# WESTERN CLARION

# The Answer

"There is overproduction because of underconsumption, there is underconsumption because of lack of purchasing power, there is lack of purchasing power because there is unemployment, and there is no employment because of overproduction."--- (Rochester "Merald.")

overproduction. In the cause of that lies the solution of the puzzle.

Capital presupposes wage labor, and wage-labor, in turn, presupposes dispossession of the means of life, obviously, since no one would labor for wages who could otherwise acquire a living.

This is the fundamental on which our present society rests, and all the complex and intricate phenemena of modern life is determined and brought about by the nature and character of that organization. How this organization came to be, we need not here enquire : the mere statement of the fact is apposite to our present purpose.

The nature of capital ,then, is wage-labor ; its character, production for profit. Naturally, therefore. its sole business is the accumulation of wealth. But the wealth accumulated rests in individuals at first, with further development, in corporations. The organizations of capital automatically turns the whole productive activity of society into profit for the owners of industry, and just as automatically does it strip the actual producers of all the wealth they are co-operatively instrumental in producing. Production is a social act ; it can only be carried on harmoniously through joint effort and industrial co-ordination, and through this co-ordination the whole of society is a wholly individual affair. The whole of the surplus belongs, by property right, to the "captains of industry," i.e., the capitalist class, and this process of dispossession is entirely legal, because the ruling class,-that is, again, the capitalist class,-has enacted it so. And its ethic of slavery is also entirely moral, because it conserves the interests of the same ruling class. Thus, the "opportunity" of the worker is the opportunity to labor-when he can find a master; his incentive, the necessity of escaping from absolute starvation ; and our much belauded industry, the industry of the slave compound

Distribution, being individual, interest in its acquirement is single, i.e., it is the motive impulse of business. Hence there is an unabating struggle for possession. Also, the greater the possession, the more deadly and unscrupulous is the struggle, on the one side, and on the other, the more impossible for the smal! owner to maintain his possession. Consequently, accumulation not alone centres on the owners of private property, but is continually augmented in ever fewer but ever more powerful groups, blotdeavor, and dropping the total society ever deeper ution. The primal features of the "vicious circle" into the surge and effect of proletarian impecuniosity.

duce cheaply; it must regulate both production and market to its own all-obsorbing self-interest, no matter at what cost, or at what sacrifice to society.

But to produce cheaply means the greater industry. It means the elimination of waste and over-HE key to the above 'vicious circle' is in lapping, of friction and inefficiency, ultimately of competition in production. Which is good and much to be desired. It also means the reduction to its lowest terms of the component elements of necessary labor. To which we set the seal of approval. For the minimum of necessary labor is the prime condition of ultimate achievement, the foundation from which society can attain to the peak of possible development. But the shutting off of labor in production closes the doors of the world market. The inability of society to buy results in the regulation of production to the effective market; and the necessity of that regulation, in turn, demands the widest control of whatever market is available. Hence we come to conflict and deceit; to luxury and want; to vice and filth ; to disease and stagnation ; to the waste of the idle, but eager and willing forces of production; to the appaling destruction of consummated capitalism.

Capitalist private property is the ultimate cause of it all. The private ownership of the means of life necessitates the production of human requirements only for profit. Self-interest, pre-determines. each competitor to the struggle for greater gain, and free competition ensures the elimination of all but necessary labor. But this competitive struggle involves the production of the greatest volume of commodities to meet the full market demand. For, only in the sale of commodities can the surplus of exploited labor be realized, while the mass profit of the transaction is in ratio to the mass volume, and necessity of cheap production displaces uncertain labor with the tireless machine. All competition is subject to like conditions. It is presented with the same problems, is moved by the same impulse, and is determined by the same laws. Consequently, we have the phenomena of over-production on one hand, and on the other, the complete inability of the limited labor forces to buy back what their machine slavery has produced. Hence production can only take place when the master class can secure a profitable market. But the development of the capitalist system itself, progresively destroys the market, because it impoverishes the one creative force of production, whereon all the others rest.

Over-production and under-consumption are but incidentals of the capitalist system of society. They are not original elements, but secondary causes, solely derived from comomdity production. They are merely the evidences of a society aproaching dissolconsist in that there is no employment because there is no profit to be derived from production; there is no profit in production because there is no market; there is no market because there is no purchasing power, and no purchasing power because of unem-The remedy is obvious. The abolition of capitalist ployment. private property, i.e., property in the means of life. The abolition of class control of natural resources; the abolition of production for profit, and its corrollary, wage-labor. And, instead, the social ownership of social necessities: the social control of all resources; the social management of social production, and all industry carried on for the use and benefit, not of one class but of one society. Then, but not till then, will the vicious circle of crises disappear. Then will feverish activity, alternated with feverish stagnation, give way to the abundance of social prosperity. Then will competition and exploitation in life's resources vanish away. Then will wanton affluence and appalling poverty offend us no longer: the entangling confusions of class law and class morality disgust us no more. And all their inevitable consequences, their untold iniquities, their unmitigated vice, their sordid depravity, and the bloody curse of political civilization will melt away from us like phantasms of medieval night and, like a butter-

fly from its chrysalis, society will emerge from the bondage of capital, and grow into full-winged beauty, with all its wonderful powers and potentialities, its impassioned aspirations, and dauntless mind, free and untraminelled, individually enjoyed, but socially possessed, as they are socialy created. That is the R. answer to the problem.

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## MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISOORY

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the workers in a condition of servitude more pitiable than the colonists under the tyranny of George III.

When trade began to revive, economic conditions, with further development of machinery, brought about corporations and joint stock companies and the disappearance of the individual capitalist as an active participant in the productive process. The capitalist henceforth can be an infant, idiot or imbecile person, with ownership protected by law, and live on the productive energy of others.

Although trade began to revive, wages were cut still lower owing to the glut of the labor market. Things became unbearable, 16th July, 1877, saw the railway strike, which extended to other industries, and the workers were forced to realize what the civil war had been fought for when the capitalists, with all the power of the State, used it in a bloody defeat of the workers. This was the first great fight between so-called capital and labor in America.

The rise of corporation and joint stock companies reduced the numbers of establishments of wealth production from 13,514 in 1850 to 11,193 in 1900, even although the population had increased 50 per cent. and the territory occupied had doubled. So we see the opportunity of the worker to pass out of his class is becoming not only more difficult, but practically impossible so far as the prominent industrial establishments are concerned. It is reckoned that 30 billions of dollars of wealth has passed from the competitive system into the control of a score or more individuals. The government is a committee to manage the affairs in the interest of the capitalist class.

Thousands were unemployed in the cotton industry of England as a result of the Civil War, but they sided with the north while the higher classes favored the south, and vessels were built for the south, e.g., the "Alabama." The States received 15 million dollars compensation from England for the "Alabama' incident. The 'Alabama' claims were disputed by England 1862, 1865, 1869, 1870, but when the European political sky grew threatening with France and Germany, Great Britain herself made overtures on January, 1871, and a tribunal awarded the above damages September, 1872.

Note: The British slave trade was abolished by parliament on the 25th of March, 1807. Slavery itself ceased to exist in British possessions in 1834. The French did not abolish slavery until the revolution of 1848. The slave trade was abolished by the United States in 1808, but slavery itself continued in the country for more than half a century after that. The negro slaves of the United States were freed by Abraham Lincoln's proclamation of January 1st, 1863, the system was finally abolished by constitutional amendment in December, 1865.

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The accumulation of wealth does not mean the amassing of money, of hoarding and saving, of having a sporran full of "yellow Geordies." Business amplitude will not permit of that and social necessity does not require it. Accumulation of wealth means, in reality. the accumulation of exploiting power, the concentration of the productive forces in corporate minorities, the re-investment of all surplus (over necessity) in productive activity, so that greater profit,--and with it greater power-may accrue. That is to say; greater power to crush all competition from the wealth fields of the world. "Freedom of trade, "-i.e., freedom to garner everything to itself,-is the watchword of all business, and it dare not lag, on pain of death, in its pursuit of the game.

Yet this accumulation is fatal. For, in proportion as capitalism garners and accumulates, in propor tion as it reinvests and develops, it delimits itself. It narrows its sphere of subsequent conquest, it checks its rate of future advance; it sets ultimate bounds to its field of endeavor; it is, at length, actually compelled to erect barriers against its own progress. Because self-interest-competition-demands the lion's share of commerce ; it must have the widest .market; it must have the largest control; it must pro-

### -:0:-FAMINE RELIEF COMMITTEE

For the Drought Stricken in Soviet Russia.

## To All Labor Organizations-An Appeal for a Great Cause!

Fellow Workers,-Twenty million workers and peasants in the Volga region in Soviet Russia are dying of hunger! The crops there have been completely ruined by an unpredecented drought. Russia which for seven years has been devastated by world war, civil war, and foreign interventions, caused by base manipulations and intrigues of the great capitalist powers, is now unable to cope with this new catastrophe. For the first time the workers' republic surrounded by a hostile world, is crying aloud for help to the workers of the world. Comrades! Soviet Russia is the only fortress, the only bulwark of the workers against capitalism, and we cannot afford to (Continued on page 8)