

# FIGHT CONSCRIPTION!

## THE ANTI-CONSCRIPTION LEAGUE:

### ITS OBJECT AND BASIS.

The Anti-Conscription League is an organisation consisting of men and women who are totally opposed to Conscription in any shape or form. MEMBERSHIP of the League is confined to men who are likely to be called upon for service should Conscription become law, and who are determined to refuse such service—whatever the consequences may be. *Men above military age, and women, who are in sympathy with the aims of the League, are welcomed as Associates. The Associates of the League, besides assisting financially, will be able to render invaluable aid in educating public opinion, and organising protests against any suppressive proceedings which may be instituted against Members.*

The League bases its attitude upon the urgent need that has arisen for offering immediate and whole-hearted opposition to the imminent further enslavement of individuals through legislation. The much-vaunted "Social Reform" measures that have been passed into law during the last few years have contributed largely to the ever-increasing power of the parasitical minority who already hold the great mass of the population in an economic servitude which will shortly be supplemented by a political tyranny of the worst description if the workers are prepared to submit without protest and resistance. Under the pretext of "military necessity" (which "has never known any law," as recently stated by a Liberal Under-Secretary for War—amidst the cheers of the self-styled representatives of the people), under the pretext of "military necessity" we are threatened not only with MILITARY CONSCRIPTION, but also with INDUSTRIAL CONSCRIPTION.

The essence of Conscription is REGISTRATION, and this has already been partially introduced into the industrial sphere by means of the detestable State Insurance Act—which has already been used by employers as a weapon against workers on strike. The workers will be told that Conscription is to be applied only "for the duration of the war"; but history and experience combine to teach the lesson that encroachments on individual liberty are more easily established than abolished. Once let Conscription be introduced, and the workers of this country will find it an enormous obstruction to their efforts towards emancipation. Workers who go on strike against intolerable conditions will be mobilised as soldiers and then ordered (*under military law and its penalties*) to perform the work they have refused to do as civilians: this course has already been adopted—in the case of French railway men on strike in 1910.

Military Conscription must be condemned on the highest

moral grounds. The workers of this country have no real quarrel with their brothers of different nationalities; yet at the behest of Governments (the creators of the wars which they call upon the workers to wage) the toilers of one country go forth to slaughter those of another—men whom they do not know, whom they have never even seen! Conscription *for industrial purposes* is equally indefensible, since it is designed to compel men—against their highest instincts—to engage in the production of implements to be used for the destruction of human life. But the Churches of all denominations are usually to be found supporting wars, regardless of the fact that their own Scriptures teach the commandment “Thou shalt not kill!”—without the qualification “unless in uniform, and by order of the Government.” Thus the State initiates, and the Church sanctions, wholesale carnage and destruction, and those who desire the cessation of these iniquities must therefore look to the matter themselves.

The State exists for the express purpose of upholding the present system of legalised robbery, which enables a small minority to monopolise the land and other means of production—thereby owning and controlling the very lives of the workers. To achieve its purpose the State relies, at the last resort, upon *brute force*, and the Army is its principal instrument. If therefore the workers permit Conscription to be imposed upon them, they will strengthen immeasurably the hands of their worst oppressor.

We who think thus have banded ourselves together for mutual support and encouragement, and because we know that many a man is with us in spirit who perhaps might not dare to resist if he felt himself to be alone against the great thoughtless multitude whose opinions are so largely moulded by sensational and lying newspapers. Come and join us in our struggle against the establishment and continuance of British militarism under the pretext of destroying the militarism of Prussia. Do not allow the State, the Church, or the Press to do your thinking *for you*: think for yourself, and act in accordance with your convictions! Do not let the CURSE OF CONSCRIPTION be the bitter heritage of your children, and of their children after them!

### **Refuse to be Conscripted!**

Act at once! Join the League to-day. Send your name and address (stating whether you are joining as Member or Associate) to the Secretary, Anti-Conscription League, 127 Ossulston Street, London, N.W., who will also gladly receive contributions. The minimum subscription (for Members and Associates) is sixpence per quarter.

*Copies of this leaflet for distribution can be obtained from the Secretary of the League at the above address.*