

Lessons for Proletarian Schools.

Workers' Dreadnought

WE STAND FOR A CLASSLESS SOCIETY.

VOL. IX. No. 51.

SATURDAY, MARCH 3, 1923.

WEEKLY.

THREE SONNETS.

From the German of E. Toller.

Ernest Toller was one of the leaders of the Munich Soviets. His highly-praised Masehinsturmen will be produced by the Incorporated Stage Society in London.

PRISON NIGHTS.

The nights are full of silent tears, there seems
An infant's timid tapping at thy wall,
List in suspense! Would someone press thy
hand?

Ah no; thy hand encounters but the stones.

Groans and rebellion seething in the night,
And wild desire that for the woman burns,
Whilst thou, all trembling from enfeebled
blood,

By mocking phantoms findest thy dreams
disturbed.

The air of night teemeth with songs unsung,
Like velvet butterflies that faint and fade
In dusky dews kissing mysterious things.

Those melodies thou'lt never hear again
As thou wouldst seize them now they dis-
appear,

Where is no road to follow, no return.

A PRISONER GIVES HIS HAND TO DEATH.

At first the cry of the unfortunate;
Then curses ringing through the noisy halls,
The call of syrens sounding the alarm,
And in the cells the death-watch low tic tac.

Why hast thou given thy hand to Death, O
friend?

Was it the moaning of the beaten ones,
The sob of hunger, or the years that eat
Our bodies slowly, as the foul rats gnaw

The stiffening corpses? Was it then the steps
That tramp above our heads with ceaseless
noise,

Or yet the silent mockery of these walls

All sorrow-draped, O nightmares, that
oppress?

We cannot tell. This only do we know,
That men hurt other men, and that no bridge

Surely unites us, you and I; apart
As lonely streams; we lose us in the night
Of this drear edifice; and we do freeze,
Freeze in the numbness of a mortal cold.

FORESTS.

Forests appearing on horizons far
That with the breath of evening wake to life.
How my desire doth enter into thee
—Moments my captive sadness can surmount!

I bruise my face upon the iron bars,
And wound my hands to cure their fevered
state,

O poorer than an outcast dog; I am
The anguished death-cry of the hunted beast

Forests of oak; temples of the oppressed,
O pines that are my country's harps, ye
weave,

Healers of sorrow, round your joyous child

The wondrous presence of my far-off land.
When shall I folded in your murmurs deep
List to the lofty hymning of your soul?

Has the Race Lived in Vain?

The disintegration of society rapidly advances to chaos. The amalgamations of steel, railways, oil, shipping and finance undermine the world that grew out of the economic Reformation. Commercial magnates glory in a depression which ruins their rivals. The small man is being thrown off the ever-steepening pyramid. A score of men dictate the destinies of the world. Democracy is the god held up to the worker, behind which the Mammon autocracy pulls the strings of the political puppets.

What say the pundits of the Labour world? Answer: The growth of the Trust causes the reorganisation of labour to meet the new situation. They suggest "One Big Union." Good; but what is to be its policy or goal—for it is evident that unless there is an end in view the means is a will o' the wisp. Has the race lived in vain? Are there no lessons in history? There is much writing, much talk, much printing of recrimination. "Now Roman is to Roman more hated than a foe." The discussion of internationalism and organisation goes on through the Capitalist League of Nations and Proletarian Internationals of various shades all seemingly hating each other for the love of unity. Brotherly love and unity are forgotten. Each has his nostrum discharged with vitriolic vituperation from his rostrum.

The Press groans with ceaseless production of literature, and the virgin forests of the world are depleted to provide pulp for its production. To what end? The putrefaction of an exhausted civilisation torn to rags by competitive antagonism. "A house divided against itself can't stand." Can it?

The Modern World Bows Its Head in Shame.

Is there no light in History? Let us see. We hear of, and see, pictures of great buildings, statues, and read of poetry which have come down from the ancient world and are acclaimed as the standards. The modern world bows its head in shame, unable to approach their correctness, grandeur, beauty. The pyramids of Egypt, the Temples of Solomon, the Parthenon, the Acropolis, the Temples of India, the amphitheatres, the bridges, roads and aqueducts of Rome, the Vatican, the Temple of Diana, the cathedrals of our own and other lands. Who designed, cut and built these? Answer: Workers. The worker was looked upon with loathing, scorn, hatred. And in literature: who made the Homeric poems? Answer: A Union of Artists extending over thousands of years. Who was the root of Plato's and Aristotle's philosophies? (Aristotle foresaw that the shuttle might be worked without slaves, and said there were people too poor to be good.) Answer: A workman—Socrates, a stone mason and member of a Trade Union, a thiasos. He wrote no book. Who is the root of what is known as Christian literature? One Jesus of Nazareth, a carpenter, a dyer, a magician, a healer, a teacher, the proclaimer of humane and social philosophy. Can any good come out of Nazareth? The equivalent

to-day is: Can any good come out of a Trade Union? Baptism was a Trade Union initiation ceremony. Cleanliness was insisted on, and superseded circumcision. Nothing was originated by the magnates except corruption and tyranny.

There are two kinds of Christianity: (1) That of the working class, the social religion of good works, kindness, mutual help, and love. It existed thousands of years before Jesus, the carpenter. It is pre-Christian. Christianity spread rapidly because it was a working-class thing and was engrafted into the pre-historic Trade Unions and at once blazed across the world. The other class of Christianity is (2) theological Christianity, paganised Christianity, the Christianity of the master class, of Mammon, of Capitalism, a bastard thing. Whenever you see a clergyman got up as a soldier, he belongs to the theological Christianity, the Church militant, and is the boasting hireling of the master class, his business being to maintain the confusion of the two. But between the two there is an unbridgeable gulf. Love becomes here "Charity," the curse of our life. When you hear such a one saying: "He will not work, neither shall he eat," it is blasphemy. This was a rule of working-class community of goods and referred to a time when the Unions were co-operative and Communist. The brethren were provided with work by the Union, and they had to contribute fairly to the funds of the Union. The demand for work to-day is a desire to share the burden with the brethren. The sign of the Cross became the standard of the worker because it was the instrument of their execution. Jesus died on the cross because he was a workman and preached working-class economics. Paul died by beheading because he was a Roman citizen and could not be a workman. He joined a Union in order to spread the Gospel of working-class brotherhood. The red flag was, and is, a working-class symbol from time beyond history. Its use by the master class to-day is a gross prostitution. When a body takes on a military form it is a capitalistic attempt to side-track the worker.

Civilisation Founded on Slavery.

The ancient civilisations were founded on slavery of the worker, and there were many attempts by the slaves to throw off the yoke by strikes, uprisings, wars. They are mentioned in the works of aristocratic writers as servile wars. The books dealing with them in detail were suppressed or destroyed (Livy and Diodorus, for instance); but we have been able to trace the following: (1) Drimakos of Chios, who defied the State for thirty years; (2) Viriathus of Spain; (3) Eunus of Sicily, who defied the Rome power for ten years with an army of 200,000 slaves; (4) Aristonicus, who opposed the will of Attalus III. of Pergamus, making over his kingdom to the Romans; (5) Nabis in Greece, who exterminated the Ephori of the Lycungian law—a Communist founded on slavery; and lastly (6) Spartacus, a gladiator, who escaped from Capua, assembled an army defeating the Romans in many battles, but finally defeated about a hundred years before Christ—his army of about 300,000 being overwhelmed by the concentration of the armies of veterans

NEXT WEEK:
AN ARTICLE ON FASCISMO BY
PIETRO GUALDUCCI.

under Casisus from Italy, Lucullus from Spain, and Pompey from Asia Minor, amounting to about 400,000 at the battle of Salamis in the South of Italy. The carnage was terrible, and after the battle 6,000 slaves were crucified along the roads leading to Rome. Then there was universal despair, but the idea of a deliverer (Messiah) grew among the lowly. He came not as a military conqueror, but in the shape of a lowly workman, a carpenter. He proclaimed to the world the brotherhood (a word much prostituted by the priesthood) of man, and directed that this gospel be preached throughout the world. He said "resist not evil," "the meek shall inherit the earth," "the labourer is worthy of his meat." It was an appalling doctrine to the dominant who thought they could govern, and he had his reward on the Cross. It explains why he was crucified while Barabbas was set free. Barabbas was a physical force rebel who could be had at any time, but it was difficult to trap a man like Christ, who by dialectic and parable understood only by the brethren, could refuse to pay tribute to Caesar, and nonpluss the tax-collecting bureaucracy. He disappeared, and there is reason to believe that by the connivance of Pontius Pilate he was removed from the cross before death, and took refuge among the Trade Unions spread underground (in catacombs) across the Roman world, carrying on his working-class economic mission till about the age of 50. Rome, given up to all sorts of loathsome indulgences, crushed the Trade Unions of the workers, destroying its own pedestal, and so fell.

The position is that employer and capitalist cannot provide work to absorb the unemployed workers and capital. They have ceased to function, and, like the appendix, have become increasingly rudimentary. Having ceased to function, it has lost power. Congestion has set up inflammation, of which a most virulent attack broke out in 1914, and still rages. Operations have been performed on every part of the body politic except on the rudiment. What is to be done? There are two ways: (1) Either the rudiment must consent to effacement and gradual absorption; or (2) there must be a surgical operation. The first would be the course of nature in an ordered development of society where freedom broadens slowly down from precedent to precedent, and the adjustments would be easy. The second would be an act of violence occasioning a social shock which would cause difficulty in the social adjustments and entail much suffering to the rudiment. Which is it to be? What do the "doctors" say? Conferences, committees of enquiry and scientific investigations on social things get no progress. The patient is suffering from capitalistic complications and can't live longer. The patient dies. The patient is the system. The workers will carry on absorbing capital and spreading brotherhood.

JOHN CROLL.

THE TENTH YEAR.

With a certain amount of truth the philosopher has remarked: What is there in an anniversary to distinguish it from another day? All days are equal, it is true, with an almost even measure of sorrow and struggle, at least, for those who swim against the current.

Yet an anniversary may signify an increasing of efforts, moved by power of the remembrance of past battles.

For that reason—to do propaganda with a renewed enthusiasm—the idea of celebrating the "Workers' Dreadnought" entering in its tenth year is catching on.

The organisation of a Social in London is proceeding apace, and particulars will be out shortly.

Meanwhile we are waiting to hear from the provinces.

We want to impress upon comrades that it is necessary to get to work at once, and also that to meet sundry pressing claims donations are urgently needed. Actually we are besieged by these claims. We ask you to come along with finances to raise the siege.

TRADE UNION FINANCE.

STRIKING FACTS AND FIGURES.

Some of the slaves are losing faith in the pure and simple Trade Unions. One of the latest examples of this is the call made for a commission to inquire into the balance sheet of the Liverpool Carters' and Motormen's Union, where there is a question regarding an item, "sundry property, £109," on the assets side.

Several items in the balance sheet are highly interesting, and show to what a great degree the power of the Union "resides in finance," as the Labour leaders tell us, and is vested in the hands of the chief officials. Moreover, it should be observed that the Trade Union funds are frequently held by the employers of the Union members. That is indeed a curious circumstance. Here are some items from the 1920 balance sheet, showing in whose keeping the Trade Union funds are invested:

Mersey Harbour and Dock Board, £3,646 5s.

Liverpool Corporation, £2,000, £2,500, £3,000.

Birkenhead Corporation, £2,000.

Wallasey Corporation, £2,000.

Bradford Corporation, £2,000.

Treasury Bonds, 1935, 5½ per cent., £500; 5-15, £2,000.

National War Bonds, 1922, 3 per cent., £3,000; 1924, £2,500; 1927, 5 per cent., £3,000.

National War Stock, 1929-47, 5 per cent., £3,347 6s. 6d.

Exchequer Bonds, 1925, 5½ per cent., £5,000.

C.W.S. Development Bonds, £5,000.

Cash in bank and in hand, £11,112 1s. 5d.

Premises, £1,000.

Cash advanced to Approved Society, £511 17s. 5d.

Telephone deposit, £1.

Sundry property, £109.

Total, £56,227 14s. 10d.

Little change is made in 1921 assets.

The 1922 report is of great interest, especially to the out-of-work members. Here are a few of the details of expenditure upon the Union premises at 400 Scotland Road, Liverpool:

Sixteen chairs at £4 16s. each, £76 16s.

214 yards of linoleum at 8/6 per yard, £90 19s.

Carpet, £40 16s. 6d.

Seamless carpet for secretary's office, 10 ft. 6 in. by 10 ft. 6 in., £18 18s.

Photographs of Executive Committee and Staff, £15 12s. 4d.

Total expenditure on new premises, £3,366 9s.

It is fortunate that it is not by cash that the workers' struggles are really fought. If it were so, it would be a pity to have so much capital locked up in the stock of the Mersey Dock and Harbour Board, which is an ally of one of the biggest employers of carters in Liverpool. If cash were needed by the workers in their struggle, to invest the Union funds with the Mersey Dock and Harbour Board would be like lending the British Fleet to France or Germany. Evidently the Union officials have not quite realised yet that Capital and Labour are brothers who sometimes fall out. We do not forget, however, that members of the Liverpool Carters' and Motormen's Union were allowed to bring raw material and finished stuff from the rope-works when the workers organised in the N.U.D.A.W. were on strike for eighteen months at a stretch.

On to One Union of All Industrial Workers, with delegates on the job, not in £3,600 offices, with their feet on £18 8s. seamless carpets and a salaries account of £5,000 per year for officials of a Union with only 12,000 members, whose only unity is that their names are written in the same book, and they are lulled to sleep with the same dope

J. O'H.

A RANK AND FILE PROTEST.

A meeting of the National General and Transport Workers' Union was held at the Jubilee Hall, Liverpool, to organise the scalers of Liverpool into the ranks of the Transport and General Workers' Union. Mr. Banks, the chairman, stated that he would welcome all opposition in the hall, but refused to answer several questions from the rank and file. When asked: "Did not one of the officials of the Transport and General Workers' Union supply blacklegs during the tug-boatmen's strike in Liverpool?" he replied that he could not answer. When asked: "Was not Mr. Milligan responsible for the seats found by Mr. Pitman, secretary of the Loyal Unemployed Distress Committee?" he ruled the question out of order. He also refused to answer the question: "Do the Trade Unions intend to co-operate with the National Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement to try to relieve the distress prevailing among the unemployed at the present?"

Eventually Mr. Milligan, the chairman, slunk off the platform amid chaotic protests, leaving Mr. Dunford to address what remained of the meeting—one comrade who remained in the gallery complaining of the salaries paid to pot-bellied officials.

JACK CULLEN.

FABIANISM.

The following description of the Fabians and the Labour Party is given by Lieut.-Col. Josiah Wedgwood and Mrs. Ethel Wedgwood in their book: "Roads to Freedom." The remarkable thing is that Col. Wedgwood has since become a Labour M.P.

"In England the Fabians, the official Labour Party and the Progressives throw their energies and talents into such proposals as: a limitation of the hours of active slavery to eight; a provision of crèches with hygienic bottles and educational toys for the children of mothers obliged (under the industrial system) to go out to work; bureaux for registering who is engaged in wage work and who is not (with a view to compelling the man who is not in service to enter it at once); insurance schemes for putting part of that part of a workman's wages which he receives into the bank for him, so that he may go to authorised sanatoria when he is ill, and be attended by licensed doctors; bills for making men and women decent by flogging them, and for locking up other people's children on humanitarian principles.

"So do we see a conscientious house-mistress of the good old type take charge of her young maids' minds and morals, regulate household affairs so as to train them for good servants shepherd them to and from the established church in black frocks and bonnets; physic them with patent drugs when ill; provide them with suitable evening recreations, so that they may not be tempted to flirt at the back door; and treat every breakage of china or decorum as a breach of the decalogue.

"Such a programme is, of course, attractive to the political schoolmasters who have climbed into intellectual pre-eminence on the shoulders of those who 'swink with their hands.' It is only by inventing things of that sort that they can justify to themselves their privileged position. As for the sheep, fortunately for the professional shepherds, they only ask to be more humanely fleeced and more comfortably folded by shepherds of their own selection. They do not yet believe in a world where sheep are neither shorn nor penned."

"If we are ever to get the Government into a tight place in Parliament—and it is to be hoped we shall—both the ex-Premiers will have to be in the Lobby with us."—Arthur Ponsonby, Labour (late Liberal) M.P., in the "New Leader."

That gives a fairly clear indication of what the Labour Party may be expected to do.

SEVEN THAT WERE HANGED.

By Leonid Andreyev.
(A Famous Russian Author.)

(Continued.)

II.

SENTENCED TO BE HANGED.

The predictions of the police were realised. Four terrorists, three men and one woman, carrying bombs, revolvers, and infernal machines, were taken in front of the steps of the residence; a fifth accomplice was arrested at her dwelling, where the implements had been manufactured and the conspiracy planned. A large quantity of dynamite and many weapons were found there. All five were very young; the eldest of the men was twenty-eight, the younger of the women nineteen. They were tried in the fortress where they had been imprisoned after their arrest; they were tried quickly and secretly, as was the custom at that merciless epoch.

Before the court all five were calm, but serious and thoughtful; their contempt for the judges so great that they did not care to emphasise their fearlessness by a useless smile or a pretence of gaiety. They were just tranquil enough to protect their souls and the deep gloom of their agony from the malevolent gaze of strangers. Some questions they refused to answer, some they answered simply, briefly, precisely, as if they were speaking, not to judges but to statisticians desirous of completing tables of figures. Three of them, one woman and two men, gave their real names; two refused to disclose their identity, which remained unknown to the court. In everything that happened they manifested that distant and attenuated curiosity peculiar to people seriously ill or possessed by a single all-powerful idea. They cast swift glances, seized upon an interesting word in its flight, and went back to their thoughts, resuming them at the exact point where they had dropped them.

The accused placed nearest the judges had given his name as Sergey Golovin, a former officer, son of a retired colonel. He was very young, with broad shoulders, and so robust that neither the prison or the expectation of certain death had been able to dim the colour of his cheeks or the expression of happy innocence in his blue eyes. Throughout the trial he twisted his thick blond beard, to which he had not yet become accustomed, and gazed steadily at the window, knitting his brows.

It was the latter part of winter, that period into which, among snowstorms and gray, cold days, the approaching spring projects sometimes, as a forerunner, a warm and luminous day, or even a single hour, so passionately young and sparkling that the sparrows in the street become mad with joy and men seem intoxicated. Now, through the upper window, still covered with the dust of the previous summer, a very cold and beautiful sky was to be seen; at the first glance it seemed a thick and milky gray; then, upon a second examination, it appeared to be covered with azure stains, of an ever-deepening blue, a blue pure and infinite. And because it did not strip itself suddenly, but modestly draped itself in the transparent veil of clouds, it became charming, like one's fiancée. Sergey Golovin looked at the sky, pulled at his moustache, winked now one and now the other of his eyes behind the long, heavy eye-lashes, and reflected profoundly on nobody knows what. Once, even, his fingers moved rapidly, and an expression of naive joy appeared upon his face; but he looked around him, and his joy extinguished like a live coal upon which one steps. Almost instantaneously, almost without transition, the redness of his cheeks gave place to a corpse-like pallor; a fine hair painfully pulled out was pressed as in a vice between his bloodless finger-ends. But the joy of life and of the spring was still stronger. A few minutes later the young face resumed its naive expression and sought again the sky of spring.

Toward the sky also looked an unknown young girl, surnamed Musya. She was

younger than Golovin, but seemed his elder because of the severity, the gravity, of her proud and loyal eyes. The delicate neck and slender arms alone revealed the intangible something which is youth itself, and which sounded so distinctly in the pure harmonious voice that resembled a costly instrument in perfect tune. Musya was very pale, of that passionate pallor peculiar to those who burn with an inner, radiant, and powerful fire. She scarcely stirred; from time to time only, with a gesture that was hardly visible, she felt for a deep trace in the third finger of her right hand—the trace of a ring recently removed. She looked at the sky with calmness and indifference; she looked at it simply because everything in this commonplace and dirty hall was hostile to her and seemed to scrutinise her face. This bit of blue sky was the only pure and true thing upon which she could look with confidence.

The judges pitied Sergey Golovin and hated Musya.

Musya's neighbour, motionless also, with hands folded between his knees and somewhat of affectation in his pose, was an unknown surnamed Werner. If one can bolt a face as one bolts a heavy door, the unknown had bolted his as if it were a door of iron. He gazed steadily at the floor, and it was impossible to tell whether he was calm or deeply moved, whether he was thinking of something or listening to the testimony of the policemen. He was rather short of stature; his features were fine and noble. He gave the impression of an immense and calm force, or a cold and audacious valour. The very politeness with which he uttered his clear and curt replies seemed dangerous on his lips. On the backs of the other prisoners the customary cloak seemed a ridiculous costume; on him it was not even noticeable, so foreign was the garment to the man. Although Werner had been armed only with a poor revolver, while the others carried bombs and infernal machines, the judges looked upon him as the leader, and treated him with a certain respect, with the same brevity which he employed toward them.

In his neighbour, Vasily Kashirin, a frightful moral struggle was going on between the intolerable terror of death and the desperate desire to subdue this fear and conceal it from the judges. Ever since the prisoners had been taken to court in the morning, he had been stifling under the hurried beating of his heart. Drops of sweat appeared continually on his brow; his hands were moist and cold; his damp and icy shirt, sticking to his body, hindered his movements. By a superhuman effort of the will he kept his fingers from trembling, and maintained the firmness and moderation of his voice and the tranquility of his gaze. He saw nothing around him; the sound of the voice that he heard seemed to reach him through a fog, and it was in a fog also that he stiffened himself in a desperate effort to answer firmly and aloud. But, as soon as he had spoken, he forgot the questions, as well as his own phrases; the silent and terrible struggle began again. And upon his person death was so in evidence that the judges turned their eyes away from him. It was as difficult to determine his age as that of a rotting corpse. According to his papers he was only twenty-three. Once or twice Werner touched him gently on the knee, and each time he answered briefly:

"It's nothing."

His hardest moment was when he suddenly felt an irresistible desire to utter inarticulate cries, like a hunted beast. Then he gave Werner a slight push; without raising his eyes, the latter answered in a low voice:

"It's nothing, Vasya. It will soon be over!"

Consumed by anxiety, Tanya Kovalchuk, the fifth terrorist, sheltered her comrades with a maternal look. She was still very young; her cheeks seemed as highly coloured as those of Sergey Golovin; and yet she seemed to be the mother of all the accused, so full of tender anxiety and infinite love were her looks, her smile, her fear. The progress of the trial did not interest her. She listened to her com-

rades simply to see if their voices trembled, if they were afraid, if they needed water.

But she could not look at Vasya; his anguish was too intense; she contented herself with cracking her plump fingers. At Musya and Werner she gazed with proud and respectful admiration, her face then wearing a grave and serious expression. As for Sergey Golovin, she continually tried to attract his attention by her smile.

"The dear comrade, he is looking at the sky. Look, look!" thought she, as she observed the direction of his eyes.

"And Vasya? My God! My God! . . . What can be done to comfort him? If I speak to him, perhaps it will make matters worse; suppose he should begin to weep?"

Like a peaceful pool reflecting every wandering cloud, her amiable and clear countenance showed all the feelings and all the thoughts, however fleeting, of her four comrades. She forgot that she was on trial, too, and would be hanged; her indifference to this was absolute. It was in her dwelling that the bombs and dynamite had been found; strange as it may seem, she had received the police with pistol shots, and had wounded one of them in the head.

The trial ended toward eight o'clock, just as the day was drawing to its close. Little by little, in the eyes of Sergey and Musya, the blue sky disappeared; without reddening, without smiling, it grew dim gently as on a summer evening, becoming grayish, and suddenly cold and wintry. Golovin heaved a sigh, stretched himself, and raised his eyes toward the window, where the chilly darkness of the night was already making itself manifest; still pulling his beard, he began to examine the judges, the soldiers, and their weapons, exchanging a smile with Tanya Kovalchuk. As for Musya, when the sun had set completely, she did not lower her gaze to the ground, but directed it toward a corner where a spider's web was swaying gently in the invisible current of warm air from the stove; and thus she remained until the sentence had been pronounced.

After the verdict, the condemned said their farewells to their lawyers, avoiding their disconcerted, pitying, and confused looks; then they grouped themselves for a moment near the door, and exchanged short phrases.

"It's nothing, Vasya! All will soon be over!" said Werner.

"But there is nothing the matter with me, brother," answered Kashirin, in a strong, quiet, and almost joyous voice. In fact, his face had taken on a slight colour, no longer resembling that of a corpse.

"The devil take them! They have hanged us all just the same!" swore Golovin naively.

"It was to have been expected," answered Werner, without agitation.

"To-morrow the final judgment will be rendered, and they will put us all in the same cell," said Tanya, to console her comrades. "We shall remain together until the execution."

Silently, and with a resolute air, Musya started off.

(To be continued.)

PLATO ON COMMUNISM.

"Hence in those days mankind were not very poor, nor was poverty the cause of difference among them; and rich they could not have been, having neither gold nor silver—such at that time was their condition; and the community which has neither poverty nor riches will always have the noblest principles; in it there is no insult or injustice; nor again are there contentions or envyings. And therefore they were good, and also because they were what is called simple-minded. Would not many generations living on in a simple manner, although ruder, perhaps, and more ignorant of the arts generally, although inferior to the men of our day in these respects, be simpler and more manly, and also more temperate and altogether more just? They could hardly have wanted lawyers, for they had no laws at this early period; they lived by habit and the customs of their ancestors."

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Our View.

THE LEGAL RULE which deems that a wife who commits an offence in the presence of her husband does so under his coercion is to be abolished. The Lord Chancellor has introduced a Bill altering the law in this respect, and the Bill will almost certainly reach the Statute Book. It is argued that since the legal disabilities which made the wife the chattel of her husband have been repealed, and since the Parliamentary franchise and the right to sit in Parliament have been extended to women, the law which permits a woman to escape responsibility for her acts on the ground of the husband's coercion is an unjustifiable anomaly. Nevertheless, the economic dependence of the married woman upon her husband still remains in the vast majority of cases, and where there is economic dependence, the subtlest and strongest form of coercion is always a possibility to be reckoned with. The economic dependence of the mother upon her children's father will never come to an end until the private property system is abolished. The Suffragettes have not emancipated women: only Communism can do that.

ON SUNDAY, February 25th, the British Section of the Fascisti held a ball at the Hotel Cecil in London: it is not in the poor places, which young proletarian organisations are only able to afford, that this budding terrorist organisation holds its functions. The affair was advertised as a Black Shirts' Ball.

In Italy the Fascisti are finding the glass of castor oil too mild a torture to satisfy their brutal instincts. They now extract the teeth of those who do not obey the command they make in their house to house visitations to shout: "Long live Italy!"

The International Women's Suffrage Alliance has disgraced itself by asking the brigand Mussolini to receive a deputation of its members when it holds its annual Congress in Rome on May 12th to 19th. Mussolini has agreed.

The Roman Catholic Church has disgraced itself in the same manner. Cardinal Vannutelli, at the Finzil wedding, which Mussolini attended, pronounced what was practically an official eulogy of the Vatican and hailed the black-shirt brigand as "marked out to serve his nation." All intelligent persons must recognise the sinister part the Roman Church is playing.

On Sunday last Franz Birnecker, a Vienna workman, murdered by Viennese nationalist reactionaries, was buried. In token of sorrow for the dead, the workers of Vienna stopped for two minutes in their work on tramcars, telephone services, electric power stations, and so on.

THE NEW TRIAL of Sacco and Vanzetti for a murder of which they are obviously guiltless, but for which they lie under sentence of death, is again delayed.

Meanwhile, Sacco has courageously entered on a hunger strike for release. Innumerable demonstrations have been held, and petitions organised, and there has been talk of striking

for the release of class-war prisoners. Those who mean to strike should do it now. They should regard Sacco's challenge as addressed to them, as well as to the authorities. A strike would undoubtedly cause Sacco's release: will it come?

THAT 550 MOTHERS have offered their children to a wealthy Canadian woman who wishes to adopt a blue-eyed boy of four is but another evidence of the appalling poverty which reigns under this unhappy system. Had a child of another age, or with eyes of another colour, been demanded, as many more children would have been forthcoming. Each offer is the signal of a woman's despair.

THE FAMILIES evicted from 40 South Grove, Peckham, last month, are still homeless. Mr. Nunn's children are still in hospital. They have been allowed to stay longer than was considered needful, because there was no home to receive them. The fathers are sleeping out or in common lodging-houses. The mothers and children are sleeping on the floor of first one house, then another, with those who are willing to take them in. Nunn and Nay are still tramping about with placards advertising their homeless state.

The House that was Seized.

A COMMITTEE of Conservative Members of Parliament has been formed to work against the teaching of Communism to children. The Committee asks the Government either to introduce a Bill to make such teaching to children under 16 illegal, or to give facilities for the passage of a private Members' Bill to that effect. Comrades should be up and doing on this question.

FRANCE RETALIATES by an act of flagrant highway robbery: steals thirteen million marks of German money, and even the plates for printing more money. Apparently France intends to print German money for the use of her army of occupation, instead of buying it with her falling francs.

Perhaps, also, she contemplates bringing down the value of the mark by printing vast quantities of paper money to flood Germany with it.

The English Government worked thus against France in the days of the French Revolution, flooding France with false French currency. America, and probably the other Allies also, did the same by Soviet Russia in the days of the Allied military intervention to destroy Communism. Meanwhile there is daily news of French excesses in the Ruhr, and daily news of a growing hostility to the Allies amongst the German people.

THE MISERABLE NEGOTIATIONS between French and British military commanders respecting the use which the French may make of the British zone of occupation is protracted and pettifogging. Many moves in the contest for wealth and power between the rivals are veiled from public knowledge. Of one thing we may be sure; they are motivated by the basest self-interest.

THE BRITISH ZONE.

PRESIDENT HARDING has announced that the United States will now become a member of the Permanent Court of International Justice at the Hague without assuming membership of the League of Nations, is an evidence that United States Capitalism is preparing to intervene in its own interests when it considers the occasion fitting. The capitalists of the various countries, including our own, are jealously watching their commercial interests, caring only for them. The Capitalist newspapers publish

quietly, without distress or nausea, the words of a French official to the Press:

"In six weeks we shall invite you to a farewell dinner. The bound limbs of Germany are beginning to rot."

CHRISTOPHER WREN was paid only £16 13s. 4d. a month for his work as architect of St. Paul's. That is a hard fact for those to encounter who

pretend that men and women are rewarded according to their abilities under Capitalism. It is true that Wren's four pounds a week would purchase more in Wren's day than at the present time. Nevertheless, there is no gainsaying the fact that Wren's income was paltry as compared to that of any insignificant

THE FRENCH INVASION OF THE RUHR is unifying Germany. The captains of Germany's heavy industries, Stinnes and the other ten great industrial

capitalists, have largely fought their own individual battle to increase their vast fortunes since the war, and have left the German State to take care of itself. They refused to disgorge their wealth, and left the State to stagger under the crushing burden of reparations with the smallest possible financial aid from them, evading even that aid whenever possible. They were prepared to come to terms with the French for the exploitation of the Ruhr; but the French would not co-operate with them. The French ruling classes are determined to dominate, both the Saar and the Ruhr. They are not prepared even to share that wealthy mineral region with Germany.

When the German magnates found the French unwilling to negotiate a business deal with them as fellow-capitalists; when they found the French determined to treat them as pariahs because of their German nationality; then the German capitalists began to turn for protection to the German State they had flouted.

Now at length they have agreed to assist the State out of their vast wealth—on their own terms, of course; the German capitalists will not lose so long as German Capitalism survives. Now they place their vast stores of foreign money at the disposal of the German Government, which is their creature. Thereby the remarkable feat of driving up the mark whilst the franc falls is being performed.

Manifold are the absurdities and contradictions of the Capitalist system! Germany lies helpless under an armed invasion; the German people starve, yet German money appreciates in value by the manipulation of the exchanges!

City merchant of his day. Moreover, it should be observed that the private property owners of Wren's day prevented the carrying out of his plan for rebuilding London after the Great Fire. The owners of slum property prevented the creation of the great roads 90 feet wide, which were to lead up to St. Paul's; the fine quays by the riverside; and the squares and public buildings he desired.

AS THE SPIRIT OF COMMUNISM grows

we shall see Communist fraternities springing up in our midst. Already such attempts are beginning here and in many other countries. The unemployed, with their equal doles and equal poverty, massed as they are in many districts, might alleviate their conditions were groups of them to pool at least a part of their dole and buy in common. They would benefit still more if they were to pool their labour and work for each other on a basis of mutual service. A group might, for instance, bake its own bread. Unemployed builders would construct the oven, the material and utensils would be bought in common, unemployed bakers would bake, and a member or members of the group would take round the bread in a hand-cart constructed by one of the others. Comrades would bring their materials to the

tailors and dressmakers in the group, or the materials would be bought at wholesale prices for the group. There would be no buying and selling or payment for services rendered between members of the group; nor would the group make things to sell at all. Gradually the group would come to do all its buying in common, and would not buy anything for its members which one or more of them could make for the rest.

It may be argued that if the unemployed were to do so they would become so contented with the present system that they would make no efforts to change it. We do not anticipate that the dole, which would still be their means of paying the landlord and obtaining materials, is likely to become adequate enough to produce a state of contentment. If that were so, the unemployed with leisure to work for each other would be infinitely better off than men and women who give their time and energy to an employer, and find that their wages have sunk to the barest subsistence level.

No one's Communist fervour will be reduced by attempting to practise Communism even amid the difficulties of the present system. Most so-called attempts at Communism and co-operation have been merely the going into business as a capitalist, and the production of commodities for sale.

ON THE RAND.

DEATH SENTENCES EXPECTED

By A. B. Dumbar.

The strike is over, the revolt passed. We had thought the hangings were over too. Now, however, it is announced that two more cases have been set down for murder, and that a new Special Court has been formed. Sir John Wessels is the president, and Dr. Waal, son-in-law of the late General Botha, is again on the Bench. The Court sits early in February, and about twenty cases are down for hearing.

The Communists, including myself, who are still waiting to face the music, are not worried much about the ordeal in front of us.

What was all the late trouble about?

Simply an act of war.

The Chamber of Mines proclaimed a blockade by issuing notice that 2,000 men on the mines were redundant, and their appearance on the properties would be regarded by the Chamber in the same manner as a Government would regard a foreign army.

Time was, and not very long ago, when bodies of workmen took their notice to quit work, and starve their wives and families, as a matter of course. Times have changed, and so has the outlook of the worker.

The steady propaganda of Communism has been planted, and to-day the worker not only disputes the right of the master class to say what he shall do, or not do, but he disputes the right of the master class to have any say at all in his material welfare.

It was in this frame of mind that the Rand workers resolved to join issue with the Chamber in January last year. A conference was called, and much valuable time wasted on the workers' side while the representatives of Capital and Labour were busy trying to solve the problem:

"Whether it was moral to starve 2,000 miners and their wives and families in order to increase the already big dividends of the masters."

The Government was busy preparing for the emergency when it would be called in as final arbiter."

In a debate in the House of Assembly on the "Women's Franchise," Mr. Merriman said "he opposed the Bill, as all constitutional government depended on force for its existence, and men supplied the force." He spoke the truth. The master class depend on force for their existence, and the Government supplies the force.

The Government in the late struggle is said to have remained neutral! Nevertheless, the police more than once swept the crowds off the streets with fixed bayonets. In Boksburg some fired, and three strikers were killed. Still the Government declared itself neutral, as all good Governments do.

However, the Government was called upon by "the people"—that is, the people who run the newspapers—to come to the assistance of law and order, and a war took place over a front of sixty miles.

One thing surprised everyone, and that was the Government never attacked the Chamber who started the war. It simply got into the strikers with guns, planes, bombs, tanks, rifles, and all the death-dealing implements, which is part of the stock in trade of all peaceful Christain Governments.

One good thing the Government did was to show what its "impartiality" meant, and the lesson was not lost. After the battle the brutalities committed beggar description.

A Commission was appointed, which included Mr. Brace, from England, who had served the miners so well that the Government had to find him a job to keep him from becoming one of the unemployed.

This Commission decided, as all Commissions do, against the workers. The workers in South Africa have lost faith in commissions, and we must thank Mr. Brace for this, as I believe it is the first useful piece of work he has done since he became a renegade. The Martial Law Commission also did good work. It fixed the blame on the workers and exonerated the Government, which was just what one would expect from a Commission of Judges.

Perhaps the greatest farce in the whole business was the Special Treason Court. The justice shown there was so great that the counsel refused to appear for the defence. The Judge-President was obliged to make an appeal from the Bench for a senior counsel. He got one; and with something like two hundred cases awaiting trial, the Court adjourned at Christmas, and has not met since. The men, who had been about ten months in gaol awaiting trial, had fines imposed from £10 to £20 in the Magistrates' Court, and so ended the drama.

The courage shown by Stassen, Long, Lewis, and Hull was remarkable. Indeed, the three latter were accorded a funeral that surpasses anything ever known in this country. Their names are sacred, and will live for ever. What effect has all this had on the Movement? Of course, as I predicted in the "Dreadnought" about a year ago, the trade unions suffered. Few people who understand the function of the Unions will mourn this. The Unions were bulwarks of the system, and had to go. It is possible that in the rebuilding, something better will rise.

AN AMERICAN FRAME-UP.

After a preliminary hearing lasting two days, John E. Merrick, charged with being an accessory before the fact and having planted an infernal machine containing 76 sticks of dynamite near the shoe factory of Knipe Brothers, Haverhill, Mass., was held for the grand jury as accessory, and the complaint charging that he had planted the infernal machine was dismissed.

Friends of Merrick state that his arrest is due to a frame-up and the desire of the police to get a reward of 2,000 dollars offered by Knipe Brothers. The infernal machine was found on January 4th, and on January 22nd Merrick was arrested two days after the offer of the reward.

At the time of the discovery of the infernal machine, which, together with the dynamite, was contained in a black suitcase, a strike was on at the Knipe Brothers' Shoe Factory.

Under cross-examination, Mr. Knipe, owner of the factory, admitted that his son-in-law was connected with a big Boston construction firm that used dynamite. Lee, the engineer of the factory, who removed the dynamite from the infernal machine, volunteered the information that he "knew all about the dynamite," and had used it while a miner and worker on a railroad construction gang. Lee arrived at work the day the infernal machine was found before any of the other workers. He relieved the night watchman at 5.20 a.m. that morning.

Under the Stars & Stripes.

The Iowa Supreme Court has decided that though membership of the I.W.W. has been held to be illegal, in itself, by many Courts, there is no warrant for this assumption. According to the Criminal Syndicalism Act sabotage is a punishable offence. In the case of an I.W.W. member, named Ton, Judge Milo Smith, at Marion Hall, instructed the jury that:

"Sabotage means the practice which teaches withdrawal of efficiency—that is, either to slacken up and interfere with quality or production or give poor service, or the destruction, directly or indirectly, or injury to the property rights of an employer by an employee, or one acting for him in the furtherance of industrial or political ends or his own pecuniary interests."

The Supreme Court of Iowa held, however, that sabotage must include malice and injury to property.

Justice Weaver spoke of the syndicalism law as:

"the product of conditions created by the war—an extraordinary piece of legislation which finds moral justification, if any it has, in the exercise of the State's war power for protection against the machinations of its enemies from within and without."

"But it contains much which is ill adapted to normal conditions in a democracy, and its vague and boundless generalities afford material for endless trouble. No convictions under it should be entered except upon the clearest evidence."

Has the I.W.W. general strike threat influenced the Iowa Supreme Court?

Four of the six Iowa Supreme Court Judges upheld the introduction of evidence obtained by unlawful means. The other two, Judges Weaver and Preston, dissented. Justice Weaver said:

"There is no apparent reason why we should overrule our former holdings as to the admissibility of evidence obtained by unreasonable or unlawful search or seizure in violation of constitutional prohibition of such acts. That guarantee of protection is expressly stated in the fourth amendment to the U.S. Constitution."

"In the face of our constitutional guarantee it is disconcerting to find the Iowa Supreme Court giving adherence to the propositions that evidence is admissible, however unfairly and unlawfully obtained, even when it is procured under circumstances which met with the unqualified disapprobation of the Court so long as the accused has not been compelled to do some positive, affirmative act inculcating himself."

The United States once had a more or less democratic constitution; but successive Governments and the Supreme Courts have largely abolished it.

The Workers' Prison Relief Committee of Paterson, New Jersey, writes:

"We feel that the attention of all those interested in building up a sound and strong labour movement should be drawn to the clear-sighted and courageous stand taken a few days ago by three of the political prisoners in the U.S. Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas. Peter R. Green, Harry Lloyd, and Bert Lorton were offered individual pardon, on condition that they consent to deportation. They refused, preferring to serve their full sentences rather than come out in this way. They maintain that they committed no crime, and should therefore be released unconditionally. Furthermore, they insist that all the I.W.W. prisoners should be released together, since they were all convicted on the selfsame charges, and are equally innocent. By refusing individual clemency, Green, Lloyd, and Lorton have given the world a striking demonstration of the true meaning of solidarity."

"ELIZABETH STUYVESANT,

"OLRICH FRUEH,

"FREDERICK A. BLOSSOM."

Esperanto.

LESSON 9.

Future Tense.

The Future Tense (or time) ends in -OS. Mi venos, I shall come; ŝi venos, she will come; li parolos, he will speak.

Note the three Simple Tenses:

The Present Tense (time) ends in -AS; mi tenas, I hold; vi tenas, you hold.

The Past Tense (time) ends in -IS; mi tenis, I held.

The Future Tense (time) ends in -OS; mi tenos, I shall hold.

Besides these Simple Tenses, there are Compound Tenses.

A Compound Tense consists of est-as, -is, -os, together with a Participle; i.e.,

Tenata, being held (Present).

Tenita, (having been) held (Past).

Tenota, about to be held (Future).

A Participle (tenata, etc.) helps to form the Compound Tense of a Verb; or we may say that a participle participates in forming the compound tense, for example:

Present: Li estas tenata, he is being held.

Past: Li estas tenita, he has been held [literally, "he is (in a state of) having been held"].

Future: Li estas tenota, he is about to be held.

You will notice that the "time" is indicated in Esperanto by the A, I, O in -ata, -ita, -ota. In English the "time" is shown in the words being (Present), has been (Past), about to be (Future), the word held being the same in all three cases.

A Participle is usually in the form of an adjective—that is, it ends in -a. But it may, on occasion, be used with the ending e (adverb) or -o (noun).

The above participles are said to be Passive (i.e., the opposite of Active).

Estas is called an auxiliary verb, because, as in the instances given above, it helps to form a compound tense of a verb.

De. When the preposition de follows the participles -ata, -ita, -ota, it means by. (Compare with "a language understood of the people"—in Esperanto, "lingvo komprenebla de la popolo.")

Vocabulary.

perdita, (having been) lost
portata, being carried or worn
vundita, (having been) wounded
konstruita, (having been) built
finita, (having been) finished
komencita, (having been) begun
pagita, (having been) paid
skribita, (having been) written
parolata, being spoken
uzata, being used.
farota, about to be done.
de, of, from or by
Johano, John
sekve, consequently
ĝi, it
jam, already
ankoraŭ, still
lingvo, language
baldaŭ * (pronounce bahl-dow), soon.

Translate: La libro estas perdita de Johano (by John). Li estas vundita kaj sekve estas portata. La domo estas konstruita; ĝi estas jam finita. Domo, kiu estas konstruita, ankoraŭ ne estas finita. Mi estas pagita de (by) tiu persono. Lingvo, kiu estas parolata, estas lingvo uzata. Laboro ne komencita estas laboro farota (to be done). Laboro jam komencita estos (will be) baldaŭ finita.

* Aŭ is pronounced somewhat like ow in cow, endow. It really consists of the sounds ah-oo blended into one syllable

Now as the State is not to govern, it may be asked what the State is to do. The State is to be a voluntary association that will organise labour, and be the manufacturer and distributor of necessary commodities. The State is to make what is useful, the individual is to make what is beautiful.—Oscar Wilde.

LESSONS FOR PROLETARIAN SCHOOLS.

I.

LIGHT ON THE OLD TESTAMENT.

All peoples have passed through primitive Communism; and the Hebrews, some of whose agitators and historians wrote the Old Testament, went through the stage of primitive Communism, like all the rest. After Communism had disappeared it was looked back upon with regret. Hence the tradition of the Golden Age common to all peoples.

At first they were nomads—that is to say, a wandering people, who roamed about the Arabian and East Egyptian deserts. They were organised in tribes and clans, holding their property in common. In the twelfth century B.C. they invaded the fruitful land of Canaan and conquered its people, who were more civilised, in the sense that they were further advanced in many sorts of knowledge, and who had become less accustomed to fighting than they.

The Hebrews at that time knew no such thing as private property in land. Their cattle and all their possessions they held in common. They divided the land of Canaan by lot amongst their tribes, and each tribe divided its portion amongst its families or clans; but the land was still a common possession; the families worked it for the benefit of the tribe.

In time, however, partly, perhaps, from contact with Canaanite civilisation; partly through uninterrupted possession and the individual cultivation of the soil, land came to be regarded as absolute property. Under pressure of any misfortune, some sold or mortgaged their land; and, being left destitute, became the servants of others. The old equalitarian society of social brothers and sisters, who shared their all in good times and bad, passed away.

In the days when the Hebrews roamed the desert as Communists, their highest god was JHWH (Jahweh or Jehovah). He was a war hero, and also a god of tribal cohesion. To him some sacrificed meal, and some a lamb. He commanded them to do right; to be just to each other, frugal and austere, for the desert is not a land of abundance, and to be valiant in battle—in short, to do what they believed to be right; for he was, of course, their own creation and the embodiment of their ideals of righteous conduct.

The Canaanite god was Baal. He was the symbol of nature's fruitfulness in a land of milk and honey, corn and wine; he was the god also of fruitfulness in mankind; for that fertile country could support many people, and agriculture found labour for many hands. The altars of Baal were the scene of luxurious banquets, and his sacred groves were the haunts of lovers.

The Communist society of the Nomad Hebrews was gradually transformed into the society based on private property of the Canaanites; and as their social customs changed, so their religious ideals changed. Some Hebrews became worshippers of Baal; others invested the worship of Jahweh with the characteristics of Baal worship.

The prophets of the Old Testament were those who opposed the private property system into which the Hebrews were drifting with the class distinctions, the poverty and injustice which were its inevitable results, and who objected to the forms of Baal worship. The Hebrew prophets, as they are called, the social agitators of their day, clothed themselves in the garments of desert nomads, and went forth to preach lustily against the new order. Elisha championed the old religion. Amos, Isaiah and Jeremiah led the class struggle of the dispossessed demanding social justice. Let those who have never read the Old Testament in this light turn again and re-read it, and they will find it glowing with meaning. They will realise that these are the fervent outpourings of impassioned agitators.

Canaan was constantly menaced upon its borders by the other tribes moving on from the barren desert. The constant warfare

with invaders created the desire for a king who would organise the defence of the country. The power of Israel grew. The Israelites had gained possession of the caravan roads and a portion of the sea coast. They traded with the Phoenicians. Their trade grew, and they engaged in trade wars. They conquered Elath, the Red Sea port, in order that they might import gold from Ophir and the products of India. Opulence and luxury grew greater among the wealthy, whilst poverty increased and the unfortunate became the bond-slaves of their creditors. Usury developed extensively. The agitators denounced the new Capitalism.

Said Hosea:

"The merchant has the balances of deceit in his hand; he loveth to oppress. And Ephraim said, I am become rich, I have found me wealth."

Isaiah thundered:

"Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no room and ye be made to dwell alone in the midst of the land."

Jeremiah told the story of the fall from Communist righteousness, recalling to the tribes of Israel their old desert life, and declaring that his were the words of Jahweh:

"I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, how thou wentest after me in the wilderness in a land that was not sown. Israel was holiness unto the Lord. And I brought you into a plentiful land, to eat the fruit thereof. But when ye entered, ye defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination."

MUTUAL AID

We heard a lot about self-help last century, and I think the masses have yet to learn to help themselves. When they are wise they will help themselves to all the means of production. I believe in self-help, with one proviso: that you do not help yourself to anything of which others cannot have the counterpart on equal terms. Walt Whitman wrote that phrase, and in our spare moments we might turn sometimes to other things that Walt Whitman wrote

Why do we live dull, meaningless lives? Why this everlasting effort to make ends meet, to go on existing for no purpose in particular? Why are we like a lot of sheep, knowing not where to go, and following any old lead that is given?

Let us remember in what kind of a system we live. We call it the Capitalist system, because it exists primarily for the benefit of Capitalists; but you and I, fellow-worker, are not Capitalists, nor do we desire to be.

The Capitalist system is based on the idea that some people have the right to use other people for the purpose of making profits. One great idea is not to engage in productive work yourself, but to cultivate what is known as business or professional acumen, and so obtain a privileged position, carrying with it the legal right to extort from others the means of a very comfortable livelihood. Sometimes believers in this system say very frank things, as when Mr. J. M. Keynes admits that it is doubtful whether the system can employ everybody except at the very top of a boom period.

Those who believe in the Capitalist system have one regret about it; that while it continues to turn out profits and good times for the few, it has also a nasty habit of turning out a few prophets for the many.

Some of these prophets go about preaching Communism. You, fellow-workers and workless, have heard a lot about Communism through the Capitalist Press and the agents and stalwarts of Capitalism, but it is usually about what Communism is not.

The Communist community is a state of society in which every one does his or her share of work according to his or her capacity, and receives from the necessities and comforts produced by such common labour the necessities and amenities of life that are the common needs of all.

E.B.

From the Publishers.

Railroad Melons, Rates and Wages. A handbook of railroad information, by Charles Edward Russell. (Kerrs, Chicago, two dollars.)

What are railroad melons? This book explains that they are profitable little, or it may be great, opportunities for the "insiders," or, in other words, those who already hold stock in the company. Here is an instance of a water-melon given to the stockholders in the Great Northern Railway Company of U.S.A. in 1893: 5,000,000 dollars of additional stock was issued to the stockholders at par, that is 100, when the market price, the price that new-comers were expected to pay, was 140. This was a melon of 2,000,000 dollars to the stockholders, and added 5,000,000 dollars to the capitalisation of the railway. The book is a striking romance of Capitalism. It remarkably demonstrates the artificiality and dishonesty of the Capitalist system, as exploited to excess by American sharpers, and shows the appalling burden it places upon the community. We should like to serialise the whole book. Since that is impossible, we will give a few incidents from the early history of the New York Central and Hudson River Railway. Our readers must understand that the exploitation practised by the manipulators grew from year to year till their iniquities entirely outshone those upon which we are about to touch. In a subsequent issue we shall give some further facts. Our readers should bear in mind that Capitalism is international, and that these things do not only happen in America.

At periods prior to seventy years ago the State of New York had lent to eight groups of gentlemen the sum of 50,048,496 dollars. to build eight railway lines, on the understanding, of course, that the money be repaid. That money, however, never has been, and never will be, re-paid.

One of these groups possessed the Syracuse and Utica Railroad Company, running between those two cities.

Another group of gentlemen obtained, by judicious lobbying, permission to build another railway to run between the same cities. They called themselves the Syracuse and Utica Direct Company, and said they had a capital of 600,000 dollars; but not a cent of that money was ever paid in.

The gentlemen to whom New York State had lent its money, and who actually possessed eight railway lines, were uniting their ventures at this time.

The Syracuse and Utica Direct now threatened to upset the plans of the others by building their own line to compete with them, unless they were given a share in the existing lines.

For their 600,000 dollars, which had never been seen, they were given 600,000 dollars' worth of shares in the new amalgamated company—the New York Central; half these were called "premium bonds."

Thus eight genuine companies were consolidated, and one fake one. There was also another fake company, the Mohawk Valley, which had a nominal capital of 1,575,000 dollars, but in reality nothing at all save a permission to build, given by the generous legislators of New York State. Even the eight genuine companies had much watered stock, and their original capital belonged to the taxpayers of New York.

The new company now issued a further 9,000,000 dollars of "premium bonds," which were distributed free of charge to those who already had shares—more water! The capital stock of the company was now 22,923,000 dollars, more than half of which represented no actual investment, but was purely fictitious. The books of the company were systematically cooked, and for 25 years these "premium bonds" were described as an asset in the company's books under the title "debt certificates."

The point of all this is that the fares which a railway company in New York State may charge are based on the rate of interest on

capital which the legislators consider should be paid. Interest is paid on the fictitious bonds, and thus the interest paid on the money actually invested is considerably larger than appeared to be the case. It must not be forgotten that the Mohawk Valley Company had 2,463,250 dollars' worth of shares given to it in return for non-existent capital it was supposed to possess, when it came into the combine.

The watering of stock continued apace. In 1868 the capital was supposed to amount to 28,795,000 dollars. On its largely fictitious stock the New York Central paid 6 per cent. in 1854, 1855, 1856, 1857; 7 per cent. in 1858 and 1859; 8 per cent. a year between 1859 and 1865; 9 per cent. in 1866 and 1867. In 1867 it petitioned the legislature for permission to increase its passenger rates, on the ground that at the existing rates it could not earn a just and reasonable profit. Meanwhile the Hudson River Railway had a capital stock of 6,962,971 dollars liberally watered. In 1868 it doubled its stock and sold the new issue to the insiders at 50 cents on the dollar, the market rate being more than par. This was a very juicy water-melon.

On December 19th, 1868, the directors of the New York Central voted 7 2-3rd per cent. dividend, and gave to each stockholder free additional stock to the extent of 80 per cent. of his holdings at the time.

Commodore Vanderbilt, a leading railway light, decided that the stock was too valuable to be widely distributed. By manipulations he was able to bring about through his vast wealth, he caused the price of New York Central stock to fall from 135 to 84. The small people took fright and sold. Meanwhile, Vanderbilt bought stock. The directors then met and voted a cash dividend of 7 2-10th per cent., and a stock dividend of 20 per cent. The next move was to amalgamate the New York Central and Hudson River. For their 13,900,000 dollars' worth of stock in the old company, the Hudson River stockholders received 29,651,800 dollars' worth in the new, whilst the 28,795,000 dollars' worth of stock in the New York Central became 59,605,650 dollars' worth of stock in the new company. More than 50,000,000 dollars' worth of stock were merely gifts by Cornelius Vanderbilt to himself and his family.

COMMUNISM AND ITS TACTICS.

Those who have been students at a school of art and craft, which has been fortunate enough to be entrusted with some piece of work destined for actual use, will realise something of what industry will be under Communism. They will remember with pleasure the zealous fervour with which the students threw themselves into the effort, the friendly emulation in efficiency, the general determination to achieve as fine a result as possible in the collective work. Everyone was enthused by the thought that this was no mere exercise, but an object needed and desired. The finest and most difficult parts of the work were done by the teachers and more accomplished students, the easier and more mechanical tasks were willingly performed by those who were least advanced, who, nevertheless, felt that their turn to execute something ambitious would come with the acquisition of further skill. In the tasks set merely for their training, the students had already learnt that their own stage of progress determined the sort of exercises their teachers set them, and now when engaged in this joint enterprise, for which all had set the highest possible standard of efficiency, they realised that for the sake of the whole work no one should be allotted a part that was beyond his skill. Every student, however, even the dullest, firmly believed in his own capacity for progress—otherwise he would have given up this sort of study and turned to something else. Moreover, every student was encouraged to design, to invent, to learn, to do things that were at present beyond the range of his capacities. Every one of them spent a considerable part of his time in doing some-

thing of his own choosing, something which was to be his own creation and the expression of his own ideas. These last are the merits of the school; its demerits are that its students rarely take part in or come in contact with constructive work that is to be put to use. The acquisition of technical efficiency is undoubtedly retarded thereby, and much of the zest necessary to the highest accomplishment is also lost.

In commercial industry the profit to the employer and the wage to the worker are placed, both by employer and by worker, before mastery of the craft and the production of useful and beautiful objects. The latter are apt to be regarded as only necessary in so far as they minister to the former. Mechanical efficiency is acquired in the practice of industry with a rapidity uncommon in the schools. Girls and boys who have worked a few months in the potteries learn to paint more accurately on slippery cups and saucers than students who have studied an equal time in the schools of art do on the paper nicely strained on their drawing-boards, using the finest sable brushes and water colours.

But the boys and girls in all but a few branches of industry soon reach the end of their progress. Their creative faculties are stultified, or altogether unawakened, because they are kept to the production of a few stereotyped objects.

Only in rare instances does commercial industry supply scope to the creative faculties. Therefore, in commercial industry there is almost no living creative art. The Wedgwood pottery is but a dead copying of a beautiful art that was once alive. The productions of the famous Copenhagen porcelain factory, though tainted by commercialism, have yet something of living and developing art in them, because the workers there are encouraged to make designs on their own account without being compelled to turn out designs continually in order to assure their living. Those workers display an interest and pleasure in their work which, in heightened measure, will obtain throughout industry under Communism.

The craft guilds of the past were somewhat vitiated by production for profit, but they gave to their members the opportunities for enjoyable work and craft development which modern industry absolutely denies to the vast majority.

The Soviets under Communism will bring industry to all the best features of the school and unite them to practical work. When profit making is eliminated, the young students will be able to gain technical experience in the actual workshop without losing the opportunities for study and experiment which the school provides: the industry will have its own school departments.

To-day the opponents of Communism turn to Russia for evidence against Communism and to prove the failure of the Soviets. It cannot be stated too emphatically that the Russian Revolution has not succeeded in establishing Communism, and that the Soviet Constitution has only been very partially applied. Moreover, the Russian Soviets are not regularly constituted, since they include representatives of political parties, representatives of political groups of foreigners living in Russia, representatives of Trade Unions, Trades Councils, and Co-operative Societies, as well as representatives of the workshops.

"Pravda" of April 18th, 1918, published the following regulations for the Moscow Soviet elections:

"Regulations for Representation.

"Establishments employing 200 to 500 workers, one representative; those employing over 500, send one representative for every 500 men. Establishments employing less than 200 workers, combine for purpose of representation with other small establishments.

"Ward Soviets send two deputies, elected at a plenary session.

"Trade Unions with a membership not exceeding 2,000, send one deputy; not exceeding 5,000, two deputies; above 5,000,

one for every 5,000 workers, but not more than ten deputies for any one union.

The Moscow Trades Council sends five deputies.

Political parties send 30 deputies to the Soviet; the seats are allotted to the parties in proportion to their membership, providing the parties include four representatives of industrial establishments and organised workers.

Representatives of the following National non-Russian Socialist parties, one representative per party, are allotted seats:

- (a) "Bund" (Jewish).
- (b) Polish and Socialist Party (Left)
- (c) Polish and Lithuanian Social-Democratic Parties.
- (d) Lettish Social-Democratic Party.
- (e) Jewish Social-Democratic Party.

The intention in giving representation to these various interests was, of course, to disarm their antagonism to the Soviet Power, and to secure their co-operation instead; but the essential administrative character of the Soviets was thereby sacrificed: Constituted thus they must inevitably discuss political antagonisms rather than the production and distribution of social utilities and amenities.

The Russian Soviets sprang into life in the crisis of the revolution of March 1917. They had not been created beforehand in preparation for it. They had arisen in the revolution of 1905, but had died away at its fall.

The March 1917 revolution only created Soviets in a few centres. Their number grew, and was added to by the November Bolshevik Revolution; but five years later the Soviet Government admitted that the network of Soviets necessary to cover Russia was not complete. Kameneff, reporting on the question to the seventh all-Russian Congress of Soviets in 1920, stated that even where Soviets existed, their general assemblies were often rare, and when held, frequently only listened to a few speeches and dispersed without transacting any real business. The Soviets were never able to cope with the productive needs.

The so-called "New Economic Policy" inaugurated by the Soviet Government in 1921; a policy that is really a reversion to Capitalism, of course, inevitably stuck at the root of the Soviet idea. It has robbed the Soviets of their essential function—the administration of industry—and has transformed them into political, and to a large extent powerless, bodies.

The introduction of the New Economic Policy came as the climax of a retrogressive cycle. At the height of the revolutionary wave had come the call, partially responded to, for the management of industry by the Workshop Councils; then, with the ebbing of the tide and with the growth of reactionary tendencies in the bodies possessing coercive authority, the Workshop Councils were superseded. Management boards were established, consisting of representatives of the Factory Committees, the Trade Unions, and the Council of National Economy, a body created jointly by the Trade Unions and the Soviets. Then followed management by a single person, the Workshop Councils being deprived of all right to interfere in the management of the factories, save indirectly, through their minor share in the election of officials and boards of management. Thus by reducing the functions of the Workshop Councils, the return to private ownership and management of industrial enterprises was facilitated.

The Russian Soviets do not administer production, distribution and transport. They merely elect a proportion of those who have a share in administering certain industries.

The Workshop Council, the basis upon which the Soviet structure is theoretically supposed to be built; the local Soviet, often in Russia a diversely mixed body, has but little autonomy. It is dominated by the Councils of delegates from wide areas, or the representatives who are endowed with an increasing measure of coercive authority the further they are removed from the workshop.

Unity and the United Front.

The 'busmen should be congratulated, fellow-worker, on having conducted their fight against wage reductions with good fighting spirit; but though they have won this little bout with the employers, they have by no means reached the millennium.

A comrade declares, fellow-worker, that it is contradictory to support the All-Workers' Union of Revolutionary Workshop Councils, and to be opposed to the United Front.

This comrade fails, fellow-worker, to understand the purpose of unity and to see where it is useful and where it is not.

Some people want unity of employers and employed; some people want a United Front of all political parties—Tory, Liberal, Labour, Socialist, Communist, Anarchist.

Our comrade does not want that: he knows we cannot abolish the system of profit that way. He knows that the only possible union of directly opposed interests or directly opposed classes is an agreement to maintain things as they are.

He does not realise, however, that the same applies to the union of opposing opinions. So long as people agree to differ and yet to work together, they can make no change in regard to the points on which they differ. Witness the unemployed organisation, which, in order to conciliate various opinions, has dropped from its card its original objective—the abolition of Capitalism. Witness the Communist Party of Great Britain, which, in the hope of being affiliated to the Labour Party by conciliating the Trade Unions, has dropped all efforts to establish the Soviets in the workshops.

Our comrade considers that in order to secure the unity of the working class we should support no rival to the Trade Unions. He forgets that the Trade Unions maintain the working class in a state of disunity by setting up craft barriers between the workers.

An All-Workers' Union of Revolutionary Workshop Committees would open to the workers the means to be united, when they have the will to unite, for the purpose of overthrowing the Capitalist system.

When the workers are united in purpose, their unity will at last become a genuine one.

Moreover, when the workers are united in the Workers' Councils, they will have control of their own organisations and the possibility to control production, distribution and transport. Then they will have the power to change the system.

THE SEARCHLIGHT.

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