

THE SPECTATOR.

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Conscription and Conscience: A History, 1916-1919. By John W. Graham. (G. Allen and Unwin. 12s. 6d. net.)—Mr. Graham has thought it worth while to describe at length the agitation of the “conscientious objectors” who would not fight for their country in the War. It is, however, interesting to know that they numbered in all only 16,000, and that the “absolutists,” who would neither fight nor work, but who expected to be fed and clothed while the nation was in deadly peril, numbered only 1,543. Mr. Clifford Allen, in his preface, admits that many of these persons showed “a spirit of half-arrogant pride not far removed from that militarism which they sought to overthrow.” He reminds his Socialist friends that the individual would have just as much right to refuse to work for the State in a Socialist Utopia as he had to refuse to fight for the State. Mr. Allen forgets that the Socialists, as in Russia, would control the food supply and, probably, would show no mercy to dissentients.

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