

How Can Slaves Be

Loyal To Truth?

"A long War and dear Bread!" Such was the English squire's habitual toast in the days when Corn Laws gave him the monopoly of supplying his countrymen with wheat.

Today those evil times threaten to return, and will return, unless the people bestir themselves. Bitter is the protest raised by English radical papers against the manner in which the funds for the war are being raised. \$81,000,000 a year extra must the English worker now pay for the privilege of consuming tea and coffee, but not a cent is demanded from the landowners for their law-begotten privilege of cornering that rich and famous island. Well may the Middleton "Guardian" cry: "The land of Britain is held from the Crown, and upon its call should have been upon its vassals to take up their ancient obligation to find men and money for war." Moreover, farther on in the same article I read: "Whilst the Chancellor of the Exchequer was framing his budget a colleague in the Cabinet was holding a great sale of farm lands and obtaining phenomenal prices!"

Such a sham cannot endure. The struggle is to severe for that. An institution that cannot, or will not, render service when service is imperatively needed is an institution that must go. Land-grabbers cannot be permitted to profit by the present conflagration. It is unthinkable that a great nation which revolted nearly a century ago against the confidence game played by the land monopolists should allow itself to be fleeced once more by the same old gang using the same stale trick. It would have been the crime of all the ages if the English workers had lain down and invited national extinction at the hands of Germany—as urged by a most treacherous section of the "Anarchist and Socialist movements—but it will be little less criminal if they allow their own drones, the landed aristocracy, to fatten off the nation's calamities and set it back a century. That will be treason not only to themselves but all mankind. Everywhere the assault on landlordism is in full swing, and to hark back to the landlord policy of "Protection" is to give up the whole fight.

See how this thing is going everywhere, and from it learn where political power still rests. Only a few days ago the papers were telling us that in Germany there was loud outcry against the Junker aristocracy, who had added greatly to the nation's present sufferings—which they as a class brought on by blocking, to the best of their ability, all efforts to get food from outside sources. It is hard to get news from Germany and one does not know how reliable this information is, but it was commented on widely in our papers and there is nothing improbable about it. If Germany's Junkerdom is acting thus it is only doing what the English cabinet minister has done, and what the English landed aristocracy has done for centuries. For that matter England's landed aristocracy acts only as all landowners invariably act. You talk of internationalism and yearn for an international issue! Well, here it is. Man's entire life on this planet is poisoned by the cornering of what must be for the use of all. Everywhere—legally or illeg-

ally, with the rapier of intelligence or the brutal bludgeon of physical violence—the fight against landlordism is being waged, and it is a fight to the bitter end. The despatches that told me of Joe Hillstrom's execution also informed me that he had taken part in the Mexican Revolution because he hoped to get a piece of land; and a day or two after I read in the same paper the following head: "Night Riders shot down. Landowners and tenants in Missouri in deadly feud. Seven men are wounded in a battle near Clarkton. Detectives hired to guard property fired upon." It is not in Mexico alone that there is war against land monopoly.

Picking up the "Coast Seamen's Journal" I read an address by Walter Macarthur, delivered at the International Peace Congress held recently in San Francisco. It is headed, "Landlordism the Cause of War," and in it the speaker insisted that "the laws of society respecting the ownership and use of land ignore and contravene the laws of nature respecting the necessities of man's existence." That tells the whole story, and it seems needless to add that there are none more hopelessly insane than those who imagine that, by some hocus-pocus, they can evade the central law of life.

What struck me, however, most forcibly in Mr. Macarthur's address was his reference to the Commission on Industrial Relations which, created by Act of Congress more than three years ago, has only recently rendered conflicting reports on the causes of industrial unrest. Is it not significant that, although hopelessly divided on other points, the members of the Commission unanimously denounced land monopoly as the cause of the increasing congestion of cities, the higher cost of living and that army of unemployed which, at this moment, is the most menacing of all our foes?

Unless my memory betrays me, Mr. Macarthur was for years editor of the "Coast Seamen's Journal" and, as a prominent figure in the American Federation of Labor, at one time aspired to Congress. Remembering all this, and much old-time experience of Samuel Gompers and the Coast Seamen's Union, I turned with some curiosity to page 11 of its "Journal," whereon is reproduced the "Economic Platform adopted by the American Federation of Labor," which recently held its annual convention in San Francisco. There are nineteen planks to—in my opinion—this kindergarten platform, and not one of them has even the remotest reference to landlordism!

Modern civilization presents us with a frightful spectacle of moral cowardice and the mental dishonesty that springs therefrom. Thanks to the labors of the past man today knows things he dares not acknowledge and hold opinions he dares not voice. Millions laugh to scorn, in private, the childish fables taught us from the pulpit; but the preacher is their client, their patient, their customer or their employer, and never would they dare tell him that he is just a bunco man and nothing more. Hundreds of lawyers have told me in private that our land system is a preposterous defiance of life's basic laws and answerable for ninety-nine hundredths of social misery and crime; but the landowner and the real estate dealer are their clients or neighbors, and never will they say publicly what they think about the method by which those clients and neighbors make their money. I can put my finger on

that truth which, if acknowledged from the White House, would have been of inestimable value to the people of the United States and of the world.

Look at this European war, which has now dragged this country into its vortex. Let us not still pretend it has not, when we are in the throes of such a campaign for "Preparedness" as no American ever dreamed of sixteen months ago. Let us not allege we are not affected when powder mills and arms factories are being blown up daily, and our Government is hunting down the authors of vast labor conspiracies said to have originated in the highest official circles of Berlin. When the indicted officials of the Hamburg-American line admit, through their counsel, that they were paid \$750,000, by the Deutsch Bank of Berlin, to charter supply ships sailing under false manifests; when our Government's own prosecuting counsel refuses to accept these confessions and declares that they are made not to bring out the real facts but "to smother them;" when these and similar things are set before us daily, we cannot maintain that attitude of proud indifference we adopted so loftily when the war began. Where do we stand today, as the result of not having had the courage to face the truth and speak it? Germany despises us and tells us bluntly that we are even afraid of Mexico. The Belgian says: "By treaties to which the United States was party I was guaranteed against invasion, and when invasion came the United States had not even the courage to rebuke the invader." So says the Frenchman, and so says the Englishman; for England, though not actually invaded, would have been invaded by the Kaiser could he managed it. Was there no right and wrong in this gigantic quarrel? Was there not some one who decided that it was worth his while to conquer, even if the world had to wade to the bridge-bits in blood? I tell our readers bluntly that the man or nation too indolent to ferret out the truth in such a case is dead to human sympathies, and that a people too cowardly to speak its honest thought has no standing with the truly civilized.

Where does the man who dares not speak his honest thought get off? Does he get there? Has the Labor movement, or the Socialist movement, or the Anarchist movement, got there after all these years of strenuous propaganda? Can any one of them point to a considerable body of adherents and say: "These people have implicit confidence in and will follow us to the death, for they know that we are true as steel and that what we believe we stand by, cost what it will?" Can the United States today say that? Of course it cannot; the plain truth being that from the Rio Grande to Cape Horn the United States is utterly distrusted, while in Europe it is regarded as a heartless calculator, waiting coldly for the chestnuts which others are pulling from the fire.

I wrote recently of Germany as having lost probably 5,000,000 men. That was doubtless an exaggeration, though I took it from a source regarded at the moment as reliable. I now find that Frank H. Symonds, the well-known expert of the New York "Tribune," places Germany's loss, to November 1, at 3,750,000, and Germany is only one of many warring nations. History records no slaughter comparable to this, and the army suffering is small as compared with that of millions to innocent people throughout the vast area now swept by war. Honest labor would have prevented this. A single outside nation that had the honesty to investigate impartially and, without fear or favor, lay the blame where it belonged, would have placed the wrongdo-

ers in a light so strong that all the world would have forced them to instantaneous submission. But that demanded a moral courage this generation does not possess, and cannot possess, until it rids itself of slavery and adopts those enlightened institutions which will make the individual his own independent master. At present, living at the goodwill of a landlord, we are necessarily a slavish race, incapable of accepting or uttering truth.

WM. C. OWEN.

Such Is Life.

This section habitually ignores—as did "Land and Liberty"—the ordinary strike and liberty, because its editor considers that strikes never settle anything, as is proved by the history of the past and is indeed self-evident, for deep-lying causes cannot be affected by attacks on superficial results. We have received, however, a circular from the 20,000 clothing workers now on strike in Chicago, which states, among other things: "In the investigation before the aldermanic committee appointed by the city council, scores of pay envelopes were introduced in evidence, showing that the wages paid average about 8 cents an hour." This is disgusting enough that is this advanced age and country flesh and blood should be so cheap, but it is doubly disgusting when one considers that this is the condition in a trade which, for at least a generation past, has shown exceptional enterprise both in organizing and striking for better conditions. Labor is kicking vainly against the pricks and the experience of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America proves it.

"You who shall liberate the land will do more for your country than we have done in the liberation of its trade."—Richard Cobden (England's great Free Trade agitator.)

Frank P. Walsh, chairman of the Commission on Industrial Relations, is now much in the public eye, and he has been giving the workers some advice which they would do well to heed but assuredly will not, if their leaders can prevent it. "If I were a workingman," he says, "I would be very careful about trusting any part of my economic welfare with a legislative body. And again: 'Every ill in the industrial system will find its base in special privilege given by the people.'"

In New York City the stock exchange is booming as it has seldom boomed in all its inflated history, but Police Commissioner Woods has issued notice that "New York has all it can do to take care of its own destitute and unemployed." In California all the professional boosters are shouting that good times have returned, but the State Commission of Immigration and Housing has published a warning which runs: "If you are looking for work or charity you will not find the former in California and you will find the latter only through hard labor on the roads or rock piles." Between these harsh official utterances and President Wilson's honeyed words there is a world of difference, but I will lay long odds that the former are nearer to the truth.

WM. C. OWEN.

At a meeting of the Sydney Labor Council it was voted that: "This council is opposed to any form of compulsory service of life, health and limb that does not, first of all, bring wealth under conscription. Most justly!

Show Us Wherein Authority Can Benefit The Poor.

I Bent over the plough and irrigating with his sweat the furrow that he turns, the peon toils and entones one of those inexpressible sad folk-songs that seem to condense and sum up all the bitterness that social injustice has been accumulating for centuries in the poor man's heart. The peon toils and sings, thinking at the same time of the hut wherein his family is awaiting him to share its humble meal. His heart is flooded with tenderness as he muses on his wife and little ones, and looking up to note the position of the sun and tell the hour of day, he perceives a light hour of dust which gradually grows larger as it nears him. Those who are approaching are soldiers of the mead. His heart is flooded with tenderness as he muses on his wife and little ones, and looking up to note the position of the sun and tell the hour of day, he perceives a light hour of dust which gradually grows larger as it nears him. Those who are approaching are soldiers of the mead. His heart is flooded with tenderness as he muses on his wife and little ones, and looking up to note the position of the sun and tell the hour of day, he perceives a light hour of dust which gradually grows larger as it nears him. Those who are approaching are soldiers of the mead.

For three days past Pedro has been tramping the city streets eagerly in search of work. He is a good workman; his muscles are of steel on his face, which stamps him a child of the people, honesty is reflected. Vainly he tramps the city, begging the employers to "take the trouble" to exploit his sturdy arms. On every side the doors are shut against him, but Pedro is energetic and does not allow himself to become discouraged. So, streaming with sweat and with hunger's sharp teeth gnawing at his entrails, he offers and offers his fists of iron in the hope of meeting a master who will "kindly" consent to exploit them. Crossing the city for the twentieth time he thinks of his wife and children in their poor pigsty, who, like him, are suffering from hunger and are about to be put out by the landlord who

is not willing to wait any longer for the rent. He thinks of his little ones and, his heart torn with grief, hastens his footsteps in his efforts to find a master, a master, a master. A policeman has noticed Pedro passing and repassing, turning to pass again and turning to pass yet again the street whereon he himself is posted to "keep public order." He takes Pedro by the collar and conducts him to the nearest police station, to charge him with vagrancy. While Pedro suffers in the prison his family perishes of hunger, or prostitutes itself or steals to escape starvation. Will Pedro tell you that Authority is a good thing for the poor?

Santiago, full of content, bids his wife farewell. He is going to ask the hacienda owner for the share coming to him as co-partner in the abundant harvest they have raised. The hacienda owner pulls out books, memoranda, notes, bills, and after adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing, says to his co-partner, "I owe you nothing. On the contrary you owe me provisions, clothing, wood," etc., etc. A co-partner protests and runs a judge, asking for justice. The judge goes over the books, memoranda, notes and bills; adds, subtracts, multiplies and divides, and condemns the co-partner to pay the hacienda owner what is owing and the costs of the suit. The wife, all smiles, comes to meet Santiago, their youngest child in her arms, believing that he will bring plenty of money, since the harvest has been a splendid one; but she turns a splendid one; but she tears flowing down his sun-burned cheeks as he comes with empty hand and broken heart. The hacienda owner has falsified the accounts, and the judge as always, sided with the strong. Will Santiago tell you that Authority is a good thing for the poor?

RICARDO FLORES MAGON.
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Land and Liberty

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