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Since the following pages were first printed in THE GATEWAY, glorious events have, happily, robbed them of some of their point. There is still enough point left, however, to justify their issue in pamphlet form, as the public demand already shows.

The Liberties Bought with a Price.

ARE THEY WORTH DEFENDING?

We have received from two foreign Socialist organizations in London a long manifesto discussing 'The Rights of Foreigners' in which some highly extraordinary claims are made. The document may indeed be taken as representing that frank desertion of Socialism by Socialists, and that entire perversion of Socialist principles and practice by men who still call themselves Socialist, which this time of test and trial has witnessed. Conscientious objectors declare themselves Socialists whose names never appeared on the roll of any of the Socialist organizations, and who are not known to have done any service on behalf of Socialism whatever. More than once we have had special raids upon dance parties held under professed Socialist auspices, the authorities having come to the conclusion that these gatherings offer special facilities for the easy capture of a heavy bag of young men eligible for military service.

The bitter unfairness of this misrepresentation of Socialism by weeds and weaklings who do not realise the very rudiments of the exacting creed they profess is seen when we recollect that the intellectual leaders of Socialism are everywhere on the side of the Allies. And be it said that Socialism has everywhere owed its inception to intellectuals. Even in Germany itself, Dr. Leibknecht, Kautsky, Haase, Ledebour, Bernstein, level much the same indictment against Prussian world-policy that the publicists of the civilised world have been compelled to formulate against it. Sweden is said to be pro-German; but Branting, the leader of the Social-Democrats in the Swedish Parliament, has given his voice for the Allies, doubtless with the consent of his followers. Dr. Vandervelde and Professor Huysmans for Belgium; Thomas, Marcel Sembat, Viviani, and Briand for France; the gallant, single-minded Leonida Bissolati, Socialist leader and Cabinet minister, who served as a private in the Italian army and has just been decorated for conspicuous bravery - make a very good showing for the attitude of international Socialism towards this world-crisis. With Hyndman, Bax, Cunninghame-Graham, Blatchford, and A. M. Thompson vehemently pro-Ally in this country, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald on the fence, and Mr.

Snowden a mere preacher of stalemate who does not say the Allies do not deserve to win, but only that neither side is likely to win, it is intolerable that Socialism should be persistently associated with pro-Germanism. Pro-Germanism never did have a leg to stand with, and those responsible for the successive developments of its policy of outrage are now revealed to the world as criminals beside whom the vilest private-enterprise offenders, from Christie of the Cleek and Burke and Hare down to Charles Peace, appear as mere retail traders in the anti-social.

Who and What are the Manifestants?

The manifestants are Russian and Jewish Socialists who are faced with the alternative of either returning to Russia and accepting military service there, or, on the other hand, accepting the burden of citizenship and military service on behalf of the land which has given them shelter, freedom, and the opportunity of doing fairly well for themselves - as many Russians and Russian Jews have undoubtedly done.

The Open Safety-Valve.

Some of these men are probably political refugees, whose efforts to lift the blight from Holy Russia had secured them the unwelcome attentions of the Tsar's police. To hand them back to the clutches of the despotism from which they have escaped would be distasteful in the last degree; though let me say here - what I have often said in pre-war times - that the open safety-valve for European despotisms has proved an excellent thing for the despots and a very evil thing for the peoples they misgovern. No despotism was ever scotched - no people ever attained constitutional rights and freedoms - by its leaders running away from the fight. Where the issue involved is one of certain death to stay, it is no more than prudence to go, and it would be a hard saying to declare that life should not be cherished till a more favourable opportunity arises for striking the blow for a better day.

But most of those who come away from Russia have left to escape dangers much less than that of death or prison-exile. And how on earth is popular liberty to be secured in Russia or anywhere else if the popular leaders abandon the cause and the country together?

In this connection one often thinks of a certain vastly luminous incident. In 1637, before the storm broke that established the supremacy of Parliament in Britain, Oliver Cromwell, John Hampden, Sir Arthur Haselrig, and other revolutionary leaders, had actually booked their passages in a small flotilla which awaited them in the Thames. The sailing of the ships was prohibited by royal proclamation, and the interdicted emigrants returned to the struggle which, among other incidents, cost King Charles his head. Had they been allowed to sail for New England, who can say how events might have gone in old England?

Brooking Tyrants.

There is no honourable way of escape from political tyranny. The English tyrant-quellers saw that as against Charles it was a question of Your head or mine. It is no chauvinism, but necessary defensive pride, to point out that we in this country have again and again brooked our tyrants to the teeth. Cromwell declared, while still only a colonel of horse, that if he met the king face to face in the field he would fire his pistol at him as at another. The British way is not the way of the cowardly hedge-shooter. We do not throw bombs and run away. We do not slaughter the tyrant's wife and his servants in order to get at him with clumsy, irresponsible vengeance. We indict him by legal process, as we did Charles First; we meet him in battle array as we did Richard Second, twice over; or we put him in terror of death and send him skipping over the seas as we did the last of the Stewart kings. British kings have been assassinated it is true. Rufus was cleanly shot in the eye with an arrow; the *faineant* Edward Second was done to death horribly in Berkeley Castle; and the first and third Jameses of Scotland were stabbed from motives of private vengeance by men who had at least no recoil of horror from letting the blood of kings. But our national way is the open way, the fair way, the constitutional way. It is a dangerous way for the citizen; but we have never lacked citizens who were prepared to run the risk. And that it is a way which kings and other tyrants hold in wholesome dread there are many examples to prove. King John, the ablest and boldest of the Plantagenets, signed the Great Charter, thereafter rolling in fury on the floor of his tent and tearing up handfuls of turf as he exclaimed, 'They have given me four-and-twenty overlords!' meaning the twenty-four provisions of the Charter. Haughty Elizabeth wept tears of penitence before her angry subjects later in the day, and withdrew the obnoxious measures that had provoked the storm. Charles the Infatuated broke his solemn pledge, and signed the death-warrant of his all-too-faithful Strafford, rather than rouse the Commons. William Fourth swore, but did as he was told.

Some of the Centuries' Martyrs.

The bearding of tyrants and repressors was not always safe - very far from it. The blood of Simon the Righteous, perishing, sword in hand, in the defeat of Evesham, after incomparable services in a benighted age; the deaths of Tyler and Ball, of Cade and Kett, of Latimer and Ridley, of Vane and Argyle and Russell and Sidney; the death of Sir John Eliot hastened by confinement in the Tower, from which his appeals for liberation were found by Charles to be 'Not humble enough'; the cropped ears of Prynne and Bastwick and Burton; the many martyrs of reform in Scotland and England banished beyond the seas or dying by the hand of the hangman - these and hundreds and thousands more of the named and nameless dead have purchased our liberties with a great price.

Do our Jewish and Russian guests hope to enter into the heritage of freedom and right so dearly won, and now again as dearly defended, free, gratis, for nothing?

A Pre-Empted World.

Man, heaven help him, is not born to freedom in any spot of earth. He comes into a world pre-empted. The landlord claims the earth, the capitalist claims the tools and raw material, the priest claims his mind, the military caste claims his thews and sinews and stoutly-beating heart. In this favoured spot of earth we long since Conquered the kings and were preparing to conquer landlords and capitalists, the way being free of all constitutional barriers - of all barriers save those of the mind. We had no conscription - we alone among the great nations of Europe. We had secured the freedom of the press, of the platform, and of combination - which some of the European nations were without. Our people were so far emancipated that the great majority of the population never went to church and made jokes about hell-fire, as about harps and trumpets and crowns. Envious of the blessings we had won from the powers of despotism, aliens abandoned the contest with these powers in their own lands and flocked to the Isles of Inheritance, there to bask and prosper in a sunshine of liberty and right which, such as it is, had never yet been made to shine upon their own country by the blood and sufferings of their more tame-spirited kin.

The Menace.

And then two of the greatest of the despotisms attacked a republic and three limited monarchies, and for a time the whole promise and prophecy of liberty and right hung in the balance. The assaulting despotisms had nothing whatever to give the world, except, in the case of Germany, the dulness of regimentation and organization - life regulated on the system of the card index. Germany's achievements - the Protestant Reformation, her nurture of music, her encouragement of philosophy - all belong to the period before the Prussification of the German States as a whole. The triumph of Germany would have spread an iron-handed blight over the self-governing nations of Europe, in which all forms of native genius, all forms of the democratic spirit, would have gone under. For, unlike the Roman, who was disdainfully tolerant towards the subject races whom he conquered, as the Briton is to-day, the Teutonic temper is to Prussianise all. A victory for Prussianism would have meant not only slavery for the outside world, but it would have killed Social-Democracy in Germany itself.

Hohenzollernism had become a laughing-stock in Germany. To the Social-Democrat the Kaiser was 'Genosse Wilhelm' - Comrade William - whose royalist rhodomontade got them adherents daily; and if they cursed at Zabernism, they chuckled at the memory of 'Captain' Koepenick's exploit.

But already all that hostility to imperialism is forgotten. The Kaiser never was so popular. The military class never till now seemed at once the bulwark of the nation's defence and the great extender of and contributor to, its glory. If that feeling persists through starvation, death, and the defeat of all Germany's ultimate aims, what madness of dull pride would the world have witnessed had Kaiserism succeeded?

The Call of the Hour.

If ever men lived in a time when the liberty of the world was menaced it is now. If ever there was a time when it was necessary to show what democracy can achieve it is now. And if the races who make up the composite British Commonwealth are prepared to defend with their own bodies and lives the rights and status which their forefathers gloriously won at no less cost and hazard, on what ground of equity or reason shall the refugee refuse to contribute his share to the defence of liberties which he is so glad to share? Is the alien of all men the only man who shall share the rights of freedom without sharing its duties?

A 'Law' and a 'Principle.'

Nothing less than that is the claim made in this impudent manifesto. The claim is even made with the tongue of derision in the cheek of effrontery. It is made in name of the law of nations, which these denationalised men cannot forbear from alluding to contemptuously as 'the *so-called* law of nations.' It is only a 'so-called' law, but it contains, they say, 'the principle of the Right of Foreigners.' Did ever a despised whole contain so valuable a part? If the whole is only 'so-called,' why is not the 'principle' also but 'so-called'?

The Basis of Democratic Power.

These outlaws of a benighted empire appeal to 'modern democratic ideology' as having given 'the full development of the principle of the Right of Foreigners.' But what right have they to appeal to democratic ideology if they have made no contribution to it, and avow their distaste to making any contribution to it now? Far be it from me to say that Democracy has not an ideological basis. It is because it has its foundations in the eternal equities that the worst democracy is better than the best oligarchy. If men were automata oligarchy would be right; but the best conducted nation walking in leading-strings is less admirable than even the errors of men who live free, responsible lives in which they strive to find the more excellent way. It is because democracy is so right for the masses and so inconvenient for the classes that it has so often to be fought for. And the world (or human nature) being as it is, the institution of democracy has its only basis in the power of democracy. Democracy is a power in western Europe, the United States, and the British Colonies because our forefathers 'died and slew to leave us free.' The democracy did not win its power by appeals to ideology. It won its power by appeals to the pike. The Swiss democracy won its status with the spear at Sempach and Morgarten. The Scots won it at Bannockburn. The English won it at Marston Moor, Naseby, and Worcester. The French won it by razing the Bastille, executing Louis XVI., and making their own republic.

There's no receipt like pike and drum

For crazy constitutions

sang Macaulay in jest which it is impossible not to accept as truth. The Reform Bill of '32 was carried only because the land was full of riotings and burnings, and the

soldiers, it was declared, could not be relied on to shoot their own class and kin, the rioters.

The nation had so proved its temper in past times that the authorities needed only a hint that its blood was up. When on July 23, 1866, a Reformers' procession, barred out of Hyde Park, threw down half-a-mile of railings and took possession of the park in spite of the police, a Tory Government made up its mind that the Household Suffrage Bill had to be passed. It knew that if it did not, there would be plenty more to follow.

Force is the *ultima ratio* of democracies as of kings, and the peoples of western Europe are free because they have used the strike and the pike and have burned ricks and smashed machinery, while at the same time they have no cossack tools of despotism prepared to dragoon a nation at the bidding of a tyrant. Dirty work is often done in free communities still; but there is a limit to even military discipline, and it has often been reached in all the western nations. That it has never been reached in the Russian or German armies is the disgrace of these armies and of the nations to which they belong, for whence does the subservience of an army derive except from the subservience of the people who recruit it?

The Retort Direct.

To the Russians and Jews who send me this manifesto I say: You have now an opportunity of fighting for freedom under favourable circumstances. Our statesmen are not, like your Russian statesmen, in league with Germany for a secret peace. Our officers have not to be exhorted to refrain from stealing, as the Grand Duke Nicholas exhorted the Russian commanders. We do not fight for a tyrant emperor, but for our own free institutions - indeed for freedom the World over, the freedom that is menaced by the bare thought of Teutonic ascendancy.

You ask for 'equality before the law' with British citizens, but the whole purpose of your manifesto is just precisely to escape that equality. You declare that 'democratic principles . . . involve opposition to all that restricts human liberties and support for all that develops them.' Those are the very grounds upon which we ask you to fight the Teuton and to destroy the despotism which has placed the millions of the Central Powers at the mercy of their non-elected war lords.

You invoke the statement of the American Secretary of State, Seward, that

There is no principle more distinctly and clearly settled in the law of nations than the rule that resident aliens not naturalised are not liable to perform military service.

But this only means that it has been so for a long time - not that it should for ever continue to be so. New occasions demand new duties. Generous-minded men rush to perform a merely human duty such as the service of freedom and humanity wherever they are threatened. When Italy strove against the tyranny of the Pope and of the House of Hapsburg hundreds of gallant young Englishmen rushed to put their lives

at her service in a glorious cause, and Algernon Charles Swinburne, democracy's greatest poet, sang his most impassioned songs over the spectacle of an ancient dismembered nation rightly struggling to be free and united once again. All this is the natural impulse of generous young manhood, and you are evidently young, since service is demanded of you.

When the republic of France was harassed by the Germans seven and forty years ago Garibaldi left his island home to help in its defence, bringing a band of his devoted red-shirts with him. His elderly crippled son and his gallant grandsons were among the first volunteers from other lands who came to help the French Republic once more at this time. Some of the flower of America's young manhood have fought and died in the early days of the present struggle, taking their stand as a sacred duty on the side of the free nations as against the old and damned imperialism which you thralls of eastern and central Europe have allowed to grow up and become bloated, to curse and decimate and devastate the homes and lives of better and braver men than yourselves.

Many hard things have been written and said of the Jews, but the hardest thing of all is this which you write of your selves. Naked, unashamed, perhaps unconscious of the infernal impudence of the claim, you say you wish to have all and more than all the rights of British citizenship, while at the same time your main purpose is to claim immunity from the supreme service and sacrifice that our young British manhood gives and makes with a song and a jest upon its lips. And you address this appeal to one who has given thirty years' unrequited service to the democracy, while you and your tribe have been feathering your nests, reaping where other men have sown, and still you want only to go on profiting by the sacrifice of better men than yourselves, taking their places, their businesses, their posts, and their emoluments. It is little wonder if the Russians still wallow in religious superstition and political disability; little wonder if the Jews are a scattered, despised, and persecuted race, if these be your conceptions of the great game of life.

But you are neither Russians nor Jews. Are you men at all True men have generous emotions of pity for suffering, of rage at injustice, of hatred for tyranny. But you must be pigeon-livered and lack gall. It will be doing a service to the world, not only to put you in the fighting line, but to put you in the hottest forefront of the battle, so that you may stop the bullets that would otherwise cut short the lives of men having some element of manhood and good citizenship in them. It is such things as you who people the world with bad citizens and bad neighbours. It is such worms as you who keep nations in the mire. You, equally with the Germans, are our enemies, the enemies of all free men. The Teuton fights to perpetuate tyranny in the world. You refuse to fight against tyranny. Your inaction has the same result as his action. You are both enemies of the human race, vertebrate vermin to be dealt with after the manner of that kind. For the moment, the fighting line will serve. We give our own brave and bonny lads not without sorrow and rage and hatred; but we shall weep no tears for you.

A Last Word.

We are very far from forgetting the noble company of heroes and martyrs, men and women alike, who lived and died for the cause of popular liberty in Russia. No country in the world ever had such a galaxy of consecrated lives during the few decades covered by Herzen and Bakounine to Vera Sassoulitch, Sophie Perovskaya, Kropotkin, and Stepniak. But the struggle was not continued long enough, the passion for liberty and right was not sufficiently diffused among the people, and Russia has always had too many traitors and sycophants. A nation has the government and institutions it deserves to have, and it cannot be an accident that Russia is still politically five hundred years behind Britain, the most rebellious country in the world, where kings and governments have been put up and knocked down like ninepins in a bowling alley.

It is the men that make the nation. The spirit of liberty is not a chance thing; it is human, individual; it persists in families and localities. The West Riding towns that recruited and sheltered the victorious army of General Fairfax now vote for Labour and Socialist representatives, just as the city of Aberdeen, which supported William Wallace and Robert Bruce, is still always in the forefront of political and municipal progress.

Here is your parable. I do not despair even of you. You have sins of omission to repent of. Accept the present call to service, either on behalf of your own country or on behalf of the hospitable land which has entertained you in security under the law. Try to believe and understand that it is even more blessed to give than to receive. A deathblow to imperialism in any part of the world is a blow to it in all parts of the world. The defeat of Germany cannot but mean better days in Russia. The cause of the Allies is one and the same thing in all parts of the field. If you would bring forth fruits meet for repentance, go afield and there repent.

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