

What will the world have for its colossal investment in war?



Some War Thoughts.

It is not only the Socialists in Europe who have disappointed us in their attitude towards the war. David Lloyd George, England's far-sighted and fearless Chancellor of the Exchequer, causes surprise, at the very least, by his proposals for raising the war budget. If our papers report him correctly—there is always a chance of mistake, of course—Mr. Lloyd George has forsworn his principles of penalizing idleness and unearned incomes, and has chosen to lay the burden for a war that is not a workingmen's war on the shoulders of the working class. There is not a word, in any report in American papers, about increasing the tax on land values, the importance of which Mr. Lloyd George has so long and fearlessly preached. The English workingmen are exhorted to give their lives in this war and to further bear the burden by paying added taxes on the necessities of life and on some of the poor little luxuries they are able to afford . . . and what is the argument advanced for all this sacrifice? "We fight for our *land* . . . for our freedom . . . we fight to keep England for the English." And yet it was Lloyd George who first taught the average Englishman *who* owns the land of England! Why not let those who own the land of England fight for it and pay the taxes as well? There would be some reason in this.



The Krupp Company, manufacturing Germany's big guns and other war material, votes 3,000,000 marks towards the relief of the families of soldier employees. Seeing as the Krupp Company helps largely in making the relief necessary it would be interesting to know the exact relation, in dollars and cents, between the benefit accruing to the Krupps through the death of each soldier, and the amount spent in each individual relief case. It could doubtless be computed by subtracting from the added profit this war brings the Krupp Company, the 3,000,000 marks given the relief fund. The balance, we fear, would still be found on the profit side for the Krupp Company, so that self-interest on their part and the part of other such firms will still be a fruitful source of danger to the cause of a world peace.



The Comic Spirit, which looks on at the doings of mankind must find some source of pleasure in

s. c.

the assertion on the part of nations who have always aided and abetted the military spirit as a function of their national life, that they are "fighting a holy war against militarism." It is so delightfully illogical.

Either militarism is right and necessary as a function of government or it is all wrong. If it is right, then why isn't the country which has brought it to the highest state of perfection the country that should be most admired by all militarists? If it is wrong, then why isn't it wrong when present in a small degree as well as in a larger degree? If burglary, for instance, is right and lawful as a function of society, then the man who steals the most should be most admired, not condemned. But if burglary is wrong in itself, is the thief who gets away with only a few hundred dollars' worth any better (in principle) than he who loots several thousands? It is most amusing to hear the ardent militarists of this country, the followers of Rooseveltian doctrines of brute force as a qualification for citizenship, take sides, violently, with the Allies and as violently condemn "Prussian Militarism." Don't they realize that what they are condemning is merely the thing they admire raised to its highest potency? Or can it be that they are angry with Germany for having shown to what the thing they admire may lead?

GRACE ISABEL COLBRON.



Governor Hunt's Dilemma.

Governor Hunt of Arizona has done well in saving from execution six condemned persons whom he was said to be at first disposed to send to death. The press dispatches had said that there were eleven condemned ones awaiting execution, so that his act may not save all who were to die. But it is also possible that the dispatches erred in giving the number. The Governor has been compelled to endure a sore trial, such as should be required of no man. For this, sympathy is due him, however he may pass through it. But let it be hoped that he has not committed the irretrievable error of allowing a single execution in the fallacious belief that the burden of guilt will rest entirely on the people.

S. D.



The Inalienable Right to Life.

The Arizona Republican of Phoenix of December 10 finds fault with The Public for urging Governor Hunt to prevent a wholesale execution, in spite of popular approval of capital punishment. The Republican declares the issue to be "Shall the

majority prevail?" That is not the question at issue. The right of a majority to rule is the right of the people to manage their own affairs. About that there seems no room for difference of opinion. To hold that this right does not extend to matters outside of the province of government is not a limitation of popular rights any more than to hold as limitation of an individual's right to manage his own affairs, denial of his right to interfere with affairs of others. The best democrats of ante-bellum times refused to obey the fugitive slave law, correctly holding that the right of a black man to his liberty was beyond the just power of government to dispose of. The best democrats of today would undoubtedly defy the same law under similar circumstances. There have been and are laws and local ordinances interfering with freedom of speech or of the press. None know better than advocates of democracy that there is no inconsistency in resisting such legislation.

It may be asked "who shall determine what rights are inalienable and what are proper governmental functions?" Of course there may be difference of opinion as to whether certain rights are inalienable and whether or not certain governmental acts are within its proper powers. There is no human power to determine regarding these, and there should be none. But while there may be room for doubt about some rights and some functions, there are some rights about which there need be no doubt. If the right to life, for instance, is not inalienable, then there can be no inalienable rights at all, and even the right of the majority to rule must be without foundation. The right of a majority to rule rests on the possession by individuals of certain rights, of which the right to life must be the first one.

The Republican asserts that the doctrine of the right of all men to live "has never been accepted anywhere." Even if true, that is no reason why it should not, if properly proven, be accepted now. But it certainly was accepted on one historic occasion, at least. The acceptance by the American Colonies of the Declaration of Independence was surely an acceptance of that doctrine. Upon that doctrine, it was declared, is based the right of governments to exist "deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed." The argument that justified separation from the mother country would have failed to stand the test of reason, had it not been clear that all men have cer-

tain inalienable rights, including the right to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness. S. D.

Municipal Attractions.

If the poor, who play the part of the shuttlecock in the great game of battledore and shuttlecock, ever get far enough away from their environment to look upon their situation from the outside, they must wonder at the motives of those who wield the battledore. Upon the one hand they hear the advice, get out into the country, get away from the city, go back to the land; and upon the other they see efforts made to entertain, instruct and amuse the poor of the city. Not content with parks, museums, zoological gardens, swimming beaches, and the various municipal means of recreation already in use, there have been instituted municipal dances; and it is proposed to add to these, municipal movies. Where will it all end? If we continue adding to the attractions of city life how are we to get anybody to leave the city to go on land? Or how, indeed, are we to keep those already on land from flocking to the city?

If the State really must interest itself in the private affairs of the citizen, and if there is too strong a tendency for people to leave the farm for the city, as so many near-sociologists claim, might it not be better for the State to devote more attention to making country life attractive? It was long ago remarked by investigators that the poverty of spirit, and the lack of social culture, in the average country village was greater than that in city slums; and that there was more call for social settlement work in the rural districts than in the metropolitan. City poverty is spectacular because concentrated; a like number of people thinly settled will show greater need. The very fact of the drift toward the city indicates where the greater attractions lie. S. C.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

DIRECT LEGISLATION IN NORTH DAKOTA.

Atlantic, Ia., Dec. 11, 1914.

The amendment adopted last month in North Dakota which provides for the Initiative for statutes and for the Referendum, is all that could be hoped for. But for constitutional amendments a 25 per cent petition is required. This was placed there by the prohibition element for the purpose of making it unworkable.

The Constitution of the State forbids the sale of