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A Call to Manhood

**and other
STUDIES IN SOCIAL
STRUGGLE**

26 Essays

By

GUY A. ALDRED

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THE STRICKLAND PRESS
104 GEORGE STREET, GLASGOW, C.I.

1944

DEDICATION

Despite severe differences of background and outlook, and without intending any compromise of vision on my part, or implying any such compromise on his part,

I DEDICATE

this collection of, mainly anti-war and anti-militarist, essays to

HASTINGS, DUKE OF BEDFORD,
Indefatigable Pamphleteer,

as an expression of political gratitude from one heretic to another, inspired with a desire for truth.

I believe that principle and not expediency should be the rule of public life. I believe that the Duke of Bedford has displayed a magnificent loneliness of regard for principle in the House of Lords on every occasion on which he has spoken. I believe that he set an example of principle when he affirmed and refused to take the usual oath.

The Duke of Bedford has exhibited moral courage in the House of Lords by his opposition to 18B and his stern defence of civil rights in time of war and crisis, which is the time when civil rights are challenged by the executive and require to be defined clearly and defended boldly by the citizen; by his upholding of the rights of conscience and his instancing and impeaching cases of persecution of conscientious objectors against war; his consistent, uncompromising indictments of war and militarism despite studied insolence, neglect, and assumed contempt on the part of the war-entrenched and interest-moved dullards in the Upper House of Parliament.

I believe that the Duke of Bedford's Anti-War stand will

command the respect of future generations emancipated from the falsehoods of war, and faced with the realism of the sordid legacy bequeathed to them by the power-politicians of the First and Second World-War; a combine of finance-ruled Tory reactionaries and pseudo-Socialists turned militarists from greed of place and office. I would anticipate the verdict of history on his outstanding pacifist witness by asking him to accept this dedication.

I approve of the Duke of Bedford's anti-war conduct, and I do not believe that such approval should be whispered in dark corners. I declare my alliance clearly and firmly because the Duke stands so splendidly alone against current scoffing and abuse. I believe in the intensely lonely man. He is an evidence that the time has come to take sides and that the side to take is his: for the lonely side is the side of God and progress; the side that would save and redeem mankind without the shedding of blood. It is the side of true human society.

Glasgow, September 19, 1944.

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FOREWORD.

I did not intend to write a foreword to this collection of essays. Explanation seemed necessary and so the foreword evolved.

The essays were published mostly as editorials, between the years 1906 and 1943. No changes have been made, either in style or statement of vision. Sometime it has been necessary to alter a word or omit a sentence, merely because of the different setting. In one instance, I have transformed the editorial, sometimes pretentious, but always musical "we," into the modest but much harsher and more aggressive first person singular.

There are many comments I would like to make on the essays in this collection. Most of them should be related to my other writings. The "Scots Marriage" essay, page 36 in particular, calls for consideration. The reader should see Appendix b, *Studies in Communism* (1940), pp. 62-63, for the defence of the Scots law of irregular marriage that I made before the Morison Committee at Edinburgh, on February 24, 1936. Also references to marriage laws in *Dogmas Discarded* and *Letters to the Editor*. These writings are obtainable still and should be read.

Naturally there are errors in this work. The reader will discover them.

GUY A. ALDRED.

GLASGOW, September 15, 1944.

A CALL TO MANHOOD

(December 1914)

Many Socialists have left these shores for America, to escape service in Kitchener's Army. It is said that some Irish Nationalists are doing the same. Such conduct must cease. Every opponent of modern murder must stand firm in face of danger. No friend of freedom must seek a refuge across the Herring Pond. It is cowardice to run away at such a time.

Let every man's conscience and information guide his destiny. The one cannot, and the other should not, lead to America. If you believe the war to be just, you will march—without conscription, unless your work at home is as serviceable to the end in view as any you could accomplish on the field of battle. To fight, in this event, is your bounden duty. If you do not believe the war to be just—you will not march, even under conscription. No man must shoulder a rifle against his conscience. No man can be forced to point one against his will. There is no call to fire a shot, if your reason bids you refrain from killing your fellow-man. It is murder of the worst description to do battle with him whom you feel to be your fellow-victim of a monstrous conspiracy of assassin interest. Knowing OR deeming killing to be unjust, you must not slay. Decide then your destiny, accordingly as you believe in the war or not. Decide as becomes a citizen NOT a slave. Stand firm in that decision, no matter how incessant the clamour of the world without. The kingdom of your allegiance is within you. Be no coward.

All who believe in brotherhood to-day, all who would dethrone the demon of sudden death, the moloch of mammon and militarism, are the salt of the earth. See to it that the salt preserves its savour. Never was such salt more in demand. Never was the supply so poor, the quality so inferior.

Display resolution. Do not quake. Fearlessly, proclaim the truth that is in you. Let the light of wisdom be seen by all men. Stand firm against the division of mankind into conflicting death-traps. Declare the world to be your country, assert the brotherhood of man, and hold that it is better to be destroyed rather than to destroy. Seek not to save your life, only to lose your soul. Preserve your soul's integrity, at the expense, if needs be, of your life. Be a man—not a subject.

Not only can you be ordered to repel invasion, you may be bullied into foreign service. Or again, you can be called upon to suppress riot and rebellion—to murder your own kith and kin. That is your duty to King and Country. Consider well the issue thus presented to your mind. Let your reason pronounce its verdict, and do not shrink from acting upon its recommendation. Reason is the mark of manhood. But the mark of Cain is that of the brute. Comrades, be men!

Some of our friends suggest maiming their limbs to evade the responsibility of pronouncing judgment. Do no such thing. Keep your limbs intact. Let the whole body, the complete man, pledge its strength not to fight. To maim the body is to corrupt the soul. If maiming come, let the Government be the assassin, because it fears integrity; let your life be the measure of its guilt, not your limb the price of your cowardice. Be of good faith.

A just war cannot be waged unjustly. If you believe the war to be just, if you back your belief with the offer of your life, then see to it that your near and dear ones are treated justly. See that justice is done to your comrade's unmarried wife. But ah!—justice under capitalism. We would not have you weep. We must not incite to revolution. Our aim is not to scatter incitement, only to plead with all men to act from principle. The woman who has lived with the soldier is prosecuted should she claim to be in law what she is in fact, a wife. She is seeking to obtain money by fraud. But the gun-trust shareholder, bank director, and politician who affirms his poverty to secure a state-pension, is honoured as a patriot. His declaration is but a matter of form. The ruling class of Europe is waging a just war, an honourable war. Its apostles are all honourable men, and we would not that the stones should rise and mutiny. We would that that good world citizen, the Socialist, should remain loyal to

his internationalism, however. Freedom has a greater call upon his devotion than the desolation now being prosecuted in Europe. His outlook as a man must not be purchased by his price as a commodity. It were contemptible to be a hireling. It were an insult to accept the hire. Meanness is not manliness.

Prove no coward. Be no slacker. Our mother, Earth, would have us heal her wounds. Our sister, Liberty, would have us be her champion. Both bid us be clean in our manhood, upright in our dealings. They call us from tradition and from prophecy, from the dreamland of past and future, to stern realities that are, to the living world of to-day. Never mind the philosopher who drank hemlock, the prophet who died on the cross. Think not of the world that will be, whose beauty will have had for its manure the martyred persons of the sages and heroes that have been, and are to be. Our sires have died for truth. Our children will do as they have done. Shall we do less? Belongs cowardice to our generation alone of the generations of men. If not, then let us welcome the modern equivalent of hemlock and crosses, so long as our testimony avails the cause of Liberty and brings relief to our Mother Earth.

It is we who are the chosen sons of men, the children of our sires. We did not fight yesterday. We shall not create to-morrow. But we must discharge our filial obligations to-day. King capital rejoices to have our common mother chained. Her fetters must be removed. The tears of sorrow must give place to those of gladness. Smiles and laughter must abound where to-day weeping is made manifest. Here, in the shambles of Europe duty has appointed to each of us our tasks. They permit of no shirking.

Man was destined for a nobler end than the feeding of cannon. Yet death were chosen well, when all ways of living truthfully are closed to us. Life may offer us many pleasing fancies, to lure away from the narrow path of destiny. Their rejection, and the choosing of death, are decreed still by every canon of honour. The life we owe to nature must be sacrificed to the mistress of every free-man's idolatry.

We feel our personal impotence at this juncture. But we know something of what is needed. The fires of battle must be put out. No less is demanded by the mothers of

Europe. The fire-brigade is recruited from the workers. They may spread the flames—they can extinguish them.

For our part, we pledge our refusal to participate in this blood-shed under any circumstances. May be, not always with a smile, but certainly with such minimum determination as is necessary, we shall resist any and every government assault on our neutrality. And we shall seek no refuge in flight.

Our place is at home. Our duty to the red-flag is to remain under the threatening shadow of the Union Jack, until the crisis is past. Our greetings, comrades, to liberty. Our love, comrades, to all mankind. Our duty to Mother Earth. We must stand firm for peace and sanity at all cost. It is the cause which has the first and last call on our manhood. Let us hearken to its bidding, and respond without fear to its demand. Every man of us must be as true as steel, as firm as iron. To retain our manhood, let us not fear to lose our lives.

HANDED OVER! WHAT IT MEANS.

[I was arrested at 17 Richmond Gardens, Shepherd's Bush, on Thursday, April 13, 1916, and charged with failing to surrender myself for service under the Military Service Act. I appeared at the West London Police Court the following day, and appeared again at the same Court, on April 27 and May 4. I was never called to the Colours under that Act; and there can be no doubt, and there never was any doubt, that the first Military Service Act never applied to me. I had made myself a nuisance, by championing the case of Henry Sara, who was at that time working with me in the struggle, and C.O.s generally. The authorities were resolved on my detention or imprisonment. The question no longer matters because sooner or later resistance to Conscription would have come.

From the columns of "The Spur" I make excerpts which take the readers down to my first court-martial. I made notes of all that happened and wrote voluminously. This helped to preserve sanity.]

I. Police Court Farewell.

West London Police Court, May 4, 1916.

After editing a monthly journal of Socialist and rebel thought continuously since December 1910, I must bid a graceless farewell to the editorial chair. A flag I do not respect, upheld by a militarism I detest, is being borne aloft. The enemy compels my physical presence, even though it cannot command my allegiance. I must line up with many

comrades similarly placed. Our fight is against a foe which gives no quarter, and knows no honour in battle. Only humiliation awaits those who war against Conscription at home and so strive to secure real freedom in the commonwealth. I trust that, in this struggle, I may prove a humble but no mean warrior. Whether I shall survive the fight or not, only a godless providence can say. I hope I may, for in the days to come I have other, but not less important work to do than I am attempting now. Action tests the strength of one's thought: and it is good to be tested. But there are days of thought and quiet in which one accomplishes more solid work than in those moments of storm and stress. And besides, the present strife is but guerrilla warfare. To the future belongs the real battle, in which passive resistance plays no part, the great campaign of social revolution.

2. In the Hands of the Military.

Davis Street Barracks, May 4, 1916.

I was taken from West London in a taxicab. Refused medical inspection there, but was treated courteously enough. Brought here. Refused to put on uniform, but was treated courteously and reasoned with. Am going to hunger strike, I think.

Fovant Camp, 5th May.

I am a good few miles from Hurdcott Camp (Sara was at this time at Hurdcott). I have little to say, beyond stating that I am standing firm by my principles. My journey down here was pleasant enough. I am in one of the finest companies of men one could be amongst. Did I believe in soldiering I could ask for no better comrades, but *I do not*. In other times, my civic virtues would be recognised as splendid qualities. But now, well good men as well as bad are opposing each other. It is a shame and a fact. My attitude, from the military viewpoint is unforgivable. There are opposite views of duty!

Fovant Camp, 6th May.

When I was taken to the Davis Street Headquarters of the 9th London Regiment I refused to sign for my kit or to don khaki. I was sent down here under escort with the kit. I refused to don khaki or to strip for examination. Was charged to-day with six charges of "refusing to obey

orders." After this, I was forcibly examined and put into khaki. But my protest remains. On Monday, I shall be called upon to sign my papers and to drill. After this I shall be put into the guard room to await court-martial. I put up a hunger strike till to-day. Received a decent dinner on condition that I withdrew strike until end of week. It is possible to get two years for my refusal to drill.

Fovant Camp, 7th May.

I shall go back to the guard room to-day, as I intend to refuse all parades, all drill and shall finally strip off the uniform entirely. I am told that if I persist, I shall get 3 years' penal servitude. At Hurdcott, Sara lies down on parade. He is terribly treated.

Fovant Camp, 10th May.

On Monday I refused to put on my puttees and hat to go down to breakfast. Was ordered to do so by Sergeant Mortimer and replied that I would take no breakfast. Was charged before Capt. Henderson, and then got my own way. Refused to button uniform, so the Regt. Sergt.-Major did this for me. Later same morning charged before the Colonel. He remanded me till afternoon parade. Capt. Henderson came into the hut and ordered me to assume equipment and to go on parade. I refused. Was taken under armed guard again before the Colonel. He said one man like me caused more trouble than 100 good men. He asked me to accept his punishment and I demanded a court-martial. He seemed surprised and said it would be secret and that I would gain no cheap notoriety from it. I retorted that I wanted no cheap notoriety, but would stand by principle. Was then taken back to detention room and marched out again under armed escort to Major Willoughby, who drew up particulars of evidence. I am still kept in close confinement, without exercise of any kind, awaiting court-martial.

Fovant Camp, 12th May.

On Thursday the Colonel visited me. He is bitter, but not bad. He complained that it was against the Army regulations to mention liberty in my letters. Asked me to reconsider my position since I was a man of intelligence. Complained of people writing to me as "conscientious objector." Told me I had no sense of duty. I smiled. Wanted to know what would happen if all men were like

me. Admitted there were a few like me in Germany, but failed to realise there were a few here. I am awaiting my court-martial—D.C.M.

I want you to know that solitary confinement finds me reflective, strong and bold. I am awaiting the day when we shall destroy this cursed system of lies and misery. Believe me, the day will come. Our tyrants have not all the power they think.

13th May.

Colonel again visited me. Said he was sorry, seeing my fine intellect that I should remain in such a position. Urged me to change. Asked what 500 or 600 men in London and such a number in Berlin could do to end war. *Agreed that war* was wrong and horrible. But admitted that England must maintain a large Army ready for more war! Finally said I was in a minority and must suffer for my principles. Confessed his regret that I could not throw in my lot with the others.

3. Detention Room Musings.

[These "Musings" were published in *The Spur*, June 1916. Only part are printed. Penned while waiting my first court-martial.]

I believe that the warriors of the world are the curse of the world. Do you then think that either cajolery or menace will make me ally myself to a curse? Whoever thinks so knows me not at all.

The working women of the world are doing the *Manual* work of the world. They are being told that they are equal to man because they are driving man to self-slaughter. When they proved mental equality, women were jeered at, and brutally treated. Now they are showing slavish equality, they are applauded and told they should have the vote. But who will the vote benefit? Working women or their mistresses?

The great argument against Socialism was that it made all men equal in servility. That was said to be the vice of Socialism. Now magazine articles are being written to show how nobly militarism accomplishes this task. How funny despotism becomes when it tries to argue.

Militarism can starve, cage and chain. But it lacks prestige. It boasts the trappings of pomp, but lacks the

soul of majesty. To want majesty is to be without power. Finally militarism will fail. Only revolution has majesty. That is because revolution means liberty.

Militarism is a machine. You refuse to do up a button, and the machine is out of gear. You refuse to wear a hat and half the machinery is at a standstill. You refuse to "right turn" and the machine is scrapped.

Militarism is at an extremity. Its cogs are thinking, thinking and becoming clogs. They feel themselves gripped by trickery and resent the pressure. They have discovered their own sense of worth, and hate to be classed as worthless. So the crude machine is scrapping.

Thought is active and questioning and virile. Thought will be spoken and written and read. Thought will be uttered, communicated and received. In vain are papers suppressed and thinkers jailed. No Bastille prevents a revolution.

What are we Sons of the army of the night? they ask. We are what our martyred forbears were. We are the fates. Let the timid and the powerful beware.

"Be a man," said the Colonel, "and give up these ideas." This is like saying, "Be a soldier and desert your colours." How wise are those in authority above us.

"What can 600 like you do?" asked the Colonel. "Vanquish militarism," I replied.

"You are not like others, you are an intelligent man," exclaimed the Colonel, "which accounts for my position, sir," I answered.

"Join up with us now," said another officer, "and we'll give you a week-end at home." So much generosity appalled me. But I smiled.

The chaplain has not visited me, and I have not visited him. We are on excellent terms with each other.

"Resist to the uttermost as long as you are able," writes a Glasgow comrade, in a letter which escaped the censor. Quite so, and after that—I'll resist again.

The king of beasts is reputed by hunters to be the most cowardly of brutes. Is that why the military machine can tame it?

It was after I was getting used to being marched about the camp under armed guard. I was brought in contact with an officer, who was blazing with fury at my "tomfoolery," as he phrased it. "The army," he exclaimed,

"can cast out demons." "I am sorry, sir," I replied, "but I am only one. It will need to cast me out however."

Life here resembles somewhat civilian life. In the city, the more crimes you commit, the less offences are recorded against you. I have committed so many offences since I have been here, that many have been overlooked.

"You have refused all orders," queried a Derby recruit, in wondering amazement. "Yes, even holy ones," I replied.

The Colonel cannot understand me quoting Jesus Christ, since I am an Atheist. And I cannot understand the chaplain preaching Jesus Christ, since he is a militarist.

One of the Captains visited me. "I am not a Field Marshal," he said, "only a Captain. I travelled miles to join up. I wish you could be one of us. But I admire a man who stands by his guns. Shake!" I shook. That was a soldier's greeting—and I welcomed it.

TO THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES.

[Published in "Man," Los Angeles, Calif., U.S.A., March, 1938. Marcus Graham, editor of "Man," was first arrested in Paterson, N.J., in 1919, on the ground that he was an alien and a warrant was issued for his deportation to Canada because he held Anarchist ideas. He refused to say where he was born on the ground that the U.S. Constitution says that "no person shall be a witness against himself." The warrant was not executed. On January 14, 1938, he was sentenced to six months' imprisonment for contempt of court for refusing to tell by Federal Judge Leon R. Yankwich, in the Southern District Court of California.]

According to the traditions of the English-speaking race on both sides of the Atlantic, according to the traditions which founded North America, inspired the Bay-State, and threw a British Sovereign across the Atlantic with his German troops; according to the traditions of Emerson, Theodore Parker, Thoreau, Lloyd Garrison, and Lowell; according to the best libertarian traditions of all English thought and culture, afterwards called American thought and culture, because the Motherland forced the Colonies to become rebels and then revolutionists; according to the unwritten law of English thought and right, which deposed and executed Charles Stuart, and inspired Thomas Paine and

Richard Carlile; and the written law of the United States Constitution, Marcus Graham is being persecuted by those who would undermine the traditions of our forefathers. I ask all libertarians to protest and to rally to his support and to end this inglorious 19-year persecution of which he has been a victim.

The English-speaking race, on both sides of the Atlantic, have by persecution at the stake, by jail, and exile, made the English tongue the tongue of liberty and of freedom. Those who use the English speech to justify persecution are enemies not merely of Marcus Graham, but of the English language. They belie the true impulse of all American and English history.

Work for Graham's unconditional freedom, work for his release, for his free right of use of all his talents; for his right to make the English tongue, that spoke so well at Smithfield Market, and spoke so well against witchcraft when power and superstition defiled it, with authority, once more the bold, clear, simple speech of the common people. English was born as the tongue of the people. Wiclif spoke it as the people's tongue. John Ball used it at the churchyard when he rallied the farm labourers of England. Jack Cade and Watt Tyler spoke it. And Robert Burns, but spoke a variation. Thomas Paine wrote "The Rights of Man" and "The Age of Reason" in English. George Washington saluted the Republic of the United States in English. Abraham Lincoln wrote the end of chattel slavery in English. We, who love the English language, and would immortalise it as the language of Freedom, honour Marcus Graham above the Department of Justice, and demand his freedom that he may speak it to the glory of man, and to the honour of the English-speaking peoples.

People of America, common-folk of the Republic, I ask you to respect your language, my language, our common language. Make the Government free Marcus Graham, unconditionally and immediately.

PRISON: WHAT IT MEANS AND REQUIRES

(February 1940)

II. Genius in Prison

Many of those who have made up their minds to resist war and military service, and who have declined to com-

promise by considering work of national importance, are wondering what the future has in store for them. Could their generation have escaped war, the lives of these enemies of authority would have been protected, conventional and respected. Until the Government challenged their consciences with compulsory calls to militarism and war, these persons had no idea of rebellion, passive or active. Resistance to authority was an idea that never occurred to them. Now all this is changed. True, when governments descend into war, they change the life of every human being in the belligerent countries. But ordinary folk look forward to army life, and to death on the battlefield, with more equanimity than they look forward to imprisonment even in war-time. Militarism is harsh and involves regimentation. But it is according to rule and represents the normal man's response to abnormal conditions. It keeps to the ruts. Collectively we do not think. Militarism and uniforms become the fashion. When the trumpet sounds, the great majority respond. Marching to disaster becomes the herd-like impulse. It is very difficult to keep out of step. Thought is an individual function and imposes a double burden on the unfortunate thinker. He is stamped as a creature of anti-social tendency because he stands apart from his fellows. The sensitiveness which causes him to question war and the claims of the State upon his allegiance, even unto murder, does not belong to the criminal mind. Psychologically, the C.O. does not belong to the prison type. He faces the realisation that his destiny is to be fulfilled in prison with uncanny dread. Death indeed would be preferable even though less useful. It is good to go to prison. It is good to survive prison. It is good to return from prison and to plan to end the prison system for ever.

This article specially addresses itself to conscientious objectors. The writer does not intend to describe his own prison experiences. Instead of depicting his own reaction over a period of eight years, to the horrors, the sorrows, and humours of jail life, he proposes to roam through history, and to refer to some of the masterpieces of the writer's thought, that were the direct consequences of imprisonment. The solitude of jail has proven often the needed stimulus of genius.

Amongst those who are anticipating imprisonment for conscience, there may be some possessed of a latent power

that imprisonment will energise into expression. That power may be stirring within them already, and they may wish to learn of that astonishing company, the old world men of talent, who had their lives branded and their gifts marked with the prison stain. The story takes us to many lands, and represents a thread running through the ages.

There was Charles of Orleans, whom the English captured after an unfortunate charge at Agincourt. He spent twenty-five years in exiled-captivity at Windsor, and later, at Pomfret Castle. He was rhyming ever in his native-tongue; and his songs and poems place him in the front rank of French medieval poets. Then there is Sir Walter Raleigh, although doomed, a somewhat indulged prisoner. Dishonoured because a great adventure, which proved to be his last, had failed, he spent his days in the Tower of London, waiting the end, writing a History of the World. We have all heard of the great deeds of gallantry of Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. Only some of us know that the story was composed by Sir Thomas Malory. How many know that Sir Thomas was a victim of the Wars of the Roses and that his *Morte d'Arthur* was composed in captivity? Have we not all heard of Paganini? It is said that he acquired his superhuman mastery of the violin because he was compelled to practise on a single string in prison.

One of the favourite instruments used in his days of fame by Paganini was a violin made by Guiseppe Guarneri, the greatest maker of violins after the master, Stradivari. Guarneri also landed in prison, and all the hope of making those marvellous violins which had been his glory and his fame was taken from him. Then comes the story of how genius found a way. The jailer's daughter procured wood, of various kinds, tools, mostly bad, varnish. All these things she begged. She gave them to the fallen master craftsman and in his dim barred cell he set himself to make violins as he had done in the days of his glory.

The mention of Guiseppe Antoinio Guarneri (1683-1745), the greatest genius of his family, recalls the name of another craftsman, Benvenuto Cellini (1500-71). For purposes of registration, Cellini was a goldsmith, sculptor, and author. He excelled in all three crafts. He was also a warrior and a man of genius. Behind the pose of braggart, he concealed a miraculous ease of mastery in art and crime. He proved that a braggart is not always a coward;

nor yet need he be destitute of ability. Cellini was in and out of prison many times. He knew the meaning of repeated imprisonment if not of the truly civilised, truly legal repeated sentence. During his prison spells he found consolation and philosophy in the Bible, in the writing of wonderful prose and as wonderful verse. Because of the knack with which he could beat out a cup or set a ring he was permitted not only to divert himself with hammer and graver. Thus he won the forgiveness of the popes and princes who had sentenced him. Cellini's greatness saved him from ending his days in prison as it saved him from ending his life on the scaffold. The genius of Oscar Wilde brought him to his doom.

Conscientious Objectors are not likely to give much heed to the shade of the immortal John Bunyan. Certainly, he was a soldier as well as a preacher. Yet his dourness for conscience is worthy of recalling and the memory of him will encourage much through hours of gloom. Bunyan spent twelve years of his life in prison as the price of his nonconformity, and for his examples of conscience. His trials are magnificent, for the way in which he defends the laymen and attacks the professional mind, whether cleric or jurist. He may have been a narrow scholar, but he was a brave thinker. The law said he must not preach and Bunyan said that he must preach. He would compromise nothing and demanded that the State withdraw its invasion of his conscience. He went to prison without genuine trial, because the right, in law, of the State to decree could not be challenged. The State gave itself absolute power. To Bunyan we owe much of that liberty the present war is attempting to steal from us.

Denied the right to preach from the pulpit, Bunyan took up the pen. He has handed down to us books of unequal worth and of dubious and now discarded theology. In their happy portrayal of human nature, they are as great as the works of Dickens. Bunyan satirised all the follies of mankind and left us pictures of his contemporaries, magistrates, clerics, politicians, saints and sinners, and commonplace citizens, that are immortal. Bunyan the genius and convict has given to us that immortal character we know so well. He is a member of every church and a strong supporter of the Labour Party. His name, thanks to John Bunyan, is known to us all. It is Mr. Worldly-wiseman.

Bunyan's theology makes him seem a firesome person. The range of famous convicts affords plenty of scope for more attractive personalities. Everyone has heard of Robinson Crusoe. This may not be the greatest work of Daniel Defoe, but it ranks as his best-known. Defoe once wrote a very unwise political pamphlet and so languished in Newgate Prison. His capacity for producing prison literature gave him a means of vague communion with the world of free men. Behind prison bars he actually edited and produced a kind of periodical, his "Review," which continued after his release and grew into nine large volumes. This "Review" founded in prison became the model of Steel's famous "Papers."

More worthy of being recalled is the name of the immortal Cervantes, the creator of "Don Quixote." Then there is Voltaire, who composed one of his greatest works from the Bastille. Less fortunate, alas, for mankind, was Roger Bacon, the father of philosophy and of science, denied the means of writing even to the smallest extent because the darkness of authority feared the brilliant reflections of his fettered and imprisoned genius.

In his prison cell the conscientious objector has roamed through the centuries and communed with the ghosts of many illustrious convicts. He has seen the crowded fools' parade of suffering; all that is sombre and purely great, and much that is at once great and charlatan. Wit and scholarship, rogue and craftsman, all mingle to make one amazing personality mocking his drab garb of shame. If he will leap the centuries as he ponders through the endurance, the conscientious objector may vision Oscar Wilde, no longer mocking, but fallen from his jesting high estate and eating out his soul in Reading Gaol, planning his tremendously true and semi-fictional "Ballad of Reading Gaol," and writing that strange, sad apology for his life, "De Profundis."

There must be few who do not know the story of Wilde. How he captured London by his glamour of words as playwright, essayist, and wit! How his audacity turned to folly, and a worse man than himself, an uncouth man of title devoid of genius, angered him and trapped him to his doom. In 1895 came the setting of his sun. The sentence was two years' hard labour, which Wilde endured and survived, only that he might die five years later in Paris, an exile living in poverty, charity and disgrace. In

prison he maintained his courage by his pride of intellect and with magic words endeavoured to make a bravely pitiful appearance of mastering the doom that had fallen upon him. His last witticism, uttered to a friend in a Paris cafe just before his death, applies with even more force to his period in prison than to the few years he lived afterwards. "You see," he said with a strange smile, "I am dying beyond my means." Fortunately this can never be said of a man who goes to prison for his principles. He is oppressed by an opposed inertia that he might become a light unto the world. He faces destruction gladly because there dwells within him that which cannot be extinguished. He is of the immortal choir invisible that gives harmony to the universe.

Of those who go to prison from misfortune and class persecution, become rogues from temperament and economic duress, yet retain some peculiar spark from manhood or womanhood some indestructible element of character and individuality, it may be said that they struggle and endure beyond their means. Their stories become tragedies, only understood when death ends their careers. They must die to be understood. Such was Thomas Dowd.

II. Thomas Dowd

In life, Dowd seemingly was a very ordinary person, a man of criminal impulse, unworthy thought. He was a thief, with no claim to goodness. He worked alone, and shrunk from the society of his fellows. He possessed no gift of speech or of writing. He enunciated no philosophy. His language was the argot of the underworld. Whatever wisdom inspired his struggle, it remained his secret. No public opinion upheld his attitude and he sought no admiration from any man. Not even a cause enthused him. Yet he stood alone against almost unbearable torture within the solitude of the prison and won two wonderful victories towards a very poor and very ordinary freedom. He proved one thing—that he was indomitable. This courage deserved to be remembered for all time. Every conscientious objector, who, being inspired by a cause, yet faces his captor sometimes with doubt and often with fear and trembling, must learn, as must every champion of liberty, how to be indomitable. Thomas Dowd taught that lesson. He led a useless life that preached the greatest and most useful of all sermons

for all time. Through courage, his life, of shabby detail and sordid error, has been transformed into a wonderful saga of untiring patience and heroism, so unostentatious as to seem commonplace in its grandeur. In death, poor, unknown, criminal Thomas Dowd mounts the pulpit of good faith, and bids all those who have the cause of humanity at heart, to battle without fear. To declaim this message faithfully may have been his destiny.

Thomas Dowd died one dull autumn day, in 1911, in the town of Lanford, North Carolina. He was shot to death whilst resisting arrest. There is nothing glorious in such a death. Nor is there in the details that police records of the United States supply for his biography. He is described as an expert cracksmen, master of trick escapes from jail. Altogether an undesirable character. It has been said that there are sermons in stones. No one has avowed that there may be inspiration unto patience, courage, and virtue in a criminal. The real story of Thomas Dowd is replete with "inspiration." The burglar and thief came from the environment and mis-education of the man. This aspect of the man was the product of the social system into which he was born. His courage and patience belonged to him as an individual: was, in fact, the man himself.

The story begins some years before August, 1911. Thomas Dowd and his brother, Vince, were engaged in a housebreaking expedition at Asa Bradley's store, in Birmingham, Alabama. The two brothers stole furtively up to the back window of the store, started to pry it open with a jemmy. They found that the window had been unlocked. They climbed in gently, discovered an old-fashioned cash drawer, emptied its contents, and found themselves the possessors of 27 dollars in bills, and \$3.65 in coin. After making certain that there was neither safe nor strongbox, the brothers gathered up the implements of their craft, and turned back to the shaded rear windows by which they had entered.

Unfortunately, the brothers' movements had been noticed by Officer Joe Chapman, who turned back to Officer Smiley, on the next beat, for reinforcement. The Dowd brothers made their exit almost openly. They had secured so little that they felt that no crime had been committed. Chapman and Smiley ran to intercept them. Vince was ahead of his brother, caught the flash of the policeman's shield, ducked aside, crying out: "Look out, Tom."

Vince and Tom found shelter of a sort. Chapman and Smiley closed in with great caution. Each had drawn his revolver.

"Step out, you two," Smiley ordered, "and come out with mitts in the air!"

Vince answered impulsively with a shot. Both policemen fired. Vince fired again. Then Tom took a hand in the fight. Vince's third shot struck Chapman full in the face and killed him instantly. The Dowds made a dash for liberty as Smiley bent over Chapman. Seeing that his comrade was dead, Smiley gave immediate chase to the pair of armed and now desperate criminals. He fired as he ran, with greater accuracy, considering the uncertain street lighting. One bullet grazed Tom Dowd's head. Another struck Vince's elbow. A third bullet struck Tom in the thigh. He staggered, pitched forward, and fell with one leg doubled beneath him. A few feet distant was an open cellar entrance. Vince turned back to help his brother. "Go on, kid—beat it," Tom ordered. With amazing quickness and fortitude, he dragged his injured leg to the cellar entrance, and literally dived down it. "Keep going, kid—you can outrun any of 'em," Tom's voice urged. "I'm set!"

So far as Vince could see, his brother had secured a miraculous hide-out. He was accustomed to his brother's fast thinking. He ran—and ran so as to draw the chase right away from Tom's impromptu cover. He leapt clear of the show, and crossed the street deliberately beneath an arc light, and so exposed himself to Smiley's accurate fire. The policeman's gun got him in the cheek. He ran on recklessly and might have escaped but for his very fleetness of foot. He ran into another blue-coat and gleaming shield. The officer fired and missed. Vince fired and missed. It was his last shot. Smiley charged round the corner and fired—did not miss. He did not die but lingered in the hospital, recovered, was put on trial, and hanged.

Tom Dowd lost hold of his gun as he fell. But he had the jemmy and other tools in his pockets. His clothes were sticky with blood. Crouching there, unarmed and spent, he heard the relentless, pounding of steps that passed by in pursuit of his brother. Shots were heard from a distance. There was much excited discussion between people who passed near his haven. Odds and ends of phrases finally pieced themselves together in his mind. If caught, he and

his brother would hang for a crime that netted them only \$30.65.

Hoping that his brother would escape, Tom Dowd made an heroic effort to ensure his own safety. His wounded leg was numb. His body was scratched and bruised. He had a small electric lamp. From time to time, when the footfalls sounded some distance away, he held his coat as a kind of canopy and flashed the torch to examine his wound. At last he opened the cellar door with his jemmy, and dragged himself inside. It was mouldy-smelling but he was out of imminent danger. He shut the door, located a semi-disused water-tap, found the water undrinkable, but used it to dampen his bandages. He knotted a handkerchief to mask the lower part of his face and hugged the shadows. An old negro caretaker appeared. Dowd told him to be silent; exchanged clothes; bound the old man up gently enough; discovered a cork and burnt it, blended it with dust, and made himself appear like a negro. As the dawn broke, he made his way to the negro quarter of Birmingham, sick, feeble, yet plucky and persevering. The cellar from which he had escaped was in litigation. The caretaker he had captured was its sole resident. Tom Dowd discovered this sometime later, after he had gained a place in which to hide and nurse his wounded leg. He was sheltered and cared for tenderly and loyally by an underworld friend. Tom Dowd's thigh-wound had turned to blood-poisoning. But the attention of his undercover samaritan saved both his life and his leg. Otherwise his leg would have to be amputated and he would have become a cripple.

He learned sadly of the fate of his younger brother, Vince, who lay dangerously wounded in five places and closely guarded, in a prison ward. Everything was being done to nurse Vince back to health in order that the State might hang him. The authorities had traced the bullet in Chapman's skull to Vince's weapons and announced that he alone was the killer. Although weak, Tom Dowd left his hiding place, pulled off two burglaries, and gave the proceeds to the lawyer for his brother's defence. Although he never saw his brother again, he contrived to communicate with him, and did all he could for him, up to the very moment of execution. After his brother's death, Tom Dowd resolved, for the future to work alone.

Tom Dowd wandered through the country, attacking safes in villages and small towns. At last, in Bloomington,

Illinois, he broke into a general store, exploded the safe, but jarred the telephone wire. This acted as a burglar alarm and the store was surrounded by armed men. Vince had been dead two years and Tom was unarmed. He surrendered and was tried and sentenced to the Illinois State penitentiary at Joliet for a term of fifteen years. He settled down mildly to prison life, and although the police had declared that he was a lone and resolute marauder, no one dreamed that he would attempt an escape. Joliet was said to be impregnable. In his heart, he believed that there was no such thing as an unbreakable jail. He had heard of others who had failed, even when aided with big sums from outside. Dowd had no money and no confederate. He belonged to no organisation. He was utterly alone. And he was unconquered within. He determined to escape. To do this he had to discover the flaw, mental or physical, in the prison or its system. This job of unearthing the "soft spot" was subtle and extensive. It demanded resourcefulness and patience. After two years he discovered what he wanted. One way and another, he had inspected every inch of the prison except the hospital. Then he managed to get into the hospital, and studied it thoroughly. One department remained closed to him—the insane ward. He resolved to penetrate this chamber of horrors.

After several more weeks of waiting and trying, Dowd got himself attached to the gang that cleaned the prison. One day he strolled into the ward of those whom crime and punishment had driven insane. His work was almost complete, when the keeper or warden in charge left the ward for a few moments. Dowd dashed to the windows and found one of the gratings loose. He left his bucket behind "accidentally" and reported it: was reprimanded, and sent in the next day to recover it. He owned a file, stolen during his "visits" to the machine shop. He slipped this behind a water-pipe before he left the maniacs' ward. And now, remembering how he had played the Negro in Birmingham, he resolved to play the maniac in Joliet. His aim was to be transferred to the maniacs' ward, and then to the room, in which he had concealed his weapon of liberty. What a man!

Tom was clever. He again waited a few weeks before going crazy. It would never do to assume madness immediately. At last the time came to execute his strategem. One morning, a keeper found Dowd lounging in his cell, flushed with fever apparently, rambling extravagantly.

"Tell the warden," he airily instructed the amazed keeper, "I'll have my breakfast served in the cell after this. Get me some good cigars. I'm going to change a lot of things around here. No work before noon, and not much then—."

The keeper reported the matter to the warden. Dowd was brought to his office and accused of play-acting. Dowd gave no heed to the accusation. He replied coldly, formally: "I wish to submit a long list of complaints, with my recommendations."

The warden again accused Dowd of pulling a game on him. Dowd ignored his comments and stared vacantly out of the window for a while. He turned round and swept into a tirade of nonsense. The warden hesitated. "Take him back to the cell," he ordered. "I'll have the doctor look him over—and God help him if he's faking this."

Next morning Dowd was examined by the prison physician, who applied the ordinary simple tests. The doctor grinned, told him he was faking, and suggested that, for his own safety, he should quit pretending. Dowd stuck to his gabble and vacant stare and was slammed back into his cell. He knew that severity unto torture was the only method prison employed to determine whether a convict was sick or acting. In the past, pretenders actually had gone mad in attempting to withstand the tortures devised by prison disciplinarians. Dowd resolved to endure what all others had found unendurable. He entered upon a terrible contest with the authorities of Joliet.

The first punishment ordered by the warden was to have the prisoner's wrists clamped into the "bull-rings"—manacles with teeth on the inside to tear the flesh—and so suspend him from the cell-door, until consciousness left him. Under this punishment, Tom Dowd never winced nor gave way. When he regained his senses, he babbled more mad and impossible instructions and demands.

The warden was amazed, worried, and ashamed. He ordered a further medical examination. The doctor examined carefully and reported that Dowd was sane. The warden recovered from his shame and turned brute again—authority challenged and outraged by defeat. Poor Tom Dowd was strung up to his cell-door once more. The heavy lash was laid on his bare back till the blood ran, and his mind was darkened. He never whimpered nor

begged for mercy. Outside, on the street of Christian and democratic America, they were selling newspapers, advertising the Churches, and parading religious notices.

Dowd's fortitude infuriated the warden and his gang of prison officials. Guards took Dowd down from the cell-door and cast his poor, bleeding, unconscious body into a dungeon, where he remained, until the black fog cleared from his tortured brain. At once, he played the lunatic again. The warden summoned him to cease his pretending, confess, and go back to routine work. His reply is to be found in the prison reports on his case. Crippled with pain and physical exhaustion, Dowd instantly answered, with a florid gesture: "Get busy, yourself, warden—you're a lazy dog, you are. My shoes need shining. Shine them, since you've nothing else to do around here."

The warden spluttered with wrath. Dowd straightaway had to suffer an application of the paddle. This cruel instrument of late nineteenth-early-twentieth century democratic torture of the English-speaking races, was a flat piece of thin wood, soaked in boiling water to make it flexible. The Joliet paddle contained auger holes and raised blisters at every blow. While being smacked upon the quivering flesh of the prisoner, it was dipped repeatedly in a boiling fluid or hot sand, to add to its punishing power. Dowd bore this terrible infliction without a murmur. The doctor, standing by, felt the victim's pulse, and announced that another blow would be fatal.

Dowd was removed to the prison hospital to recover. He continued his ravings. He was re-examined and declared sane once more. He was ordered to resume work and told the warden to do some work himself. He was punished with more cell-hangings and dungeons. He refused to work and used vile insults to the warden and prison officers, and babbled ridiculous orders, considering his circumstances. Finally, he was strapped into a tub and given the water-cure.

In medieval days, the water-cure was known as "the question." The victim almost suffocates in the torrent poured upon him. It had been used repeatedly in Joliet before Dowd became an inmate. In every instance, the convict had quailed and confessed. Dowd stood it till he passed out. The prison doctor could not hide his anxiety. He intervened to stop the punishment—and doubted his

own conclusions. He became sceptically nervous of his own qualifications. The warden also doubted. He asked the doctor for a consultation. Dowd's endurance had virtually convinced him of Dowd's madness. He recoiled from further disciplinary tests. The man within was at war with the warden assumed by appointment from without. It was his duty to be severe to make sure that fellows were not faking. If the administrative powers were weak in punishing, half the condemned men would turn the prison into a sanatorium.

The doctor told the warden that Dowd was sane, unless he was suffering from some new dementia as then unknown to science. But he could not understand Dowd standing up to such punishment. He half thought he must be suffering from a new kind of mental breakdown. But he could not certify him insane.

The warden protested that the doctor's report meant that he must keep on hammering at Dowd. The doctor replied that it was impossible for Dowd to stand further hammering. The conversation was noted officially and the warden decided to settle the matter finally.

A few days after Dowd had withstood so bravely the water-cure, the warden appeared before Dowd's cell with a redhot poker in his hand. Dowd raved at him in his now masterly demented style.

"Still lugs, Tommy!" replied the warden. "Then say, here's a fine sword for you."

He poked the fiery iron between the bars. Dowd saw the trap instantly, and never flinched. He was to be put now to the ordeal by fire.

"What a fool you are, warden, to give away things," he answered. He leapt forward, and seized the searing iron firmly in both hands. He yelled with pain, but made it appear like fury. He clung to the poker and jerked at it with all his might, as the foul incense of scorching human flesh rose in the cell and drifted through the corridors of Joliet. The warden was sick. He dropped the poker and lurched back in horror. Dowd the indomitable had won again.

As the warden dropped the poker, Dowd collapsed, flung the hot iron from him, and tumbled into an unconscious heap on the floor of his narrow pen. He was carried to the hospital, his poor burned hands wrapped in soppings

of oil and lime-water, his mutterings stilled with an opiate. Here he remained for weeks, nursed and fed, because he could not lift a spoon to his lips.

The warden had made his supreme test and was moved at last by pity and remorse. The doctor urged gentler methods but declared that he could not truthfully declare that Dowd was insane. He remained convinced of Dowd's complete sanity.

At last Dowd's hands healed and he was sent back to his old cell. There he lay while the baffled warden pondered their unequal duel. Dowd determined on the warden's capitulation. He scraped together a mass of filth and sat in his cell, eating it. The warden went to see for himself and spied quietly from a point where Dowd could not see him. He waited for no doctor's report but ordered Dowd to the lunatics' ward. The official report stated: "*Dowd laughed all night.*" He celebrated, with an assumption of quaint, demented mannerisms, victory.

On the second night, Dowd did not laugh. He stirred as soon as he could, recovered his file, pried open the loose-grating, and let himself down to the top of a shed, using a rope he had made of his sheets. Despite his crippled hands, he gained the wall, dropped lightly to the ground, and escaped from Joliet and the State of Illinois. He was pursued the next day in vain. The warden said to the press: "Well, Dowd's gone! By jove, he earned it."

Dowd remained at liberty for three years. He lived by crime, because he had no other way of living. The United States of America, the capitalist system of society, did not know how to turn to usefulness and honesty Dowd's splendid qualities of courage, patience, and loyalty. At last a "fence" "tipped off" the authorities. Detectives arrested him at Farnington, Virginia. He was sentenced to serve twelve years' imprisonment at Richmond, Virginia. The authorities received a report from Joliet of his mad-stratagem, and the warden warned him not to repeat the trick. Dowd raised his two hands, palms out, and revealed their permanent condition. The warden flinched and noted the conversation:

"Never again, eh, Dowd?" he said.

"Not a chance, warden. I've put it over once. That tore up my ticket!"

Thirty days later, Dowd was free once more. He made

his second great break for liberty, remarkable for smoothness, applied intelligence, and celerity.

After he had been in the Virginia prison a few days, Dowd discovered that it lacked a "recheck" or counting system. The men were marched in from the workshops at dusk, and counted as they left the dining-room. If there were no absentees, the "all-right bell" was sounded, the pickets came down from the walls, lowered their ladders, and went home. The prison was left in charge of the night watch. The inmates were locked-up for the night without anyone taking the trouble to count them again. Dowd realised that this was his opportunity to escape.

For a fortnight he studied carefully the method of conducting the count-up. There were 904 men in the dining-room, 12 in the hospital, 3 in dungeons. The deputy-warden made his calculations in the hall in the dining-room. He totalled it to 919 and found that this agreed with the official roster. Then he gave his signal to sound the bell. Dowd knew that he dared not attempt an escape from the hospital. His Joliet reputation made this impossible. And the hospital was guarded closely. The dungeons were not. He decided that through the dungeons was the road to liberty.

Somehow Dowd contrived to learn all about the dungeons and to inspect them, under guise of cleaning work. He found that they were dark, damp cubby-holes, situate in the oldest part of the prison. Convicts committed to them for breaking prison regulations were shut up in the dungeons at night and lashed the next morning, when the other prisoners went about their usual work. Dowd examined the cells. He mastered their padlocks and entire structure. He also discovered that the dungeon-prisoners were never checked at night. If a prisoner was consigned to a punishment cell, and then managed to escape from the cell just after feeding-time, he would not be missed till the following day. So reasoned Dowd. It was necessary for him to model a key for the padlock. He was allowed some chewing gum one day by a friendly warden. With this he made an impression of the keyhole whilst working, and furtively modelled a key from the handle of an aluminium pot. He "borrowed" his tools from the machine shop. Finally, Dowd faced the problem of how to get through the solid oak planking inside the punishment cells

that had been erected to prevent the prisoner from getting at the lock. He stole and secreted in a punishment cell a hammer, chisel, and a pair of claw pincers—the one punishment cell unoccupied that morning. At the meal hour he broke a rule, abused the deputy-warden, and was consigned to the punishment cell. Late at night, in the detached part of the prison, he worked without attracting attention. He loosened the nails, and had the plank ready for removal. He hid the evidences of his work and took, without flinching, the corporal punishment next morning. He was released from the punishment cells and had to wait for a day when there was no one in the dungeon cells to betray him.

A certain Monday came and nobody was suffering in solitary. Dowd waited till late in the day, and then abused a keeper. Dowd seemed to be in a rage and jostled the keeper. He was marched away to solitary and stepped naturally into his well-prepared cell. The door was slammed upon him. No time was wasted in examining the cell. The guards were too indignant at the man who had jostled a keeper. Dowd ignored their taunts as they left him and waited.

At 5 p.m. a keeper brought him a cup of water and two slices of bread. He waited a few minutes; made sure the dungeons were deserted; then set to work. He removed the prepared planks and opened the padlock with his hidden, improvised key. He put the board back in its place, drove in the nails to hold it, and locked the dungeon door as he passed out on his way to freedom. The guards were congregated in the dining-hall and the deputy-warden was ready to take down the count on his blackboard. Dowd darted into the corridor and moved noiselessly towards the door that led into the prison yard. He skulked in the shadows of the kitchens, heard the good-night bell sound loudly, saw the sentries come down from the prison walls, and terminate their duties. Night descended and at last Dowd cut across the prison yard, gropingly found one of the ladders, raised it, reached the top of wall, lay flat, and let go, dropping silently to freedom! For a second time he escaped from prison without aid or influence.

Dowd remained free several years. Then came the day in 1911 when he was recognised in Sanford by a deputy-sheriff, who had been a keeper at Richmond. The deputy reached for his gun. So did Thomas Dowd. Dowd aimed

low, not to kill. The sheriff aimed high and hit Dowd in the shoulder. Dowd ran. The sheriff shouted for help and a local policeman confronted Dowd. Both fired, Dowd still aiming not to kill. The officer's third shot struck Dowd in the head and killed him instantly. So ended this strange career of lone adventuring, a wasted lifetime of obvious courage, loyalty and talent.

As we have said, we tell this story to conscientious objectors, not to commend burglary or robbery, but to commend courage and fearlessness: to bid them stand up to jail and suffering bravely and not to weaken unduly at the thought of prison persecution. Dowd had no ideals that sustain men and none recognised him as having ideals. He was a social outcast. He was honoured by none. Yet he was, in himself, a man: a brave and worthy man. His courage in life, and under persecution, now that he is dead, should inspire those who claim to be moved by ideals, to live bravely and endure well for the triumph of those ideals. Their conscience should give them a backing poor, brave, outcast, lawless, useless Dowd never had. And they have friends also, where he was nigh friendless.

MEDITATION

[This meditation was written on the eve of my first Court Martial. It was published in "The Spur," June, 1916. E. Armand translated it into French and published it in his paper, "Par dela la Melee," Orleans, February, 1917. It was reproduced in other French anti-Militarist papers and widely circulated in leaflet form by French War Resisters.]

I have a sheet of paper on which to prepare my defence to the many charges standing against me before to-morrow's court martial. And I intend to use it to prepare no defence. I am thinking of things good and bad, of persons virtuous and vicious. I want to indict the good, to deplore the bad, to denounce the virtuous and to heal the vicious. For good and bad, virtue and vice, are not what they seem.

I am thinking not of the good in essence, but the accepted good, the good in appearance. This good of fair speech, modish manners, and pretty dresses has been accepted as good throughout the ages. And it is a lie. It is vice through-

and through, lust instead of love, adultery instead of piety, a carnal wit, a stomach morality. Christ denounced it. Guatama exposed it. Socrates analysed it. And we must slay it.

What is reputed vice then? But reputed virtue in disgrace—the pomp with the shoddy showing, the respectability with the prostitution exposed. Sometimes even, reputed vice is real virtue seeking a resting place for the night, after a weary day of witnessing to the truth:

Man is ignorant. But there is an ignorance of innocence, which one day will know truth and testify accordingly. That ignorance is splendid. Its charms are felt like the possibilities of a marvellous child, whose brilliant future all can foresee. But there is an ignorance of squalor, of mental and moral mud, of stagnation, crime, filth, disease. That ignorance breeds war, feeds on superstition, is found on the bench, preaches in the pulpit, and exalts itself in politics. That ignorance counts itself respectable and controls the marriage mart. That ignorance I fain would destroy.

And now let me pray. To the destiny of man, to the instinct of my own nature; to the martyred spirit of all dead pioneers, let me pray. Let me commune for health and strength and endurance in captivity. Let me pray for zeal of spirit and power of faith. Let me pray for intellectual vision and fervour of passion. Let all vulgarity slip from me and the word the spirit of truth, become incarnate in me. Let me never deny the truth either in word or spirit. Let me work for the overthrow of scoffers in high places, for the destruction of the scoffing. Let me become a prophet against the scepticism of worldly piety and social unbelief. Let me become a son of man, the enemy of God, the foe of kings, the destroyer of ritual, ceremony, and all useless form. Let truth and truth alone be my mistress, and may I bring witness to her integrity from all lands and climes. May no worldly ambition, no temptation in this wilderness of understanding, lead me to serve the enemy of man, the principle of power and domination.

O holy spirit of truth, thou comforter, I have felt thy warm inspiration. May I deny at no time thy claim upon me. Dwell thou in me and with me in the days to come, and grant me perseverance in thy cause, until harmony shall dwell in the habitation of man, and peace and justice prevail through the land.

Fovant, Tuesday, May 16th, 1916.

THE MILITARY CELL

[Mr. Stanley, the ex-Secretary for War, stated in Parliament in May, 1940, that military detention was less punishment than ordinary imprisonment. This essay, written and published in August, 1916, answers this error.]

"Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming."—Isaiah xiv., 9.

I have been in three types of Military cell lately. One was a detention room, intended to contain four remand prisoners. Another, similar type, half the size or less, was used for a prisoner sentenced to small punishment. These were back-woodsmen's affairs, wooden floored, zinc walled, primitively ventilated and narrow windowed, with only a little of that opened. Then I have been in the finely constructed, large and well-barred though widely opening windowed, stone-walled, iron-gated and iron-doored cell of the military detention barracks.

I have seen men verging on madness after a few days detention in the second and third types of cell. I have been near to men who have tried to shoot, to drown, to knife themselves to escape the solitude of such incarceration. And I have pondered, and marvelled, and understood. I have seen clearly that, in Christian civilisation the Galilean has failed to conquer, and that *Cæsar* and his lust still rule the hearts of men and corrupt their understandings.

Were *Cæsar's* dominion dead, the cell would not exist. That is a truism. But the Imperial Tyranny could not last a day longer had but *Cæsar's* victims the power to gather strength in the cell. In this supreme test of soul, they fail; and, because of their failure, madness rules this chaos termed human society because of its unreasoning and unquestioning animal brutality.

The slave complements the master, and is but the same monster suffering evil fortune. Condemned to the sordid association of collective work in the prison yard, I have seen hireling taskmaster and hireling victim, sergeant warder, and soldier prisoner, meet cheerfully and merrily on the common platform of filthy talk, worthless morality, and bottomless depravity of vision. My soul has revolted. These men chant psalms in church; and, being prisoners, mumble prayers in their cells, until the dirge drives some silent neighbour to distressful despair. How I have longed to escape their society; and, with the Psalmist they cite

without understanding, exclaim, "So I gave them up to their own heart's lust: and they walked in their own counsels" (Ps. lxxxii., 12). How I have longed to escape with my criminal task to the solitude of my cell.

Given idleness, no books to read, nothing to write on or with, denied labour and exercise, I have preferred the cell to the barrack yard. Here I experience freedom, which, outside, I cannot enjoy. I discover calm, self-discipline, joyous self-communion. I sorrow deeply with Jesus at the world, and weep with impotence, truly; but I feel a greater at-one-ness with the splendid serenity of Guatama's magnificent sayings than with the heroically indignant words of the despised and rejected Man of Sorrows. I reveal quiet earnestness and some little amusement. This is what my masters term punishment. It expresses their idea of torture, and exposes their ambitions, their poverty of wisdom, their paucity of the real power of authority. For what does their punishment mean? That the worst fate that can befall one is to be left to oneself!

Prison with its cell-life thus expresses the irony of life. It shows how little we live from, and think from ourselves in these days of turmoil and tragedy. It proves us the same as these Roman slaves who were auctioned in the forum and used by tyrants in the public exhibition of their insane whims.

What a farce our civilisation is! Its very breath is useless. It recognises no individual soul; it spurns personality; and the most thoroughly comprehensive of its ideas is that, in ourselves, we are—nothing. We exist only as appendages to clothes, to uniforms, to amusements. No virtue from within, and only worthless passion from without. So we despise our savage ancestors!

Why not? Do we not worship gods as false as their supreme idols ever were? Do we not talk of God, and know only the devil? When we speak of fairness, do we not breathe foulness? Is not our virtue vice?

In the cell, I vision the kingdom in which we live in all its grime and crime, and I vision another kingdom which is not of this world but is of the earth. The life to come hereafter—here, in our time, when men shall have destroyed the brutality which comes from above to thrive from below.

Ere the solitude of the cell gives place to the silence of the tomb, I hope to see *Cæsar* die for ever, and all allegiance to his sway depart from the hearts of men. In the cell, I

gather strength to accomplish his doom. One cannot live in the cell for ever; but one can watch from there for the day of action after the night of thought: for thought is not the dawn but the hour before dawn. When the day breaks fully, the social morn will witness the collapse of the authority that would have maimed in the cell by the power that was gained in the cell. Let us watch patiently and wait bravely.

SCOTS MARRIAGE

(August 1940)

On Monday, July 1, the old Scots Law of Irregular Marriage was abolished except for a very doubtful and difficult preservation of a phase of the Irregular Marriage by habit and repute. This subject is dealt with very clearly in an appendix to our pamphlet, *Studies in Communism*. Wars pass but the rights of the people lost in war-time are recovered with difficulty, if at all. The assassination of the Scots Law of Marriage ought not to be accepted without protest.

It was in the House of Lords, in 1811, that the Scots Law of Irregular Marriage was first established. This was in the celebrated case of Dalrymple versus Dalrymple. This marriage was contracted by word and presence, a verbal exchange of consent. The man went to England and the woman sued in the Consistory Court. In a word, this case was decided in England and not in Scotland. Lord Stowell delivered the celebrated judgment upholding the sanctity of irregular marriage, of marriage by consent in the presence of each other. The House of Lords upheld this decision establishing the Scots Law of Irregular Marriage.

Four years after the Dalrymple decision, in the case of McAdam, the Court of Session reaffirmed the Scots Principle of Irregular Marriage. Although tried in Scotland, this case was confirmed in the House of Lords.

These cases were reviewed by one of the most distinguished Scots judges and lawyers, and a most distinguished member of the House of Lords, Viscount Dunedin, in the lecture he delivered before the David Murray Foundation

Society, March 21, 1935, on the Divergencies and Convergencies of Scots and English Laws.

The Scots Marriage Law is part and parcel of the Constitution of the Scots people. Since the Act of Union of 1707, there has been a continual and constant invasion of the rights of Scotland, above all, of the habits of life and thought of the Scots people. The new law makes the invasion complete by undermining and destroying the fundamental principle of Scots morality. This is no mere national question in a narrow political sense, however, but one that concerns the whole of Britain, and for that matter, all the world. The Scots principle of marriage, defined twice and upheld by the House of Lords since the Act of Union, embodies a fundamental moral principle. The State cannot tinker with or amend this principle in any way without striking a blow at marriage as an institution and mating as a moral fact. It is not a question of geographical boundaries, nor even of theology, but rather one of the deep-rooted custom and understanding of a people: a people that has shown itself powerful, sober and practical in agriculture and industry at home and administering and pioneering abroad: and, therefore, not a frivolous people as suggested by those who queried the morality of its marriage customs.

Actually, the Scots Marriage Law is practical, ethical and religious. It asserts the ancient Christian view that those who are married in the sight of God must be regarded as married in the eyes of man. Although modern philosophy expresses the same fact without reference to Theism or the deity, the mental approach is substantially the same. Scots Law expresses the principle that what is marriage *de facto*, there being no legal impediment, must be marriage *de jure*. It asserts, also, what is denied by the English insistence of registration as a necessary preliminary, that the actual marriage consists of the solemn mating for life of one man and of one woman. It can be argued with plainness and simplicity, amounting to brilliance, that Scots Marriage Law, above all other law, does recognise the solemnity and importance of mating, as marriage in its highest sense. The late famous Prince Peter Kropotkin, in his memoirs of Russia, describes how, in the Czar's time, a priest of the Greek Church adopted the very principle prescribed in the Scots Law, and declared that a colony of men and women who have been faithfully living together in the honourable relationship of husband and wife, without any State permission, were married in the sight of God and the Czar.

This brings me to the main point of my indictment of the new law.

Usually, before any amendment is made in the law of the land, and particularly as regards an issue that affects the life of the people so directly as the law of marriage, some enquiry is instituted. The number of Royal Commissions that have sat and have published volumes of evidence on this or that matter of social importance, sometimes without any resulting amendment to the existing law, attest the truth of this contention. In the present case, what has been done? Certainly a Committee was appointed. Certainly that Committee called for evidence. Can it be said that that Committee noted any evidence? Can it be said in the real sense of the term, in the strict literal and grammatical use of the words, that the Committee functioned, seriously considered evidence, duly questioned the witnesses, and actually left on record an account of these proceedings? Did the Committee enquire into the volume of learning that has been published on this matter, canvassing its every aspect? The truth is, no such record was published. The enquiry was polite, frivolous and shallow. It failed, totally, to treat with the patient consideration that was demanded, the most important question of marriage in Scotland.

Another question arises—how did this Committee come to be appointed? Was there any demand for a change in the Law of Marriage for Scotland on the part of the Scots people? Or did the demand come from England? It is my contention that the Scots people never wished any change in their law of marriage; that there was never any need for any change, since the Scots Law of Marriage is neither more nor less than an expression of the simple fact and principle of marriage. From the standpoint of commonsense and ordinary human decency and morality, it is dangerous and unwise to interfere with the Scots Law. If the demand did not come from Scotland, it must have come from Scotland's southern neighbour. But what right had England to demand that the Scots Law of Marriage should be changed to suit the vagaries of the English temperament, its foibles and weaknesses? The answer is to be found at Gretna.

It was alleged, by the English, slandering themselves, that Scotland's English neighbours unwisely plunged into marriage, or contracted bogus marriages, by taking advantage of the facilities at Gretna. This is a very old story. The first attack on the Scots Law of Marriage made in the

English Parliament was in 1856, when the Brougham Act was passed requiring 21 days' residential qualification.

Although a very slight modification, even the 1856 Act was an invasion, because its spirit was quite contrary to the idea of Scots Law of Irregular Marriage. The reason given for that Act was the number of runaway English marriages at Gretna. It was not asserted, or even pretended by the most bitter critic of the Scots Law, that the Scots had abused their law. But the law had to be changed to suit the convenience of the English, who could not contain themselves but were impelled by the devil within them to treat the moral code of Scotland either as so much fun or else so much menace. We were brought to this position in 1856, and we are brought to the same position more drastically to-day, because the demand has been more sweeping and uncompromising in its attack.

The Scots Law of Marriage operated well in Scotland. It was part and parcel of the Constitution of the Scots people. It was recognised by the Scots aristocracy and endorsed by the Law Lords of the House of Lords, by the Consistory Court, and by the Court of Session. It has been honoured and practised by the Scots peasantry, and was subscribed to by Scotland's immortal bard, Robert Burns. That moral code which expressed the genius of the thinker, the aristocracy, and the peasantry of Scotland, has been abolished to suit the vices and to please the whims and scandalous behaviour of England's sons. Englishmen have reduced a moral code to a legal sophistry, and so Scotland's law and moral status had to be changed.

England's sons eloped to Gretna with no knowledge and with no understanding of the law of marriage. They had no sense of moral responsibility, and were imbued purely with false notions of adventure. They saw nothing but rare sport in this solemn procedure. Because they were irresponsible, the responsible conception of marriage that is defined in Scots Law, and has been affirmed repeatedly by the Court of Session and the House of Lords, had to be destroyed. The ancient Scots Law of Marriage has been put on one side, annihilated, in response to a mere English whim, and in deference to an English proclamation of its sense of vice.

It is not a principle of Scots Law that those who marry in irregular ways should have the marriage registered, and every attempt to make registration compulsory is a total negation of the fundamental principle of the Scottish Law of Marriage.

Registration was not compulsory because registration does not constitute marriage. Registration is but a convenient official way of recording a fact. Marriage is the fact, not the record of the marriage.

Because of the very exactness of Scots Law on this point, it was assumed by the English critics and deriders that Scots morality is loose. In effect, and in practical working, it was strict. The assumption, made on more than one occasion in the minor Courts of English law, that any relation between a man and a woman, or any exchange of agreement to cohabit, constitute marriage, is incorrect. The supreme morality of Scots Law and its absolute soundness were never better illustrated than in the case of *Duran versus Duran*, which was decided before the Second Division of the Court of Session of November, 1904. The case is reported in the *Scottish Law Reporter*, Vol. XLII. 69-74. Most important and valuable decisions were recorded by the Lord Justice Clerk, Lord Trayner and Lord Moncrieff, Lord Young concurring. Their Lordships upheld the decision of the Ordinary, Lord Kincairney. In this case it was decided that the mere exchange of documents was not in itself proof of marriage in Scotland, but there must be supporting evidence of intention, and, if signed by both parties in the knowledge of its terms, and at the time of the signing one of the parties sincerely intended marriage, no mental reservation on the part of the other would prevent marriage resulting. This case brought into high relief the way in which Scots Marriage protected a person against being made a victim of fraudulent misrepresentation.

It is at this point that I wish to attack the procedure of the Committee of Enquiry. Before that Committee, suggestions were made to overcome, very simply, an alleged disadvantage said to result from lack of registration. In the Committee's Report there is no evidence of such a suggestion having been made. I am compelled to conclude, therefore, that the purpose of this Committee was not to seek to amend the Law of Scotland but to pave the way for its utter annihilation. Other evidence was submitted to this Committee as to the way in which English Courts have treated expert legal evidence establishing marriage across the border. In no case has the indignity proceeded from the Scots Law but merely from the failure of the English to understand the nature.

I have said that the new law of compulsory registration is immoral because it approaches the subject with an unclear

and an unnatural mind. It is an expression of a strait conventionalism, but not of a strait morality. It is an irresponsible conventionalism divorced from the soil. It includes no understanding of life. After all, marriage is a matter for the individuals concerned. In itself, it is not the affair of the State. It becomes the affair of the State when it is necessary to refer to it as a fact, when it is necessary to record the fact.

The new Act was devised badly and ill-advisedly. There is evidence of this in the Act. For example, the clauses of the Act follow an excellent preamble. The most important facts about Acts of Parliament are to be found in the appendix contained in a schedule of the Acts which are repealed, but a preamble is no part of an Act. In the present Act, the preamble states that marriage of habit and repute is to stand. I cite as evidence of the hurried and incompetent construction of this Act: *First of all*, there is no clause in the Act that does protect definitely, and in precise terms, marriage by habit and repute. *Secondly*, since marriage by habit and repute implies non-registration of marriage, and since that implies a period during which the parties must be married by declaration and consent, how is it possible to abolish the one form of irregular marriage and retain the other? One can only do so by instituting chaos in the moral affairs of mankind in relation to the sexes. To satisfy the clauses of this Act, one must conclude that a man and woman will live together, and although they discharge all the normal relations of husband and wife, they shall be deemed unmarried. Then one day, some slight having aroused their anger, and there having been a due lapse of time, they may appear before the Court of Session and demand a Declarator of Marriage. If, unfortunately, that anger should express itself at one month and it be held that sufficient time has not elapsed to establish habit and repute, they will be deemed unmarried. If their anger is amenable to the requirements of time, and postpones its expression for the required period, then they will be married.

The new Act does not amend the Law of Scots Marriage. It ridicules marriage as an institution, and the law of mating. It has destroyed the ancient commonsense of the people and substituted a careless and irresponsible servitude of conventionalism.

SOLDIERS' SONS

(July 1940)

Albert Mann fought at Mons in 1914, won the D.C.M., and was mentioned in despatches.

On Tuesday, June 4, 1940, he handed his war medals in a parcel to the Clerk at the South-Eastern Conscientious Objectors' Tribunal in London.

His son, 20-year-old Joseph Albert Thomas Mann, of London Road, Wembley, had been removed from the register. The son said that his father had made him promise never to take part in war.

Geoffrey Gordon Close (27), married, foreman van salesman, living in a furnished flat in Rawcliffe Lane, York, told the Yorkshire Tribunal for Conscientious Objectors held in Leeds on Monday, June 17, that his father gave his life in the last war, and he thought that was sufficient contribution from his family for the State.

The Chairman, Judge Stewart, replied that if every man whose father gave his life 20 years ago was exempted from serving, in this country, there might not be sufficient people to protect the country.

Mrs. Wilson, mother of Close, said she had been married a second time. She promised her son's father when he went to the last war, that if the pledge "War to end war" was not kept she would train their son in opposition to war. Mrs. Wilson said that she had done so and it was due to that influence that her son had adopted his present attitude.

After the Tribunal had ordered Close's name to be removed from the register without qualification, Mrs. Wilson exclaimed: "What sort of conscience do you recognise?"

Before the same Tribunal appeared the following day Frederick Hardy South, 39 Nab Lane, Shipley.

In the *New Statesman*, London, for June 22, 1940, his mother Margery South, described the treatment of this youth by the Tribunal, and recalls the fact that his father was wounded twice in the Great War, as were also two uncles, whilst another three uncles were killed in action.

Mrs. Margery South writes:—

"My son's pacifist record was not disputed. He was a member of the No More War Movement, and automatically became a member of the P.P.U. when the two movements merged. He is an active pacifist, is saturated with facts and figures—has spoken in public, taken part in poster parades, and engages in any pacifist activities that are still possible. . . .

"In the course of a very short and irrelevant cross-examination the Judge asked: 'Do you wish this country to lose the war?' To this my son replied: 'I do not wish either side to be defeated.'

"That is not answering my question. Do you want this country to win the war?"

"I do not wish this country to win the war sir," was the reply.

"In a flash Judge Stewart turned to the Court and said: 'This man has the mind of a traitor.' My son attempted to speak; he wished to point out that the pacifist fears that victory by either side will be a prelude to a vindictive peace policy, but the Judge angrily ordered him to be silent. My son respectfully once more asked to be heard, but the attempt was useless, and, refusing to listen further to the insults of an almost incoherently angry Judge, he left the Court.

"The whole thing was a sheer mockery and was not made better by newspaper report headed 'The mind of a traitor,' and which quoted Judge Stewart as saying, 'Steps will be taken to deal with a man who speaks like a traitor in this Court.' These reports have been a grief to my husband, who knows the utter sincerity of my son, but who, along with five volunteer brothers, fought in the infantry in the last war when three were killed and two wounded—my husband being wounded twice."

In the *Yorkshire Observer*, for June 14, Mrs. Margery South had to publish a letter protesting against local victimisation, stating:—

"... in view of certain unpleasantness to which we have already been subjected, I should be grateful if you would give equal publicity to the fact that my husband does not share the views held by my son, that he and five brothers were volunteers in the last war, and three of these brothers were killed and two wounded, my husband being wounded twice."

And we have "conchies" from the last war holding high positions in the State, or functioning as Lord Mayors or Lord Provosts, and expecting to receive titles, and to find a place in Burke or Debrett, at an early date. What folly! But what hypocrisy!

SO HORRIBLY UNTHINKABLE!

(June 1939)

J. Ramsay MacDonald, speaking at the Inter-Parliamentary Union Congress, held in London, on July 23, 1930, said:—

No nation can contemplate war and prepare for it. Science has subdued war by making the conditions of the next war so horribly unthinkable."

If by nation, Ramsay MacDonald meant the common people, this statement is quite true. The common people never contemplate war and never prepare it consciously. The common people simply drift and never think. But they work at munitions, serve reaction for wages, and so actually do prepare the way for war. Their actions are directed by the Governments, who *do* contemplate war and who prepare it callously and deliberately. Mostly these Governments are controlled by the armament firms, who organise a trinity of criminal error: they contemplate war; they propagate war; they prepare for war. The business of the armament firm, and the status of the statesmen under capitalism, are based on the promotion and propagation of war. These people are not deterred from their purpose by any contemplation of the horrors of modern war.

They know there is no glory in war. They know that war is not merely hell, but a foul indecent hell. They know the depths of that hell: culture and knowledge turned to crime; organisation devoted to murderous profit; mankind lower than swine; the brain of gods controlled and directed by the mind and vision of something less than beasts. War means filth—starvation—disease—crime. Death from science—by death rays! Death from torpedoes—directed by wireless! Death from liquid poison; from tanks and poison gas; from disease germs. Pestilences methodically prepared and deliberately launched on man and beast. Men, called savants, receiving wages for pursuing such depravity in the laboratories of civilisation's great countries, the Powers of Christendom. Blight to destroy crops; Anthrax to slay horses and cattle; Plague to poison whole districts and not just to defeat armies; such is military science, pursued by Government, applauded by statesmen, defended by divines, and extolled and made possible by the money-lords of the armament ring.

The Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill, enemy of the Bolshevik Revolution, advocate of the 1939 Soviet Pact, knowing that wars mean this and are prepared for in this way, urged conscription to this end. Major-General F. D. Swinton described the invention of lethal rays to shrivel up and paralyse human beings, and accepted such preparation as normal, the natural lot, purpose, and destiny of humanity.

The United States Chemical War Service has discovered a deadly poison liquid, three drops of which on the skin, will kill a man, sending him to his grave after imposing on him a terrible agony. And then, of course, there are torpedoes, *controlled by wireless*, guided from the air, and able to change direction to follow victims.

Major-General Fuller, whom we knew in our *Agnostic Journal* days, when he was only a Captain, is a remarkable man in many ways. He is a student and a writer of force, as well as a soldier. For some unearthly reason he believes in war. But he has no illusions as to the meaning of war. He depicts the next war:—

Fleets of fast moving tanks, equipped with tons of liquid gas, against which the enemy will have no possible protection, will cross frontiers and obliterate every living thing.

This is what war means. All horribly unthinkable! But contemplated and prepared. Ramsay MacDonald must have known that he was speaking nonsense when he pretended otherwise.

Captain Wright, sometime Assistant-Secretary to the Supreme War Council, wrote of Sir Henry Wilson, who was director of military operations at Army Headquarters when the war broke out:—

Sir Henry had predicted and prepared for this war all his life. He had been over the ground upon which it was to be fought, time after time, on his bicycle, and, for example, had chosen the billets our headquarters were to occupy in one place.

Ramsay MacDonald found a place in his First Labour Government for Lord Haldane, as Lord Chancellor. Haldane was War Minister in the Liberal Government of 1906. On pages 31-35 of *Before the War*, he described how the Great War was prepared in advance, having been fully organised and anticipated:—

... Anyhow, we fulfilled our contract, for at 11 o'clock on Monday morning, August 3, 1914, we mobilised, without a hitch, the whole of the expeditionary force, amounting to six divisions and nearly two cavalry divisions, and began its trans-

port over the Channel, when war was declared six hours later. . . . The navy was already in its war stations, and there was no delay at all in putting what we had prepared into operation.

The nation, meaning the ruling class, had contemplated and prepared for war.

The Glasgow evening press, on May 6, 1913, reported the speech made that day in Glasgow by Field-Marshal Lord Roberts, V.C., to the City Fathers. Here is an excerpt:—

I seem to see in the near distance the gleam of the weapons and accoutrements of this army of the future, this Citizen Army, the wonder of these islands, and the pledge of the peace and the continued greatness of this Empire.

To-day, "Bob's" dream of National Service is realised. Britain is a conscript nation. The conscription is not seriously opposed by the Labour Party, the Communist Party, or the Trade Unions. Lord Roberts was supposed by the reactionaries to have made a great speech. Actually, he expressed an ugly common-place anticipation of horror and oppression, ending through misery, in hopeless calamity—the calamity of war-preparedness after war, and conscription for unending wars. The common people, even the so-called Socialists among them, have accepted the horror as inevitable, even though the interval between Lord Roberts' speech and its realisation, treated the world to a war which during its course, and in the process of its aftermath, presented such astounding contrasts of reward for services rendered and suffering endured.

Here are two cuttings from the *Sunday Express*, for October 12, 1932:—

Attending the D.C.M. League rally at Blackpool was a hero who is now living on 13s. 6d. a week. He is the oldest living holder of the D.C.M., except Corporal Henry Hampton, aged 78, of Leicester Street, Bolton.

Viscount Byng of Vimy Ridge is resting quietly at his Essex home at Thrope-le-Soken. He received a gift of £30,000 in 1919 for meritorious war services.

This gift did not include pensions, or normal reward due to rank, at time of retirement from the armed forces. Byng did not stand alone in his enjoyment of a special gift over and beyond his ordinary emoluments. His name is to be found in a list, which includes other persons of rank. Each person named received, apart from, and in addition to, his pension, a sum free, gratis, and for nothing, as the special gift of a "grateful country." The sums each received

range from £100,000 to £10,000. Here are some of Byng's colleagues in the financial honours list:—

- (1) £100,000—Admiral Beatty and Field-Marshal Haig.
- (2) £50,000—Admiral Jellicoe and Field-Marshal French and Allenby.
- (3) £30,000—Field-Marshal Plumer and Generals Rawlinson and Home.
- (4) £25,000—Lt.-Col. Hankey.
- (5) £10,000—Admirals Madden and Sturdee: Rear-Admiral Keyes, Vice-Admiral de Roeback; Commander Tyrwhitt; Field-Marshal Wilson; Generals Robertson and Birdwood; and Air Vice-Marshal Trenchard.

In addition to the special gift mentioned, and the ordinary pensions of rank, many of these persons received titles and other honours.

Now consider what plain Tommy Atkins, Kipling's "good 'un" received at the conclusion of the war. He was not ennobled. He received no special gifts. He received no capital sum: only a *Weekly dole*, served out in shillings. Here is Private Tommy Atkin's financial honours' list, to find a place in which he had to exhibit evidences of suffering:—

- | Shillings. | Disablement or Condition. |
|------------|--|
| (1) 40— | Permanently disabled; totally paralysed; mad; blinded. |
| (2) 36— | Lost right arm. |
| (3) 32— | Lost leg; struck dumb. |
| (4) 28— | Lost nearly all leg; struck deaf; lost left arm. |
| (5) 24— | Lost half leg; lost most of left arm. |
| (6) 20— | Lost less than half leg; lost one eye. |
| (7) 18— | Lost toes above knuckles. |
| (8) 16— | Lost right thumb or four fingers. |
| (9) 12— | Lost left thumb or four fingers. |
| (10) 8— | Lost two fingers; lost toes below knuckles. |

What a callous calculated gradation of compensation for misery! What finesse of brutality! In MacDonald's

phraseology, so horribly unthinkable! But contemplated and prepared! Fact! For this doom are our conscripts being prepared.

MacDonald said no nation could contemplate a next war and prepare for it. Let us leave Britain out of our calculations and ignore all the Europeans who are contemplating and preparing for a next war. Let us consider the United States of America.

Take the post-war years, and note the increase:—

Fiscal Year.	War Department.	Air Corps.
1921	\$292,886,375	\$32,332,907
1930	\$327,363,054	\$59,981,778
1932	\$344,610,560	\$72,491,915
1936	\$382,654,083	\$85,836,332
1937	\$394,095,800	\$96,872,333
1938	\$393,460,400	\$101,851,424

What is this but contemplation of, and preparation for the horribly unthinkable?

If the world is to be redeemed from war, the peoples of the earth must rid themselves of statesmen and parliamentarians, who dabble in panics, that the horribly unthinkable might become commonplace, miserable, disastrous facts.

WAR TIME PATRIOTISM

(October 1939)

I. Feeding The Enemy

Events of the Great War of 1914-1918, defined the reactions of the patriots in war-time. Speaking in the House of Commons on February 11, 1915, Mr. Denniss, M.P., denounced the entire indifference of shipowners to the "general public warfare" and quoted the case of certain shipowners who had written, threatening that, if the Government dared to interfere with ships:—

They have been able to collar the railways, but they shan't collar our ships. We will boycott the United Kingdom and will carry goods for foreigners.

Forty-eight

Mr. Denniss quoted from an American newspaper to show why the British shipowner wanted to carry for foreigners:—

It is pointed out that freights from America to Europe have gone up 900 per cent. . . . No wonder the British shipowner is anxious to carry goods at such a price. They have only gone up 650 per cent. from the Argentine to England, so he prefers to carry 900 per cent. increase for a foreigner to carrying at 650 per cent. increase for Great Britain. From New York to Liverpool the increase is 500 per cent.; from New York to Rotterdam the increase is 900 per cent.; and cotton from New York to Bremen, 1,100 per cent.

Patriotism and 650 per cent. increase were not good enough for the shipowners. But the sorrow and agony of sacrifice in the great desolation were good enough for the common people.

Mr. Denniss proceeded to quote from the *Morning Post* and *Shipping Gazette* the following declaration of the shipowners:—

Why should we not take advantage of our present opportunities to make as much money as we can? War is but a temporary incident in the life of a nation.

The British, Foreign, and Colonial Corporation, Ltd., Investment Bankers, 57 Bishopsgate, London, E.C., issued a pamphlet eulogising the war in these very clear terms:—
"The British shipowner is one of the few fortunate individuals to whom the war has proved an unmixed blessing."

In another callous announcement, this firm explained this statement and showed how terribly true was its claim:—

Reference must also be made to the depletion of the merchant service by the depredations of submarines. These losses are, of course, covered by the insurance; and while the owner is recouped for the loss of steamer, these are not at present being made good by launching of new tonnage, owing to the fact that the shipbuilding yards are practically all monopolised by the Admiralty for special work. Thus, as time goes on, steamers will be scarcer, and the demand for their use will cause freights to go correspondingly higher.

Note "*the depletion of the merchant service,*" which meant death and sorrow.

The terrible struggle in the Dardanelles closed the Black Sea Market. In April, 1915, the same British, Foreign, and Colonial Corporation commented upon the possible success of British Arms and the reopening of the market:—

If freights have reached their present high level in spite

C C M

Forty-nine

of the fact that the Black Sea markets have been closed, it would seem that the opening of this fresh outlet for shipowners' energies must result in an all-round accession to rates of freight throughout the world.

On May 6, 1915, this British, Foreign, and Colonial Corporation issued another circular to its clients, stating: *The longer the war lasts, the longer is the present state of affairs in the shipping world likely to continue.*"

For profits, the shipowners, who demanded the conscription of human beings to feed the guns, were prepared to boycott the United Kingdom, and to carry goods for foreigners; they welcomed the war as "an unmingled blessing"; and rejoiced in submarine warfare, with its toll of death.

Mr. Houston, M.P., in the House of Commons, on February 11, 1915, discussed the case of the "tramp" owners. He said:—

I know one who fixed four of his steamers from the Argentine on open charter at 16s. per ton; the charterer of one of these boats has re-let that boat at 65s., and made £14,000 profit.

Some months later, on December 23, 1915, Mr. Goldstone, M.P., told the same House:—

I want to quote one instance, given upon excellent authority, that one ship sailing from San Francisco was chartered for £80,000.

Here are some more quotations showing the reaction of the patriotic shipowning fraternity to the war:—

The opportunities now open to British shipping are obvious. There are no more cut rates by subsidised German vessels. German ships being swept off the sea, we have no serious competitors in carrying the trade of the world.—Journal of Commerce" (Nov. 27, 1914.)

The net earnings in the (shipping) trade are estimated to have risen from 20 millions in 1913 to 250 millions in 1916. The profits are so great that a steamer is reported to pay for her entire cost in two voyages.—"Daily Mail," London (Feb. 5, 1916).

The report of the White Star Line shows that the profit for last year, after providing a very large sum for excess profit and other contingencies, amounted to the enormous figure of £1,968, 285. Dividends amounting to 65 per cent. have already been paid.—"Daily Chronicle," London (May 17, 1916).

The Dulcia Steam Shipping Company, in a period of about ten-and-a-half months, made a profit of £50,449 on an issued

capital of £50,000; and indications point to at least that rate of profit being fully maintained on the paid-up capital during the next financial year.—Statements issued by the Dulcia Shipping Co., Ltd. (May 26, 1916).

In the *Yorkshire Factory Times* for May 11, 1916, Mr. Myers pointed out that the Tempus Shipping Co., Cardiff, with only five boats, made £100,000 profits on their previous year's working, after setting aside £80,000 to meet excess profit tax, and placing £30,000 to reserve. The total profits for the previous year were *only* £15,488. To this firm, the war was a matter of rejoicing.

Mr. Myers showed that, for the first three months in 1915, eight shipping companies made in profits £1,201,795. *In the first three months of 1916, the same eight concerns made a profit of £2,140,598—an increase of 77 per cent. on their previous year's tremendous trading.*

Closely connected with the shipping industry are the coal, iron, and engineering industries. Everyone who has considered the treatment meted out to the miner since the war will appreciate the extent of the coal-owner's love of country and regard for the well-being of his fellow-citizens. The Board of Trade inquired into the increase of the cost of production at the mine, and concluded that, *on a high estimate, it had not risen more than one shilling per ton. It declared that the rise in price "is considerably above the increase in cost of production and distribution which can reasonably be put down to the war."*

The Gas and Electricity Departments of the Birmingham Corporation were paying, in 1916, at least £200,000 more per year for coal than they paid before the outbreak of war. The same was true of every municipality in the kingdom. The navy was treated in the same way. Speaking in the House of Commons, on July 27, 1915, Sir Arthur Markham, M.P., said:—

At a certain period this year, the Admiralty were paying for coal for Admiralty purposes from 10s. to 12s. a ton above prices prevailing in 1913-14.

And the Board of Trade *knew* that *the cost of production at the mine had risen less than 1s. Od. per ton!*

I do not wish to distress the reader with lists of figures showing the shipping, coal, iron, and engineering profits of the opening years of the Great War. It is necessary, however, to take a glance at the profits of the tea

concerns. The following eight companies nearly doubled their profits on the year :—

Company	Profits	
	1914	1915
Ceylon Proprietary Tea Co.	£12,720	£25,721
Imperial Ceylon Tea Co.	5,207	17,995
Standard Tea Co. of Ceylon	16,141	28,811
Scottish Ceylon Tea Co.	7,366	13,486
Dimbula Valley Ceylon Tea Co.	33,472	54,191
E. India Tea and Produce Co.	2,092	17,354
Eastern Produce and Estate Co.	71,724	122,760
Ceylon Tea Plantation	108,300	163,899

Total Profits £257,022 £444,217

Naturally the profits soared higher in 1916.

In his book, *The Triumph of Nationalisation*, Sir Leo Chiozza Money explained these huge profits on tea, without specifically referring to them. He mentions the enormous exports of tea from the United Kingdom during 1914-16 to European countries, and adds.—

This increase was due to the fact that Germany, being cut off from coffee, very naturally bought all the tea she could get from her neutral neighbours. Members of the British tea trade carried on a business with European neutrals which they knew to be abnormal. The trade knew well the populations of the little countries to whom it was sending the tea and how little those countries normally consumed. At last the traffic was stopped owing to the energetic action taken by the present writer. Hence the very different figures of 1917. Thus also it was with tobacco and other articles.

To this statement, Sir Leo appended the following footnote :—

It was not until the latter part of 1916 that I carried my proposal to prevent the re-export of tea, tobacco, etc., from the United Kingdom.

On April 4, 1916, Sir Leo presented a memorandum to the War Trade Committee entitled "Tobacco and the Enemy." This document opened with the following words :—

I once more urge very strongly that it is of great importance to use every possible effort to restrict the enemy's supplies of tobacco. Several months have elapsed since I brought the matter seriously before the Committee, but nothing has been done, and in the interim an enormous further amount

has gone to Germany and to Austria. Largely through the aid of our own commercial men and our own shipping, and under the protection of the British Navy, German soldiers in the field are being comforted by supplies of a commodity of peculiar value to the soldiers.

Two days later, Sir Leo presented another memorandum on "Tea, Coffee, and Tobacco," because the Government was not alive to the situation, after seventeen months of war. We quote :—

As to tea, what was perfectly obvious is at last admitted—after two more weeks of war, costing millions a day. Tea is being supplied to the enemy for his military purposes by our tea merchants, and the trade is, in my opinion, deplorable in the circumstances.

In the end Sir Leo Chiozza Money's view was accepted. With what real reluctance the sequel proves.

Thomas Johnston, M.P., mentioned Sir Leo Money's charges in the House of Commons on February 12, 1925, when he questioned the Rt. Hon. Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister, K.B.E., M.P., then President of the Board of Trade, about *the conduct of certain British Capitalists during the war, in attempting to sell to countries adjacent to Germany, British reserve stocks of Food Stuffs.*

The President of the Board of Trade in the Tory Government took the extraordinary view that Sir Leo Money had described "*the trade as callous, wicked, and abnormal,*" but had stated nowhere that it "*was illegal.*"

Correspondence occurred between him and Sir Leo Money.

Writing from the Board of Trade, under date February 19, 1925, Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister defended this traffic with the enemy in the following terms :—

The essential point is that traders were carrying on in the years 1914-16 a trade which was, for the most part at any rate, not contrary to the law and which was ended, not by prosecution, but by the imposition of a prohibition of export of the commodities concerned except under licence.

Sir Leo Money replied on February 28, 1925, very much to the point, as follows :—

As I interpret your answers, you seem to make excuse for the merchants on the ground that their action in exporting to neutrals adjoining Germany was not strictly illegal in many cases, but merely amounted to driving a coach-and-four through inefficient war regulations.

In other words, even in 1925, a Tory and patriotic

Cabinet minister, defended British merchants, using British ships, British ports, and the British navy, to make a profit legally—and an excessive profit—while feeding the enemy, and from feeding the enemy. At the same time, poor shell-shocked youths, who had been through mire and murder, were executed for desertion in face of the enemy by their own comrades, because their nerves had given out. Those who escaped this fate were returned to “Blighty” and starvation.

II. Starving the Hero and His Family

The starvation and neglect did not wait until the end of the war. In some cases it commenced at once, whilst the war was halfway through its course.

The *Herald*—then endeavouring to be some kind of a general Labour paper—in its issue for June 10, 1916, gave some typical examples of the treatment meted out to work-class “heroes” in war-time:—

Here is the case of a sailor who was on active service during 1915-16. He was invalided to a naval hospital owing to a nervous breakdown, discharged on May 11, but he was so ill he could not be sent home. Pay to his wife was, however, stoppd from that day. Subsequently the woman was informed that her allowance could only now be 10s. a week on which to keep herself and her child. . . .

A shoeing smith, who for many years was a foreman, and if now in health could easily earn £4 a week, was wounded in 1915, kept until 1916 teaching boys, then he was discharged. He had one leg shorter than the other, is still under the doctor; some days cannot work at all. He has been granted a pension of 10s. 9d. a week. He has a wife and seven children, the eldest of whom is 14 and the youngest three weeks' old. . . .

A private in the A.S.C. has a wife and four children dependent, eldest 14, youngest 11 months; discharged as medically unfit in February of this year. Suffers from general debility following from concussion of the brain and a strained back caused from an accident in France, where he served for over nine months. He left the Army with a gratuity of £2 and 17s. 7d. to buy civilian clothes. He made repeated applications for a further grant, and on April 27 received a letter from Chelsea Hospital saying he had been granted a pension of 4s. 8d. a week for six months. The doctor says if he is ever to recover he must have special nourishment and constant care. Does anyone imagine that on 4s. 8d. a week this is possible? . . .

In another case a man was discharged in August, 1915, with his left arm shot through, shattering the muscle. He was

granted a pension of 5s. 3d. a week for six months, from February, 1916. He has a wife and four children dependent on him. He tries to get work, but is unable to do so because he cannot lift. The family is in a very pitiable state. . . .

Another man served twelve years in the Army, five of which he spent in India. He has an exemplary character and the Indian medal; went through the South African War, got the South African Medal, 1889-90; had malarial fever when he served in India, and re-enlisted in Reserves in November, 1914. He was discharged in 1916, applied to Chelsea Hospital, and has received a pension of 4s. 8d. a week. He is now in the London Hospital very ill indeed, and has a wife and five children, the eldest of whom is 15 and the youngest five months. They are being supported by the Board of Guardians. On May 8 this man received a letter to say the pension would be increased to 7s. . . .

A man in the Royal Marines joined in 1915; served in Gallipoli and Egypt; was invalided out in 1916 after suffering enteric fever; has a wife and five children (all under 14). He was just a nervous wreck. He has been granted a pension of 11s. 3d.

Trading with the enemy was good for the tea companies, the tobacco companies, the shipping companies, and, of course, the allied heavy industries. Since it prolonged the struggle, it was not so good for the men who risked their lives in the struggle; and whose agony, and the agony of whose families, required that the struggle end. The profiteers were prepared to prolong the struggle, whilst mouthing patriotic slogans, by enemy trading, and mercilessly exploiting the people at home. In 1916, 2½d. of the price of the 4-lb. loaf was represented in freightage.

The minutes of the War Emergency Workers' National Committee, June 3, 1915, included a report on the difficulties experienced by various Town Councils in renewing municipal coal contracts:—

The various Committees of the Glasgow Corporation are buying for immediate needs only, as if they were to place their contracts for a year at present prices it would mean an increased charge of £400,000 as compared with last year's prices for the same quantity and qualities of coal.

The gas department is now in the market for 750,000 tons, and if compelled to pay present prices the extra charge on this lot alone, according to the manager, would be £300,000. Because of the high prices of coal the cost of household gas is to be raised from 1s. 11d. to 2s. 6d. per 1,000 cubic feet.

Last year the tram department bought 50,000 tons of coal at an average cost of 10s. 8½d. per ton. Offers were recently invited for a six months' supply, and the quotations recommended for acceptance averaged 17s. 10½d. per ton, an increase of 67 per cent. compared with last year.

III. Suppressing Comment

Desire to save the face of this profiteering under cover of patriotism led to the suppression of Free Speech in Glasgow Town Council. *Forward* told the story in its issue for January 1, 1916, in an interesting report of the proceedings of the Town Council, at its last meeting in December, 1914. The report was headed:—

FREE SPEECH

No Prussianism Here

STIRRING PROTEST AT GLASGOW TOWN COUNCIL

Eleven Labour Members Suspended

The letterpress recalled that the sub-committee of the Town Council that dealt with the letting of public halls refused, by six votes to five, the use of St. Andrew's Hall for an Anti-Conscription meeting to be addressed, it was expected, by Ramsay MacDonald, M.P., and John Dillon, M.P.

The report next reproduced the minutes of the Glasgow Finance Committee for November 30, 1915.

These minutes came before the Council and led to the suspension of 11 members. Councillor Taylor was denounced by the chairman for defying the authority of the House, because he insisted on protesting against the meeting being banned. The *Forward* report continues:—

Bailie Maclure, seconded by Bailie Morton, proposed the suspension of Mr. Taylor.

Mr. Dollan moved non-suspension, and this was seconded.

The result of the vote was 54 for suspend and 24 for not suspend. Mr. Taylor left the meeting without comment. . . .

The suspension of Bailie James Stewart was then moved and agreed to by 55 votes to 15.

Councillor Dollan rose to protest, and on the Chairman asking him sharply if he was going to sit down, pretended to be deaf. So he, too, was voted outside.

Councillor Izett, who subsequently became a Moderate and was attacked bitterly by the Labour men, next rose to protest. The Town Clerk complained: "Oh, I say, this is getting stale." Which proved the elegance and diction of the Town Clerk. A Moderate shouted: "He wants to be suspended." Bailie Maclure moved suspension. Coun-

cillor Izett declared that this was not the way to carry on the business of the city. The suspension was carried despite this protest, and Izett refused to leave the chamber, when asked by the chairman, and when approached by two Council officers. Whilst Izett was protesting, Bailie Roderick Scott, who sat next to him, kept up a loud moaning noise. Izett thereupon slapped his face and the moaning stopped.

This scene took place because the authorities wanted conscription forced upon the people without protest. The war-profiteers did not want discussed the treatment meted out to Private Tommy Atkins, and they did not want discussed their profits.

BLACK OUT, 1939

(October 1939)

The war of 1939 has conscripted the mind of the common people. Responsibility for this rests more with the Labour Party and the Communist Party than even with the National Government. Attlee, Greenwood, Pollitt and Gallacher have even more to answer for in this respect than Chamberlain and his colleagues of the National Government. The purpose of the war is to destroy fascism, more popularly termed Hitlerism. In reality it has developed an anti-democratic inertia, fatal to all progress and to all possibility of an early and rational cessation of hostilities. The man who opposes war is shunned like a criminal isolationist. Because he will not take his brother's life he is deemed to be a modern Cain, a monster of evil, standing apart from his fellows, and cynically enquiring: "Am I my brother's keeper?" His conventional despisers do not understand, in their Christian charity, that it is precisely because he feels he is his brother's keeper and declines, therefore, to take his brother's life, he refuses to participate in murder. For this sin of the great refusal he is banished from the company of his fellows and becomes the outcast of a grotesque, blacked-out, fear-ridden civilisation. His fellow-citizens feel that they have been forced into the mire and muck of murder. They object

to this strange being who speaks their tongue but refuses to become part of the brutal spectacle. Chairmen of Tribunals suggest that if he is recognised at all he ought to do some penance for his attitude, make some apology to his fellow-man in the sight of heaven. Yet the man who opposes war does so because he is most sensitive where his fellows are most calloused.

It is true that, at the time of writing, the war merely dribbles on. This easy development of homicide cannot continue for long. It must either be arrested or it will turn into a world massacre. Common sense must either isolate promptly the present conflagration or it will embrace every continent and rage in every ocean. If there should be some who survive the memory of the disaster it will haunt them to their dying day. It is useless to expect diplomacy to arrest the war it did not prevent. Diplomats prepare and speed war. Only the common people can end war.

The United States armament manufacturers supplied war planes to Germany and then armed America for defence against Germany. They discovered that Britain was America's geological shield against Germany, and so proposed to supply planes to Britain as a matter of principle, policy and strategy. All this was done in the name and to the interests of America's plutocrat democracy.

When war was declared, the British Government substituted almost decree for law, and all the nations blacked out their normal life. In London, Edinburgh and Glasgow we were afraid of the Nazi bombs. But Berlin and Vienna were blacked out also. They were afraid of Britain's democratic bombs. The blackout was common and mutual. It expressed nothing more and nothing less than the panic and menace of war, equally wrong on both sides. The declaration of war destroyed chivalry. Respect for human rights, for the individual soul of man, for democracy, for freedom for speech and thought; for law and civilisation and honour: all was blacked out. The war of 1939 gave us the great symbolic blackout in Europe. There could be no better symbol or description of war than this—the blackout. In our cities by night, in our streets, our stairways, and our transport we bear the mark of war. Our lives become strained and uncertain. Darkness develops our nerves and makes us afraid. It enters into our lives. We cannot think and we are not allowed to think. In this war there are to be no great war correspondents. From

military necessity, that good old official expedient for suppressing popular knowledge, we are not to learn at first hand description the facts of the struggle but are to be spoon-fed on what official bureaucracy pleases to tell us. Our lives are good enough to be blacked out. Our minds are too poor to function. Our consciences must not operate. In the twentieth century of the Christian era we have become, body and soul, the property of the State. To believe that our decisions belong to us, that we possess an individual responsibility of manhood and womanhood, that our destiny is with our nature or has some link between the invisible soul of man and its invisible god, is counted treason and sedition by the Church of Christ and by the State that prosecuted Richard Carlile a century ago for refusing to believe that the law of England was based on Christianity.

Versailles made Hitler; and the statesmen who dictated Versailles as a satiric comment on the sacrifices of the dead of 1914-18, are still active demanding the sacrifice of the second generation. The twenty years' armistice was ended when the Soviet Union cynically double-crossed the British Government and signed the peace pact with Germany. We do not say that the Soviet Union has a common interest with Germany. We do allege that it wanted its own particular slice of Poland. British diplomacy has some blame for the massacre and disaster in Poland. War could have been averted even without socialism. Thousands of Polish dead would have been enjoying life. Instead they have gone to their graves—for what? Even under capitalism a second peace conference should have been called and the miseries and shoddy wrongs of Versailles undone.

The war opened by giving extraordinary emergency powers to the Government. As we write the National Register is with us. We are to be tabulated once more under an internal passport system. We are to carry identity cards and be challenged by the police at the street corner. All this in the wake of the blackout with its innumerable paid A.R.P. workers. In many instances these persons have been moved not by patriotism, not by belief in war, but by funk and the meanest of mercenary motives. Under capitalism so many people go to church and so few possess a soul. The extraordinary powers taken unto itself by the Government will not be returned to the people in the days to come without a struggle. Democracy has lost

the war for the time being, whatever Government may win the war. It is as though the gods really do make mad those whom they would destroy. The common people played at socialism with their parliamentary democracy. Their leaders betrayed socialism and to-day socialism, like Christianity and other idealisms, is but a name without meaning, a shadow of things hoped for without body or substance. Revolution has not come from the people. By some strange trick of fate it would seem that those in authority are determined to force war and violence and tyranny upon the people in order that changes that might otherwise have come peacefully shall be forced upon them, not from the left but from the right, not by the peaceful method of propaganda but through the violent turmoil of war and bureaucratic invasion.

The sin of governments, the march of homicide, hide themselves behind a convenient disguise: the magic official description, emergency. To those in all lands responsible for this emergency which impresses me not by its grandeur but by its sorrow, I have one declaration to make: the future of working-class youth is on the top of the soil—not beneath.

MILITARISM AND WOODLAND

[On August 20, 1918, the author completed the third sentence of imprisonment imposed upon him by District Court Martial, for resisting military service, and was returned under escort, from Wandsworth Prison to the Detention Room at Deepcut Camp. Here on August 29, 1918, he received his fourth Court Martial, and was returned to Wandsworth Prison, sentenced to two years' hard labour. Between the dates mentioned—August 20 and August 29—he wrote a number of essays on his experiences. The one bearing the title, "Militarism and Woodland," was published in "The Spur" (Vol. V., No. 5, page 103) for October 1918.]

Since my release from prison I have been mentally and morally barren. The emptiness of life has weighed heavily upon me in this Deepcut detention room, and if I can succeed only in conveying to my readers some understanding of the soul-crushing monotony which now oppresses me, I shall be rendering a service not only to my fellow

C.O.s, but also to the soldiers, who, in one way or another, and to only a little less extent, travail through the same slough of despond.

I have normally small taste for the countryside. Still I know, somewhat, the joy of roaming through the woodlands. From the detention room window I can vision the despoliation which has been made of the country by militarism. Woodland has been turned not into useful residential district but into dreary gravelled sanded stony waste: the trees have given place to dull and ugly huts: and the vision which woodland might have rendered poetical and have matured, the barrenness of soulless hut life has destroyed. Where birds should sing, only guns boom. Where men should love, males only lust. Where the mystery of sex should be wonderfully understood, only the sensualism is apprehended. Men understand the fact of sex in a brutal animal way. But the delicacy of sex, all the subtle tenderness which belongs to it, its tender charm, and the growing innocence which comes with deeper knowledge: all this wondrous realm of real comradeship is beyond the ken of those who dwell in a desert which was once happy woodland. From this window I watch the soldiers and the girls go by. Sex attraction parades its vitality with impudence rather than with dignity. And though with some cases there may be real tender feeling between the parties, in many, if not most, a conscious vulgarity obtrudes itself. Militarism destroys the woodland and degrades the mystery of life. It vulgarises and prostitutes all that it touches.

Thus in the guard room, men on guard idle round the hours of the clock. In the huts, the men, off-parade, are appalled by the barrenness of life. All comfort has vanished from it: and with that loss of comfort departs the sense of delicacy, that loving touch of home, which makes angels out of outcasts, and saints out of loafers. Reduced to its barest need life becomes abnormally brutal; and so the soldier, with his simple life, so far as comfort is concerned, and his regulated burden of duty and obligation, so far as military necessity demands, becomes something less than a man for all normal purposes. The craving of sex is fostered by his barrack-enforced asceticism. The comradeship of human difference is lost sight of, because the vision of it never penetrates the gloom of dull despair and hopeless discipline the war has developed. So the soldier expresses the barrenness of life.

Yet the sons of men, degraded and depressed by "Christian" institutions and capitalist newspapers, are not bad fellows. I have heard the stories of expeditionary men, received their hand clasps, acknowledged their comradeship, and realised the wonderful drawing together which is taking place between us socialist C.O.s and the soldiers who have fought in Flanders. Stay-at-home civilians and some Red Caps may hate us, but the genuine soldier who has fought and suffered knows no such hatred. He is one of us, and we are all the boys.

But militarism has destroyed the woodland, the woodland which hallows life, which evidences its mystery, which makes us feel so marvellously at one with all nature. It has seized on our poor human nature, which has been dwarfed by the slum and arrested by gold, and denied us the right to know and to grow. Militarism has discovered woman in slavery and added to her chains. It has found her ignorant and outraged her in addition. It has seized her son and conscripted her womb. Herself, intended by nature to be the channel of progressive revolution throughout the ages, she is but deemed the gutter pipe of venereal disease.

So the war goes on. So woman is deemed a hanger-on of man, an instrument to satisfy his lust, and perpetuate his ambitions. Good Christian divines, labour leaders, newspaper men, ex-feminists, all encourage this loathsome conception of woman's function in life.

Yes, I honour woman. I reverence mother, sister, and sweetheart, because I realise how much we have in common as human beings, how small is the difference between us as sexes, and yet how uniting and vitally harmonious are the consequences, of these subtle differences. Understanding this, I oppose the militarism which is corrupting the youth of both sexes. As I look out upon the desert which has supplanted woodland in this district, I vision how militarism thrives in the desert; the desert of barren love, of barren knowledge, of barren comradeship. I turn from the window and hear the sounds that come from the guard room. I hear the cry of human nature going up against this barren life of militarism. Fellowship, knowledge, true holy love are demanding to have their place in life; and so, once again there is the writing on the wall to be read and understood by all who will read and understand. Militarism is doomed. One day the woodland will take

us children of the earth into her haunts and glades, and recall us to the romance of love and peace. She will demand that we shall eat of the fruit of reverence and peace, the fruit of the *tree of knowledge* of good and evil.

ONCE CALLED A HERO!

(August 1939)

The case of soldier Thomas Parker, recorded in another essay, is typical of the treatment of war veterans. Sir Ian Hamilton asked the B.B.C. to let him make a "Week's Good Cause" appeal on behalf of the South African Veterans' Association. He was refused.

Sir Ian Hamilton attended the conference of the British Legion in Scotland, held at Aberdeen, on Saturday, June 24, 1939. In his speech he said:—

People forget war veterans very quickly. If we have another war it looks as if the British Legion itself will be overwhelmed. The poppies will all be sold on behalf of the new lot.

General Sir Ian Hamilton is the Grand President of the South African War Veterans' Association. He was unable to attend their annual conference at Salisbury, because of his Aberdeen engagement. But a message was read from him, explaining that the appeal to the B.B.C. was signed among other officials, by at least a dozen famous generals. He declared that the appeal was made on behalf of

Some ten thousand old soldiers, many of whom, at the average age of 63, find themselves without employment, and two years to go before they can claim the Old Age Pension.

Soldier Thomas Parker was literally done to death by neglect in June 1933. Sir Ian Hamilton's statement proves that the neglect of the war veterans is continuous through the years. One may go backwards and forwards and find instances galore of the neglect of, and contempt for, the ex-Serviceman. Kipling made this neglect the theme of his poetry and so attained immortality. "Once Called a Hero" could be inscribed over many a neglected pauper's grave.

Lance-Corporal John Albert Cross, of Bow, served in the Sussex Regiment during the Great War of 1914-1918.

Before enlistment, he was a car-man and enjoyed splendid health. On enlistment, the medical authorities certified his physical development as excellent. He was discharged from the army with shrapnel lodged in his thigh. He walked with a limp; had pains in his leg; and could not fully extend his knee. Under the pension scale partly exposed in this booklet, his disablement was assessed at 25 per cent. He was awarded a pension of 4/8 per week.

Cross was wounded in January, 1916, and remained in the hospital till March of that year. In July, 1916, he was taken back to hospital for treatment of the old wound. In August, 1916, he was discharged from the army on account of this same wound. He continued to suffer from this wound for five years but received no treatment for his sufferings. In 1921 an abscess formed in his leg, and he developed kidney and lung trouble. Christmas of that year saw him back in hospital for the removal of the shrapnel. He was found to be suffering from tuberculosis of the lungs. On March 30, 1922, Cross returned home very ill and died on April 3, 1922. His doctor certified:—

I am quite satisfied that the tuberculosis originated from the gunshot wound six years ago.

I have had a large experience of similar cases in India, and have frequently found that a wound was the origin of tuberculosis disease even after some years of freedom from any symptoms. The wound was quite healed at the time of his death. The post-mortem examination revealed: (1) Signs of tubercle in the lungs, caseating masses and nodules, no cavities; (2) disease of the aortic valve, with much cardiac dilation and hypertrophy (weight of heart, 18 oz.); (3) old entry and exit wound scars on the inner aspect of the right thigh, obviously due to a gunshot wound; (4) liver and spleen much congested, kidneys also congested.

In my opinion, the cause of death was pulmonary congestion following pulmonary tuberculosis and heart disease, originating in debility following the gunshot wound.

The doctor added:—

I have had considerable experience, both among British and Indian troops, of similar cases. In India I was in charge of a large number of tubercular cases, every one of whom had been a perfectly healthy man before receiving a gunshot or shrapnel wound. I therefore had no hesitation in forming the opinion which I stated at the inquest.

The doctor proceeded to describe how, owing to wounds, it had been impossible for Cross to work, and how, owing to his small pension, he had suffered from continuous malnutrition.

Two years later another case came to light. The *News of the World* for October 26, 1924, published the following item:—

V.C. DIES IN POVERTY

Guardsman Who Attacked Machine-Gun Post
Single-Handed.

"Almost penniless, Thomas Whitham, V.C., who won the honour when a private in the 1st Coldstream Guards, has died of peritonitis at Oldham Royal Infirmary. Whitham won the Cross on July 31, 1917, the opening day of the Battle of Ypres. His battalion were storming position on Piekem Ridge, and were held up by enfilade fire from a machine-gun post. He attacked the gun crew single-handed, and his bravery enabled his comrades to advance. Deceased leaves a widow and six children. Prior to his admittance to the infirmary he had been out of work, and had to raise money on his medal.

Now for another aspect of the treatment meted out to war's victims. During 1917, Philip Snowden, not then expecting to be a Viscount, courageously and persistently exposed such practices at the Front as the shooting of the

SHELL-SHOCKED KILMARNOCK BOY

for "desertion in the face of the enemy." Thomas Johnston recorded the story in *Forward*, for November 17, 1917, as follows:—

We have seen the letters in this case, the broken-hearted boy writing to his parents describing the pains in his head (from previous shell-shock) and how on his way to the trenches again, a shell burst close to him and destroyed what small nervous control he had left, and how he walked away, and how he was now awaiting court martial. "Don't forget to send a parcel and I will let you know what I get in my court martial. . . . Your ever loving son, Stanley."

We have also seen the official intimation to the parents that the "sentence" was duly executed on the 29th day of August.

Poor Stanley was persuaded to enlist by the recruiting appeals of Harry Lauder! When he enlisted he was a "hero," like John Albert Cross, and Thomas Whitman.

On behalf of the War Office, Mr. Macpherson declined "to interfere with the discretion of the Army Command in such cases." Let this fact be told to every recruit, to every conscript.

THE VANSITTARTS DINED WITH HITLER

(May 1942)

Mr. G. Ward Price is described in *Who's Who* as Director, Associated Press. It is explained further that he is Special Foreign Correspondent of the *Daily Mail* and served that journal as war correspondent, beginning with the First Balkan War.

In October, 1937, he published through Messrs. George G. Harrap & Co., Ltd., his book defending and eulogising Hitler and Mussolini, entitled *I Know These Dictators*. A second edition of this work appeared after the first month of printing and a third edition in November, 1937. It was a best seller. In view of the attitude of the *Daily Mail* and the Associated Press allied newspapers towards Socialists and Pacifists since the outbreak of war we have no hesitation in directing attention to Ward Price's eulogy of the dictators, which exposes so completely the part played by the reactionary—and so-called patriotic—press in foisting these dictators on Europe and the world.

Ward Price divided his book into two parts, *Hitler and Mussolini*. Each part is divided into 9 chapters.

Chapter I. of the Hitler section (page 7) says:

The Fascist and Nazi revolutions are too momentous to be judged with personal bias. Outside their countries the men at the head of these regimes are called "dictators." That term is accurate in the sense that their authority is supreme and overruling, but it does mean that Hitler and Mussolini have subjected reluctant and resentful people to their will. . . . Their functions are defined by the titles of Fuhrer and Duce that they bear. Both of them have the support and approval of a much greater proportion of their fellow-countrymen than has ever voted for the Government of any democratic state. They came to power by constitutional methods.

The work consists of 250 pages of eulogy of the dictators.

Facing page 208 is reproduced a Mussolini letter in three languages—English, French and Italian—addressed to Ward Price. Beneath is given the following English translation:

Head of the Government.

Personal.

My Dear Price,

I am very glad that you have become a director of the

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"Daily Mail," and I am sure that your very popular and widely-circulated newspaper will continue to be a sincere friend of Fascist Italy.

With best wishes and greetings.

(Signed) Mussolini.

Rome, 11th November, 1926.

In this work (pages 218-221), Ward Price describes Mussolini as he saw him in September, 1923. He reproduces from the *Daily Mail* of that time the impressions he formed of Mussolini as a patriot, a man of character, an Italian Raleigh and Drake. Fourteen years later he repeats this eulogistic description as being sound. The *Daily Mail* eulogy of Hitler and Mussolini was not so much casual tribute as a studied and consistent policy.

Ward Price describes Hitler's first formal dinner party in 1934 (page 29):

. . . I was one of four foreign guests at the first dinner-party which the Chancellor gave on December 19, 1934. The others were Viscount Rothermere; his son, Mr. Esmond Harmsworth; and a well-known member of the Anglo-German fellowship, Mr. E. W. D. Tennant.

Ward Price describes the dinner and continues (pages 30-31):

When dinner was over, Hitler rose, saying: "Will those who don't want to smoke come with me into the room on the right, and the rest go into the room on the left?" Lord Rothermere, who is also a non-smoker, with Herr von Ribbentrop and some of the ladies, accompanied the Chancellor. I went with the smokers, and was soon in conversation with General Goering, who wore his blue Air Force uniform with white lapels and a cross-hilted sword which he has specially designed for that service.

On pages 152-153, Ward Price quotes at length and approvingly, parts of a letter Hitler addressed to Viscount Rothermere on May 3, 1935, denouncing war as an instrument of national policy, and pointing out that the blood poured out on battlefields is wasted. On pages 158 and 159, the author depicts Lord Rothermere in Venice anxiously waiting for news of the German elections, and rejoicing at the increased poll of the National Socialists—*Hitler's Party!*

On pages 32 and 33, Ward Price describes the Vansittarts.

During the Olympic games, Ward Price attended a large State banquet at which above a hundred were

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present. He describes all the ridiculous ceremony with gusto, and continues (page 32):

The meal was served at a huge horse-shoe table. On the Chancellor's right sat Lady Vansittart, the wife of the British Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, who was then visiting Berlin. . . .

On page 33, we read:

As Sir Robert Vansittart stood in the middle of the room after dinner, laughing and joking with Herr Hess, the Chancellor's deputy, there was a noticeable contrast between the glittering splendour of the star and cordon of the Grand Cross of St. Michael and St. George worn by the one and the field-service-like simplicity of the khaki uniform of the other.

CHRISTIANITY, MILITARISM AND ESPIONAGE

(December 1942)

The recent discussions on 18B, the rabid "Second Front" propaganda of the cowardly and despicable stay-at-home hireling militarists of the Communist Party, direct attention to the dangerous nature of war-time clamour. Lady Astor uttered the simple truth as to the part played by Stalin in the war and immediately is denounced at "inspired" Communist Party gatherings of workers as the author of "*irresponsible, mischievous, dangerous and subversive*" statements. The Beaverbrook press features these worthless and unprincipled denunciations to seal the alliance between Lord Beaverbrook and William Gallacher. What a world! This pretence of hysteria is the comedy which hides from understanding the tragedy of our times.

The recent debate on 18B Regulation in the House of Commons shows how impossible it is for people to think clearly on current wrong. Commander Bower is right unquestionably in his expressed view that a large number of perfectly innocent, inoffensive, and loyal citizens are being detained illegally to cover up the dereliction of possibly six persons who may be a menace. Our comrade, R. R. Stokes, of the Labour Party Peace Aims Group, is right when he characterises as outrageous the cowardly animosity displayed against the unfortunate detainees. Maxton made a persuasive speech, asking Herbert Morrison to "liberate every person

possible." But no one seems to think that the principle of 18B is thoroughly and completely wrong. Commander Sir Archibald Southby made an excellent speech, quoting effectively Blackstone, and showing how the common people had been tricked in the alleged amendment of the original declaration. The fraud exposed by Sir Archibald Southby literally takes one's breath away on reflection. We can all recall the storm in the House of Commons. The original discussion was summarised in the *Word* at the time. M.P.s protested. The national press pretended to protest. The regulations were amended. We were told that the Law Officers of the Crown had embodied the principles of the amendments. Yet, later, the Highest Court in the land declared that no actual amendment had been made. In this debate, Herbert Morrison, who was opposed to the original regulations, soberly advised the House that no amendment was intended. He said this rejoicingly and aggressively. But the House accepted this attitude, which means that, at the beginning of these regulations and their discussion, the parliamentary opposition and the newspaper noisiness was undiluted mockery and humbug. No one said 18B was wrong and unnecessary. But we tell our readers in the country, in both Houses of Parliament, and on the Government Benches, that 18B is unnecessary precisely because it is wrong and violates a fundamental principle of justice and human liberty. War is bad enough without the added fundamental negation of an inherent right of human liberty constitutionally registered only by the heroism and struggle of the best and bravest of our ancestors. We are jealous of their struggle and their legacy.

Many of our 18B internees have been Fascists and some adhere to the ideas of Fascism. This fact makes many critics wonder at our opposition to the internments. We are advised that there are limits to toleration. One Freethinker refers us to the Utilitarian doctrine of the Victorian Rationalists. We are not in love with Utilitarianism and prefer the radical libertarianism of Richard Carlile. We believe that liberty can take care of itself and that democracy does not need to pay Fascism the tribute of imitation. Fascism is an evil thing and ought to be denounced. Its ways are no less evil when camouflaged as degrees of democracy afraid of destruction. Under cover of such decrees Fascism creeps into the decencies of the Commonwealth and destroys its virtue. Then principle surrenders to power.

Our opposition to 18B is based on the fact that we believe that *the liberty of the citizen is a legal right to be maintained and defended in times of crisis and clamour*, and not a fancy exhibition of alleged freedom to be pronounced and toyed with in periods of comparative calm, when the Executive of the day has no intention of challenging the citizen's right. We believe that umbrellas—and constitutional rights are citizens' umbrellas—are for use on rainy days and not on clear ones. The importance of this truth can be illustrated by a reference to the United States in the year 1918. Time and place permit us to discuss the facts, and so to illustrate our contention, without rousing prejudice.

The year 1918 opened by a declaration of the Kaiser, that the preservation of Christianity was the issue at stake in the great conflict, and that he was on the side of Christianity. He elevated God to the high command of the German army and avowed that "*God's hand is seen to prevail.*" Woodrow Wilson, in the name of the United States, speaking officially, and Lloyd George, in the name of England, replied to the Kaiser by announcing that the English-speaking democracies were trusting in heaven. In the United States, the bond salesmen and managers of the Liberty Loans prepared statements for the press saying, like their enemy the Kaiser, that Christianity was at stake. Governor Lowden, of Illinois, announced at a meeting of ministers that the war was "*a conflict between the spiritual resources of the world and the national resources of the world.*" The United States represented the spiritual resources. Wall Street stood for Jesus of Nazareth. The Kaiser represented the material resources. His was the cause of Woden. And so it was proposed to make *Onward, Christian Soldiers* the battle hymn of the United States Army, on the ground that the American forces were "*the reserve forces of the Almighty.*" The press throughout the great republic pictured United States soldiers singing and playing *Onward, Christian Soldiers* throughout all the streets of the cities of Europe, in the belief that "*it will proclaim everywhere that America has a divine objective.*"

Henry Watterson of the *Louisville Courier-Journal* declared that "*the Kaiser never appeals to Christ.*" So far as words went, this simply was not true. George Washington did not appeal to Christ. Abraham Lincoln did not appeal to Christ. Neither Washington nor Lincoln believed in militarism. Each took to the sword with loathing and

both assumed power with diffidence and a stern determination to surrender it back to the people. They were each superior, in personal dignity and worth, to the Kaiser. And they did not employ the term "Christ" as a charm or a name of jargon to be played with for military purposes. The Kaiser did. He beat Woodrow Wilson at the game of appearing pious. Thus the American journalist was talking nonsense in the name of patriotism: nonsense and falsehood.

The American Expeditionary Forces were getting into action in 1918. United States conversation tended everywhere to be war-talk. Philosophy and intelligence were at a discount. Henry Watterson had to make headlines somehow. It never occurred to him to splash the Truth across his pages. He might have said that a War Lord could not express the spirit and teaching of Jesus of Nazareth. He might have denounced the Kaiser's appeal to Christ as moral blasphemy. This would have been to think. It was beyond him. He preferred the lie: the Kaiser never appealed to Christ.

Woodrow Wilson pleased the Christian Ministers throughout the United States by distributing small editions of the gospel to the American Expeditionary Forces. On each fly leaf he had caused a piety paragraph to be reproduced. According to Henry Watterson this was appealing to Christ. But the Kaiser slept with a New Testament on the lightstand by his bed. He told the first gathering of German chaplains to the front: "*We must make Christ the ideal of our practical life.*" At Christmastide 1917 Elsie, the fair daughter of Field Marshal von Hindenburg, later to become President of the German Republic and the inaugurator of Hitler's regime, sent to the soldiers fighting under her father a hymn which read as follows:—

**Christ Jesus gave his life for me;
From every debt I now am free.
He has procured the Father's favour,
He has become my gracious Saviour.**

**He to the bayonet thrust gives vigour,
The joy to aim, to pull the trigger.
My aid is Jesus, that I know—
On to the foe, on to the foe!**

The New York *Sun* quoted the first two lines of the second stanza, and lamented Elsie's state of mind. The *Sun* added that the words showed "*the extent of the re-*

volution which must take place in German sentiment before any discussion can be possible between Germans and Americans."

The lines are crude and the sentiment an outrage. But the *Sun's* comment was humbug. United States clergymen made Jesus a man of war from the first day that the United States entered the war. That was said to be patriotism. So was Elsie von Hindenburg's atrocious hymnology in German.

A Los Angeles divine asserts that Jesus was the man who "put fist into pacifist." A pious pun, but hardly a Christian sentiment.

The pious editor of one of the most reactionary papers published in the United States referred to Jesus as the "Christ of Anger and action—a Christ who will fight and kill. He exclaimed, in ecstasy:—

How glorious is that lashing fury of Jesus Christ, who would take bayonet and hand grenade and bomb and rifle, and do the work of deadliness.

To please this editor, and his readers, the United States Government, with President Roosevelt's approval, shipped 400,000 Testaments, purchased from the Bible Society, to American soldiers in Europe. The Government sent the Testament to American citizens in arms abroad, and the United States sent citizens at home to jail for quoting and believing in the Testament. Which brings us, at last, to the crux of the story.

In Los Angeles, the Rev. Floyd Hardin, the Rev. Robert Whitaker, and a Quaker theological student, named Harold Storey, were sentenced each to six months in the county jail and \$1200 fine. Storey had said, with justice, that it was "difficult for many Christians to conceive of the Carpenter of Nazareth thrusting a bayonet into the breast of a brother."

The prosecuting attorney, demanding Storey's conviction, fiercely quoted as true Christian teaching, "But these mine enemies, bring hither and slay them before me."

Whitaker and Hardin shared Storey's sentiments. A stupid Court, in all the glory of its legal pomp, decided that they were degrading Christianity by using it as a cloak for disloyalty!

In *The Truth Seeker*, New York, the National Free-

thinker weekly, for April 13, 1918, Dr. Bowden, Associate Editor of that journal with George E. MacDonald, took issue with Governor Lowden's doctrine that the God of the Kaiser and the God of Joshua were different and opposed deities. Under the heading, "THE CLERGY ARRAIGNED," Professor Bowden wrote:—

We have carefully compared the reputed offences of the German emperor with the hideous doings of God as related in the Bible, and there seems to be but one conclusion to draw from the comparison, and it is this: The former received his inspiration from a careful study of the performance of the latter. Indeed, it is well known that the Prussian generals who published books explanatory of the German idea of war, based their notions directly upon the lessons they had learned from a very painstaking study of the Holy Scriptures. And it is also well to note that not one of these German works has been answered from the biblical standpoint which forms the groundwork for their authority.

Thereupon, the New York postmaster, the Hon. Mr. Patten, dropped *The Truth Seeker* a note saying that the Solicitor of the Post Office Department, the Hon. W. H. Lamar of Washington, had pronounced *The Truth Seeker* of April 1918 *unmailable under the Espionage Act*.

Under the Espionage Act! Six weeks of enquiry passed. Editor George E. MacDonald wrote the Hon. Solicitor. The latter answered all correspondence promptly and politely. But he refused to say wherein *The Truth Seeker* had offended.

At last, a happy letter caused Mr. Lamar to relent and to explain.

Mr. MacDonald pointed out that it grieved him to be accused of disloyalty without having it explained to him wherein he had offended, since he had never intended disloyalty. He was a member of a Liberty Loan Committee in his own town and could account personally for sales amounting to \$6000. On the date that his paper was suppressed, he was doing work for the American Red Cross. His ancestral blood had soaked American soil from Bunker Hill to Bull Run. His two sons were serving overseas and so the Service Flag decorated the windows of his home. Was he the kind of a citizen to have his loyalty impeached in this insidious and anonymous denunciation by some unknown scribe whose American history dated from the arrival of the emigrant ship from which he came ashore at Ellis Island?

The Hon. Solicitor replied that in view of what Mac-

Donald had said, there would be no proceedings, and while it was not the general practice of his office to indicate to publishers particular matter appearing in an issue of a publication regarded as non-mailable by the Department under the Espionage Act, he would advise MacDonald that *the paragraph from the Professor's article formed the basis of the ruling of the Department.*

So that was it. A citizen was guilty of espionage—that is to say, he was a spy of the enemy, or gave him aid and comfort—who argued that the Kaiser derived his inspiration and example from the intense nationalism of the Old Testament and the Old Testament conception of God.

PRISONERS AT THE BAR

(May 1943)

George Pleydell Bancroft, Clerk of the Assize for the Midland Circuit since 1913, has many interesting and valuable notes and anecdotes in his volume of recollections, published in 1939, under the title of "Stage and Bar," by Faber and Faber, Ltd., of Russell Square, London. Bancroft, the son of Sir Squire Bancroft and Marie Wilton, is the author of the famous play, "The Ware Case."

In these recollections Bancroft recalls the stand made on behalf of prisoners by Maurice Healy, K.C., who has been Recorder of Coventry since 1941. Born on November 16, 1887, Healy was called to the Irish Bar in 1913 and to the English Bar in 1914. When he was a Junior in 1922, the historic incident occurred in which he proved himself a hero of very unusual courage.

The Judge of the Assize was Mr. Justice Horridge. Born in 1857, Horridge became a K.C. in 1901, and sat as Liberal M.P. for Manchester E., 1906-10. In that year he became a Judge of the King's Bench Division of the High Court. He died in 1938. He lived much too long for a man of such reactionary views; and how he managed to be returned as a Liberal for such a radical city as Manchester, with all its traditions of freedom of

thought, it is hard to understand. Bancroft refers mildly to the reactionary impertinence of Horridge in three classic sentences of delightful understatement, and then proceeds to describe Healey's reaction to the judge's attitude when he was made aware of it:—

The Judge of the Assize was that able Civil judge, Mr. Justice Horridge. In trying crime he had a peculiar idiosyncrasy. He did not approve of allowing a prisoner on trial to be seated in the dock. The prisoner, innocent in our Law until proved guilty, had to stand, broadly speaking, throughout the proceedings.

Well, Healy, on hearing of this was amazed, and out of court expressed his views with some degree of Irish emphasis. Then it happened at Nottingham one day that counsel for the defence asked the judge if the prisoner might be seated. This was after his trial had proceeded for a considerable time.

"Why?" asked the judge sternly. Whereupon the prisoner fainted. There was a good deal of comment about this, and at Derby, the next town, the historic incident happened.

Bancroft gives the shorthand note in full:—

Upon the prisoner's plea of not guilty being taken by me and the jury sworn, Healy rose very quickly and spoke very quietly throughout what follows.

Mr. Maurice Healy: "My lord, may the prisoner sit down?"

Mr. Justice Horridge (sternly): "Why?"

Mr. Maurice Healy: "With great respect, my Lord, why not?"

Mr. Justice Horridge: "Because I do not allow prisoners to be seated unless there is some special reason for it."

Mr. Maurice Healy: "Your lordship misunderstands me. I am claiming this for the prisoner as a matter of right."

Mr. Justice Horridge (firmly): "I disallow it."

Mr. Maurice Healy: "I would ask your lordship to allow me to argue it. Before ever the Criminal Evidence Act was passed it was the rule of law laid down in many authorities."

Mr. Justice Horridge: "Will you cite me one?"

Mr. Maurice Healy: "If I may, I will cite from Archbold (the textbook). I am citing from page 163, where it is laid down: 'The prisoner is to be brought to the bar without irons, shackles, or other restraint, unless there is danger of escape and ought to be used with all the humanity and gentleness which is consistent with the nature of the thing, and under no other terror, or uneasiness than that which proceeds from a sense of his guilt and the misfortune of his present circumstances.' Now, my lord, if the prisoner were here charged with a misdemeanour and not a felony, it would not be necessary for him to go into the dock at all. He could be accommodated with a seat by his counsel so that he might instruct him. If that were so before the passing of the Criminal Evidence Act, when the prisoner could not be a witness, it is all the more so after the

passing of the Act. How can a prisoner be placed in a position in which no witness for the prosecution could be asked to stand with an anxiety upon his mind, which no witness for the prosecution could have, before he went into the box to give his evidence, and after that to go in to give his evidence on his behalf, to stand the ordeal of examination and cross-examination? I submit under those circumstances that the prisoner is put in such a position of uneasiness as is not contemplated by the law. I think I am right in saying that your lordship is the only judge that follows that practice. Either this is a matter of practice or law. If it is a matter of practice I submit that practice ought to be governed by the same principles, and the very last judge who came this circuit never allowed any case to be opened for the prosecution before he directed that the prisoner was to be accommodated with a seat if he so desired. I submit with great respect that there ought to be uniformity. The prisoner comes to the bar as an innocent man. He is entitled not only to every right but to every privilege which is granted to every other person in court. When your lordship comes into court we all stand up because your lordship represents the Majesty of the King, but your lordship also represents the courtesy of the King, and when your lordship sits down we are all allowed, by that courtesy, to resume our ease as enables us to perform our respective duties, and I submit that that courtesy should be extended as much to an unconvicted prisoner as to anybody in court. I am extremely sorry that I should make a demand which is unpleasant to your lordship, but there is something which all counsel should do, and that is that they should have courage in defending the rights and in defending the liberties of their clients, and the constitution of this country has never been more jealous than in pruning all relics of harsh and cruel treatment of prisoners. For this reason I submit that as a matter of right the prisoner, unless there is a danger of escape, should be allowed to be seated. My lord, I have spoken boldly, but I hope I have not said anything that was undue."

Mr. Justice Horridge: "Mr. Healy, you have made your submission with all due respect. I intend to control, until I am told by a superior authority that I ought not to do it, the conduct of the court in which I preside. In my view if there are special reasons, or I think the trial is likely to be a long one, I allow the prisoner to be seated, but I recognise no right on the part of the prisoner or counsel to say as to how prisoners are to be treated. Prisoners will stand unless there are special reasons for their being seated. Where I think it right I shall direct them to be seated."

Mr. Maurice Healy: "If your lordship pleases."

The case then proceeded. On the fourth witness for the prosecution being called:

Mr. Justice Horridge: "You have a good many more witnesses, Mr. Winning?"

Mr. Winning (for the prosecution): "Yes, my lord."

Mr. Justice Horridge: "This case will last some time. Therefore the prisoner may be seated."

Mr. Maurice Healy: "I am much obliged, my lord."

Bancroft records to the credit of Horridge that he bore no malice for this rebuke. Immediately after the argument he said to Bancroft: "Healy did that very well."

Bancroft adds:—

But the fact remains that from the publication of the incident the invariable practice of every judge is to order that the prisoner be seated immediately before he has been "given in charge" of the jury.

I think the whole handling of the difficulty by Healy was masterly both in its courtesy and in its courage. That day, 16th February, 1922, at Derby Assizes is very prominent in my memory.

It deserves to be a prominent day and it should be remembered as a day of credit to Maurice Healy. It never ought to have been necessary for him to have made such a stand. That he had to do so is a disgrace to Bench and Bar alike.

The incident referred to and the entire question of the status in Court of an accused person is dealt with admirably by Albert Lieck, lately Chief Clerk of the Bow Street Police Court, in his excellent "Bow Street World," published in 1938.

Mr. Lieck quotes from Stephen. "A Digest of Law of Evidence," Article 94:

The burden of proving that any person has been guilty of a crime is on the person who asserts it.

Mr. Lieck says that this quotation "*enshrines what is called the presumption of innocence.*" He continues:—

A person accused, we proudly boast in England, is held to be innocent until he is proved to be guilty. That, though an undoubted proposition of law, emphatically restated in 1935 by the House of Lords, is in practice often simply untrue.

It is true of many prisoners in many courts, of perhaps all prisoners in some courts. But of many in some courts it is sufficient to be charged, for guilt to be assumed by the bench. The burden of proof is, from the beginning, unlawfully shifted to the accused to prove his innocence. Sometimes he succeeds, sometimes he fails. The failure goes unnoticed because the immense majority of persons charged are in fact guilty of the offence alleged. Of this majority by far the greater majority plead guilty. In some courts it is made a matter of aggravation not to plead guilty.

Here I remark that the placing of a man in the dock already begins to whittle away the presumption of innocence. The dock is too freely used. It is merely a place of restraint for a person who may become violent. If there is no reason to expect this he

ought to be allowed to be placed at the bar and not to be shut into a cage.

Its use is arbitrary. In some police courts every accused person is put in the dock. In the metropolitan police courts persons arrested go into the dock: persons summoned stand (or sit) at the bar. The summons may be for outrageous violence. The charge may be obstruction with a motor car, where the accused has been arrested on a warrant, endorsed for bail, merely because he has failed to appear to a summons.

I am told by experienced gaolers that it is easier to control a violent person in the dock. In thirty years I have seen less than half a dozen violent prisoners. Moreover, the time comes when the prisoner, of disposition mild or violent, has the right to go into the witness-box to give evidence on his own behalf. The only assault I have ever known of on a magistrate was not by a prisoner, but by a man who suddenly rushed from beside the witness-box and struck the magistrate on the bench. That represented carelessness on the part of the officials, or bad construction of the court.

All defendants ought to be allowed to sit, whether in the dock or elsewhere, if their case will take time. In these days they are frequently invited to do so. But one judge was until recently on the bench who refused counsel's request for his client to sit down, with the result that the man fainted with fatigue. This is to punish before conviction. How can a man who is physically tired conduct his defence? or properly attend to what is going on? The man should, of course, have sat down, and braved the consequences. Had the judge then ordered the gaolers to compel him to stand, the judge and the gaolers would have been guilty of assault. There is no law compelling a prisoner to stand in court.

There are not many counsel as fearless as Horace Avory in standing up for their clients. In that fine book, "My Sixty Years in the Law," Mr. Ashley tells how the cruel old Sir William Hardman, after trying to get a woman convicted against whom there was no case, ordered her to remain in the dock when acquitted. Avory said, "This is monstrous, and unless she is released at once I shall advise her to bring an action against you for false imprisonment." She was at once allowed to go. A judge is a great man, but, emphatically, not above the law.

In advocating the almost complete disuse of the dock, I shall be sure to be reminded of Fowler and Milsom, the murderers, and of how Fowler made a violent attempt to get at Milsom to do him an injury or perhaps to kill him in the dock. But everyone knew what wicked fellows these were, and what an exceptionally brutal ruffian Fowler was. The officials knew that precautions must be taken, and took them though hardly sufficient as it turned out. Such precautions were not necessary with a feeble old man whom I saw in the dock charged with murder, because weary of life, he and his old wife had agreed to commit suicide together, and she had succeeded.

By all means have a cage for dangerous beasts, but for men and women who are not dangerous beasts the presumption of

innocence demands a trial in such moderate comfort as can be compassed in a court of justice.

But comfort is rarely studied for anyone in court.

Mr. Lieck draws attention to the poverty of many persons who are compelled, on that account, to submit to all the errors and bullyings that can be imposed upon them in a Court of Summary Jurisdiction. To these people a magistrate, however ignorant he may be of the principles of law, is at once the law and above the law.

Over a period of years a notorious offender in this respect has been a Metropolitan Police Court Magistrate since 1931. Mr. Mullins is not without legal knowledge and has distinguished himself as an author. His behaviour on the Bench is less forgivable on that account for he is a man of authority by virtue of his knowledge and not merely on account of his position. We sometimes suspect that his outbursts on the Bench must have a physical explanation. There must be health trouble, probably liver disorder, to turn a man of knowledge into an ignoramus and a bully at the time when his learning ought to be informing his discretion and controlling his judgment.

On Wednesday, December 2, 1942, Mr. Mullins, at the London South Western Police Court, tried a woman for the theft of a book.

The woman was Celia Naomi James, 32, of Longfield-street, Wandsworth. She was accused of stealing a 4s. book from a Putney shop.

She was described as a housekeeper.

Mr. Mullins used his position to air his impertinent opinions about the women who are housekeepers. Said this mockery of justice to the Court and whatever public were permitted to be present:—

I don't like this word housekeeper. It usually means something immoral.

Courts have nothing to do with morals. Mr. Mullins is not a judge of morals. Whether women are mistresses or otherwise is none of his business. Nor did it arise in the case. *The charge was the theft of a book.* That, and that alone, was the business of Mr. Mullins. After all, whatever legal airs and graces he may give to himself, he presides merely over a Court of Summary Jurisdiction. He does that not too well.

Detective Anderson said that Celia Naomi James was employed as a housekeeper. Part of her work was to look after a woman who was very ill.

Evidence was given on the alleged theft. Mr. Mullins brushed such a mere question of fact, the actual charge and his sole concern, to one side. He had to express once more, his opinions. He did so with gross arrogance, judicial incompetence, and the most outrageous misbehaviour. Did we persist in the practice of our ancestors, Claude Mullins ought to have been taken from the Bench and placed in the public stocks as a warning to magistrates not to exceed their powers. With a grand air, this magistrate clowned out this absurd sentence:—

I shall give her the benefit of the doubt and assume that she is a real housekeeper and not a mistress.

The charge was stealing a book. The other question was never before him. He had no right to assume anything as to her housekeeping. He had no power to give her the benefit of the doubt. Presumably the liver disorder eased itself for on the only charge on which he had the right to speak, he sentenced Celia Naomi James to one day's imprisonment.

Hilde Marchant reported the case for the "Daily Mirror," for Thursday, December 3, 1942:—

I phoned Mrs. Claud Mullins, described as a housewife, and asked her if the word "housekeeper" carried any implications of immorality for her.

"No nothing at all," she replied.

I quoted her husband's words in court, and she said: "Well, I don't know the case."

When I asked her again if, on its own value, the word housekeeper meant immorality to her she repeated, "Nothing at all."

When the conduct of a magistrate brings his court, and justice itself, into contempt, it is time that he was retired into obscurity. Yet we have records of abuses, not only in the lower courts, but in the very courts of the King's Bench itself. One day we will list and expose the judges concerned, giving a full record of their misdemeanours.

In Glasgow, many poor folk come to us daily for advice, full of fear and trembling. Over 100 people consult us nearly every week. We place our knowledge

and energy freely at their service and the result is an unpaid treadmill of overwork. A little good is done and some misery eased. We do not know what else to do. The unnecessary oppression of the poor, even beyond the fact of their poverty, is a sorry problem. We often wish we could give courage and understanding to these folk and act as public defender on their behalf. We resent their vital lack of character. They are trapped. Until our social order is changed, as changed it will be, and how, the well-being of the common people, the development of their character, and the protection of their small rights, calls much more for the establishment of an office of unpaid public defender than for the enlargement, of which there is a tendency, of the office of paid public prosecutor.

In every city and village, there ought to be recognised a public defender. Such a person should be a layman skilled in knowledge of law rather than a lawyer practised in craft. Few professional lawyers are true or able jurists or men filled with the genius of legal understanding. Respect for principles and love of right, are the true ingredients of law. A true lawyer is one who knows and upholds the *Rights of Man*, aims to establish the *Age of Reason*, and practises *Commonsense*. He may be a layman but if this is the measurement of his vision, he should be called to be the defender of the poor so long as this system lasts. Whilst defending the prisoner at the bar he should work diligently and continuously for the social transformation which will liquidate all that creates and necessitates such anachronisms as "prisoners at the bar."

SPURIOUS THRIFT

(September 1915)

Leaflet No. 8 of the Parliamentary War Savings Committee series, issued from 12 Downing Street, London, S.W., explains how a soldier's wife can help her country, her husband, and herself:—

"She can be very careful with every penny that she spends, save all she can, and put the money in the War Loan. She

will thus help her country to pay for the War and have something laid by for her husband and herself if bad times come after the War. Her savings will be earning $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. for her with the security of the British Government behind them."

Emphasis is laid upon the possibility of bad times coming at the end of the war. Does anyone believe that this means that our rich folk will suffer? If not, why should the soldier's wife be asked to save, out of her paltry income, against the coming evil days? If the workers are good enough to fight and suffer for the defence of the country's wealth, they are good enough to share it. *Let the wealth of the nation be pooled.* That is our challenge to all who would conscript the workers for the trenches, but have no intention of facing the obligations that arise from wealth. Let the ruling class not be "slackers," and the workers need fear no poverty in the approaching "peace" days.

Out of the small investment she is able to make, how much can the soldier's wife hope to save against future poverty? To those who invest thousands, the War Loan, with its four-and-a-half per cent. is a sound investment. What does it represent to the working folk as an income? Nothing at all.

Once a famous general lost fifty per cent. of his fighting force. His army consisted of thirty-thousand men. In the same war, a reconnoitring party, led by a sergeant, was reduced by fifty per cent. This force consisted of four men. Will any sane man contend that the losses were equal?

Come to the War Loan. Suppose a man invests £10,000. That means an income of £450 per annum. Suppose a working woman to purchase £5 worth of stock. As this leaflet so elaborately explains, she receives an annual income of 4s 6d. In the one case, the wolf is kept from the door, most efficiently in the most evil times. In the other —!

Why not ask the poor to give for patriotism's sake right away, instead of insulting them with a prospect of gain which is a pretence? Since when has an undignified appeal to the stupid cupidity of ignorance been deemed good statesmanship? Why resort to the tactics of the bucket-shop?

That is what this kind of appeal amounts to. In this leaflet the struggle to raise £5 is represented by the careful way in which the poor person is told how he or she can purchase their £5 Stock Certificate on easy terms. The

intending investor is to save five shillings and then to buy a Voucher for this sum at the Post Office. When twenty of these Vouchers have been purchased, they can be exchanged for £5 Stock Certificate any time between December 1st and December 15th. *Interest on each of these 5s vouchers is paid at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum from the first of the month after purchase until December 1st. This means one farthing a month interest for each 5s invested.*

The War Loan was issued in June, and the farthing a month interest could not date from before July 1st therefore. Down to December 1st, this means five months' interest, or—*five farthings.* The Parliamentary Savings Committee dwells upon this at length. Either it considers the working people so mean, or else so poverty-stricken, that this huge sum, received as unearned increment over so short a period, is a bribe of magnificent proportions! In this case, why issue official leaflets warning the people against the vice of extravagance? If they are mean, they cannot be spendthrift. If they are poor, they cannot be wasteful of a substance they do not possess. Why mock their misery or miserliness with a tirade against luxury?

Actually, this sum of five-farthings is interest on a sum of five shillings invested for six months, on pawnbroking reckoning. We wonder if the gentlemen who issue these leaflets are aware that the worker, if he pawned an article for five shillings, including the price of the ticket, would pay tenpence interest on the loan. In the case of the pledge, he deposits an actual article as security. In the case of the voucher, he receives a paper bond. We are not quarrelling with the value of the Government's security. Of course it is good. But there is no *personal deposit*—and the difference between five farthings and tenpence is enormous, if the former sum is worth making such a song about. The Government pays the worker five farthings interest for the use of five shillings for nearly six months. The worker pays the pawnbroker six farthings for the use of five shillings for one month, or any part of a month. Since there is every reason to suppose that the pawnbroking system is flourishing as well as ever, the financial system founded on such expedients is wanting in dignity as well as equity.

The leaflet ends by telling the poor how to save:—

(1) Eat less meat.

(2) Be careful with your bread.

(3) Waste nothing: to waste food is as bad as to waste munitions.

(4) Use home products whenever possible, and use them sparingly.

(5) Before you spend anything, think whether it is absolutely necessary to do so.

(6) If you have the opportunity—grow your own vegetables, etc.

The last item of advice calls for no comment from a town-rat. So far as the first five points are concerned, the worker is no master of his destiny. According to the *Board of Trade Labour Gazette* for August, the increase in the cost of living between July 1914 and July 1915—the war period—has been about thirty-four per cent. The price of bread is up about forty per cent., fish by sixty, tea by thirty, sugar by nearly seventy, and the increase in meat ranges from thirty-seven per cent. for ribs of British beef to seventy per cent. for flank of frozen beef.

Some plain facts about this economy campaign, exposing hypocrisy in high places, are given by Mr. F. Handel Booth, M.P., in *Reynolds's Newspaper* for Sunday, August 22nd last. There are six Whips employed at the Downing Street office, doing work which two could perform. Between them, they draw £7000 a year to tell the workers to eat porridge. Downing Street—great, famous Downing Street—throws £500,000 per day away in sheer waste, and smothers the workers with leaflets telling the house-wife to cut down gas-bills, wash at home, wait on her children personally, make her own clothes, and pay no attention to fashions. As though this was not the usual lot of the working woman! As though the society woman would suffer such conditions!

Mr. Booth details the large number of indoor and outdoor servants employed by duchesses and titled ladies, who boom this thrift campaign and own castles and mansions galore. He speaks of personal considerations producing an unwieldy Cabinet and party necessities having placed on the public funds a phalanx of unnecessary junior Ministers, most of whom are playing the usual game.

A Committee (which includes ex-Ministers notorious for carelessness) has been appointed to scrutinise officialdom, but the great spending Departments—War and Admiralty—are excluded from its ken. Cabinet Ministers who receive twice the remuneration of any previous holder of their portfolios, appeal publicly for us to eat less meat and to reduce expenses. M.P.s who are never seen now in the House are drawing their £400

a year in full. Surely we can reduce our own salaries before we go about the country lecturing on economy with full expenses paid! A well-known member told me of his tour among farm labourers to sell 5s vouchers and to urge rigorous economy. He said his Rolls-Royce motor came in handy.

Brighton, Harrogate, Hindhead, are all crowded. A Scottish M.P. counted over 100 motors out on joy-rides which passed him in one hour at one point near Wimbledon. One hears of a marriage in a leading political family with eight bridesmaids. The Government has issued a printed request not to race, hunt or shoot; yet a few days ago it tried to pass a Bill to extend grouse shooting for a week. Newspapers print appeals against luxuries and draw money for advertising their sale. What does it all mean? Ministers' wives are as magnificently gowned. The Houses of Parliament tell the peasant to live on lentils, but clap him in jail if he takes a rabbit home to help his wife to save up for the War Loan vouchers."

The Government have issued a pamphlet against taxi-cabs, cigars, motors, theatres, restaurants, stating plainly: "The habit of taking taxi-cabs for journeys where trams or trains or omnibuses are available should cease." Each M.P. has received this tract. "What hypocrisy!" comments Mr. Booth. "The men whose names are on the literature take taxi-cabs. I have seen them."

National Service

The taxes are rapidly increasing and the waste is abominable in the lower classes, who are the ones making money and spending it right and left. The result is that we shall lose our sons, our money, and our self-respect before this abominable state of things is remedied. Only the drastic hands of retrenchment and conscription can ever bring things right.—Mrs. Helen Stewart, 98 Redcliffe Gardens, Kensington, "Weekly Dispatch," August 22.

The Hon. Clara Tennant, daughter of Lord Glenconner, of the Nobel Dynamite Trust and the National Service League, married recently. Her gown was carried out in white broche. The corsage and long sleeves were of silver lace. A full Court train hung from the middle back was composed of silver tissue over white net and bordered with real tissue ermine.

A soldier's mother has been fined £10, or one month's imprisonment, for attempting to obtain by fraud 12s separation allowance. Her husband was an invalid. The son earned 7s 9d weekly as an apprentice. On enlisting, he gave his earnings at 23s 6d, and said he gave his mother 12s. His Army conduct was excellent, and he gave his mother 5s out of his pay of 9s 6d.

A LAMBETH LECTURE

(1912)

My lecture to the North Lambeth Liberal and Radical Club on Friday, December 1, 1911, occasioned interested orthodox a stir. Under the double headings of

BLASPHEMY:

DISGRACEFUL SPEECH BY SOCIALIST

the *Daily Express*, in its issue for December 2, published fourteen brief excerpts from my speech. The following extract, from the pen of the reporter, shows the outrageous length to which Mr. Ralph D. Blumenfeld's patriotic journal was prepared to go in order to secure my incarceration:—

The "Express" considers it a duty to its readers to print the following report of a speech delivered last night by Guy A. Aldred, the Socialist, at the North Lambeth Liberal and Radical Club. The address was on "The Social Significance of Blasphemy." It shows the length to which misguided and vicious Socialism leads some of its enthusiasts. Aldred has already been convicted for sedition. The reading of his dreadful speech will shock our readers, as it will every sane person; but until the true nature of these outbreaks is exposed there will be no check to them. Unfortunately, the police do not interfere. Public opinion alone can put an end to these disgraceful exhibitions. That is our excuse for giving publicity to the man's vapourings, which apparently find listeners among a misguided class. . . . The "Express" calls upon the police to stop these disgraceful speeches.

The *Streatham News* for Friday, December 8, also contained a (somewhat garbled) report of the same address under the heading of "An Indictment." This was about forty lines in length, and referred to me as:—

Mr. Guy Aldred, a young man whose self-styled description is "Minister of the Gospel of Revolt, late prisoner for sedition."

The following excerpt contains a fairly accurate summary of part of what I said:—

They were told that men like Boulter should not bring blasphemy to Streatham Common, and they were also told that the people of Streatham had determined not to allow any more from Highbury on the Common. The Rector of Streatham, who was one of the deputation to the L.C.C., . . . did not want foreigners (from Hoxton) on Streatham Common, yet the same gentleman would help the Church Missionary Society to thrust down the throats of the people of China, etc., the tenets of the Christian religion. The real cause of the trouble on Streatham Common was first and foremost the "Streatham News,"

which had reported speeches said to be obscene. He maintained that the "Streatham News" had incited the people to riot, and the editor of the paper should be made to take his stand in the dock for a criminal offence. If Boulter had stuck to his guns in this case he would have finally smashed up the organisation against him.

I add the *Daily Express* report of some of the things actually said:—

"Aldred said:—

"If the attitude of the Christians of Streatham towards Harry Boulter is justifiable, then the murder of a Christian missionary by the Chinese Boxers is justifiable.

"If it is wrong to preach Atheism in England, because Christianity is part of the common law in England, then it is wrong to preach Christianity in China because Christianity is not a part of the common law of China.

"If we followed the example of the past we should probably find ourselves on the gallows, crucified between two thieves—one a Protestant and one a Catholic.

"The Christian has perpetuated the lies of the pagan philosophers of Greece.

"In modern society a man tosses up whether he becomes a parson or a murderer; in the one case he murders lives, in the other he murders thought.

"The King—who represents the class that keeps the hangman going.

"A policeman is not as a rule a genius in the interpretation of the law.

"Saul went to the dogs because he believed in the secular power; he refused to knuckle under to Samuel, the priest.

"David—one of the most notorious rogues that ever ruled over a people.

"Harry Boulter had someone to speak up for him. Christ had nobody.

"When Constantine adopted the Christian religion it was a political dodge, the same as when they put John Burns in the Cabinet.

"Our masters—who call themselves politicians—but are the scum of the earth.

"Blasphemy and sedition are two crimes that are perfectly undefinable.

"In September, 1909, I got twelve months for sedition."

I plead guilty to having made all these utterances, with one exception, in the form, in which they are reported. As to the exception; I did not contrast a parson against "a murderer" but against a soldier, although the contrast was the same in the latter case as what it would have been in the former.

The contrast between Harry Boulter and Jesus was, of

course, in praise of the historical Jesus and his stand for social purity, as against Boulter's compromise with the powers that be. If this is blasphemy, then I am afraid that I shall have the honour of taking my stand in the dock as often as I publicly address myself to this matter of Christian origins and developments. It would be quite in keeping with Christian cant and social phariseism, for the governing class to insist on my incarceration for daring to appreciate the reality of the righteousness of the historic Jesus, whilst repudiating the divine monstrosity invented by ecclesiastical interests in the fourth century. To those interests I am opposed as Jesus would have been, and was opposed. My Atheism and Anarchy, my "blasphemy" and "sedition," are Truth's impeachment of the modern Synagogue of Satan.

OUR PRISON SYSTEM

[The following essay was planned in August, 1918, at Deepcut, whilst in detention awaiting my fourth court martial for resisting military service, but was not written actually until I was released, for the first time, under the "Cat and Mouse" Act. Just after writing it I proceeded to Wandsworth Common to speak, where I was 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 me to be interested in constitutional law and the prison system before I experienced prison hospitality. From that time on, I studied, placed, and debunked Blackstone, whose ridiculous and unworthy ghost stands too often beside 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. I 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 present essay was published in "The Spur" (Vol. V, No. 11, page 125) for April, 1919. I added the last two paragraphs in 1941.]

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, have 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 was 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 country gaol in the kingdom by order of the Home Secretary.

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 advisers 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.

CONCHIES, SOCIALISTS AND PRISON CONDITIONS

(October 1941)

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 this 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 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 interests, 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. . . .

Clifford Allen 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.

LITERATURE AND JOURNALISM

(Published in "Freedom," London, July, 1907)

Of all the haters of the canting insincerity and hypocritical pretences of what he rightly termed "day labourism," none has been more consistent, more loyal to the principles of their heterodoxy than Schopenhauer, whose faith in the ultimate triumph of right over wrong, and consequent failure to compromise with the canting respectability of his day, earned him the title of pessimist. But Schopenhauer did not care for what the world said. It was sufficient for him to know that he was true to himself, and to his own philosophy; to feel that, as man emerged from out of the darkness of theological and economic oppression, the glow-worms of social hypocrisy and religious superstition would cease to be, for failure of a gloom and a despair in which to shine; to have sufficient faith in himself and his principles to await, with patient fortitude, through a lifetime of neglect and disregard, the attentive ear which he felt his posterity would give to his message. And so he struggled on in his unrelenting opposition to all that was deemed respectable, never wavering nor turning aside from the narrow path which he had marked out for himself, and for his disciples of succeeding generations. His steadfastness has been justified by the result—his persistent assertiveness of his right to be heard has been attended by victory.

Nor is this all. Others, inspired by his doggedness, have dared to do the same; the sum total of the world's superstition has been decreased, and mankind breathes in a more honest and purer atmosphere.

The Church still retains its hold over the masses, however; and that hold is none the less to be feared because she has been obliged to modify her dogmas, and alter her methods. The battle has still to be won; and the victory has none the less to be dearly paid for, because—thanks to that prison-martyr, Richard Carlile, his co-workers, and his freedom-loving successors—we have a Press our fathers knew naught of. Indeed, the danger, if anything, is increased, and not diminished thereby; since, in place of the open and avowed antagonism of former times, we have a freedom which robs us of our energy whilst denying us the fullness of true liberty. And we have to gird our loins and see to it that our ardour is not deprived of the earnestness of success through the subtlety of the opposition. It is necessary, therefore, that we should understand their methods in order to appreciate their sentiments. And, seeing that so much space and attention is devoted to the Church, it is proposed in the present essay to give some consideration to the Press.

In addition to twelve months' experience on the editorial staff of a London daily paper, the writer spent close on five years in a sub-editorial capacity in the office of a certain well-known press agency. Now, the cant of the whole system, the stereotyping of opinions involved—which have both, for some time past, oppressed him—have led to an open rupture, and he turns his back upon that journalistic systemisation of prejudices which offers the very antithesis to the spirit of true literature.

A man possesses a little fortune, and being of mediocre talent, and possessed of an overpowering vanity, desires to pose as a "leader of public opinion" in the particular village in which he lives. He accordingly determines to run a local newspaper, and having registered it under as large an array of titles as any compositor can reasonably be expected to set up, he begins to turn his attention to the "copy" side of the journal. Not being in that financial position which would enable him to pay a proper

price for local intelligence, and having of necessity to publish more than the paid reports of marriages; etc., he puts himself in communication with one of the London press agencies.

Here we find at a price of 2s. 6d. or less a column, stereotyped columns of "Words of Wisdom," "Science Gleanings," "Wise and Otherwise," "Facts and Fancies," "American Humour," "Hints for the Home," "News of the Churches," "Weekly London Letter," "World of Women," "Business Abroad," etc.—all of these columns being the result of "paste and scissors" operations on the various morning, evening, and weekly journals that find their way into the sub-editorial sanctum. In order, however, that the columns in question may look as original as possible, as much reprint, without the acknowledgment of its source, is indulged in as is compatible with a non-infringement of the Copyright Acts. Then there are political leaders—mostly of the Nonconformist conscience order—representative of the editor's opinions, which are written, set up, and stereotyped in London, and sent down to the journal in question all ready for printing. In view, also, of the recent affectionate protestations, the dissenting pietist has conjured up for the Labour movement—a purely secularistic, not to say hypocritical, movement, being of the earth, earthly—a column of "Labour Notes," by a "Labour M.P.," is also supplied—the mild views of this gentleman being yet further diluted by the editorial pen of the agency "boss." Then the special correspondence and other news, retailed by the various London and larger provincial journals, are distilled and condensed, and several columns of plagiarised news offered at the usual half-a-crown per column.

And so one finds in different parts of the country exactly the same paper—with the exception of local advertisements—published under different titles, according to the locality. Yes, there can be no doubt about it. The type is the same, the headlines, the illustrations, the setting, and the views are all the same; the one paper, except the space retained for local advertisements, is an exact facsimile of the other. Count up the price of the columns at half-a-crown each; learn the sale of the journal at a penny a copy; subtract the former cost from

the latter amount; add the extent (in equivalent monetary value, if possible) of the editor's satisfied vanity, and you have a mediocrity's profit through journalistic exploitation. Consider the ease and small amount of energy exerted in obtaining a fair income by the agency's editorial staff, the dinner and theatrical invitations, and you are in a fair way of appreciating the real meaning of modern journalism; for what is true of the press agency on a larger scale, is true, in a lesser degree, of the ordinary newspaper.

Shakespeare holds that there are but three kinds of greatness: that which is inherited, that which is achieved, and that which is thrust upon its possessor. But there are different degrees of merit attached to the greatness that is achieved. There is the greatness of Bakunin, who, by virtue of his disregard for the traditions of a canting respectability, pressed on to greatness, and so achieved distinction; and there is the greatness of the journalist, who but seeks to learn the nature of the popular prejudices in order to interpret and pander to them correctly. The difference between the two is this—that, whereas the former, by thinking about the various questions he treated of, both on the platform and in the press, did much to hasten the era of increased liberty, the other, thinking (as Schopenhauer would put it) only in order to write for monetary reward, takes his cue from his readers, and seeks to flatter them by confirming the "truth" of their inane and insane prejudices, and so places a premium upon a stereotyped conventionalism as opposed to a liberty-working originality of thought and heterodoxy of expression. And so the market is glutted with books and journals of no ethical or scientific value; the wheel of progress is stayed; the eloquence of a Cicero of unconventionalism passes unheeded, whilst the unoriginal platitudes of a cheap orthodoxy are received with applause.

Of such is the world, particularly the self-congratulatory, spiritually-minded section. So be it. It is with thankfulness that I shake from off my feet the dust of daily journalism. And, knowing not what the future may have in store, recall the bidding of Charlotte Murray:—

**Press forward still to higher heights:
Than thou didst know of old,
Press forward, though the way be rough
Or filled with bliss untold.**

The highest heights to which ever man can attain are those of liberty of thought, freedom of action, and the service of one's fellows. The successful ascent of these heights alone brings the happiness which makes for human betterment. As yet, they have been climbed only by those who have realised that short of an atheistic basis, and Communistically expressed aspirations after individual freedom, there can be no social progress. And I am such. In my heresy rests my salvation. My happiness is assured. Can the same be said of all my readers' happiness?

This essay was read as a paper before the Camberwell Branch of the National Secular Society in November, 1905. After revision it was published in the columns of the "Agnostic Journal" for January 13, 1906. I revised it for publication in "Freedom."

THE WORD—TO THE WORLD!

(December 1933)

Many decades since, the word challenged an unbelieving world through the lips of a prophet thus: "Behold ye despisers—and perish, for I work a work in your days which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you."

The old-time prophet was poor and his authority was the inward wisdom generated of poverty. He died, as such men die, mourned by a multitude of half-believers, who yearned rather than understood. They were powerless from their very poverty. Generations later they were to be succeeded by semi-believers, who were to prove powerless from their very sense of comfort. There is a gulf widely fixed between a half-believer and a semi-believer. The first responds to the teaching and desires to believe; the second despairs of the teaching and has no desire to believe but deems it wisdom to mock with his lips that which he dare not subscribe to in his mind or thought.

Although even the half-believers were few, somehow the prophet's message lived. It still lives as it must live, until understanding brings power of achievement unto the poor.

Prophecy is a strange business. The vision of the prophet gives radiance to his word. It outlives the prophet himself. He dies scorned and neglected. His word continues and increases until the struggle ends in triumph. The man is mortal—a mere instrument. His word is the verity, and is embodied in the scheme of things that serves man by using men. One generation of unbelievers and despisers hear without understanding and scoff merrily; the second generation of those who scoff hear and perish: spiritually in themselves; materially and finally as a class. The epoch of critical poverty throws up the agitator or prophet to proclaim the doom of the idling world of exploitative luxury, and lends the power of working with the tools of poverty, the mean methods of starvation. The powerful cannot believe and even the poor find it hard to sense that the power of the word consists in the very poverty of its machinery. The Jews could not believe that Jesus was the Messiah because he came without arms and was clothed in rags and had not where to lay his head. How could truth obtain arms in a world of oppression and unctious self-interest? How should truth have where to lay its head when the palace is built on falsehood and the hovel rests on lies? Have not the parliamentarians urged that one must capture Parliament and the State Power and so inaugurate the revolution with the ceremonial robes of legal majesty? Did they not put their theory into operation in Germany? Behold! the Messiah came with pomp and ceremony, duly arrayed in purple and fine linen. He came; at first he was Mars, the God of War and the Son of Mammon. Then he became Nazism, reaction incarnate, the offspring of Parliamentarism. He came because the poor were blind and their leaders could not see.

He who has vision is more than an angel—he is a man and an agitator: not a serf, not a stomach, not a brain subordinate to digestion: but a man, a mortal arrayed in the invincible armour of light. His manhood stamps his word with authority. Friedrich Nietzsche, greatest of Anti-Christians, has revealed the power of the word in his poem:—

There the gallows, rope, and hooks,
 And the hangman's beard is red:
 People round and poisoned looks,
 Nothing new and nothing dread!
 Know it well, from fifty sources,
 Laughing in your face I cry:
 Would you hang me? Save your forces!
 Why kill me who cannot die?

Beggars ye! Who hate the tougher
 Man who holds the envied lot;
 True I suffer, true I suffer—
 As to you—ye rot, ye rot.
 I am breath, dew, all sources,
 After fifty hangings; why!
 Would you hang me? Save your forces!
 Why kill me who cannot die?

The same idea is well expressed by Ferdinand Freiligrath in "The Angel of Revolution":—

Ye see me in the cell, ye see me only in the grave;
 Ye see me only wandering lone beside the exile's weary wave;
 Ye fools! Do I not also dwell where ye have sought to pierce
 in vain?
 Rests not a niche for me in every heart, in every brain?
 In every brow that brooding thinks, erect with manhood's
 honest pride?
 Does not each bosom shelter me that beats with honour's
 generous tide?
 Not every workshop brooding woe, not every heart that shelters
 grief;
 For am I not the breath of life that pants and struggles for
 relief?

Nietzsche and Freiligrath both express the revolutionary early Christian idea. Says Proudhon outlining the history of that idea:—

All at once, a man appeared calling himself the "Word of God." It is not known to this day who he was, whence he came, or what suggested to him his ideas. He went about proclaiming everywhere that the end of existing society was at hand; that the world was about to experience a new birth; that the priests were vipers, the lawyers ignoramuses and the philosophers hypocrites and liars; that masters and slaves were equals; that usury and everything akin to it was robbery; that proprietors and idlers would one day burn, while the poor and pure in heart would find a haven of peace.

Society was saved by the negation of its own principles, by a revolution in its religion, and by violation of its most sacred rights. In this revolution the idea of Justice spread to an extent that had not been dreamed of before never to return to its original limits. Heretofore Justice had existed only for masters; it then commenced to exist for the slaves.

The word, seemingly declared in vain, becomes manifest in the flesh. Even when the critics of the messenger denounce his teachings most vigorously they pronounce his message most definitely. A certain school of free-thought, not content with its many excellent attacks on superstition, thought it necessary to deny all virtue to early Christianity. This school is very much opposed to my activity in the press and on the platform. It forgets that when G. W. Foote was indicted for blasphemy, his main and most excellent argument was that Jesus had been indicted for blasphemy before him. It may come as a surprise to this school of Freethought to read the following extract, culled from "Acid Drops," published in *The Free-thinker* of June 17, 1889, page 193:—

Christian Socialism was explained at St. Catherine's Church, Rotherhithe, last Sunday afternoon by the Rev. Stewart D. Headlam. Christianity is Socialism, said Mr. Headlam. So it is, if we are to go by the New Testament. But it is not Mr. Headlam's Socialism. Christian Socialism, as taught by Jesus and practised by the primitive Church, is downright Communism.

Now, Mr. Headlam, do be honest and go the whole hog. Half-and-half measures are unworthy a man of your spirit.

Foote's evangel was very limited. Although his followers would deny it, his interest in life was essentially theological. Atheism and Pantheism relate as much to theology as Deism, Theism, or Polytheism. The history of theology is a history of negation. The Idea of God destroys itself by a process of expansion. The Idea expands until God loses all his physical attributes in universal spirituality. He grows vaguer and vaguer until at last he gives up the ghost entirely. From being located in Heaven he grows into occupation of the entire universe. He ceases to occupy and begins to permeate the universe so as to occupy it more completely. His followers grow jealous not only of the universe but also of space. They identify him with space as well as matter. He expands into everything. Nothing he is not. Nothing he becomes. Until he becomes nothing, until his real definition and purely poetic existence is understood by the human mind generally, the atheist is as great a theologian as the theist. He spends his nights and days in company of this God that does not exist. He pretends an interest in the secular happiness of mankind. His interest is pretence. It is elementary, unformed, and purely pious. He has no real interest in the emancipation of the poor from poverty. God is his obsession. He is at

no greater pains to make his dream complete so as to secure the secular wellbeing of every man, woman and child on earth, than is the Christian to realise the brotherhood of man. He is purely a theologian, of an advanced character, continuing the useful negative work of former heretical theologians, and setting up a small respectable Bethel of his own within the limitations of class society. Richard Carlile is to G. W. Foote as Jesus Christ is to a modern Anglican minister. I refrain from saying the Archbishop of Canterbury because I respect the fact that Foote was concerned with an idea and not merely a property sinecure. He bowed none the less before the cause of property and had no live enthusiasm for that of poverty. Richard Carlile was original. He set his cause on nought. Foote was merely conventional. He based his cause on the mediocre interests and current practice of conventional society. Christianity was false to Richard Carlile because it was untrue. That was his position, plain and flat. Christianity was false to Foote and to Charles Watts and others of the Secular and Rational Fraternity because it did not conform to society and was inconsistent with political reformism. The fact that he was not a Liberal in the English political sense was a serious secularist complaint against Jesus. The fact that he was not a Liberal like the late J. M. Robertson is an excellent recommendation of the teachings of Jesus to the consideration of working men. Bradlaugh and Foote never thought of that.

There are traditions about Jesus, recorded in the sermons and writings of the early fathers, that are not to be found in the New Testament. One such tradition is an excellent proletarian story. It is said that Jesus, as a child, played in Nazareth with a gibbet. He did many strange things with that cross of wood. Years later, those who loved his manhood, his mission, his way of living and of dying, regaled themselves with the wonder of his early plaything. The symbolism of it amazed them. It implied that he set his life on nought. He desired no fame, no military glory, no kingship, no power to destroy; only the power to influence through being destroyed. He literally set his cause on nought. A great Polish writer has passed the idea on to the working class. The ruling class prepares for their children many wonderful toys, all eulogistic of the capitalist system, symbols of pomp, circumstance and power. The worker's child gazes in the shop windows and anxiously desires these toys. His or her father made

them so that his own offspring might not have them. Wonderful world! Wonderful Providence! Why not accept this irony of Providence? Why not give the child of the worker, if he resents injustice early, the toys of his future with which to play? Give him chains and let him play at wearing them. Give him handcuffs and let his wrists respond to the touch of steel. Let him have the wheelbarrow and so grow accustomed to pushing it. Permit him the hangman's rope so that he shall not dread it. Train him to solitude and let him grow articulate through silence. Let him shun fame and seek ignominy for ignominy is the workers' lot. Let him play at hue and cry. Let an unknown spy accuse and let the one accused defend himself before a perjured court. Children play at mothers and fathers, at schools, at Indians, and at play-acting. Why not at courts? Let the court give no heed to the truth the accused one tells. Let the spy and his employer have the last word and let the judge speak for the prosecution. Let the accused one make his poverty's garments look more poor. Let him play at standing before a tribunal of pomp. Let the judge steal a coloured tablecloth or curtain and wear it so that he may look ermined and respectable. Let the accused one pretend to be killed and to be buried far away from all his friends. Yes, let him anticipate in play his destiny.

Whoso is born poor and would be a prophet has all history for his guide. He knows what will be when he is dead. A cross in some men's hearts for a monument; a fragrant memory in place of a stone; a wilderness, his habitation and his grave. Girls weep for his memory and their tears are dried by charlatans. Men talk of him a little—and the talk dwindles to nothingness. Such is the life and death of the prophet of the poor. Let the working-class child play at the symbolism of his destiny. Maybe, in the knowledge of it he will grow up a Socialist, loyal to his class and loyal to truth; mild, serious, but not afraid. His anticipations will make him proof against disappointments. He will have mastered the mysticism that inspires the race of Messiahs. He will become a prophet without honour or reward. He will lose the world and gain his own soul. His glory will be his shame before men.

“I have set my cause on nought.” Such is the declaration of the prophet. It emphasises the power of his word.

Not his word as a man, but his word as a messenger. It explains why the prophet disappoints all the world's conceptions of power and grandeur. The prophet's story is an ironic biography of unequal circumstance translated into an epic to please our childish wonder. Have not Whittier and Lowell, each in his own style, reserved for us wonderful pictures of William Lloyd Garrison's printing office, so meanly furnished, "in which the freedom of the race began"? One day, poets will romance about prophets no more. The marvellous stories will be collected as so much data from which to induce the philosophy of freedom. Liberty will be a fact, unquestioned and unquestionable, socially registered in the universally amiable terms of social revolution. The registration will be very quiet and formal. It will be so tame and natural that it will be impossible to realise the agitation and crisis that was necessary to its achievement. Social revolution, for all the dread that men have of it is but the incidence of history. Anticipated by the lone voice of one crying in the wilderness, it moves forward like the thief in the night. In the immortal words of Proudhon, "like the Nemesis of old, whom neither threats nor prayers could move, the revolution advances, with sombre and inevitable tread, over the flowers with which its devotees strew its path, through the blood of its champions and over the bodies of its enemies." The revolution advances because it sets its cause on nought.

The great German philosopher, Kaspar Schmidt, better known under his pseudonym of Max Stirner, depicted the material poverty and spiritual completeness of the bearer of the word, in his challenge to the world: "I have set my cause on nought." The word is nought. The world is everything. But the world perishes and the word prevails. Caesar before Jesus; the Pope before Luther; Calvin before Servetus; Capital before Labour. Great is truth, for the truth shall prevail.

WANTED—A WORKERS' SCOTTISH REPUBLIC

(Contributed to "The Free Man," Edinburgh, October, 1932)

From choice I am a domiciled Scot, but I have nothing in common with Scottish earls and landowners. I am a Socialist and want the end of all feudalisms, frontiers, sovereignties, nationalisms, exploitations. I believe in the

poetry of social usefulness. The question of a Scottish Republic I would leave to the decision of the workers, assembled in Scotland at the point of production or of struggle towards the conquest of the right to produce. I have no faith in the irresponsible and ignorant parliamentarism of exploitation functioning in spendthrift London. I would have the workers seize Scotland instead of marching to London. I would industrialise the Highlands, for freedom comes through industry and machinery, not through rural backwardness. I would expel all parasites, destroy the vested-interest Press, and have the Press controlled by the workers living and working here. I would throw up Industrial Councils against present municipalities. I would emancipate the Church from all dogmas and make it a great free pulpit. I would ask to be voted into a pulpit myself, because to-day everything is sham—sham Nationalism, sham Free-thought, sham Christianity, sham Brotherhood, and sham Division. I would have Robert Burns understood for the grandeur and happiness of his simplicity. I would not wait on England to solve our economic problems, but taking full advantage of the existence of a border, I would raise the Red Banner in Scotland and establish directly and immediately a Workers' Scottish Republic. I prefer a Workers' Scottish Republic to a Scottish Workers' Republic. I would expect a Workers' English Republic to follow at ONCE.

Give me a pulpit in Glasgow or Edinburgh for six weeks, two addresses each Sunday, and I will tell you what I believe; tell it those who have never heard me confess. I would have a living people and a living land: vitality resurgent everywhere.

BYRON'S CHALLENGE

(November 1932)

[Lord Byron flourished 1788-1824. He toured Europe and the East, 1810-11. On his return he took his seat in the House of Lords. His attendance was brief, and he made three speeches. The first speech was in February, 1812, in a debate on a Bill which proposed making "machine-breaking" a hanging instead of a transportable offence. This was when machinery began to displace hand-labour, and want and misery pervaded the manufacturing districts. The starving operatives became "Luddites" and machine-breakers. Byron was then 24 years of age. His speech is summarised below.]

Byron opened his speech with a dispassionate statement that

Nothing but absolute want could have driven a large and once industrious body of the people into the commission of excesses hazardous to themselves and families, as well as to the community.

Byron proceeds to the ironical sally against the police, by whose efforts

Several notorious delinquents had been detected; men liable to conviction, on the clearest evidence, of the capital crime of poverty; men who had been notoriously guilty of lawfully begetting several children, whom thanks to the times they were unable to maintain.

Quite modern is his attack on the Government's war against France, the "*bitter policy of the destructive warfare*" destructive of all comfort. He added:—

While the exalted offender could find means of baffling the law, new capital punishments must be devised, new snares of death must be spread for the wretched mechanic who is famished into guilt.

The Government, he added,

passed sentence of death by wholesale, and signed death-warrants blindfold.

He pictured the British Government bestowing bounty on foreign parasites, and giving its own people over "*to the tender mercies of the gibbet and bayonet.*" He described his wanderings abroad and concluded his reference:—

I have been in some of the most oppressed provinces of Turkey, but never under the most despotic of infidel Governments did I behold such squalid wretchedness as I have seen since my return in the very heart of a Christian country.

He was interrupted and accused of defending "the mob." Byron retorted to the "Noble Lords":—

... it is a mob that labours in your fields and serves in your houses, that mans your navy, and recruits your army, that has enabled you to defy the world, and can also defy you when neglect and calamity have driven them to despair.

Denouncing the Bill, Byron asked: "*Is there not blood enough upon your penal code?*" He closed his speech with the taunt:—

Suppose the man, careless of a life which your Lordships are about, perhaps, to value at something less than the price of a stocking-frame . . . is dragged into court and tried under this enactment, two things are still wanting to condemn him—twelve butchers for a jury, and a Jeffrey for a judge.

SOLDIER THOMAS PARKER

(November 1932)

During the first Great War Thomas Parker enlisted in the Notts and Derby Regiment. He was under the lawful age. The fact was discovered. He was discharged. He persisted in re-enlisting, was successful. At the end of the war, he had served in France with the Northumberland Fusiliers, and was demobilised. He re-enlisted and served three years with the Grenadier Guards. *At the age of 22, he was returned to civil life, stranded.* The years he had given to a grateful king and country ought to have been spent learning a trade. The best he could do was to become a casual worker. He worked as a miner and navvy. Mostly navvy. He got little work.

In May, 1933, Thomas Parker, having slept in a work-house, started to tramp to Tamworth in search of work, *with no money in his pocket.* In England, if you sleep out when you have money or a home you break no law. If you sleep out because you must, and if you are penniless, you defy the law. Thomas Parker, when night came, hungry and tired, crept in under a steam-roller by the roadside. He slept on 6 foot by 2 of the surface of the land he had fought for. The police woke and arrested him. The magistrate at Coleshill were lenient. They could have sent him to prison for three months. They gave him 14 days. Thomas Parker was conveyed to Winson Green Prison.

What happened at Winson Green no one knows. Parker died under conditions of secrecy. And dead men tell no tales.

The official account was that Parker refused to keep his cell-door closed. On the second night he kept shouting that he had done no wrong and that he must get out of jail, even if it was in his coffin. Parker was right in his facts and as to the manner of his exit.

At exercise next morning, Parker fell out. He said he was done. From then, say the officials, he behaved like a man in a frenzy. *The prison doctor certified that Thomas Parker was a fit man and in a fit condition to undergo solitary confinement.* Parker was sentenced to 3 days solitary confinement on bread-and-water by the Acting Governor.

On being sentenced, Parker solemnly held up his hand

and said to the Acting Governor: "This is my death card! How are my relatives to know that I am dead?"

Thomas Parker was taken from the Governor's Room, and went, with two warders, on a short but fateful walk towards the silent cell which was to be poor Parker's death-house. Within a quarter of an hour he was dead.

The two jailers walked on either side of him. They released his arms for a moment. At that second, they afterwards said, Parker took a flying jump forward down a flight of stone steps. He landed at the foot of the steps in a sort of spread-eagle fashion and then struggled up to his knees. The warders left him and locked the cell-door. A few minutes later, a warder looked through the peep-hole. Parker was lying in a crumpled heap on the floor of the cell, with a wound on the back of his head. He was dead.

At the inquest, the prison doctor admitted that Parker might have been suffering from claustrophobia, as a result of his war services. This is a nervous complaint which makes it impossible for the sufferer to submit to confinement in a narrow space. The Under-Secretary for Home Affairs told Brig.-Gen. Spears in the House of Commons that any enquiry was not necessary nor desirable.

Thomas Parker "died" in jail, neglected, on June 2nd, 1933.

APPENDICES

(1) Prisoners at The Bar

(See Essay, page 74)

Many readers wrote to me expressing their appreciation of the article, "Prisoners at the Bar," when published in the columns of *The Word* for May 1943. This particular issue was circulated widely in Norfolk and Suffolk by an Anglican cleric who had been a prison chaplain, but resigned his appointment from horror at the indignities of the prison system. Many found readers in Norwich. A solicitor there sent a list of addresses to which to send the paper at his expense. He also asked that copies be sent to Clerks to the Court in several parts of Britain, with the "Prisoners" article marked. My solicitor friend was much impressed with the account of the stand made by

Maurice Healy, not then K.C., against Mr. Justice Horridge, in defending the "Prisoner at the Bar," in February 1922, and the discussion of the status of the accused person in Court, by Mr. Albert Lieck. Mr. Healy received the paper, with the long overdue tribute, on his deathbed.

As a commentary on the article, the following news item from the *Daily Mirror*, London, for Wednesday, September 15, 1943, makes interesting reading:—

NOW ALL SIT FOR JUSTICE

Instead of standing in the dock guarded by a burly policeman people charged at Norwich City Police Court will in future sit in the body of the court room in the fifteenth century Guild-hall while their cases are tried.

Only in "special circumstances" will the dock be brought back. In other words if defendants behave like law-abiding citizens they will be treated as such.

The Norwich City Bench is believed to be the third oldest in the country from London and Bristol. Its complete record dates from 1280 and the Court is believed to have been sitting in 1194.

Mr. R. H. Mottram, the author, who is one of the magistrates, told the "Daily Mirror" yesterday:

"Although we are one of the most ancient in the country we are a progressive Bench.

"The days when accused persons had to be caged up and closely watched by four policemen are dead.

"A person is innocent of a charge until found guilty, so why should he suffer the embarrassment and humiliation of having to stand in a dock?"

The Chief Constable of Norwich, Mr. J. H. Dain, has expressed entire agreement with the magistrates' decision.

(2) The Rector's Dilemma

(See Essay, page 76)

The following letters are reprinted from the columns of the *Streatham News* for December 15th and 22nd, 1911:—

Sir,—In your last issue you gave a report of a speech made by Mr. Guy Aldred at the North Lambeth Radical Club, Kennington Road. He is reported to have said: "The Rector of Streatham, who was one of the deputation to the L.C.C., said they did not want foreigners on Streatham Common, etc., etc." I beg to state that I never said anything so idiotic, and, as a matter of fact, I never spoke at all. Mr. Guy Aldred must possess a very wonderful imagination.—Yours, etc.

HENEAGE H. JEBB.

Sir,—May I be allowed a word with reference to the Rev.

H. H. Jebb's refutation? His attribution to myself of a wonderful imagination and his virtuous indignation, seem to me to be a little premature, especially since his quarrel should be with your reporter and not with me. I did not say that the Rector of Streatham said that he wanted no foreigners on Streatham Common. What I did say was that the spokesman of the deputation to the L.C.C. objected to foreigners from Hoxton appearing on Streatham Common. The Rector of Streatham, I added, was a member of the deputation, and by his silence lent his consent to this protest. Yet, I ventured to believe that, since Mr. Jebb was a minister of the Established Church, he did not object to the campaign in foreign lands of the Church Missionary Society, in which case he believed in Englishmen carrying a foreign religious propaganda to China but objected to an Hoxtonian carrying his propaganda of Atheism to Streatham. The attitude of the rev. gentleman is quite as idiotic as any that your reporter may have attributed to him in my name, but even a rector should not strain at gnats and swallow camels.—Yours, etc.

GUY A. ALDRED.

MEDITATION

(See original English essay, page 32)

Ecrité à la veille d'une comparution devant un Conseil de guerre anglais pour refus de service militaire pour cas de conscience.

On m'a remis une feuille de papier pour préparer ma réponse aux nombreuses charges auxquelles j'aurai à répondre devant le Conseil de guerre de demain. Je ne veux pas m'en servir pour préparer une défense quelconque. Je pense à des choses bonnes et mauvaises—à des personnes vertueuses et vicieuses. Je veux accuser les bons, plaindre les méchants, stigmatiser les vertueux, guérir les vicieux. Car le bon et le mauvais, la vertu et le vice ne sont pas ce qu'ils semblent.

Je ne pense pas au bien en son essence, mais au bien conventionnel, au bien apparent. Ce "bien" qui consiste en bon langage, en mœurs polies, en vêtements à la mode et qui a été considéré comme tel à travers les âges. Et qui est un mensonge. Et qui est un vice du commencement à la fin—convoitise au lieu d'amour, hypocrisie au lieu d'intégrité—imposture sur imposture. C'est là la piété affairiste, l'esprit charnel, la moralité alimentaire. Jésus l'a dénoncé, Guatama l'a cloué au pilori, Socrate l'a analysé. Et il nous le faut mettre en pièces.

Mais qu'est ce donc que le vice qualifié? De la vertu qualifiée mise en disgrâce—du luxe associé à une misérable—de la respectabilité placée sur le même plan que la prostitution. Quelquefois même, le vice qualifié est de la vertu réelle cherchant un lieu de repos pour la nuit, après un jour fatigant passé à rendre témoignage à la vérité.

L'homme est ignorant. Il est une ignorance innocente qui connaîtra un jour la vérité et lui rendra témoignage. Cette ignorance-là est admirable. Elle nous attire comme nous séduisent les facultés d'un enfant prodige dont tout le monde peut prévoir l'avenir brillant. Mais il est une ignorance de fétilité, de boue mentale et morale, de stagnation, de crime, de malpropreté, de morbidité. C'est cette ignorance-là qui engendre la guerre, alimente les superstitions, règne dans les tribunaux, prêche en chaire et domine dans la politique. Cette ignorance se considère comme respectable et contrôle le marché du mariage. C'est elle que je voudrais détruire.

Et maintenant que je prie. A la destinée de l'homme, à l'instinct de ma propre nature, à l'esprit de martyr de tous les pionniers qui sont morts. Que je communie pour la santé, la force, l'endurance au cours de ma captivité. Que j'aie le zèle de l'esprit et le pouvoir de la foi, que je possède la vision intellectuelle et la ferveur de la passion. Que toute vulgarité m'abandonne et que la parole, l'esprit de vérité s'incarne en moi. Que je ne nie jamais la vérité en parole ou en esprit. Que je travaille pour la chute des moqueurs qui occupent les hautes situations, pour la ruine de la moquerie. Que je devienne un prophète clamant contre le scepticisme de la piété mondaine et l'incrédulité sociale. Puissé-je devenir le fils de l'Homme, l'ennemi de Dieu, l'adversaire des rois, le destructeur des rituels, des cérémonies, de toute forme inutile. Puisse la vérité, et la vérité seule, être ma maîtresse. Puissé-je rendre témoignage à son intégrité sous tous les lieux. Qu'aucune ambition mondaine, qu'aucune tentation en ce désert de l'intelligence, ne m'amène à servir l'ennemi de l'homme, le principe du pouvoir et de la domination.

O esprit de la vérité, consolateur sacré, j'ai senti ta chaude inspiration. Puissé-je ne jamais te renier. Demeuré en moi et avec moi, dans les jours à venir, accorde-moi de persévérer dans ta cause. Et cela jusqu'à ce que

l'harmonie réside dans l'habitation de l'homme et que la
paix et la justice prévalent dans le pays.

GUY A. ALDRED.

The above translation was published in *par delà la
mêlée*, edited by E. Armand, at Pares et Orleans, February
1917. It was circulated widely throughout France in leaflet-
form.

Printed and Published by The Strickland Press,
104 George Street, Glasgow, C.1.

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