

THE CANADIAN FORWARD

To Our Contributors—

The columns of The Canadian Forward are open to contributions from all friends of the cause. Though we can by no means undertake to publish all we may receive, everything, by whomsoever written, will receive careful attention.

No notice will be taken of anonymous communications.

All contributions intended for insertion to be addressed to the address given below, and must be authenticated by the name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication.

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"The general tendency of capitalist production is not to raise, but to lower the average standard of wages."—Karl Marx.



THE PERIL OF REGISTRATION.

It has often been said that "coming events cast their shadows before them." At the time of writing, the Executive Committee of the Dominion Trades and Labor Congress of Canada are in convention with Cabinet Ministers for the ostensible purpose of discussing Labor's acquiescence to the registration act.

Another event that synchronizes with this event is the report of a speech by Sir Sam Hughes at Lindsay, in which he states that "conscription is a necessity," and suggests that Quebec will not place any serious obstacle in the way.

Side by side with these evil portents we get the usual soothing balm—that registration is not intended as a preliminary to conscription. No doubt, when we have the reality in the shape of the applied Militia Act, these honest and upright gentlemen will gloat on "how they put it over" in a similar manner to the conscriptionists in Britain.

If there is any virtue in a voluntary military system, then we say without hesitation, take care lest you lose your virtue. The militarists who are behind the registration move care nothing for virtue, or a tinker's damn for the liberty of the subject. If the virtues of constitutional liberty are to be thrown to the winds, and the lives of our people are to be thrown into the balance against the central powers without a referendum of the people, then we say we demand our price: "Let all capitalist property be immediately thrown into the melting pot"; nay, let property go first, and thus establish in principle what has hitherto been accepted in precept, "That human life is of more value than property."

With us the final analysis is this: If the state is in danger, and that, for its preservation, our people are called upon to make the supreme sacrifice, then we

demand as compensation that this country shall belong to our children—and not, as at present, to a bunch of idle profit-seekers.

AN ANTHOLOGY OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY

N.B.—This is No. 4 of a series of passages culled from the works of the world's greatest sociological writers. In their final form these articles will make a worth-while anthology of Social-Democracy.

Every experienced politician knows that all great political movements were fought upon large and often distant issues, and that those of them were strongest which provoked most disinterested enthusiasm. All great historical movements have had this character, and for our own generation Socialism stands in that case. "Paid agitators" is, no doubt, the favorite refrain of those who know nothing about it. The truth, however, is that—to speak only of what I know personally—if I had kept a diary for the last twenty-four years and inscribed in it all the devotion and self-sacrifice which I came across in the Socialist movement, the reader of such a diary would have had the word "heroism" constantly on his lips. But the men I would have spoken of were not heroes; they were average men inspired by a grand idea. Every Socialist newspaper—and there are hundreds of them in Europe alone—has the same history of years of sacrifice without any hope of reward, and, in the overwhelming majority of cases, even without any personal ambition. I have seen families living without knowing what would be their food to-morrow, the husband boycotted all round in his little town for his part in the paper, and the wife supporting the family by sewing, and such a condition lasting for years, until the family would retire, without a word of reproach, simply saying: "Continue: we can hold on no more!" I have seen men dying from consumption, and know it, and yet knocking about in snow and fog to prepare meetings, speaking at meetings within a few weeks from death, and only then retir-

ing to the hospital with the words: "Now, friends, I am done: the doctors say I have but a few weeks to live. Tell the comrades that I shall be happy if they come to see me." I have seen facts which would be described as "idealization" if I told them in this place; and the very names of these men, hardly known outside a narrow circle of friends, too, have passed away. In fact, I don't know which most to admire, the unbounded devotion of these few or the sum total of petty acts of devotion of the great number. Every quire of a penny paper sold, every meeting, every hundred votes which are won at a Socialist election, represent an amount of energy and sacrifice of which no outsider has the faintest idea. And what is now done by Socialists has been done in every popular and advanced party, political and religious, in the past. All past progress has been promoted by like men and by a like devotion.

PETER KROPOTKIN.

CLIP AND COMMENT

For stating on Page 5, Column 3, that the man who is unemployed fixes the rate of wages paid to the man at work, and in Column 4 of the same page, asserting that trades unions increase wages, The Industrial Banner (Toronto) certainly takes the biscuit. "We do not attempt to deny that the unemployed worker does affect the wages of those already employed. This is the law of supply and demand in operation. Nor do we deny that trade unions do not raise wages sometimes. But we do state that trade organization of itself can never solve the problem of poverty as it does not strike at the root of the problem—surplus value."

The effects of the war in Poland, says the New York Times, seem to surpass in extent and horror all those inflicted upon any other territory. According to a statement made by the Honorary Executive Secretary of Polish War Victims, "the latest authentic reports from Poland are that all children under 7 years of age have ceased to exist, having died from hunger and disease." When the war broke out there was in Poland a population of 34,000,000. At the end of the second year, according to the authority just named, 14,000,000 human beings had perished from various causes in Poland. The property damage in that country due directly to the war is estimated at about \$11,000,000,000. More than 200 towns and 20,000 villages have been razed to the ground; 1,650 churches have been destroyed. As an instance of the vastness of the destruction of human life occurring in Poland, the following is given: "In Galicia, Austrian Poland, in the district of Gorliczy, where a battle raged for several months, 1,500,000 civilians caught between contending armies, have perished right there from starvation while in hiding." All these facts help to emphasize the pitiful significance that the belligerents have been unable to agree on any plan for admitting American aid to Poland.

It will be as well to caution all labor unionists and socialists that capitalists are watching their efforts more closely than they imagine. In a recent edition of the Detroit Saturday Night, the editor took up much valuable space by giving accurate information on Detroit's Labor Day parade. Whereas, it was announced that 30,000 unionists would participate in a labor day parade, and at least one union paper found 25,000 actually in line, this wideawake editor, by three separate countings could only number 8,750, including more than 300 bandsmen. "It speaks volumes," says he, "for a city claiming a population of 750,000 when industrial conditions are so satisfactory to the workers that they do not feel the need of more extensive organization." A word to the

wise is sufficient. Next time you hear of a Socialist or Labor parade get there and swell its numbers.

The money of German capitalists represents the unpaid wages of German wage slaves, but it is not any dirtier than the money wrung by the masters of Canada from the blood and sweat of Canadian men and women. The hypocrisy of the prostituted press which has fattened upon the workers' enslavement, in professing to discover a taint in the red gold of its masters, can only fill intelligent people with disgust. Here in Toronto a woman working under a militia contract receives 25c. for a dozen finished shirts. Money in itself is neither German, English, French, nor of any other nationality. It talks all languages, laughs at all flags, and is as cosmopolitan, callous and unscrupulous as the master class itself.

There is a little article that everybody uses, and yet I never see it advertised. I look over the daily and weekly press in vain to find where it can be purchased. On this they are as silent as the tomb. In vain I look at the signs on the street, or in the shop windows for it. It is sold in every village and hamlet in the land, and yet no drummer ever carries samples of it and never takes an order for it. Its price never rises, and yet it pays handsomely all who deal in it. And, strange to say, there is usually but one place in a small town that keeps it. There is always a supply of it—never too much nor too little. It is never taxed, no matter how many thousand dollars' worth are in stock. There has never been any corner or speculation in it and its price at wholesale or retail is always the same. It has never made a millionaire or a pauper. The little thing is a postage stamp, and if all articles were produced and handled in the same way, there would be neither poverty, crime nor insanity in the world. Try it.

The Morning Post argues that the Germans are willing for peace immediately and would give the Entente everything they desire, but only on one condition, namely, that Germany be allowed a free hand in Central and South America.

"We understand," the newspaper adds, "that condition has been put forward, of course discreetly and unofficially, by the German Government, and that it has been rejected by the allies. But why should it be rejected? We are selling our South American securities, and if the Americans really want peace and do not object to having Germany for a neighbor, why should Britain intervene? Any time in the last ten years we could have had an agreement with Germany by allowing her a free hand across the Atlantic. Great Britain stands between Germany and America like the counter-scarp of a fortress, and if the Americans induce us to peace before this job is finished what they will have accomplished is to destroy their best defence against Germany.—Canadian Press Despatch from London, England.

Frankness is an unusual quality to find in The Morning Post, which for years has been the mouthpiece of England's aristocracy. It is well, however, to be at last informed in so diplomatic and so frank a manner that this world-wide war is no longer a battle "for the rights of small nations," but a capitalists' war to keep a keen competitor out of a profitable world's market.

"You are to be congratulated upon the 'tone' of the paper. It does not insult a workman by assuming that his head is too empty to understand things decently written."

This is from one of the hundreds of splendid letters we have received in appreciation of The Forward. Its good work and good "tone" can be kept up only by your sending in sub. after sub. Hustle all you can.

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