

SOVIET RUSSIA—1920

(Continued from Page Six)

Soon after my arrival in Moscow I had an hour's conversation with Lenin in English, which he speaks fairly well. As interpreter was present, but his services were scarcely required. Lenin's room is very bare; it contains a big desk, some maps on the walls, two lock-cases, and one comfortable chair for visitors in addition to two or three hard chairs. It is obvious that he has no love of luxury or even comfort. He is very friendly and apparently simple, entirely without a trace of haughtiness. If one meets him without knowing who he is, one would not guess that he is possessed of great power or even that he is in any way eminent. I have never met a personage so destitute of self-importance. He looks at his visitors very closely, and screws up one eye, which seems to increase alarmingly the penetrating power of the other. He laughs a great deal; at first his laugh seems merely friendly and jolly, but gradually I came to feel it rather grim. He is dispassionate, calm, incapable of fear, extraordinarily devoid of self-seeking, an embodied theory. The materialistic conception of history, one feels, is his life-blood. He resembles a professor in his desire to have the theory understood and in his fury with those who misunderstand or disagree, as also in his love of expounding. I got the impression that he despises a great many people and is an intellectual aristocrat.

The first question I asked him was as to how far he recognized the peculiarity of English economic and political conditions. I was anxious to know whether advocacy of violent revolution is an indispensable condition of joining the Third Internationale, although I did not put this question directly because others were asking it officially. His answer was unsatisfactory to me. He admitted that there is little chance of revolution in England now, and that the working man is not yet disgusted with parliamentary government. But he hopes that this result may be brought about by a labor ministry. He thinks that if Mr. Henderson, for instance, were to become Prime Minister, nothing of importance would be done; organized labor would then, so he hopes and believes, turn to revolution. On this ground he wished his supporters in this country to do everything in their power to secure a labor majority in parliament; he does not advocate abstention from parliamentary contests, but participation with a view to making parliament obviously contemptible. The reasons which make attempts at violent revolution seem to most of us both impracticable and undesirable in this country carry no weight with him, and seem to him mere bourgeois prejudices. When I suggested that whatever is possible in England can be achieved without bloodshed, he waved aside the suggestion as fantastic. I got little impression of knowledge or psychological imagination as regards Great Britain. Indeed, the whole tendency of Marxism is against psychological imagination, since it attributes everything to political factors.

I asked him next whether he thought it possible to establish communism firmly and fully in a country containing such a large majority of peasants. He admitted that it was difficult, and laughed over the exchange the peasant is compelled to make of food for paper; the worthlessness of Russian paper struck him as comic. But he said—that is no doubt true—that things will right themselves when there are roads to offer to the peasant. For this he looks partly to electrification in industry, which, he says, is a technical necessity in Russia but will take ten years to complete. He spoke with enthusiasm, as they all do, of the

great scheme for generating electrical power by means of peat. Of course he looks to the raising of the blockade as the only radical cure; but he was not very hopeful of this being achieved through revolutions in other countries. Peace between Bolshevik Russia and capitalist countries, he said, must always be insecure; the Entente might be led by weariness and mutual dissensions to conclude peace, but he felt convinced that the peace would be of brief duration. I found in him, as in almost all leading Communists, much less eagerness than existed on our side for peace and the raising of the blockade. He believes that nothing of real value can be achieved except through world revolution and the abolition of capitalism; I felt that he regarded the resumption of trade with capitalist countries as a mere palliative of doubtful value.

He described the division between rich and poor peasants, and the government propaganda among the latter against the former, leading to acts of violence which he seemed to find amusing. He spoke as though the dictatorship over the peasant would have to continue a long time, because of the peasant's desire for free trade. He said he knew from statistics (what I can well believe) that the peasants have had more to eat these last two years than they ever had before, "and yet they are against us," he added a little wistfully. I asked him what to reply to critics who say that in the country he has merely created peasant proprietorship, not communism; he replied that that is not quite the truth, but he did not say what the truth is.

The last question I asked him was whether resumption of trade with capitalist countries, if it took place, would not create centers of capitalist influence and make the preservation of communism more difficult. It had seemed to me that the more ardent Communists might well dread commercial intercourse with the outer world, as leading to an infiltration of heresy and making the rigidity of the present system almost impossible. He wished to know whether he had such a feeling. He admitted that trade would create difficulties, but said they would be less than those of the war. He said that two years ago neither he nor his colleagues thought they could survive against the hostility of the world. He attributes their survival to the jealousies and divergent interests of the different capitalist nations, also to the power of Bolshevik propaganda. He said the Germans had laughed when the Bolsheviks proposed to combat guns with leaflets, but that the event had proved the leaflets quite as powerful. I do not think he recognizes that the Labor and Socialist Parties have had any part in the matter. He does not seem to know that the attitude of British labor has done a great deal to make a first-class war against Russia impossible, since it has confined the government to what could be done in a hole-and-corner way, and denied without a too blatant mendacity.

He thoroughly enjoys the attacks of Lord Northcliffe, to whom he wishes to send a medal for Bolshevik propaganda. Accusations of spoliation, he remarked, may shock the bourgeois, but have an opposite effect upon the proletarian. I think if I had met him without knowing who he was, I should not have guessed that he was a great man; he struck me as too opinionated and narrowly orthodox. His strength comes I imagine, from his honesty, courage, and unwavering faith—religious faith in the Marxian gospel, which takes the place of the Christian martyr's hopes of Paradise, except that it is less egotistical. He has as little love of liberty as the Christians who suffered under Diocletian and retaliated when they acquired power. Perhaps love of liberty is incompatible with wholehearted belief in a paradise for all human ills. If so, I cannot but rejoice in the skeptical temper of the Western world. I went to Russia believing myself a communist; but contact with those who have no doubts has intensified a thousand-fold my own doubts, not only of communism, but of every creed so firmly held that for its sake men are willing to inflict widespread misery.

Trotsky, whom the Communists do not by any means regard as Lenin's equal, made more impression upon me

A. F. OF L. OFFICIALS TAKE HAND IN STEEL TRUST AFFAIR

Atlantic City, N.J.—American Federation of Labor officials will force presidential and congressional nominees to reckon with the question of free speech and free assembly for labor organizers in steel trust territory in Pennsylvania, Ohio and Indiana. This was announced here following a conference of the federation's executive council.

DINNER PAIL EPIC

(By Mr. William Lloyd, commonly called "Bill," writer for The Federated Press)

A bubble I should like to burst, before my friend Shaw sees it first. So I will write up as a feature "The Public," that elusive creature that really nowhere does exist, except in a dense verbal mist, but is played up to be the goat when Wall Street hears of a strike vote.

Now listen, pal, and you shall hear of just two classes on this sphere—the one which works to get its bread; and one which owns to live instead. "The public" is the whole of us, each mortal, living, blooming cuss, and when you treat it as a class you write yourself down as a donkey.

Now if the switchman strikes for kale, it's hardly possible to fail that in the course of the event some little freight will get mis-sent. The papers suddenly love you and make a right-sounding howl. You become an expected look yell. You must join in the mighty yell and send the switchmen straight to Hades.

But if you should go on strike to fix some things you do not like, the switchman is "the public" now and he is told each day as how he ought to mobilize right quick and knock your block off with a brick. The switchman now gets all the love, descending from the gang above.

Then if the farmer wants more pay for his hat hogs and load of hay, you and the switchman must rush quick and prod him with a big sharp stick. "The public" is a handy tool to make all of you out a fool; they work it up into an art, to keep you fellows far apart. Of course, you really ought to join, so each should get his share of coin, and if the gang insists there be a "public" in its misery, just let the "public" then consist of parasites who won't be mislead. Then every one of us poor duffers can whistle while the "public" suffers; and if it is resolved to die of grief, why then; "So long! Good-by!"

Join the Labor Party

from the point of view of intelligence and personality, though not of character. I saw too little of him, however, to have more than a very superficial impression. He has bright eyes, military bearing, lightning intelligence, and magnetic personality. He is very good-looking, with admirable wavy hair; one feels he would be irresistible to women. I felt in him a vein of humor so long as he was not crossed in any way. I thought, perhaps wrongly, that his vanity was even greater than his love of power—the sort of vanity that one associates with an artist or actor. The comparison with Napoleon was forced upon me. But I had no means of estimating the strength of his communist conviction, which may be very sincere and profound.

An extraordinary contrast to both these men was Gorky, with whom I had a brief interview in Petrograd. He was in bed, apparently dying and obviously heartbroken. He begged me in anything I might say about Russia, always to emphasize what Russia has suffered. He supports the government—as I should do, if I were a Russian—not because he thinks it faultless but because the possible alternatives are worse. One felt in him a love of the Russian people which makes their present martyrdom almost unbearable, and prevents the fanatical faith by which the pure Marxians are upheld. I felt him the most lovable, and to me the most sympathetic, of all the Russians I saw. I wished for more knowledge of his outlook, but he spoke with difficulty and was constantly interrupted by terrible fits of coughing, so I could not stay. All the intellectuals whom I met—a class who have suffered terribly—expressed their gratitude to him for what he has done on their behalf. The materialistic conception of history is all very well, but some care for the higher things of civilization is a relief. The Bolsheviks are sometimes said to have done great things for art, but I could not discover that they had done more than preserve something of what existed before. When I questioned one of them on the subject, he grew impatient, and said: "We haven't time for a new art more than for a new religion." Unavoidably, the atmosphere is one in which art cannot flourish, because art is anarchic and resistant to organization. Gorky has done all that one man could to preserve the intellectual and artistic life of Russia. But he is dying, and perhaps it is dying too.

(To be continued in our next issue.)

Stage & Music

WHY I AM IN MOVING PICTURES

(By Dorothy Phillips)

I am in motion pictures because I love the work. The screen is a means of expressing such bigger thoughts and ideas than any other modern medium that it is a privilege to be numbered among its workers. I love the intimacy with the audience I can achieve through close-ups, in which every mood and expression is magnified and by which you become more familiar to the great public than one could in a life time appearing on the stage. I love the opportunity for sustained action afforded by motion pictures. On the stage one can only touch the high lights of a story, leaving much to the imagination, while on the film one can register a continued thought or motive, showing its every phase and angle, from the instant of its inception to its culmination.

I am in motion pictures because I can reach a greater audience than on the stage. I can appear in person, as it were, in every city and village in the world, and by letters I have received from far away corners of the earth I realize how universal is the language of the screen.

I am in motion pictures because I have a domestic strain in my make-up and love a home. I like to own a bit of land and a house and live on it. I want a place my baby can call home, and work in motion pictures permits me to satisfy that desire. When on the stage I had to travel much of the time, but since coming to California I have lived in the same house for over four years, and it's ours. I can spend my evening at home, as I do most of the time, or seek entertainment elsewhere, and not feel that I have to devote every night to the entertainment of others.

BOLSHEVIKS ARE SHOWING SPEED IN ECONOMICS

Their Aim Is To Create a Working State Regardless of Economy

(By The Federated Press)

Seattle.—The Bolsheviks are showing speed in the developing of all branches of the people's economy which is "positively neckbreaking," according to an account of life in Soviet Siberia related in New Life, of Harbin, by M. Ustulov, who comes fresh from the new rule instituted in Soviet Siberia by the Bolsheviks.

"The skeptical intellectual looks with irony on this frenzied tempo and occupies himself with faultfinding and criticism," says Ustulov. "He finds much labor wasted and claims that great results could be achieved with less expenditure of power. The Bolsheviks, however, view things differently. They are primarily interested in drawing into this work all the productive elements of the country; efficiency and economy will be considered later."

"To create a working state—that's the ultimate aim of the Bolsheviks. Because of this anyone applying for work is accepted. All the communists are overcrowded with workers; the industrial enterprises are bursting with potential power. Wherever human energy can be applied, work is done; even the economy is not considered."

"Siberia, where the Bolsheviks had only recently entered, in spite of the devastation wrought by the war, in spite of starvation and the raging typhus, became the arena of labor."

"Thus, in the state of Ensis, two smelters and one iron mill are working at full speed, though idle during the previous regime because it was unprofitable to work them. Such reasons do not exist for the Bolsheviks—work is always profitable."

The author of the article witnessed the wonderful speed with which new dwellings built according to the latest technique were erected in the villages burned by the Czechs.

BANK CLERKS OF CINCINNATI GO ON FIRST STRIKE

Cincinnati.—Members of the invisible government of Cincinnati are still shivering from the shock of the first strike of bank clerks here, which was called at the First National Bank last week.

Local financiers consider that this walkout is an ever more potent sign of the changing order of things than the big machinists' strike which has been on since May 1.

Discharge of several officers of the bank clerks' union was the cause of the strike. Negotiations for their reinstatement followed, but failed. Clerks in other banks are backing their brothers at the First National to their utmost, and the union expects soon to have every one of them organized.

Seattle.—Local shipwrights have voted to fine members patronizing unfair movie theatres \$25 for each offense.

SEAMEN'S UNION PREVENTS DEPORTATION OF PRIEST

Adelaide, Australia. (N. Y. ureau).—Action by the Seamen's Union here has prevented the deportation of Father Jerger, a German Roman Catholic priest, in accordance with the union's resolution to forbid deportation of anyone without trial, the seamen on the Nestor, which was outward bound with Father Jerger, have held up the ship. It is still at anchor.

CHILDREN QUIT SCHOOL TO BECOME WAGE EARNERS

Only Few Receive Help From Parents in Finding Suitable Openings

"What next?" is the question that thousands of bewildered children have been asking since the school doors closed behind them for the last time. An army of over 1,000,000 children between 14 and 16 years old, says the Children's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor, marches out of the schools each year to become wage earners. In a pamphlet entitled "Advising Children in Their Choice of Occupation and Supervising the Working Child," the Bureau tells what happens to these children and offers suggestions for helping them get the proper start in life.

Only a few children, according to the pamphlet, receive any help from their parents in finding suitable openings because parents do not know what opportunities are open to boys and girls, how to go about finding them, or what is the best thing for a child to do. The children begin an aimless search, making the rounds of factories, shops and offices and answering advertisements. More than nine-tenths of them go into "blind-alley" jobs that require no skill and offer no opportunity to get ahead. Many drift from job to job, and become incapable of steady work. Some find work for which they are physically unfitted, sometimes to the permanent injury of their health. Some are without any employment for a time, since in many states the law does not require a child under 16 to have a job before he is excused from school.

These conditions, the bulletin points out, call for some organization in the schools, or in connection with the schools, to tell children what and where the jobs are, and what training and ability are required to fill them. While most vocational guidance and placement work in this country has been started by private organizations, it has been taken over in a number of cities by the schools. England's experience with her juvenile-labor exchange shows that the most successful work is done in close co-operation with the school. In Austria where vocational guidance is now receiving special attention to careful study is being made of how to link up the work with the school system.

In school placement bureaus the child applying for work may be reached before leaving school and in many cases persuaded to remain, or provided with a scholarship to enable him to do so. In one city from 25 to 30 per cent of the children who come to the placement bureau are returned to school. The placement bureau in this school is a connecting link between the school room and the industrial or business world. It keeps in close touch with local industries and opportunities and helps to make school work more practical.

The placement bureau endeavors to place the child in work for which he seems best fitted and which offers the most promising future, even if that means persuading him and his parents to give up a job that offers a higher wage at the moment. It attempts to keep in constant touch with the child after he has gone to work in order to learn whether he has been suitably placed and to help him adjust himself. Although no general schemes have so far been devised in this country for supervising the child at work, the requirement in some states that a child must secure a new employment certificate each time he changes his job offers opportunity for effective supervision.

Any scheme for placement and supervision of working children should, the bulletin states, include provision for further training through compulsory day-time continuation classes.

TORONTO SHOE WORKERS GO WEST TO THE HARVEST

Walter Brown, business agent of the Toronto Boot and Shoe Workers' Union, reports that conditions in the trade are showing no improvement. "Only twenty-five per cent of our men are working full time," said Mr. Brown. "The rest of the men are on short time or out of work. A number of them intend to go west to the harvest."

Pasadena, Cal.—Upton Sinclair has been readmitted to the Socialist party and has been nominated for Congress in the tenth congressional district.

SEATTLE LABOR STAGE PAGENT OF HUMANITY

Several Thousand People Will Take Part In This Huge Spectacle

(By The Federated Press) Seattle.—Leading unionists of Seattle have formed a Pageantry Association and at an estimated cost of \$8,000 are preparing to begin rehearsals for the Pageant of Humanity, a spectacle calling for the services of several thousand people.

Mrs. Florence Wiswell Wilson, prominent educator who managed organized Labor's Pageant of Democracy in the city's largest park on Independence Day, is preparing the script for the Pageant of Humanity.

"Lots of people think labor unions can't do anything but strike," said W. J. Henry, one of the founders. "We won thousands of friends from the ranks of our opponents by our spectacle on Independence day and we intend to use the pageant as a means of getting before all the people the aspirations of labor," said Henry.

The Seattle Arena, seating 10,000 people, will be the scene of the pageant. Across the street is the hippodrome, capable of accommodating several thousand more. The hippodrome will be used as a dressing and assembling room. The pageant will form in this building and wind before the spectators in the arena and back to its starting point.

A stage capable of supporting several thousand performers, horses and even a railway locomotive will be constructed by union carpenters.

MUCH STATISTICS ON STRIKE LOSSES ARE ALL RUBBISH

If Workers Depended on Public They Would Rarely Make Progress

"If the workers depended on the public alone, they would rarely, if ever, make any progress, for the fundamental reason that the public is wholly selfish," says the National Civic Federation Review. It is declared that much of statistics on strike losses "is pure and unadulterated rot."

"The public does not want to be inconvenienced," says this publication. "In a strike on a street railroad the public does the walking and the striking men do the waiting. It makes no difference how long may be the hours the men work or how small may be their pay. 'If they don't like their jobs,' the public generally says, 'they should get others, but, under no circumstances, make us wait.' How long would it have taken the public to wake up and organize to force the bloated coal barons to give shorter hours and increases in the pitifully low wages of the anthracite coal miners in 1903?"

In regard to the appalling cost to the wage earners, there is another side to that question. The big headline figures about the losses of hundreds of millions of dollars on account of millions of days' wages being lost are frequently great fallacies. In some cases not a cent is lost and the increases in wages is a clear gain. The 1910 anthracite strike of six weeks only changed the date of the annual shutdown of the miners. Just as much coal was produced for the year, but the miners got more for the portion mined after the strike. The headline statistics can always scare the public by multiplying days by the wage rates, but no headliner has ever pointed out another startling fact, and that is that in any normal year there are more days of labor lost on any three of the seven national holidays than in all the strikes of that year. Think of the three billion days lost on Sundays and Saturday afternoons, and yet nobody counts that a loss, but a gain.

"It is not meant by this that there is not unnecessary loss, suffering, injustice and abuse of power many times by the unions, but it does mean that a good deal of the statistics put out on the subject is pure and adulterated rot."

There are 280 lawyers in the U. S. congress. That accounts for much "gab."

ALLEN

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MON., TUES., WED.

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The Comedy Hit of the Year

THURS., FRI., SAT.

VIOLO DANA

"DANGEROUS TO MEN"

Showing That a Little Woman is a Dangerous Thing

FIRECRACKER DYE IS CONTROLLED BY A CHINESE TRUST

Even the dye on a firecracker for Young America's celebration is controlled by a trust—this time a Chinese trust, however.

How the dye is produced from a Philippine wood is told by Luis J. Reyes, Philippine student at the New York State College of Forestry at Syracuse, who came here to complete his education, after graduating from the forest school of the Philippines. Mr. Reyes brought with him 750 identified species of woods from the Philippines, and among them is the so-called "Sapan," known by the Chinese as "Soo Mook," but scientifically known as Caesalpinia Sapan. In the Philippines it is also known as "Sibukan" or "Cibuan," and it is one of the best known of the oriental dye stuffs.

A strong combine of Chinese firms in Hong Kong is said to control the importation of this wood from the Philippines and makes the red ink or paste which the Chinese use in certifying official documents.

According to Mr. Reyes, the wood originally produces a color about like the yellow of American indigo, but this is treated until it becomes a red of the familiar firecracker shade.

EASTERN MOVIE OPERATORS HOLD A CONVENTION

Delegates from local unions of the Theatrical Stage Employees and Moving Picture Operators in District No. 11, in the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec and the Maritime Provinces, held a very successful convention in Brockville, Ont., last week. William Covert, fourth vice-president of the International Union, and business agent for the Toronto Local, presided. The business transacted was of great importance to the membership throughout the district. An advanced move was made to establish uniform conditions for all affiliated locals, and a model contract for the entire district was adopted.

Seattle.—Printers of Tacoma and Seattle held a 1 a.m. dinner in the labor temple to celebrate the election of James McFarland as head of the International Typographical union and to bid farewell to the delegates leaving for the national convention in Albany, N.Y.

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