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Paying Our Way

HAVING become possessed of the wherewithal, we betake us to the bargain counter to stock up our pantry (for a day) with the "good things of life." Making our selection, we draw forth the money bag and "pay"—after the wisdom of the bourgeoisie—for our purchases, and sally home to enjoy them in our thrifty fashion. What is this buying and selling? How is it we buy and sell at all?

Every society has its conditions imposed upon it by evolutionary necessity; its conventions, institutions and ethics, the visible reflex of its methods of obtaining the requirements of life. The public sentiment of society itself determines what is "right" and "good" and "lawful" and according to this standard—which is agreeable to the interests controlling the means of life, we comfort ourselves in the full exercise of "freewill" and "liberty." Each of us individually finds ourselves dominated by the social environment we are become members of, and if our "freewill" is exercised in the direction of remaining in the society of life and man it must conform to the criterion of the social organization. The social condition of our time is capital, a social condition where the means of life are owned and controlled by one class in society, the capitalist class, and the other section of society, the producing class, requiring access to those means of life in order to live are compelled "freely" to offer their services for labor to the owning class. By virtue of this social condition the institutions of this society are capitalist institutions, its ethic the ethic of capitalism and its producers slaves, working wholly for the interests of, and according to the conditions prescribed by the master class.

The master class, although reckoned sometimes as sportsmen, do not however own the means of life for sport, but for profit. They produce, i.e., they operate their mills and factories, only at the time this profit is forthcoming, and in the manner of the maximum of production in the minimum of time, at

the lowest possible cost. To the condition of industry the master class applies the term "prosperity," which means that the master class realises profits, contained in commodities, by selling them on the world market, while the workers who produced those commodities realize the price of labor power—wages.

Since the incentive of capitalism is profit, everything within its orbit is commodity production, and as there can be no production without the application of social labor, this labor power also is a commodity traded in market terms in common with other materials. The value of the labor power, in exchange, is the value of its reproduction,—food, clothes and shelter, and as the value of labor power per day, on the average, equals the value of the daily necessities of life, wages represent nothing more than the "keep" of the worker while "free" competition for jobs holds down the value of this "keep" to the lowest possible wage level of subsistence, consistent with efficiency. That is why our "buying" power is so limited.

But the slave produces daily far more values than the mere value of his "keep." By the application of mechanical devices to industry the productive capacity of labor is increased manifold, thereby producing and always increasing the amount of surplus values which, in virtue of the fundamental class ownership of the machinery of production belongs to the same class. The producers of this surplus receive no value for its production—do not get "paid" for it, as we say. On the contrary, it is sold on the world market, the "sellers" thereof, the master class, calmly appropriate it, calling the transaction, "profit."

The capitalist class, because of its ownership of the resources and tools of production, makes the producing class slaves, not only compelling the workers to operate their machinery but also forcing them to yield up the total amount of their production, and like the slaves of all slave owners, of neces-

sity, being allowed the necessities of life in order to fulfil their function of supporting their privileged masters. This exploitation is camouflaged by "wages," but, as shown, wages represent the simple necessities of life, and "free competition" means in reality freedom to work under the conditions laid down by the ruling class—or starve. Hence, when we "buy" from the provision merchant we merely receive in an indirect fashion the necessities of life which, by our own labor, we have produced. And the surplus "sold" by the master class on the world market is the vast amount produced by labor, but for which it has received no return, no value.

It follows from this that "buying and selling" has no meaning, that nothing can be "bought" and "paid for" because the wealth put on the world market for sale represents wealth produced by labor, but for which labor received nothing, wealth, in fact, stolen from the producers thereof. The capitalist class has nothing, owns nothing, produces nothing "of itself." Consequently it can give nothing and sell nothing, save what it has exploited, through the legality of capitalist private property, from the producing class—the only real wealth in the world. All other wealth (so called) being but cyphers on waste paper.

Since nothing can be sold unless it is first stolen, commerce and trade mean nothing else than traffic in stolen goods, and since labor is the sole producer of these goods labor is the sufferer in the transaction, the sole function of the capitalist class being the appropriation of the wealth produced by the slave, required by the slave, but owned and exchanged by and in the interest of the master. "Paying our way" is, therefore, the finest expediency of privilege; the most costly contrivance for the workers, giving the non-producing owning class the rich bounty of the social genius, ability and endeavour, rendering to the all-creating slave class the most pitiful squalor of poverty, the most abject measure of degradation.

R.

INDIA is a pear shaped peninsula lying to the south of a portion of Asia and situated between 80 to 37° N. Latitude. Its area is 1,802,639 square miles, and it has a population of some 315 millions according to the census of 1911 and which has probably since been increased. This population is not composed of one homogeneous stock, but is comprised of different ethnic divisions of which the chief are four in number, namely, Dravidians, Aryans, mixed Aryan-Dravidians and Mohammedans, comprised of Afghans, Persians, Moguls and Arabs. This mass of humanity has been fully supplied with food by the natural fertility of the soil which is well watered by the larger rivers and their numerous tributaries.

Although it is bounded by the gigantic Himalayas and the Sulimans, nevertheless such a rich country has always been somewhat of an orchard to the naughty tribes surrounding it, and has therefore been subject to predatory visits time and again from the surrounding tribes, which accounts for the diversified human stock within her borders and the conglomeration of religious viewpoint and social castes. There are seven different religions, known as Hinduisian, Mahommedanism, Jainism, Buddhism, Parsi, Christian and Animism, all of which help to

India

keep their several devoted followers divided into different religious groups. If this were all it wouldn't be too bad, but there is also the curse of the caste system which again helps in maintaining the confusion prevailing due to the religious notions so possessed by this turbulent mass of humanity. The castes are four in number, and are called respectively Brahman, Rajah, Sudra and Vratyas, or to more easily convey what is meant by such names we may call them Priests, War Chiefs, Serfs and slaves. These are symbolical of different parts of the anatomy of a mystical god and correspond to the head, arms, thighs and feet. Needless to say the head and arms portion represent the early conquerors and the thighs and feet the conquered.

The Aryans, who, are supposed to have entered India between the period of 3000 to 1000 B.C., pushed back the aborigines from the well watered district of the Punjab, this part of the country being

very favorable to the flocks and herds possessed by the Aryans who were in what may be termed the pastoral stage tinged no doubt with some rudiments of agriculture. It was this race of nomads who formed the Priest and War-chief class, and their descendants still claim those offices by virtue of their ancestry. The Sudras and Vratyas are mixed, and Dravidians.

But, as has been pointed out above, there have been other numerous invaders following the Aryans, and their descendants form a considerable portion of the population of India today, the Mohammedans alone forming a block of some 70 millions; a disparaging factor when unity is spoken of.

Due to economic causes existing entirely outside of India, people of a different color invaded her shores. Vasco de Gama landed there in the year 1498, followed by the Dutch, French and English in close succession. Plassey, and Pondicherry were the surface bubbles announcing a difference of opinion as to who between the last two invaders should stay there. And the winners are still there collecting the reward which they consider rightly theirs, and showing, or pretending to show an aggrieved air because the dominating elements of the new econ-

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