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W. U. COTTON, Editor and Prop.

This is No. 84

Cotton's Weekly

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IS LAURIER ALSO AMONG THE SOCIALISTS?

Sir Wilfrid Laurier believes in responsible government. He believes that the people should be allowed themselves to say what they want and what they do not want. On February the 3rd he delivered an oration in the House of Commons, in which he traced the development of responsible government. He took his stand with the makers of Canada that the principle of responsible government should be made to triumph. Listen to the words of the Premier of Canada. "When these great men, Brown, Dorian, Lafontaine, Baldwin, Macdonald, laid down the principle of responsible government in this country, did they set any limitation upon its potentialities? No, they launched out, untrammelled and unfettered, to enclose the earth in a bond of union and liberty. They did not think that the principle could be trusted for a certain distance, but that it would have to be abandoned the moment they came to the ultimate result of the operation."

Now by responsible government does Sir Wilfrid mean democratic government? Hardly. For his whole government shows that he does not believe in democratic government. If he means responsible government, a government responsible and responsive to the will of the capitalists, then his government is a responsible government.

His government is protecting the capitalists who are using the natural resources of Canada for the purpose of skinning the workers. His government has given fourteen million dollars as a gift, (they call it a bonus) to the labor skinning steel barons. His whole government is organized for the purpose of making millionaires and poorly paid workers. Sir Wilfrid's government is cramming a navy down the Canadian people. He obeys the coal barons who want to set their wage slaves at work to produce surplus profits for them out of uselessly burned coal. Sir Wilfrid is maintaining a government responsible to the capitalists. Under such a government the workers get skinned.

PRISON LABOR

The Ontario government has introduced a "reform" into the prison system. Hanna has caught a little of the progressive spirit and the Province is going to treat the prisoners with less harshness. A Reformatory has been established at Guelph and the prisoners are to be put to work raising crops. The prisoners who can be "trusted" are being transferred to this new place of exploitation. The first fourteen arrived on the 11th of April and were set to work. They are not to wear prison clothing. They are to be given good meals. They are to have newspapers. In return they are to work.

Thus does benevolent capitalism fling prison labor into competition with free labor. The Canadian government manufactures binder twine with prison labor. This twine is sold only to farmers. It is made by enforced labor and is sold cheap. By this means the Dominion government hopes to hold the farmer vote by smashing free laborers with prison labor and by giving the benefit of the product to the farmers.

Hanna is more circumspect. He is working the prisoners under his control for the good of themselves. He has read a little on modern psychology and has pity for the prisoners. So he puts them back on the land and lets them get a little fresh air and a chance to exercise their muscles, all to the profit of the capitalist government of Ontario.

This very move on the part of Hanna shows how helpless the supporters of the capitalist system are to effect reforms without injury to others, and how futile those reforms are.

Our criminal laws are based on a wrong principle, that of punishment for crime. The law is based on a wrong principle because the economic organization of society is based on a wrong principle, the trafficking in the necessities of life that the useless capitalists may get rent, interest and profit. Organized society, by its very organization, forces men and women to commit crime. The criminal law then reaches out and punishes the weak ones who commit crime. That punishment is severe.

Now the Province of Ontario, through Hanna, declares that the punishment of the criminal is going to be mitigated. The criminal is going to wear ordinary clothes and do

ordinary work. In fact the criminal will hardly know himself from an ordinary wage slave, except that he will have better cooked food and will not have to pay the landlord for it.

But the reforms of Hanna will injure the wage slaves. Prison labor, organized and paid for by the province, will compete with free labor. The criminal, made criminal by society, will be forced to produce marketable goods which will influence the market and make the job of the wage slave more precarious, thus forcing more persons to commit crimes for the sake of food, clothing and shelter, and provide new recruits for the prison jobs to compete against free labor, ad infinitum.

Capital reforms are futile. A complete change in the economic organization is necessary. When that comes the criminal will disappear, the cause which produced him having been eradicated.

In Great Britain the Salvation Army is distributing broadcast the "Emigration Gazette." On page 10 and 11 of the Gazette we read the following: "Socialism is not prevalent in Western Canada, because the individual has too good a chance for acquiring property for himself." This in face of the fact that seventeen Socialist candidates were run in British Columbia during the last provincial election. In Alberta the Rocky Mountain division is represented by a Socialist and in Winnipeg, Manitoba, the Socialists polled one-eighth of the total votes cast. Socialism is prevalent in Western Canada and is becoming more prevalent every day.

Do you not see men who do no work and yet possess all the things that this life can give? How is this possible? How can men who toil not enjoy the results of the toil of others? This is the question the workers are asking and the capitalist politicians and economists cannot answer to the satisfaction of the workers. The workers are told to live frugally and labor hard and they see others who live extravagantly and labor not. The idlers talk of their dividends and their rents and their profits and their rights but they cannot answer the question why these things should be. The Socialist answers the question by declaring that rent, interest and profit should not be. And because the answer of the Socialist appeals to the common sense of the workers the workers are taking up the banner of Socialism, never to lay it down till it waves in triumph over the parliaments of the world and the capitalist system is abolished.

In many places of older Canada the early settlers still linger and tell how things have changed since early days. Money was scarce but food was plenty and cheap. Now it is adulterated and dear. Clothing was then made from wool of sheep raised by the spinners, on the farm itself. Now the cloth is made from what the cloth-makers alone know. Then the shelterings of the people were log cabins and the heating was by wood cut from the forest. Now the sheltering of the people depends upon whether they are workers on wages or the exploiters of wage workers. The former live crowded together while the latter live in two or three palaces, choosing their residence according to the season. The old inhabitants complain that we are fallen on evil days and they are right. But the evil days of capitalism will pass away and Socialism will come, to do away with the artificial inequalities now existing.

The beer war in Bavaria is being waged with great vigor. While Munich and other large cities have not yet been reduced to drinking water altogether, there has been a vast decrease in the consumption of beer. The Germans say beer is too high and the brewers must reduce the price. This the brewers have refused to do and in many towns the people are signing a pledge to abstain from drinking beer until the price has been reduced. The important lesson to Socialists is that the farmers have been advised to sow less barley this year. Socialists claim that organization is better than competition and that intelligent action in the regulation of crops to meet the needs of the people is better than the blind reliance on chance in the sowing of grain. When Socialism comes the production of the necessities of life will be scientifically regulated in a manner to call forth the least expenditure of human effort with the maximum of results.

A SERIES OF OPEN LETTERS

To the Postmaster General of Canada.

(The Postmaster General rules that papers from office of publication can go to bona fide regular subscribers at one-quarter of a cent a pound bulk postage rate. Bundles can go to newsdealers without payment and on speculation for one-quarter of a cent a pound postal charge. Bundles can go to non-newsdealers for one-quarter of a cent a pound, if the non-newsdealer subscribes for a bundle for a period of three months. But non-newsdealers who want a bundle of a special issue must pay four cents a pound postage, a rate sixteen times that to newsdealers. This applies to individuals and to Socialist Locals. It is the universal practice of Socialist papers of the United States to announce special issues dealing with particular questions and for Socialists to purchase bundles of such special issues and pay for them in advance. Lemieux, by declaring that special bundles going to bona fide purchasers thereof must pay sixteen times the postal rate charged newsdealers for bundles sent on speculation is evidently aiming at the prevention of the free circulation of Socialist literature. Lemieux has informed me that he cannot change this ruling. I am therefore writing a series of open letters to convince him that there must be no discrimination against the public in favor of newsdealers on postal charges and that if he insists in his discriminatory charges, he will become politically dead in Canada.)

To the Honorable Rodolphe Lemieux,
Postmaster General Ottawa, Ont.

Sir:—Your communication of the 31st. March in which you state that you cannot add anything to your former communications with regard to the discrimination of your department against the workingmen to hand. This matter you evidently consider closed so far as your Department is concerned. You evidently intend to let newsdealers get bundles of newspapers through the mails on speculation at the rate of one-quarter of a cent a pound and compel the workingmen of the Dominion of Canada who purchase and pay for bundles of Socialist papers to pay your department four cents a pound for transporting the same. This matter you have resolved. Your discrimination you will continue. The last word, so far as you are concerned, is said.

But, sir, the question is not settled. Lincoln long ago remarked that no question is settled until it is settled right. This question is settled wrong. Therefore it is not settled.

It is evidently useless to appeal to you to change your unjust regulations. Therefore the appeal must be made over your head to your masters, the people of Canada. I think the best way is to write a series of open letters to you, publishing the same in Cotton's Weekly. Notwithstanding your statement on the floor of the house that Cotton's Weekly possesses no subscribers, it

According to a recent article on syndicalism by Odín Por, Samuel Gompers is not untrue to the class of workers he represents. He is the representative of the craft workers, the skilled workers who are divided into separate organizations by the nature of their work resulting from the economic forces of production which are fast disappearing. The American Federation of Labor is not a homogeneous body of workers. It is a loose federation of skilled workers whose interests lie more with the petty bourgeoisie than with the revolutionary unskilled workers. But the skilled craftsmen are being eliminated by the advance of machine production. The building trades are a case in point. The skilled wood workers get their four dollars a day. They are being replaced by "Hunkies" mixing concrete at \$1.55 per day. The skilled workers are not the revolutionary workers. But the "hunkies" are the ones who rise in revolt and unite themselves in the revolutionary industrial movement of syndicalism.

There are many persons who praise Socialism and agree with its theoretical tenets but who fight the practical application of Socialism with all their heart.

possesses over six thousand subscribers and the number is rapidly increasing. Thanks to your arbitrary action on bundle charges the circulation is rapidly increasing. That circulation will more rapidly increase as the suppression of the radical publications owing to the action of your Department becomes more fully known to the people of Canada.

Let me inform you that the administrative methods of your Department are not popular with the people of Canada. Listen to what the Toronto, Ont., Standard has to say, with regard to the point at issue:

"Cotton's Weekly," the organ of Socialism, published at Cowansville, Quebec, is up against it as far as postal privileges are concerned. We are up against it, too, and cannot help it, though we have not been silent about it either. "Cotton's" charges the P.M.G. with discriminating against it. Hon. Rodolphe Lemieux denies the charge, but we believe it all the same. We know how struggling journalism has been treated in our own case.

The Kingston Whig, under the title, "The People Be Hanged," in dealing with the question at issue declares, "What interest will suffer by the ruling that papers be carried at the same rate whether they are addressed or not? Does the average newspaper rate recover expenses? If so why discriminate? There may be a reason for it, but it is not apparent on the surface." The article ends by suggesting a commission to look into the postal service.

You, as a practising politician, look to results on your own career. The question of bundle charges matter little to you as long as you think there will be no protest. You know that a million voters with conflicting interests are not influenced by what you consider little matters. And you consider postal favoritism to newsdealers in mailing charges at a rate fifteen times lower than that charged workingmen a small matter. Yet the freedom of the press is in question. The free circulation of ideas is at stake. You will discover your mistake, perhaps, Honorable Sir, when you wake to the fact that your political career is over and that you are known throughout the length and breadth of Canada as "One Thousand Five Hundred Per Cent Lemieux."

The summer vacation is coming. Parliament will be over. The minds of the people will not be disturbed by legislative activities. The minds of the people can be concentrated on your Department. The time is propitious for a public discussion.

You evidently do not realize the feeling abroad in Canada against the government of which you are a member. I hope that feeling will be made manifest to you during the coming vacation.

Yours sincerely,

WILLIAM ULRIC COTTON.

The development of America was rapid. The development of Canada, however, will be far quicker. The enormous robbery of the workers of other countries places immense sums of money in the hands of the exploiters to build additional machinery of production. The old countries are exploited to the limit. The financiers, therefore, must look to the newer fields, and Canada has caught their attention. So the unemployed of other countries are being rushed to Canada and the surplus products of the laborers of other countries are being used to transport and set to work new hordes coming to Canada. But Canada cannot absorb the surplus labor of other countries for long. When the new machinery of production in Canada gets going full blast Canada will be troubled with the diseases of decadent capitalism, failing markets, unemployed, poverty, stricken workers, corrupt capitalists, and general rottenness. Where capitalism holds sway the signs of its decadence is everywhere visible.

Socialism is revolutionary. Every movement for the freedom of the masses has ever been revolutionary.

The coming of Socialism is the going of poverty.

Socialism will give the child a chance to enjoy its childhood.

A vote for a Liberal or a Conservative candidate is a vote for the enslavement of labor.

There will be great relief for the workers when rent, interest and profit are abolished.

The British Liberals are talking a lot about land but are doing little. The British Liberals, however, are performing an important work of education when they call the landlords parasites and idlers and other like terms. The common people have some sense and will see that the Liberals speak the truth but not the whole truth. The landlords are parasites but so are the interest lords and the industrial profit lords.

Constantly in Parliament come up bills against the working classes. And the working classes have to meet in their unions and protest and waste their time and funds in letters and telegrams to the Members of Parliament. How much better would it be for the workers did they elect a good sized bunch of revolutionary Socialists to Ottawa who would speak with no uncertain voice and expose the time serving capitalist henchmen who represent the workingmen of their district? The workers have the votes. Let them vote as they strike, against their bosses.

What chance have the little children of the working classes under this capitalist system? The workers are given but a bare living wage. When the workers are thrown out of work the little children suffer hunger and nakedness. They experience eviction from the shacks the capitalist allows the workers to live in as long as they can find a master to give them a wage and have the strength to labor sufficiently hard to give the master a profit. For the sake of their little children the workers are revolting. For the sake of their wives the workers are revolting. And the red banner of the slave revolt that waved over primitive Christianity, that waved during the dark ages, is now being born to victory by millions of exploited workers who are organized to overthrow the rule and robbery of the few against the many.

There is a great expansion of business in Canada. Three million square miles of territory is to be subdued and rendered productive by seven million people. The capitalists are absorbing the surplus values produced by the workers. The surplus values are to a certain extent being "reinvested" by the exploiters in preparing machinery for further exploitation. Railroads are being built. Factories are going up. New coal areas are being opened. All by the labor of workers. Canada, according to capitalist papers, is booming and the country is prosperous. Yet it is cold comfort to the exploited workers who get a dollar and a quarter a day to be told that the country is prosperous when they barely get a living. Canada is a fine field for financiers and the labor skinner. Undoubtedly times are prosperous for the parasites.

Now comes the rumor that Laurier will appeal to the people of Canada this year to support his navy policy. The Conservative party is being re-organized and Laurier hopes that it will be non-effective as a fighting force if elections are sprung on the country. There are certain signs that elections are near. There is the graft on the G. T. P. There are the immense bonuses being given to dry docks. There will be large profits out of the navy contracts if the Liberals win out. All these signs point to elections in the near future. As to the Conservatives being out of business as an effective opposition, it matters little. Both parties are capitalist parties. Both contain members who are slightly radical. Both contain reactionary members. The main thing is for the Socialists to continue their propaganda and waken the workers to the fact that a vote for either a Liberal or a Conservative is a vote cast for the enslavement of the workers. Agitate, educate and organize the workers. Back the Socialist Party with funds for organizing purposes. Keep the aim clear before the workers; the organization of a revolutionary political party for the capture of political institutions, municipal provincial and Dominion, and the establishment of an industrial democracy owned, controlled and managed of, by and for the working classes.

GREAT BRITAIN AND FRANCE

There is evidently an alliance between the capitalist governments of France and Great Britain. The capitalist rulers of Germany are exceedingly feared by the capitalist rulers of the two other countries. Therefore there is a secret understanding Great Britain has withdrawn her fleet from the Mediterranean waters and has concentrated her ships off Scotland in the North Sea. France is concentrating her ships in the Mediterranean. Thus the rulers of the two nations work in harmony.

The markets of the world are shrinking for the capitalist class. With India and China and Japan becoming exporting nations, the markets of the world are becoming overcrowded. The capitalist rulers have therefore to struggle to get foreign markets. Under Socialism the home markets would be able to absorb all the home products, save such as were exported for exchange purposes in return for non-indigenous foreign products. But under the capitalist system, the workers cannot buy back, with their scanty wages, the goods they have made, consequently those goods must be sold abroad or there is a crisis. And it is the struggle for foreign markets that makes the possibility of war so threatening.

But the workers who are robbed by the capitalist system; the workers who see fine silks exported while they have difficulty in buying cotton cloth, see that war is senseless and that the capitalist system provokes war. So the European workers are setting their faces against war, while the French rulers are concentrating their ships at Marseilles, a strike has broken out among the naval reservists. The strike has spread to the shop clerks. And the capitalist class have called out the military for fear of their parasite livings disappearing from their grasp.

Anti-militarism is growing in Europe. The workers are weary of the heavy burdens of armies and navies. And Laurier, Laurier of the murder ship infamy, is fastening on the backs of the Canadian workers, the burdens that the workers of Europe are doing their best to shake themselves free from.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Does a general restriction on production, such as cutting down the hours of labor, increase employment to society as a whole?

The product of man is part of his life. Body and mind, society does not confer. By what right have a few people to take them away?

How can a moral standard be valued or measured by a material one? Or in other words, is human life valued by its production, or its needs and wants?

A small minority of people called rulers confer favors on a few individuals by the way of a license to sell liquor. Is this an example of equal rights?

Is the poverty of the land and its resources the prime cause of the overstocked, adulterated food supply?

According to law an unemployed person is termed a vagrant, and liable to imprisonment. Does justice mean one law for the rich and another for the poor?

Law is supposed to be a common force, organized to prevent injustice. Law is the means to regulate our conscience, our wills and ideas, our works and exchanges, our gifts and enjoyments. Its mission is supposed to be to prevent the rights of one man from interfering with those of another in any of these things. But capitalist law is merely the organization of capitalist force to protect property rights. Socialism stands for social law, social justice, and the protection of human life as against property rights.—A. G. McCallum, Ottawa, Ont.

State capitalism is not Socialism. State capitalism is the exploitation of the wage slave by the government. That government by its present composition, belongs to the parasites. If the government exploits the wage slaves, therefore, that exploitation will rebound to the benefit of the capitalists. Socialism aims at abolishing the bourgeois form of government and establishing an industrial democracy in which the administration of things will replace the government of persons.

Socialism will give the expropriated wage slave a stake in the country.