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EDITORIAL

## WORKING CLASS MILITARISM

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**G**USTAVE HERVE'S *La Guerre Sociale* (The Social War) for February 21 has a leading article showing in detail the preparations that are making by Germany and Great Britain for a military clash, which, the article declares, is not merely imminent, but approaching rapidly. The article argues that the British Government is endeavoring to secure the alliance of France through the then French minister Pichon; it calls upon the French people to cause the fact to be known that they, not M. Pichon, dispose of their own hides, and that they are determined to oppose with force any intervention by France in the approaching British-German duel. The article argues that a proper and timely declaration on the part of the Unions and the Socialist organizations might cause the French capitalists, "whose charge d'affaires Pichon is," to think twice before they rushed to war; and that such a declaration might even calm the bellicose ardor of Great Britain, and might force a peaceful solution of the economic issue. The articles then proceeds:

"But let it be repeated: when one threatens one must be in condition to carry out his threat. It is not enough to bellow: 'Sooner insurrection than war!' Insurrections are not improvised. They demand moral and material preparation. . . . We must acquire for and develop among the working class the habit of strict discipline, an indispensable thing for all mass action, and we must be ready to oppose—let us not be afraid of words!—with a working class and revolutionary militarism the conservatism of the bourgeois."

These are weighty thoughts that go far to explain the peculiar rancor Anarchists manifest towards Herve.

Anti-military agitation has, to the shallow mind, the flavor and allurements of Anarchy. To warn, however, that the bellowing of phrases is silly if not harmful; that threats without the power to execute them are ridiculous; and, worst of all,

deliberately to issue the admonition that insurrections, so far from being improvised, require moral and material preparation, including the habit of order and discipline;—these are constructive utterances, so utterly repellent to the Anarchic mind that they are bound everywhere, just now very particularly in Europe, to have a sobering effect upon bourgeois war schemes.

The law of bourgeois existence may break through the fears that Herve’s systematic anti-militarist agitation justly raises in the bourgeois breast. Despite Herve’s posture, war may yet break out between Great Britain and Germany, and mayhap France herself may be drawn into the swirl. But the language of Herve—well measured and well thought—is bound to lay the foundation for the “working class militarism”—an armed militarism in Europe, in America the all-sufficient unarmed militarism of Industrial Unionism—that not the wildest bourgeois orgie {orgy?} of a military outbreak can uproot.

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