated a century back. Yet at that time political corruption was as rife as it is now. Perhaps it was more rife, for its agents were more notorious. I am taking advantage of the Wandsworth Inquiry, therefore, to call attention to this curious evolution of our prison system, especially as regards political offences, because I am convinced that direct action and public opinion will destroy this despotism, as it can destroy every other despotism. The evil secrecy of the Prison Commissioners, the impudence of prison governors, warders, and wardresses, and their craven attendants, has to go. The State will never destroy these vices. The people can.

Under a system where despotism did not pry into the communication of every prisoner, and punish with barbarities the slave who "splits," such hideous torture as forcible feeding could not continue a day.

It is always the poor who suffer. Despotism ever attacks the friendless. At Newcastle, during the suffragist agitation some seven or eight years ago, rather than forcibly feed Lady Constance Lytton, the authorities discharged her on medical evidence, stating that she suffered from a weak heart. To her lasting credit, let it be recalled how Lady Constance exposed this hypocrisy. Disguising herself as Jane Wharton, a factory girl, she again went to gaol—and was fed forcibly. Only when, after seven days, her identity was discovered did the Medical Officer unearth her weak heart.

In all, twenty-nine women were submitted to this degrading treatment. Then the authorities succumbed somewhat to the public scandal. Under Churchill, a new set of rules were adopted for prisoners of the second division, which removed the criminal marks and practically admitted the right of the Suffragists to be treated as political prisoners.

Much has been made of the fact that C.O.'s, after suffering over twelve months' imprisonment with hard labour, are permitted, always provided they servilely subscribe to the prison regulations, to enjoy certain very limited privileges under the Churchill regulation, rule 243A. These privileges include a limited period of association exercise and a fortnightly censored letter. I want now to compare this restricted and censored "right" of correspondence with the right of correspondence enjoyed by prisoners a century ago. The following letter was addressed by Lord Sidmouth, who suspended the *Habeas Corpus Act*, to Mr. Cunningham, the Governor of Gloucester Gaol, and issued as a circular to every county gaol in the kingdom by order of the Home Secretary:—

Whitehall, 9th Nov., 1814.

Sir,

"I address this letter to you in consequence of certain complaints that have been made relative to the government of Gloucester Gaol, and the report of the Visiting Magistrates thereon. It appears that there has been a practice of opening letters, either addressed to or written by prisoners of the classes of felons and fines, under a notion that it was your duty to do so. I feel myself, therefore, called upon to repeat the opinion which I expressed in a letter addressed to the Chairman of the Quarter Sessions of the county of Gloucester, on the 12th July last, that the law will not warrant such a practice.

"Letters should be opened in such cases *only* in which there is reasonable ground to suspect that a communication is intended for purposes of confederation and crime, or which may produce disorder in the gaol, or lead to escapes, or other mischievous consequences. It must be left to your individual discretion to decide upon individual cases in which fair suspicion may warrant you in opening such letters, to prevent apprehended mischief; but if it be done as a general practice, or without probable cause or suspicion, it will be highly reprehensible. I think it also necessary to repeat, though not called for in the same degree by every practice proved to have existed in the gaol under your care, that the legal advisors or friends of prisoners should be permitted at reasonable times, to have access to them, for the purpose of preparing for their defence or trial, or for the protection of their rights and interests. But as application of this sort may be made a practice for improper or unreasonable communications, it must remain for you to exercise a fair and honest discretion in deciding whether the application for access or communication be for the real purpose stated, and act accordingly.

"I am, Sir,

(Signed) "SIDMOUTH."

"P.S.—As the High Sheriff and the Visiting Magistrates are annually appointed, I have to request that you will communicate to them from time to time, as occasion may require, the contents of the above letter."

By order of Sir John Acland, Chairman of the Quarter Sessions for the County of Somerset, this letter was entered in the Magistrates' Journal at the Gaol of Ilchester. More than a century has elapsed since this was done. Our prison system has been "reformed" and our parliamentary franchise has become democratic! With the result that a practice, denounced by a reactionary Home Secretary, in an official communication, as illegal and highly reprehensible in 1814, has become legal and official in 1919, thanks to our democratic parliamentarism and interest in prison reform! The consequence is that, to-day, prisoner and their friends are warned:

"All letters are read by the Prison Authorities."

This despotic practice renders the prisoner absolutely helpless. Yet it has been developed by our parliamentary democracy. Side by side with the extension of suffrage has grown and developed this increasing invasion of the right of prisoners. Bureaucracy has increased in impudence with every broadening of the franchise. And when some fact or other leaks through, we control our government so well, that we are shocked out of our wits. A Prison Inquiry is ordered and we fall asleep again. So much for prison-reform Socialism and the Capitalist careerist parliamentary ballot-box.

ADDED, SEPTEMBER, 1941.

There is no protection to the common people in the fact that a man has suffered imprisonment and is elected to parliament afterwards. M.P.'s have been sent to prison and have been horrified at the conditions. But then it was too late to reform the conditions for they were no longer M.P.'s and their voices no longer carried weight in respectable and official circles. Political prisoners have become M.P.'s after their release and have forgotten that the little grey home in the west remained intact, that prison conditions continued in the same bad old way, and that human beings were suffering still what they once endured.

It is time that mankind gave up playing at prison reform and the pettifogging child's game of punishment and authority, and established a sane and decent society. We think so much in the terms of jailing that even those who want Communism and Revolution, with rare exceptions, have no idea of dispensing with the medieval and counter-revolutionary institution of barren class society, termed the prison system.

CONSCIENCE (1916) CASES

The *Word* has devoted considerable space to the question of conscientious objection. To-day many of the 1916 cases and prison experiences will be recalled with interest. April, May, July and August 1940 numbers are devoted to this question of exempting conscience in 1916. Comrades should order the four copies, post free, for 1s. 0d.

LABOUR, WAR AND THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

The Labour Party rejected Lansbury's plea against war, and decided on a policy of war, renewing its latest National Government alliance, at the Brighton Conference of October 1 and 2, 1935. Lord Ponsonby adopted the same attitude as Lansbury and uttered some wise words about a sham fight, as regards matters of principle, not as regards suffering, being staged between the great Imperialistic Powers. He added:

"I am convinced that my duty lies in pinning my faith and giving my allegiance—not to a sham fight of international war—but to a real fight against the enemy here in our midst.

"That is our job.

"This sham fight is preventing us from building up the society that we want.

"We are losing sight of the grim and dreadful war against exploitation, greed, capitalism and all the badly-constructed injustice of society which allows one man to leave £7,000,000 and another not to leave enough money to bury him.

"That is the war that I am going to be faithful to."

This excerpt is culled from the report published in the *Daily Herald*, for Wednesday, October 2, 1935.

According to our contemporary, Stafford Cripps denounced the then Labour Party Policy of League and Sanctions as a policy supporting the National Government. To-day, Cripps is Britain's Ambassador at Moscow, appointed by the National Government, in evidence of the truth of his own 1935 contention. H. B. Lees Smith denounced his arguments then as "trivial and cantankerous" and described Ponsonby's contribution as "elevating but negative." Ponsonby's argument was correct and time has shown that Stafford Cripps was neither trivial nor cantankerous in his reasoning.

William Mellor attacked collective security and made a speech the direct reverse of those he has made since the outbreak of war. He said:

"The same appeals that were made to the working-class in 1914 were being repeated now. . . .

...The League of Nations was retaining power politics in which the Imperialisms of France and Britain dominated every decision.

"The League was based on the robbers' treaty of Versailles, out of which had come Fascist Italy and Germany."

Charles Dukes, speaking for the National Union of Municipal and General Workers, replied to Cripps and Mellor:

"We are accused of co-operating with Imperialistic Governments," he said.

"Cripps and Mellor know that to be a lie, and they have no right to make that accusation.

"Our Socialism is as good as theirs, but as responsible men and women we have to say not what we hope may happen in the distant future, but what we are going to do to-morrow. . . ."

"I envy Dr. Salter his optimism, but I do not believe that singing psalms to lions will work in this year of our Lord."

Cripps and Mellor were right about co-operating with Imperialistic Governments. Dukes was right when he said that his Socialism was as good as their's. It was as good—and as bad. For it was simply parliamentarism, power politics, and not Socialism at all.

Rhys Davies recalled that he had been a C.O. in 1916, but, after much mental agony, took his stand by the League against Cripps. Davies has made some telling speeches against war and militarism in the present House of Commons and must know that his Brighton speech was nonsense.

George Dallas said that he had returned recently from the Labour and Socialist International. The Socialist parties on the Continent of Europe were looking to the British Labour Party for a lead. Which meant that George Dallas had engaged in some joy-riding at the expense of the working class. One would like to know all about those mysterious Socialist parties. What a sorry joke that parliamentary-

Socialist-job-seeking business has proven!

Jack Williams, of the Miners' Federation, compared Stafford Cripps with Oswald Mosley, and declared that the statement about supporting the National Government was "shallow and dishonest."

John Wilmot, M.P., also denied the National Government argument. Thus:

"Let us be clear about this. There is no question of this party throwing in its lot with the 'National Government.'"

CONCHIES, SOCIALISTS AND PRISON CONDITIONS

All over Britain, conscientious objectors are being sentenced to twelve months imprisonment for refusing medical examination. This directs attention to the question of prison conditions, and to the further fact that several persons who complained of prison conditions in 1916 to 1919, became M.P.s in 1923, and did nothing to remedy the appalling conditions of which they complained. This fact is an outstanding disgrace to the parliamentarians.

The name of Hubert William Peet is to be found in *Who's Who*. To his credit he recalls his 28 months' hard labour as a conscientious objector. What he suffered during that period he tells in the following letter:

"The attempted imposition of silence is unmoral, even if not immoral; the isolation drives the man into himself, and tempts him at every turn to fulfil the human instinct of communication with his fellows, a course possible by the exercise of some petty deceit or the breaking of a rule. The prison regime provides every temptation to atrophy, and to let oneself vegetate. Several times I felt acutely the danger that my pacifism might become passionism, and that if not watchful I might let my life develop into meals and mail-bags. . . ."

In 112 Days' Hard Labour, Peet wrote:

"There is in prison no method of recording permanently thoughts that occur during reading or meditation, of noting for future reference passages that may be found helpful or striking, or of making notes for plans on return to ordinary life. . . . and personally the one single alteration which would go to make gaol life more tolerable than anything else would be the provision of pencil and paper, and the permission to retain the latter on release."

Hubert Peet wrote thus in 1917. It is now 1941. For 24 years this intolerable barbarism has continued, under Labour and Tory Governments. Compare the conditions with those enjoyed in Sidmouth's days by Richard Carlile!

Stephen Hobhouse wrote in 1917:

"Sometimes when I feel tired and ill, I long for some little homely comfort, such as a glass of hot water or some tea and dry toast. I felt cruelly the restrictions of what seemed the most elementary needs. I did not think that my body with its weak points would stand it long. The struggle is often intense. Prison life has its own special temptations—to selfish introspection and the like. . . . I think the worst pitch of depression was one foggy and dark Sunday, when it was impossible to see either to sew or read in one's cell, and on remonstrating in the evening with one of the warders for not giving us the gas light, he answered, 'You are not worth it—it is not a work day.' The answer sank in."

In another letter, Stephen Hobhouse wrote:

"I told the Governor that it was impossible to keep the silence rule, in fact I came to the conclusion it was morally wrong to keep it, though it is not good for one to have to regulate one's talking according to one's distance from the warder and his character. There is no doubt that the prison system encourages artfulness and deceit. Deadening of intellect is one of the great dangers for educated prisoners, while others, owing to harrying, spying, etc., lose self-respect and all confidence in their power to lead a strong moral life."

Clifford Allen wrote during his second period of imprisonment:

"One hundred and ninety-five days of stitching, each of twenty-three hours and fifty minutes' silence. I think the greatest torture of enforced and perpetual silence is the never-ceasing consciousness of thinking in which it results. You cannot stop thinking for an instant. And if you seem to, it is only to listen intently to the beating of your heart drumming in your ears. You cannot escape thinking about the most trivial matters of routine. I think of the very knots in the boards each time I scrub them, until I could scratch them out of the floor to rid myself of their arrogant insistence upon themselves. One inevitable result is a consequent

and hopeless inability to think of those very things that are your interest, and would stimulate and hearten you. . . . And then I seem to have no way of escape from dwelling upon the horror of the war, and just because I cannot be active, my imagination is the more vivid, until I am driven almost to the breaking point of despair by thinking of all the agony of the world. . . ."

We indicted Clifford Allen's record in *The Word* for May 1940. He was made a Baron in 1932, for supporting Ramsay Macdonald's Imperialist Coalition. To his credit, in Debreit, Allen recalled the fact that he was imprisoned three times as a conscientious objector. But Allen became a peer whilst these conditions continued behind the grim walls of our prisons. Allen is dead now. He died in honour. And a second generation of C.O.s is being condemned, under a semi-Labour Coalition Government, to these conditions complained of and indicted in 1917. The fact is unbelievable but *alas* it is true.

FREETHOUGHT BIOGRAPHY

Chapman Cohen, the veteran editor of *The Freethinker*, and President of the National Secular Society, in *The Freethinker* for July 27 last, gives a kindly notice to the new edition of our "life" of Richard Carlile, and makes the following interesting reflections on the subject of Freethought biography:—

"We like the following remarks of Sir Ronald Storr, as given in 'The Times Literary Supplement.' They are taken from a speech delivered in Edinburgh.

'Reading,' said Sir Ronald, 'must bear not only the blossom of delight, but the fruits of absorbed and assimilated experience. . . . The spirit of books is the spirit of freedom—universal through, yet independent of time, clime, religion and race; the first book written was the first nail in the coffin of tyrants all over the world.'

"That is sound philosophy, and it reminds one that ever since books have been published, both Church and State have done their utmost to regulate what books should be published and what should be said in them. The Roman Church has a colossal index of forbidden books, and the other Churches, while not issuing an official index, still have a lengthy list of forbidden books. Both State and Church look upon books as something that must be regulated in the interests of established opinion.

"We repeat that we have no official index of forbidden books, although their suppression in this country is not unknown to the law. But the great weapon in this country is the boycott, far more cowardly and contemptible than any form of published legal proscription. The majority of Christians will not read a book on Freethought, the majority of hard-crusted Tories will not read anything that threatens their power or privileges. Above all, there is the boycott—the most cowardly and the most contemptible of all weapons. So far as we are concerned, the meanest form of this is manifested in the sphere of religion. Shopkeepers are threatened if they display Freethought papers, booksellers if they display uncompromising attacks on religion. . . .

"Yet we have achieved, in spite of Church and State, a measure of freedom. But, how it has been fought for! Just over 100 years ago there were scores of men and women imprisoned for selling Paine's 'Age of Reason,' and a long list of books might be given that have brought their writers or sellers terms of imprisonment. The State does not like freedom of publication, whatever shape the State is, but the Churches hate it because it strikes at their very existence. Sir Ronald Storr is right—the spirit of books is the spirit of freedom. But they may also be used to crush freedom and, when too late, the writers find that they have been forging chains for themselves. . . .

"Among the very greatest Freethinkers of the nineteenth century stands the heroic figure of Richard Carlile. The years he spent in prison—on different sentences—indicate the heroism of the man, and his conduct affected every reform movement of his time. The working classes owe more to him than most people know. It is for these reasons that we welcome a new edition of 'Richard Carlile, Agitator,' by Guy A. Aldred (Strickland Press, Glasgow, 1s. 6d.). The sketch extends to 160 pages, with a number of plates and is, in these days of dear printing, marvellous value for money.

"It will probably not come in our time, but one day we hope that some wealthy person will see to it that a series of biographies of famous Freethinking men and women is published. As we have so often said, in this country we have a very effective method of burying our great heretics. We neglect them when living, and ignore them when dead. If possible, their names are never mentioned. If as prominent in their day as was Paine or Carlile, just a passing mention is made of them and their work which leaves the student quite ignorant of what they did, and with the impression that there is no need to bother about them.

(Continued on page 35)

OBEDIENCE TO CONSCIENCE

[The following important statement was issued by the Meetings for Sufferings of the SOCIETY OF FRIENDS, Friends House, Euston Road, London, N.W.1., in June. Copies may be obtained direct for 2d. We publish it as a statement of great value and supreme importance.—Ed.]

RECOGNITION OF CONSCIENCE.

It is fundamental to the faith of a Christian democracy that a citizen has obligations which may over-ride his duty to obey the laws of the land. The British Parliament has recognised this in several Statutes by providing exemption upon grounds of conscientious conviction. The most recent examples are the military service Acts.

The Prime Minister has declared "the rights which have been granted in this war and the last to conscientious objectors are well known, and are a definite part of British policy. Anything in the nature of persecution, victimisation or man-hunting is odious to the British people" (House of Commons, March 20th, 1941). The Minister of Labour and National Service has emphasised the same principle by repeatedly expressing disapproval of the action of local authorities and private employers who have victimised conscientious objectors because of their views.

PRESENT LIMITATION OF THIS RECOGNITION.

The Society of Friends is thankful for this recognition of conscience, but is the more disturbed that the extension of the principle of conscription to industrial purposes, fire watching, and civil defence should be accompanied by a drastic limitation of the recognition to be accorded to conscientious conviction. On behalf of the Government this limitation was stated by the Minister of Labour and National Service (House of Commons, April 1st, 1941) in the words "I cannot admit the principle of conscientious objection to civil work," and "To say that you can have a conscientious objection to State mechanism would resolve itself into turning the whole of the State into a state of anarchy."

In view of this new limitation the Society of Friends is impelled to state now what it believes to be the basis and consequent importance of obedience to conscience.

CONSCIENTIOUS CONVICTIONS THROUGHOUT HISTORY.

Men and women in every generation have felt constrained to live in direct relation to loyalties beyond those accepted by their contemporaries. One of the earliest statements of this to which our Christian tradition turns is found in the reported reply of the three Israelites to Nebuchadnezzar:

"If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burnings of the fiery furnace, and he will deliver us. . . . But if not, be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou has set up."

This story recounts a direct refusal on the part of loyal servants of the State to obey its demands when they conflicted with loyalty to God. The particular witness of each age has varied in the differing circumstances, but it gives constant proof of the compelling character of the obedience demanded. Throughout history this faithfulness to conscience, though condemned at the time, has come to be recognised as of lasting worth. Readiness to accept suffering for convictions has given a redemptive character to life and revealed human effort in "a costly but noble state of tension" through which the quality of life was raised.

Our own Society was born in the experience of men and women who met publicly for worship knowing that the cost would be disturbance by the magistrates and soldiers, loss of goods and chattels, imprisonment or even death. They bore all this faithfully, conscious that they were being led into truth. In the furnace of persecution through which they passed they too desired only that they might

serve their God as they understood His will. Friends have always found in their first-hand experience of God within the soul what they have called the Light or the Light of Christ. This Light illuminates the conscience and gives power to do what is perceived to be the will of God.

FOUNDATIONS AND GROWTH.

The Society of Friends has always associated conscientious conviction with the revelation of God within the heart. In using such language we would not suggest that obedience to conscience is compliance with the vetoes or injunctions of a mysterious inner oracle. It is the acknowledgment by a man's whole self of a loyalty—to a principle, a cause or a person—to which he feels committed and which he may not betray. Conscience is a "sense of oughtness," capable of development as its promptings are obeyed. Training, heredity and example, thought, reason and religious experience—all help to determine its quality. At its best it becomes an impelling power, not so much prompting a certain course of action as making it impossible to do anything else. In the words of Martin Luther: "Here stand I—I can no other."

It is our experience that faithfulness to conscience illuminated by the Light of God in the heart produces a life which issues in service to the community. Sometimes this service is of obvious and positive kinds, sometimes it may be the apparently negative service of refusing compliance with laws or regulations which are felt to hinder the higher loyalty. The test of sincerity is the kind of life lived, though the full meaning and significance of it may not be immediately apparent. John Woolman felt "a stop in his mind" when instructed by his employer to write a Bill of Sale for a negro slave, but this was a prelude to a lifetime's devotion to the cause of the slave.

CREATIVE CHARACTER OF CONSCIENCE.

We recognise that there is increasing need for the regulation by the State of economic relationships and social services. Moreover, that the State cannot on the score of freedom condone laziness. We can understand that to those pre-occupied with active forms of social and national service the claims of conscience may seem sometimes an excuse for evasion or inaction. Conscientious objection, however, arises from the claims of the State to prescribe for a man what his service shall be, and when these demands are felt by some citizens to be contrary to the will of God they will be bound to say "No." The idea that this endangers the State overlooks the fact that the democratic State can function only on a basis of tolerance, and that it runs far greater risks in over-riding the conviction of minorities than in accepting them. Many sincere people, first become aware of the claims of a great moral principle in terms of what they feel constrained not to do. The general assertion remains true that even in its negations conscientious concern is primarily creative. It develops a relationship to the community which makes for the righteous ordering of the State. This is in accordance with the experience of our Society in the past, and to-day we expect that our members will give positive as well as negative expression to their faith.

ITS VERDICT AND AUTHORITY.

We do not assert that he who claims to be following the lead of conscience is infallible. There are inevitably instances of honest self-deception, in which through lack of self-knowledge, motives are mistaken and some deep rooted inclination or disinclination, which has no moral basis, is thought to be the voice of conscience. We may too readily identify a latent fear of the dangers of war, or a mere dislike of discipline as a conscientious objection. A conscientious decision therefore should not be hastily reached, glibly formulated, or arrogantly proclaimed: it should be a first-hand judgment not an echo of a point of view caught from others. But a man who has done

his best to see clearly and judge honestly upon the moral issues confronting him is under obligation to act upon the conclusions he has reached, even though fuller enlightenment might show him to be in error, for to do otherwise will be to betray the right as he sees it. The verdict of his conscience is binding upon him, for the alternative is to surrender to external pressure, and abandon the right and duty of moral choice and personal responsibility.

CONSCIENCE ALWAYS ENTITLED TO RESPECT

If conscience is sometimes mistaken it is equally true that no human tribunal can be sure of judging whether it be genuine. The National Service (Armed Forces) Act in providing for the recognition of conscientious objection has enabled many men to make clear to an understanding Tribunal the way in which they feel free to serve the community. There will, however, always be many men who feel that any alternative to secure their compliance is as unacceptable to them as is the principal service required under the Act. Others again will feel compelled to refuse to change their occupation at the behest of a Minister for a purpose which they must conscientiously disavow. Their conviction should meet with respect even at the risk of some insincere claimants receiving treatment which they do not deserve.

Respect should be accorded also to many whom we know to be equally sincere but whose thoughts run more easily in political channels and phraseology. Our own belief is that conscientious conviction always arises from the Light of God in a man's heart, but those of whom we are now speaking would themselves make no such claim. They should not be misjudged by the assumption that moral convictions must always be given an avowedly religious basis. The proof of a man's moral enlightenment lies in whether his convictions lead sooner or later into a true and extending human brotherhood and understanding—an understanding which we believe can only reach its fullest depth as it is linked with a unity in God.

The noblest example of individual loyalty to a guidance within the soul is found in the life of Jesus Christ. In Him the Light of God shone at its brightest and his determination to follow its leading is seen as he set his face steadfastly towards Jerusalem to meet the fate which he knew awaited him there. His conduct might have been criticised as being both unpatriotic and unpractical, but his crucifixion remains a judgment upon conventional opinion as well as a revelation of the redemptive love of God. His loyalty to the guidance of God, and the spirit in which he met persecution, set free the most potent force for overcoming evil which the world has known. Thus he stands for all time the revealer of the Father and the inspiration of those who follow him.

EDITOR'S REPORT

We issued a special appeal for £1,971 11s. 3d. in November 1940. Last month this deficit stood at £1,780 14s. 4d. During the interval there had been regular monthly losses on the paper. If we can recover this sum we can carry on for some time, despite our monthly losses, without begging further. The circulation of the paper is rising. Lady Clare Annesley sells it in the streets at Coventry. Lady Stalbridge has sent £10 towards its peace work. A working man comes in on the first of each month and gives 10/-. A London doctor, who believes in healing and sanity, has sent £1 and promised to do so each month. On all sides comrades are urging us to keep the work going. The total return last month was the highest yet: £62 7s. 8d. Many workers have left 6d. and 1/- donations at George Street shop. The deficit now stands at £1,718 6s. 8d. Comrades, it is a year since we issued this appeal. Could we not raise this balance in a month and end this feature. Our circulation is rising steadily. Each comrade needs but to make one response **now!**

RICHARD CARLILE

Until such time as a fourth edition of my "life" of Richard Carlile is called for, this essay must stand as a further appendix to the third edition. It is written, therefore, in the first person singular instead of the customary editorial plural.

Many comrades have expressed appreciation at the recent publication of the third edition. The work would be improved by the additions indicated in this commentary. They were not incorporated in the third edition owing to a printer's mistake, and the difficulty of repairing it, when discovered, without unduly postponing publication.

I. CARLILE'S BIOGRAPHERS.

The 1941 preface makes reference to W. H. Wickwar's monumental work, *The Struggle For The Freedom of The Press*. This treats largely of Richard Carlile and his magnificent fight. It should find a place in every Freethinker's library, notwithstanding its shortcomings.

Wickwar compares the three biographies of Carlile: G. J. Holyoake's; Mrs. Carlile Campbell's, and my own. (See page 68 of Wickwar's work).

Wickwar states that Holyoake's biography is "based on a close study of Carlile's writings." Actually, Holyoake's biography is notoriously slight and reveals no such study. I dealt with Holyoake's falsehoods thoroughly in *THE SPUR* for February, 1916 (Vol. II., No. 9, pages 73-74), and the essay will be revised and reprinted. Holyoake can be accepted as an authority on the struggle of Carlile, subject to the most careful examination and analysis. His comment is helpful. His record of fact, interested, unreliable, and contradictory. That Wickwar was unaware of the real value to place on Holyoake's writings detracts from the worth of his own writing. It lessens considerably his critical authority. He also shows that he cannot read, for his statement as to period over which Holyoake knew Carlile is inaccurate and contradicts the book.

Wickwar states that Mrs. Carlile Campbell hardly remembered her father, but had some of his correspondence and knew some of his friends. This is correct.

Wickwar describes my biography as a "Communist compendium of miscellaneous information picturing Carlile as a demi-god among demons." The "Communist" adjective is introduced from bias. The "compendium" reference implies that I cannot write. The "demi-god" is meant to accuse me of false writing and unbalanced judgment.

These three charges are most unfortunate for the man who makes them. The adjective has no place in the record, for it is obvious that I am a complete libertarian, and, as regards Carlile, my bias is towards the principle of the absolute Freedom of the Press. Certain folk, claiming to be Communist, falsely in my opinion, object to a Free Press and favour dictatorship over opinion. It is not correct to say that the work is a "Communist compendium," for it does not mention nor discuss Communism. It is correct to say that the Wickwar's comment is an Anti-Communist inaccuracy, for it betrays spleen and exposes the writer's narrow approach. As for "compendium," it may be that I cannot write: but to state facts simply and directly is more useful than to write falsehoods eloquently. Many liars are eloquent. The "demi-god" touch is as unfortunate as the rest of Wickwar's comment. Sir G. M. Trevelyan, who was not a Communist, but was a great and worthy scholar, in his *British History in the Nineteenth Century*, expresses the same view of Carlile and his shopmen as is expressed by me in less powerful language. Trevelyan cannot be accused of Communism and cannot be indicted for producing a compendium. But he shares my offence of admiring Carlile. Perhaps Wickwar will try to write down Trevelyan's history, which increases in repute with the lapse of time. And perhaps if Wickwar should reissue his work, he will

apologise to his readers for spoiling a splendid work of research by a quibbling legal and ruling class bias. If Carlile was too great a personality for him to understand, he ought never to have attempted the task.

Wickwar insists that Carlile was no orator. This is true. The fact makes Carlile's speech from the dock a magnificent performance, for it breathed eloquence and possesses, even to-day, a living fire.

Wickwar objects to Carlile's conduct in the dock in 1819. He ought to know that Carlile's contentions were right and that the judge's conceptions of blasphemy and sedition were ridiculous. They have been repudiated from the bench since then in most learned verdicts that read like second-hand versions of Carlile's original reasoning. Carlile's aggressive conduct was the behaviour of the agitator. Wickwar is unable to appreciate its splendour because he has the mind of a pigny scholar and is capable only of wandering round in a maze of legal jargon unrelated even to jurisprudence, the mental cobweb of despotism. Carlile belongs to the despised underworld of agitation and agitators. The first Christians belonged to this world in the days of the ancient Roman Empire, when Christianity was despised and rejected. This underworld has been the real overworld of progress. Since the days of Caesar to those of Labour Lord Advocates and Labour Ministers of Home Security, the real underworld of thought has been the fashionable political and intellectual world of class authority: the mean, contemptible, underworld of lawyers and judges, the routine mediocrity of bench and bar. There have been great lawyers and great judges. But these have been rare and usually fell on bad times because of some kink of genius that routine could not suppress. But the run of the fraternity has been of the type of Lord Justice Abbot. He was one of the worst judges despotism employed for its evil purpose. It is but natural that Wickwar should evidence studied regard for his memory. The reader must turn to Chapter IV., in which Abbott's career is detailed.

Wickwar objects to my eulogy of Carlile; but he quotes Trevelyan—whose very name spells learning—and the very work to which reference is made in this essay.

Trevelyan says that the revival of Paine's influence was due to Richard Carlile, who "suffered and achieved more for the liberty of the Press than any other Englishman of the nineteenth century." This comes perilously near the pictures of Carlile that my biography outlines. The truth is, that I am in entire sympathy with my subject. Holyoake was never in real sympathy with him, and few modern Rationalists or Freethinkers are. Which explains why Wickwar prefers Holyoake to myself as a biographer.

I conclude this chapter on the subject of Carlile's importance and his biographers, by recalling a truth written by Robert Louis Stevenson in a moment of rare insight:—

"To write with authority about another man, we must have some fellow-feeling and some common ground of experience with our subject. We may praise or blame according as we find him related to us by best or worst in ourselves; but it is only in virtue of some relationship that we can be his judges, even to condemn. Feelings which we share and understand enter for us into the tissue of the man's character; those to which we are strangers in our own experience we are inclined to regard as blots, exceptions, inconsistencies, and excursions of the diabolic; we conceive them with repugnance, explain them with difficulty, and raise our hands to heaven in wonder when we find them in conjunction with talents that we respect or virtues that we admire."

In other words, all or any criticisms which we may pass upon the subject of a biographical sketch are as much indicative of our own temperament as of that of our subject; as much an index to the character and temperament of him who censures as to that of him who is censured, to the mental calibre of the praised as to that of the praising. Hence it will be seen that the more nearly the biographer's ideals and circumstances correspond with those of his subject's, the greater is the weight which one can attach to the

accuracy of his views, and their agreement with the feelings of his subject. The difficulty, then, of Radical thought, turned Whiggist, and Free-thought reduced to complacency, doing anything like justice to the memory of Carlile, Social Republican and journalist of the poor has but to be stated to be recognised.

On the other hand, my imprisonments, almost equal in time to Carlile's, but more vicious in character, and more extensive in place, enables me to share Carlile's outlook and manner of approach.

II. VICARY GIBBS.

Chapter IV. of Carlile's "life," headed "Legal Biography," records the story of Vicary Gibbs and ends with a reference to his "levity," by which he meant leniency, or hesitation to prosecute charges of sedition or blasphemy. The chapter should have continued and concluded as set out in the following paragraphs.

Perhaps Gibbs expressed his "levity" in its most expansive form in the case of Perry, proprietor of the *Morning Chronicle*, the leading Whig paper of the day. This paper published an editorial containing the following passage:—

"What a crowd of blessings rush upon one's mind that might be bestowed upon the country, in the event of a total change of system. Of all monarchs, indeed, since the Revolution, the successor of George the Third will have the finest opportunity of becoming nobly popular."

For these words alone, exactly as they stand, aggravated by no innuendo or additional passage, Perry was prosecuted on an *ex-officio* information by Sir Vicary Gibbs, who, as Henry, Lord Cockburn, a judge of the Court of Session, wrote later, "might have been Attorney-General to Henry VIII."

Gibbs maintained that these words implied that blessings were kept from the country by George the Third, and that this lowered his majesty in the esteem of his people! Gibbs overlooked the fact that no comment could lower George the Third in the esteem of the common people! In any case, the comment was directed against the political and social administration, for which the king was supposed to be responsible no longer, and not against the king's personal dignity. Even Ellenborough was in favour of the acquittal that took place. But the prosecution expresses the outlook—the hungry pendant self-seeking logic born of the metaphysics of self-interest—of the legal mind. It placed Gibbs, the aspiring hireling of constitutionalism based on exploitation, in his proper category, as the enemy of Richard Carlile; and it elevated Carlile, as his enemy, to his place of worth in history.

In addition to prosecuting Perry, Gibbs also prosecuted, among others, Cobbett, and John and Leigh Hunt. His reward came in due course, and he became one of his Majesty's Judges, in company with the following notorious ex-Whigs. Best, Copley, Scarlett.

What a mean scramble, law and politics present! During the 12 years, 1818-1830, there were 9 Attorney and Solicitor-Generals, all hating Carlile, for a living! Eldon reckoned that there were 18 during the 20 years ending 1824!

(To be concluded.)

By GUY A. ALDRED.

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THE BREAKDOWN OF THE STATE

By C. H. NORMAN

[The following valuable essay from the pen of our comrade, C. H. Norman, was published in *The Railway Review*, for July 4, 1941.—Ed.]

In 1895, Messrs. Heineman published a translation of a book by an Austrian writer, Max Nordau, entitled "Conventional Lies of our Civilisation," a careful and far-reaching analysis of the evils then afflicting European and English civilisation, as they struck a humane and learned mind.

The width of subject-matter covered by the book—which has been ignored by most English writers on social and political questions—can be judged by the chapter headings: "The Monarchical and Aristocratic Lie," "The Religious Lie," "The Political Lie," "The Economic Lie," "The Matrimonial Lie," "Lesser Lies," dealing with the Press and the methods of journalism under its growing capitalistic business organisation, and various subsidiary evils of modern society. The book winds up with a remarkable chapter on the possibility of harmonising the social, moral and economic conflicts in European and American civilisation before the disharmonies within society would disrupt that society completely. The warnings of this gifted writer were unheeded, and to-day one has the pain of witnessing the catastrophe clearly foreseen in his book.

Incidentally, the capacity of the writer can be judged by the fact that the chapter on "The Economic Lie" has not the limitations so obvious in Marx's analysis "Capital," as Nordau is not fettered by the ideology of Marxian-Hegelian philosophy.

CLASSES AND CLASS INTERESTS

Nordau did not make the error of assuming, because there were classes in society, all those classes had necessarily an economic motive governing their relationship to society. Marx assumed a class interest in the working class arising from labour power. Class interest does not arise from labour power: but only from the possession of economic privilege—derived from the profitable exploitation of labour power by a non-labouring class. Hence the middle and upper classes hold a privileged position, which creates a general economic interest in them as classes: whereas the working man has only his labour power, which does not create, psychologically or economically, a class interest in him.

So the working class, as a class, can always be beguiled, when occasion of political or economic crisis requires it, by the other classes into thinking their interests are those of the middle and upper classes: whereas, on the Marxian analysis, they should see their interests were opposed to those of the other classes—as, in fact, they obviously are.

It is because the working class does not move from class motive that the Socialist and Trade Union Movement has always found itself acting as a lackey of the Capitalist class, as was shown in full effect during the war of 1914-1918 throughout Europe, as was seen in the history of the Labour Governments of England, and has been conclusively demonstrated by the action of the working class and their leaders since the war began in 1939, during which period the working class has been content to accept the leadership of its two past outstanding enemies in Messrs. Neville Chamberlain and Winston Churchill, whose political careers were stamped, prior to the war and during the war, with a common reluctance to take any administrative action to advance the interests of the mass of English people, and whose war records have the common factor of having brought the people of the country under their leadership, to the verge—if not beyond it—of irretrievable disaster.

THE CITIZEN AND THE STATE

One interesting passage in the book referred to deals with the relationship between the citizen and the State as illustrated by the coercive regu-

lations of government, taxation and the demands of military conscription. The function of the State has been to organise society, to protect the citizen from tyrannical acts and dangers and to safeguard the citizen's life and property. It is rather a humorous fact to notice, at a time when the State seems overwhelming in its power, that all the sanctions for its existence are disappearing. So far from the State protecting the life and property of the citizen it has abdicated that function entirely. In circumstances of air warfare the State cannot protect the life and property of the citizen, as the condition of many cities in England and Europe conclusively proves. Both sides, by gradual and persistent attack, given time, could wipe out every city and village of any size in the respective countries. There is no moral question involved in that process: it is merely a matter of mathematical calculation.

DETESTABLE STATE OF AFFAIRS

Vast numbers of citizens to-day are paying half their earning to the State by way of taxation—direct and indirect—but none of them has the slightest guarantee that, on returning to their work in the morning, they will not find their place of employment destroyed—or, perhaps, will themselves have been blown to atoms with their families and property during the night.

It is hardly creditable to the citizens of Europe that they should so meekly accept such a detestable state of affairs. The very statement of the matter is enough to represent the horror the modern State has brought upon mankind.

The jargon of "We can take it!" has really no sense in the circumstances, for to-day everything has been taken away which the State professed to protect. The inviolability of the home has disappeared by the action of the State. The right of personal property no longer exists.

The right of personal security from imprisonment by administrative degree without accusation or form of trial has gone.

When it is alleged that the people are wholeheartedly in support of the war, one may wonder why the Government should think it necessary to intern ex-Cabinet Ministers, admirals, colonels, barristers and working men of all kinds, who are British subjects, without any form of trial, or any pretence that they could be convicted of any offence, even under the wide provisions of the Statutes of Edward the Third and Henry the Seventh, which stand unrepealed. It was not done in the last war. Such action by the officers of the State is evidence not of belief in their cause, but fear that public discussion and debate would destroy the morale of the people. The fact that the legislative and administrative machine in Britain and Germany is working on parallel lines is only another example of the irony of the situation.

PROTECTION FOR THE CITIZEN?

Max Nordau, in his references to conscription, points out how absurd the contradiction is between the institution of military conscription and the claim of the State to afford protection to the citizen. The soldier who is conscripted is denied any opportunity of protecting his own family from danger. Men who are fighting in the Balkans cannot protect their families from air attack in Berlin or London. Indeed, one of the curiosities of the present war is that the civilian is forced to support a vast Army and Navy which cannot protect either him or their own families at home. It is only a question of time, at the present ratio of destruction of ships, when there will be no commerce-carrying vessels on the seas at all. The State is carrying its destructive propensities so far that even they may become self-destructive in the exact sense. Should the over-sea submarine and air fleets of Russia, the United States and Japan engage actively in the war, in a matter of 18 months practically every merchant ship of the belligerent Powers would be at the bottom of the sea or laid up in harbour, leaving a few ships sailing under the protection of neutral flags to carry on the commerce of the world!

"KING, LORDS AND GENTLEMEN"

It is rather instructive that in 1938 in Stuttgart there was published a book carrying Max Nordau's analysis of the situation right up to

date. The book, too, was published in translation by Messrs. Heinemann in 1938 under the title "King, Lords and Gentlemen," and has been equally smothered by the critics, as apparently was at that time Nordau's splendid book. Though normally referable to British institutions, this German book had a general relationship to the European sickness unto death. Considering what is said by propagandists about freedom of discussion in Britain, it is certainly strange that two of the wisest political books ever published should have been written by an Austrian and a German in Vienna and Stuttgart, translated into English and completely ignored!

It is certainly the fact that

Herbert Spencer's warnings concerning the coming slavery by the State have proved true. The fact that the slavery is imposed by Liberalism and Socialism does not alter the practical effect.

When those excuses about the New World after the war are uttered by the tyrants of to-day, let us remember that, when this war is over, as was the case in 1919 onwards, the people will be so exhausted that the privileged class will re-assert their authority with ease, as those who put forward this soothing syrup about the new social order after the World War of 1914-18 knew.

At the moment, the only goal in this war which is certain is the establishment of economic and political slavery everywhere, or a complete breakdown of State organisation by its own contradictions being brought home to the mind of everyone by the tyranny of war-time demands, in which life, youth, property and home are committed to a common destruction by that State whose main excuse for its existence is the protection of those values which it is engaged daily in destroying.

FREETHOUGHT BIOGRAPHY

(Concluded from page 32)

"Take for example that miserable production by a late Minister of Education, 'A History of Europe,' by the Right Hon. H. A. L. Fisher, published a few years back. In his excellent 'British History in the Nineteenth Century,' G. M. Trevelyan said of Richard Carlile that he 'suffered and achieved more for the liberty of the Press than any other Englishman of the nineteenth century. He and his like bore the brunt of the early struggle. . . Thanks to these sturdy predecessors the decorous and well-to-do philosophers of the Victorian era were able without fear of the law to write whatever they thought about the relation of science and literature to dogmatic belief.'

"In another part of his work he dwells on the good fortune of the working class of their day having three such servants as Owen, Cobden and Place. But one may look through the whole of the 1,300 pages of Mr. Fisher's book for any reference to their work. Those whom a scientific history has consigned to the muck heap of humanity are there galore, but not the names of the heretical men and women who fought so well, suffered so greatly and achieved so much for humanity.

"It is a cowardly and contemptible policy, this burying of great men and women. Young students, and now aged teachers, are ignorant of how much these early reformers did for the world that they spend no time in finding out what these men and women did. And not only is the policy of punishing our great reformers carried on by the Churches, but modern politics takes a hand. Politicians are as frightened of offending a wrongly educated public opinion by praising notorious Freethinkers as religious leaders are of evaluating heretics in such a way their flocks may be led to read their works.

"We think our copy of Fisher's 'History of Europe' cost us 10s. 6d. We advise others to wait until they pick it out of a shilling lot on a second-hand bookstall."

CREECH JONES

We have made several references to the excellent speech made in the House of Commons by our comrade, Creech Jones, on April 10 last. That speech is in type and will be published in our next issue. Comrades interested in Rhodesia and the question of Colonial exploitation and development ought to read this speech. Order the November *Word* now.

F. W. JOWETT

ENEMY OF MILITARISM, POVERTY AND WAR

I. A GENERAL REVIEW

Because we believe that it is necessary to make a coalition for Socialism and Peace, we are paying tribute, in this issue, to a parliamentary Socialist who maintains an attitude of uncompromising hostility to war, and has rendered great service, in days gone by, to those who suffered for conscience and anti-militarism. Our reference is to F. W. Jowett.

Born in 1864, Jowett commenced work in a Bradford weaving shed as a half-timer, when he was eight years of age. For a number of years he followed his trade, mastering it until he held the position of manufacturer's assistant. But he was thinking and he felt the call to Socialism. William Morris and Belfort Bax were engaged in their great Socialist Educational agitation through the old Socialist League, and Jowett joined the organisation. That is 55 years ago, and he has been struggling to realise the Socialist ideal ever since. He could tell a great deal that is now forgotten of the early struggles: the conflicting ideals of reforming the terrible conditions and speeding the social revolution: the many discussions as to which was imperative: struggles to get hungry children fed; to secure better houses for working folk, etc. As a parliamentary Socialist, Jowett engaged in a thirty years' struggle to destroy the present system of Cabinet Government. In reply to our criticism of parliamentarism, Jowett points out that it is essential for the common people to understand that it is not a system of parliamentary government we are enduring and living under, whether such a system is bad or good in itself, but a system of Cabinet Government, backed up and rubber-stamped by party caucus machines.

We were not a year old when Jowett was stating the case in the Bradford local press for Labour representation in Parliament. We do not think much of Labour Parliamentarism and we think our opposition has been justified. But Jowett was advancing his Labourist views in 1887, and at the same time conducting a vigorous general Socialist propaganda. The first Socialist Parliamentarians in Britain were not afraid to define the class struggle or urge the need for a Socialist Commonwealth.

Jowett played an active part in the great strike at the Manningham Mills, from December, 1890, to April, 1891. The rights of public meeting were attacked by the authorities and the Riot Act was read in Bradford Town Hall Square. Out of this activity arose the Bradford Labour Union. In 1893 Jowett was its delegate to the Conference, at which the I.L.P. was established as a national organisation. The year before he had been elected as a Labour representative to the Bradford Town Council.

In 1895 unemployment and privation were very severe in Bradford. Jowett, condemned, at a public meeting, the action of the Council for refusing to admit in an official report the existence of distress arising from unemployment. This speech evoked bitter hostility among the other members of the Council, and at its next meeting he was refused a hearing and solemnly censured by resolution. The following year the same Council elected him as Alderman. In 1898 he became Chairman of the Health Committee.

For fifteen years in all, Jowett was a member of the Bradford Council. On its Education Committee he was responsible for the inauguration of the Movement for feeding necessitous school children.

It is now 37 years (November, 1904) since a sub-committee of which Jowett was a member, reported to the Town Council that 329 children had gone to school breakfastless and it had resolved (1) to undertake to provide food for the children who go to school without sufficient food, (2) to make an application to the City Council for a grant to enable the Education Committee to provide food. These resolutions were



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Portrait of F. W. Jowett, taken in 1924, when he became First Commissioner of Works.

accepted by the Council, but at the next meeting which lasted from 3 p.m. on one day to 2-35 a.m. the next, it was rescinded despite the fiercest opposition of the then Labour group.

Two years later Jowett was elected to Parliament for West Bradford. His maiden speech was on the School Provision of Meals Bill, which afterwards became law.

A persistent advocate of international peace, prior to the great war of 1914-1918, Jowett sought for information by means of questions to Ministers, regarding the commitments of this country. He was one of the small group in Parliament which spoke and worked as opportunity offered, for peace and a reasoned settlement.

Jowett consistently urged that Members of Parliament should cast their votes on the merits of the question before them regardless of Cabinet or Party interests. He is the acknowledged exponent of the case for the democratisation of Parliament. His views were explained in detail in the report submitted to the Annual Conference of the I.L.P. held at Gloucester, 1925. Briefly it may be said that he urges the institution of a committee system with a Cabinet Minister as chairman of the committee concerned with his Department, and the members of which are entitled to question officials and secure any necessary information relating to the committee, the material proceedings of such committees to be reviewed by the full House of Commons, and the voting records of the committees to be available for publication. Such procedure, he maintains, would afford complete and more effective Parliamentary survey of departmental administration and legislation arising therefrom, and the departments would have better contact with the legislature. It would also give to members the opportunity and the right to take an active and more informed part in the administrative as well as in the legislative work of Parliament.

Jowett was a Chairman of the Labour Party in 1921-22, and for many years, beginning in 1916, a member of its Executive. In October, 1924, at the "Red Letter" forgery election, he lost his seat by only 66 votes. At the 1935 election, his first serious illness contributed to the loss of his seat. Whether in Parliament or not, his zeal for Socialist propaganda has never abated.

During 1916-1918 Jowett harassed the Secretaries and Under-Secretaries for War and Home Affairs, respectively, with searching questions in defence of civil liberty and the rights of con-

science. We can indicate but feebly in this essay his tireless activity on behalf of those victimised and persecuted for their war opposition, or poverty-stricken and oppressed under war conditions. We do not say that Parliamentary Socialism is the way of working-class emancipation. We think that, apart from the peace interlude of poverty, the second World War proves that Parliamentarism has failed. We still applaud the service rendered to liberty and justice, in the House of Commons, during a period of war crisis by one who, believing in Parliamentary Socialism, fearlessly proclaimed his war opposition and his belief in the rights of conscience. Jowett was one of the small band to whom the cause of conscientious objection owes a debt that can never be repaid.

Jowett's questions thoroughly exposed the prison system. Why, when the Labour Government came to power, it failed to tackle this problem at least, we cannot understand. Labour Parliamentarians ought never to have allowed the old brutal prison system to remain.

Jowett's questioning over the year 1916, 1917, and 1918 will be detailed in the second part of this essay. The selections will be casual rather than deliberative. But they will show how exhaustive was his questioning and will compel the reader to turn to the columns of Hansard with an appetite for more.

As First Commissioner for works in 1924 Government, Jowett rendered a service to humanity of great symbolic value. One day it will be recalled. Meantime, during the days of sadness, he has every reason to feel secretly proud. When his life has passed for ever into the ever-flowing stream of life of all humanity, it is well that it should not be forgotten. Jowett who had questioned the Labour members of the Coalition War Government, who had defended conscience and Anti-Militarism so fearlessly during the outcast and outlaw years of 1916-1918, gave the instruction for the words to be inscribed on Nurse Cavell's monument: "*Patriotism is not enough. I cannot hate any man.*"

Before he became First Commissioner of Works, Jowett had read that these were Edith Cavell's last words. Consequently, he examined the file of documents relating to her case and discovered that the statement was correct. He enquired as to the omission of these vitally important last words, and was assured that it was within his power, as Minister in Charge of all similar monuments, to have the words inscribed. Gently and delicately Jowett pursued his private enquiries and made sure that Nurse Cavell's next-of-kin would have no objection to the famous last words being remembered for all time. Then, without any publicity, until the job was done, Jowett ordered the inscription to be made. And so to-day, Nurse Cavell, brave servant of humanity, being dead yet speaketh. In the heart of London she proclaims her message: "*Patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness for anyone.*"

Jowett's name will be linked forever with these last words because he insisted on a Government recording them. Enemy of war, fearless defender of a really united Anti-war front, Jowett gave life and hope to Nurse Cavell's memory and made a dead monument a vital message of human love and fellowship.

(To be concluded.)

[The second and concluding instalment will record Jowett's questioning in Parliament of 1916-1918.—Ed.]

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