

GOD'S POOR, THE DEVIL'S POOR, THE POOR DEVILS

A Comrade of Bridgetown, P.E.I., writes: "Please find enclosed an editorial taken from the July 6th, 1914, issue of the Guardian published at Charlottetown, P.E.I. Perhaps you might comment on it."

The editorial is as follows:—

It has been said that there are three classes of poor, namely, God's poor, the Devil's poor, and poor devils.

In every community there are those who are the legitimate wards of the community, those whose misfortune has overtaken through no fault of their own. These are God's poor, the "least of these, my brethren," whom to aid is to fulfill the supreme obligation of Christianity. These, we are told, we shall have always with us, and perhaps their mission in the world is to give us an opportunity to exercise the Christian grace of charity.

It would be more difficult to define the Devil's poor. They are a larger class, and they, too, are to be found in every community. They are the non-producers, the parasites who feed on the labor of others. They are not all on the street corners or in the slums; they are not the "submerged tenth" alone, nor the denizens of the underworld alone. They are those, wherever they may be found, whether in hovel or palace, who live on the labor of others, who do not give a legitimate return for their share of the wealth of the community. They are the "idle poor," we have little to say of the idle rich, yet the latter are a strange burden, a larger factor in that great modern problem, the high cost of living, than the idle poor.

A diseased condition of modern habit of thought has divided the world into two classes, the rich and the poor. With little regard for the methods or the causes by which the one became rich and the other poor, the former are called successful, the latter unsuccessful; generally speaking, the former are recognized, the latter are ostracized. Custom, consciously or unconsciously, has fixed a gulf between the two. Few care to be classed as unsuccessful, they spend their all in bridging the gulf, and they are bridging it with the material which distinguishes the class on the other side, namely, dress, dinner, and luxury. Extravagance, the servant dresses as elaborately as his mistress; the man earning five dollars a week dresses it as ostentatiously as the man whose income is unlimited. On the street, in the theatre, in the church the two classes are indistinguishable. The one spends its all in pretending to be what the other is, the burden is becoming unbearable. We call the latter "the poor of the living"; it is in reality, very largely, the price paid by "poor devils" for the uniform worn by those on the other side of the gulf.

GOD'S POOR

This editorial shows beginnings of reason in the head of the editor. He may have seen one or two copies of Cotton's Weekly. However, the editor has still far to go to arrive at a true knowledge of economics. He grasps a central idea of parasites, of non-producers who live on the labor of others

Jobs and Life

By Martin J. Connolly, in the New York Call.

"Twas a tragedy indeed, that over the Glasgow. In a splendid editorial in the Hartford Courant, we read: 'Then came the loss of his job, as bitter to the boy, no doubt, as the enforced exile of Romeo after he had killed a man in a duel.' Yes, that's it, only worse, for if you have no job and no money you are exiled from the earth—that is, for a brief time you are a tramp, a jail-bird or a registered pauper—and then it's the potter's field. One out of ten who die in New York are buried in potter's field. And it is this, the fear of unemployment, and not the 'undiscovered bourne,' that makes cowards of us all.

Says Shakespeare: 'Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that: You take my house when you take the prop. That doth sustain my house; you take my life When you take the means whereby I live.'

When you take a man's job these days, you take his life, and there is no other way to round. And this, the job, is the only source of life the millions have in this day of inventions and plenty.

And it is this fear, the fear of losing one's job, that makes cravens and lickspittles of so many thousands—not only factory hands, but professors, and clergymen, and editors, and the economic determinism. They are afraid of losing their jobs. To lose your job is to lose your hold on food, shelter and clothing. To lose your job is to have hell here and now—to see your wife grow thinner and weaker from day to day, and to hear the hunger moan of your babies. Is there a deeper hell than this?

Why is it that today in this land of schools and churches and plenty there are more than seven millions of men of marriageable age that are not married? Why do these millions remain single, thus condemning millions of women to spinsterhood? Just this: The means of life are not assured, are not secure. They cannot get jobs, or they fear they will lose their jobs, or they have jobs and get enough to support single men in decency. Remember, your married man must compete with the single man when he is endeavoring to sell his labor power—when he goes to the factory gate looking for a job. The man who will furnish his labor power at the lowest price gets the job. The single man with only one mouth to feed, with only one back to clothe can work cheaper than the man with several mouths to feed and several backs to clothe.

There is no sentiment in business. No! And more's the pity. Love in a factory, or anywhere else, in this practical age, is ridiculous. Of course, a man in clerical garb may stand up in the 'House of God' for twenty minutes or half an hour on Sunday morning, and prattle of love, and address us as 'dear brethren.' That's all right on Sunday morning, when, for the time being, we are the 'children of the same Heavenly Father,' but when Monday morning comes you want to forget it. It's taboo! It doesn't work—not in factories or mines or mills, anywhere. No, love the greatest thing in the world, stands in the way of dividends.

If a man gets married, and the children come, then he wants more wages. More wages means less dividends. They conflict. Man must satisfy his irresistible animal passion some other way. And he does. Oh, don't fool yourselves, he does. And that is why your daughter and my daughter will probably remain single till they die. That is why the men who walk our streets are afflicted with lousyhouse disease. Beautiful! Isn't it, these men made in the 'image of God' being animated mounds of pollution. Look at them. Good God, look at them, and what do you see in their faces? No, love stands in the way of dividends. Away with it! We want 'hands' in our factories, not minds and souls. Not Romeo, but Grandgrin, make the best 'hands.' Our modern fetish 'Efficiency' precludes all thought of, all time for love, or anything else that conduces not to profit. Profit is our God.

Let your creek and lovely, your pure-minded, your tender-hearted, the Jews' kind, keep away from the factories, they are misfits, inefficient. The 'survival of the fittest' we preach. The fittest are surviving, believe me

without giving an adequate return. Apart from this central idea, his editorial is all bosh.

He divides the poor into three classes, God's poor, the Devil's poor and the poor devils. He places the unfortunate in the first class, the idle poor and the idle rich in the second class, and presumably the rest of the poor in the third class, declares that the idle rich increase the cost of living, and winds up by saying the burden of the poor devils is caused by the poor devils trying to ape the rich in matters of expenditure. Truly a hodgepodge of undigested thinking.

God's poor are the unfortunate who are given us, we are told, so we can exercise the Christian grace of charity. If this be so, God is very kind to us, and is getting kinder all the time, for insanity is increasing tremendously. In the state of New York alone thirty-two thousand people are confined in the insane asylums, one person to every one hundred of the adult population of the state. God is very kind to us for he is furnishing as many persons living in slums and degeneracy through bad housing, bad feeding, and bad clothing. God is very good to us for he is furnishing tens of thousands of able-bodied men clamoring for a chance to work which is denied them. God is very good for the bread lines are lengthening. God is so mighty good to us in this line that he has overwhelmed us with his blessings, such tremendous blessings that we cannot tend to them under the present system. Twenty-six people died of starvation in Toronto alone recently.

God, in furnishing us these unfortunate ones we may be blessed by exercising charity, evidently has forgotten how the poor may feel about it. He has been too busy showering the poor upon us that he has not thought about the sufferings his poor may feel in the process. It is usually the way with shallow thinkers to look at only one side of the problem.

As a matter of fact, the so-called God's poor are largely the poor and unfortunate created by the insane system of industry put in vogue.

Change the system and God's poor will be found to have been the poor produced by the social system.

THE DEVIL'S POOR.

The next class is called the Devil's poor which consist of the non-producers. These are by implication, the idle poor and the idle rich. This is the usual formula. It is get-

ting to be quite the fashion to denounce the idle rich. But nothing is said of the busy rich, nor their busy assistants who are not rich.

Morgan busily engaged in finance and stock schemes is as useless to the producing class as is the idle fellow who simply draws his income from investments. The busy stockbroker, lawyer, rent-collector, notary, commercial traveller, rich man's valet, noteshaver, collection agent, and the like are as useless to the producer as is the idle rich. These, however, are not mentioned.

We are told that the tremendous burden of the Devil's poor is what causes the high cost of living. This is not true. The high cost of living is due to the dwindling value of gold. Gold is not worth as much as it was twenty or thirty years ago. Vast new gold areas have been opened up and far cheaper methods of extracting the gold have been adopted. Consequently the value of gold has shrunk and this has shown itself in higher prices.

Of the wealth the workers produce, only enough is returned to them in wages for them to live. The rest goes to the master class. With machinery becoming more effective, with the tremendous increase in the productive power of labor, the worker's share of the wealth is growing smaller and smaller. His standard of living may not have shrunk, but as his output has vastly increased, the share going to the master class is greatly augmented. Suppose that at one time the worker produces a certain output of which he gets half and the master gets half. The rate of exploitation is one hundred per cent. Let us suppose the workers now produce double the amount and their standard of living remains the same. Where formerly they produced two parts or which they got one, they now produce four parts and still get but one. The rate of exploitation has increased from one hundred per cent to three hundred per cent.

The revenues of the master class have greatly increased and the workers have become millionaires, those worth a few thousand dollars become worth hundreds of thousands of dollars, and many poor men become rich, and cease to produce. This is what has happened in Canada. The high cost of living has nothing to do with this condition. The high cost of living is simply the result of the fact that gold production, has cheapened even more rapidly than the production of other commodities. As an example, in the Yukon the placer miners used to wash the gold by

hand. They would work ten feet apart and each would wash about three hundred buckets of sand a day. Now the mining has been syndicated and is controlled by a small group. Big dredges are used which scoop up the sand in buckets on an endless chain. When running these dredges scoop up a bucket a second. Gold production has become so cheap that gold is depreciating like silver did and the cost of living soars. Let us not confuse a side issue with the main cause of misery which is the system of exploitation.

THE POOR DEVILS.

We are told that the poor devils try to ape their masters in spending money AND SUCCEED. In the church, on the street, in the theatre the worker and the exploiter are indistinguishable. The man with five dollars spends his money as ostentatiously as the man with unlimited means. With the poor devil the cost of high living is the trouble.

This is a great discovery which the editor of the Guardian should herald to the world. The man with five dollars a week buys his shank for dinner with as great ostentation as the millionaire orders his champagne supper. The wife of the five dollar a week man swishes her cotton skirt against her stockinged legs, with as great hauteur as the multi-millionaire's wife rustles her silken petticoat against her jewel-laden dress. The poor devil's wife's shoddy shoes cannot be told from the diamond-studded tango pumps of the wife of the Devil's poor rich. If you saw the two women in the theatre you would be embarrassed to know which was the wife of the millionaire and which was the wife of a ditch digger. This is a great discovery, we might say the exclusive discovery, of the editor of the Guardian.

KNOWLEDGE NECESSARY

Mere sentiment, ignorant effusions on the various classes in society, a facility for writing will not help society out of the mess it is in. Knowledge is necessary. Close study is essential. The coal miner, after his hard day's work in the mine, who pores over Karl Marx's Capital, with a dictionary beside him, is preparing himself to play a greater part in the social revolution which is upon us than all the scribbles of the capitalist press who pour nonsense out of their voluminous ignorance.

A grasp of the basis of value, of economic determinism, of the evolution of society is being obtained by the slaves of Canada. The hope of Canada rests upon them.

Old Thomas

By Clement Richardson Wood.

"Give me my time," said old Thomas. Machines he was, grown sere at the job, slightly grayed.

English and more. Must have been working for forty-two years at the trade.

He was just fifty-four.

"Give me my time," said old Thomas. Foreman was fired; he was next for job, next in line.

He and his three young kids and the wife were wild-think.

Raise in the salary!

Then someone told old Thomas. The son of the superintendent had said: "You'll take a Socialist, eh?"

"Socialist, eh? I'd rather have a snake for foreman over the shop."

Straight to the supe old Thomas went with his tale. "You said it!"

That was enough? Not for old Thomas; he drew himself up as he spoke.

Quiet like—he couldn't be rough—

Quiet, unexcited, old Thomas—

"Reckon you don't need me now; give me my time."

"Don't be a fool! Think of the wife and the children; you know that I'm."

For you. Certainly you'll

Take the new job, old Thomas?"

There he stood riveted, face unresponsive, wavering not.

"Give me my time."

Nothing could move him, nothing. That's what the got—

Nothing but that—and this rhyme.

A fool, but it wasn't Deds

By Arthur Morrow Lewis.

I had just concluded a lecture in Grand Junction, Colo., when a burly railroad man stepped forward and introduced himself. I forgot his name, but remember well what he said. Here it is, about word for word:

"I was an engineer years ago, as I am today, but in those days Deds was my freeman. Having a little better job than he, I naturally thought I was the smarter man. We used to sleep in the same room. We would both turn in all tired out from the long trip and I would be asleep before you could count ten. After I had slept three or four hours I would wake up about 2 in the morning and there would be Deds with a candle shaded so as not to disturb me, reading away at a book as if everything depended on his understanding all there was in it. Many a time he got only one or two hours' rest before going to work again."

"I told him he was a d-d fool, and I thought he was. I still believe there was a d-d fool in that room, but I know now that it wasn't Deds."

Plute Doyle's Wishes

Discussing the recent suffragette activities, Sir Conan Doyle is reported to have said that he anticipated a "frustrating loss" in England if the suffragettes continued their present line of action. No doubt the wish was father to the thought, which was thrown out as a hint to those whose instincts are lower than those of the lower animals, none of which ever attack the female of the species. Sir Conan belongs to a class which holds property sacred above all else, a class which robs and starves its women folk, and watches them die in the streets, and is not ashamed to do so. He scorns the idea of being fair in political and industrial affairs, either to male or female workers, and when its profits are attacked or its property destroyed, it is not very likely to show increased respect for human life. Sir Conan gives that class the hint when he says in effect: "These women are destroying our property, why not murder them? Why not have 'lynching bees'?" And as there are any number of thugs and toughs ready for such work, the hint is not likely to be lost.

SOCIALIST DIRECTORY

ALBERTA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE S.D.P. of C. meets every first and third Thursday evening at 7:30 o'clock in Moose Hall, Fraser Ave., Edmonton. Comrades desiring assistance in organizing local please write Sec. C. Spencer, 14 Clara St., Edmonton, Alta.—384.

BRITISH COLUMBIA Executive S.D.P. of C. meets in British Hall, 204 Pender St. East Vancouver, on the first and third Sunday of every month, at 2:30 p.m. General Business Meeting on third Sunday, at 4:30 p.m. Sec. City Heights P. O., Vancouver, B.C.—284.

DOMINION Executive Committee, Socialist Democratic Party of Canada meets every first and third Monday at 4:30 p.m. Sec. H. Martin, Sec. 41 Weber St. East, Berlin, Ont.—329.

MANITOBA Executive Committee S.D.P. of C. meets every 1st Monday night of the month at Headquarters Hall, 104 Main St. For information and literature, write to Prov. Sec. J. H. Martin, 222 Manitoba Ave., Winnipeg, Man.—284.

ONTARIO Provincial Executive Committee S.D.P. of C. meets the 2nd and 4th Thursdays in each month at 7:15 p.m. Labor Temple, 167 Church St., Toronto. Sec. Secretary, P. C. Young, 82 Wroxeter Avenue—365.

AMHERST, N.S. Local No. 1, S.D.P. of C. English, meets every Thursday evening at 7:30 p.m. Sundays at 2:30 p.m. in the old school, Duke St. Please regard it as your duty to be a regular attendant. All are cordially invited. T. H. Horton, Sec. 12 Lundy St., Amherst, N.S.—294.

BERLIN LOCAL No. 4, S.D.P. of C. meets every Sunday; business every first Sunday night cordially invited. 409 P. O. Sec. J. H. Martin, 149 Weber St., East, Berlin, Ont.—236.

COBALT LOCAL No. 3, S.D.P. of C. holds business and propaganda meetings every Sunday evening at 8 p.m. Miners Union Hall, Cobalt, Ont. I. G. Dean, Sec. Box 44—384.

PINXIAN SOCIALIST ORGANIZATION OF CANADA. The Secretary, J. W. Ahlquist, 27 Alberta Ave., Toronto, Ont.—381.

LOCAL VANCOUVER, No. 12, meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. for business and propaganda in Labor Temple, Dunsmuir St., Vancouver, B.C.—284.

NANAIMO LOCAL No. 11, S.D.P. of C. Business meeting, Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m. Propaganda meeting, Sundays at 7:30 p.m. Sec. J. H. Martin, William Watson, Sec. Box 126, Nanaimo, B.C.—284.

PORT ARTHUR Local S.D.P. meets in Labor Temple, Bay St., second and fourth Wednesdays 8 p.m. for business, and first and third Wednesdays 7:30 p.m. for propaganda. Sec. J. H. Martin, 149 Weber St., East, Berlin, Ont.—236.

TORONTO Christian Socialist Fellowship, Local No. 1, meets every second and fourth Thursday, 8 p.m. sharp, at West End Hotel, 1000 Bloor St. West, Toronto. Sec. J. H. Martin, 149 Weber St., East, Berlin, Ont.—236.

COTTON'S WEEKLY is published in the interests of Socialism by Cotton's Co. of Canada, Ltd., 1000 Bloor St. West, Toronto. P. O. Box 1000, Toronto. Pres. Roy Winn, Sec. Treas.

Did you ever stop to think?

A. Sussman, Montreal.

Did you ever stop to think how this "prosperous" and poverty stricken little world of ours would look if our "pious" politicians and political "divines" would have their way without the honest man having his say?

Did you ever stop to think what would become of our civil rights, the politicians' wrongs, our liberties, their liberties? What would become of the law-abiding citizens and law-abiding politicians if they would have their way?

Did you ever stop to think how funny our little world would look if the "Lord's Day Alliance" and all other Lordish alliances would have a free hand to free us of our freedom?

Did you ever stop to think what would happen to our rich, poor little world, if the commercialized preachers and politicians whom every purse can purchase the "defenders" of God and State and deformers of the human spirit, the silver-tongued and soul-gilded knights of lawless order and orderless law would have their way? What a serious and funny looking little world we would have. We would have "peace and good will" on Sunday and everything else the rest of the week. All that is good would be preached out of the world, all that is bad clubbed in. Everything would rest, but the clubbing club of the policeman and the politician, the tongue of the ruthless priests and politicians. They would more forcibly focus the world above us, and take the world from beneath of us. Their soul-saving business would be carried on a greater scale, with bigger profits, and they would save your soul even at a price of destroying your body. Our world would be made "holy" and everything in it made hell.

Oh how this world would look if the pious disciples of Mammon could have their way. Here they are on a crusade to turn our cities into cemeteries, to stifle our spirits, to starve the longing of our souls and bodies for a day's recreation. To deny us music, song, dance, play, laughter. From their very soulless hearts they cry out that happiness is a sin, to be merry, wickedness, healthy play a crime against God. Ah, if they only had their way they would even stop the Lord of taking care of the "Lord's-day." The sun would cease to shine, the stars to twinkle, no breezes would kiss the faces of sweethearts, no river flow, no murmuring of the leaves. The birds would sit in silence, with their song sealed in their singing souls. Even the blood circulation of the human race would cease. No sneezing, breathing, kissing, the very life pulse of the world would cease on the Lord's day. Our lives would be made one big "Blue war" painted red with the blood of those who don't care to be blue at least one day in the week.

Say! Did you ever stop to think how funny this faky little world of ours would look if they would have their way? If you did not, do, but don't stop thinking!

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