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# Cotton's Weekly

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## Crothers, and the Strike at Vancouver Island

The miners of Vancouver Island have been on strike for several months. They demand recognition of their union—the International Mine Workers of America.

These miners have been at the mercy of the masters in the past, and life and limb were in daily danger.

The government allows the miners to have two mine inspectors for every mine. The duties of the inspectors are to report unsafe conditions in the mines, as regards gas, etc. Dangerous places in the mine are bulletined at the mine entrance, where the workers have a chance to see just what regions are safe before they enter.

The mine owners virtually compelled the inspectors not to report the dangerous positions in the mines. An inspector who would report an unsafe place O. K. would have an increased pay envelope, and an easier time generally. If he were honest and bulletined the dangerous spots he would be under the ban of the bosses who played the game of profits to the limit.

The miners' lives were in constant danger. They applied to the masters for union men to be placed as inspectors. Their union is very strict as regards working conditions in the mines. The masters refused to confer with them. The miners could get no satisfaction from their masters, and went on strike for a recognition of the union.

The coal barons have brought every pressure to bear in order to break the strike, but the miners remain firm. The situation is tense. Crothers, the Minister of Labor, was appealed to, and paid a visit to Vancouver Island, accompanied by Mrs. Crothers.

While there many conferences were held with the mine owners and employees. The dailies say the situation was found to be a difficult one, as the miners were asking for recognition of their union. What is the result about it? The miners have tried every means in their power to induce the mine owners to make conditions safe in the caves where they are forced to toil. They met at every turn with a refusal; if they belted individually they were fired and blacklisted. The bosses cared not for the lives and limbs of the workers who made them profits. There were others; the west is full of unemployed, so the masters decided it was a good time for a strike, and directed things so a strike would take place.

Crothers says the situation is a difficult one. He is a sweet minister of Labor. If he knew anything of mining or the dangers the miners face daily, he would see nothing difficult in recognizing a union which would compel mine owners to protect the life of their workers. Crothers is a henchman of the capitalists; he looks at labor troubles from a capitalist standpoint; he has to, or the masters would see to it that he would lose his job. Therefore he sees difficult things ahead when the master class are asked to make working conditions safe for the profit makers, the men who go into the bowels of the earth and toil that Crothers and his like may enjoy the fruits of labor.

Workers should never ask Crothers to investigate labor troubles. He is useless to arrange any of their affairs. He will come, look over the situation, and depart, and the conditions of the workers will remain in the same conditions as before he came. He is no friend of labor; he is the smiling and serene friend of the masters, each and every time. What has Crothers, or any other member of the Canadian parliament, done for the workers in past years? Crothers cares nothing for the workers of Vancouver Island, but he does care for the bosses of that island, as they represent the class which Crothers represents. No matter what his private opinion, he will do as he is told by his masters, and whatever he does will not be in the workers' favor.

And Mrs. Crothers accompanied him on his pleasure trip of four weeks through the west. Here is how a daily paper reports the Minister's wife on the strike situation:

"Mrs. Crothers, who takes a deep interest in the work of the Minister, visited the wives and families of the miners, whom she found to be kind and intelligent, and expressed much sympathy for their present hardships, as many of the miners will lose their homes unless a settlement is soon reached."

Cotton's would give a lot to know just what Mrs. Crothers expected to find in the homes of the workers. They were kind and intelligent. They expected to find a semi-civilized crowd of half-naked savages with stone axes bashing each other's brains out? Did she expect to see children hanging up to rafters by the thumbs while their parents sat by grinning in ghoulish glee? It is hard to tell what she did expect to encounter, but the above shows the wide chasm between the two classes—the robbers and the robbed. The Crotherses and their kind look down on the class which provides them with the luxuries, and seem surprised when they find them "kind and intelligent." This is a rotten insult to the miners and their families of Vancouver Island.

She expressed much sympathy for their present hardships. The miners do not want her sympathy or any body else's. Sympathy will not bring to life again the miner who is suffocated by gas or blown to atoms in an explosion. Sympathy will not feed the poor hungry little mouths

who are waiting for the father who never returns, or who comes with broken limbs and maimed features. Sympathy is cheap. The capitalist class and their henchmen always have it on tap when a mine disaster occurs. Gobs of sympathy are given out; but when it costs a little to have Justice, there is nothing doing. Mrs. Crothers is afraid many of the miners will have to leave their homes. Sure they will. The miners knew that, and took it into consideration when they saw that they were being virtually forced out of their employment. The mine bosses own the shacks of the miners, and the Vancouver Island boys refuse to do any backwater stunt they will be chased from the shacks and hoveled by the companies.

The miners of the Island want Justice from their point of view, and are going ahead in the only way possible to get it. They depend on government officials to help them in the fight, they will get sadly left, and they know it, so they are standing shoulder to shoulder against their common enemy, organized capitalism. If they cannot get better conditions in the mines, if they cannot get recognition of their union, which will provide them with a better chance to live and get a better share of what they produce, the miners of Vancouver Island might as well throw down their tools and walk west into the ocean. They would be better off.

In the recent North Grey election only about one-half the electors went to the polls. Straws show which way the wind is blowing. The dailies made great capital of this election. Both the old frowny parties berated each other in fine style, trying to work up enthusiasm among the electors. The voters of Canada are sick of the politics which have been dealt out to them in the past. Occasionally they arise and cast out a government which was thought to be as sound as a rock. They then find there is no change, and the two old parties are exactly the same when it comes down to brass tracks, that what there is in it, and working for their masters, the capitalist class. The workers of Canada are learning that they must vote for themselves if they wish to get value for their labors; they are learning that Socialism will provide them with the power to get it. The voters are finding out that Socialism is not the bugaboo they thought it was, and when an election comes on they remain away from the polls and say to themselves, "Oh what's the use of nothing?"

C. L. Sholes and Matthias Schwalback, of Milwaukee, invented the typewriter. They were mechanics, and worked nights and Sundays, starved themselves and went without sleep in order that the world might have a great labor saving machine. Sholes was skinned out of his share by moneyed sharks, and recently died in poverty. Schwalback managed to get \$75 cash out of all his labor and trouble and privation, and is living today dependent on his children, while the typewriter trust is waxing stronger and stronger and the dividends piling higher and higher. This story could be told of almost all the great inventions of the past few decades. Only a few manage to escape the toils of the moneyed sharks with whom one has to do business before he can get his ideas patented. The majority see the child of their brain exploited in other hands, while they themselves have the brunt of the price of want and absolute poverty. And every once in a while some pinhead raises and asks, "What would be the incentive for invention under Socialism?"

The following ad appears in the Victoria Daily Colonist: "Englishman for sale for one month, \$50c a day, view to permanent position, do anything; well recommended by former employers; smart, well educated. Box 193 Colonist." The Englishman sent the best of their blood and brawn to Canada in 1759 and took the country from their French neighbors. Barrels of blood were spilt over a country which the foresight of the conquerors told them was rich in the extreme. Today thirty-eight capitalists have the say of what is to be or what is not to be in the whole dominion. The working, producing Englishman comes over with the idea in his nut that there is lots of work and wages are away, and above those of the home land. Once here, he is compelled to sell his labor power and educational abilities for the lowest price in an overworked market. In this what his forefathers fought for in 1759? Is this what his countrymen fought and died for? Seems so, doesn't it?

This is the season when the farmer, his wife, and son and daughter go to the fields and help with the hay. The work is hard, the hours long, the workers weary and bent-backed. The farmer sells the hay for eight or ten dollars a ton, in order to appease his creditors; and it of ten markets at fifteen, eighteen and twenty dollars. Why don't the farmer get these profits? Ask Borden.

The workers have no money in C. P. R. stocks, yet they built the road, and built the rolling stock, and run the trains, and grow the grain which is hauled in the cars, and sent to parliament the kind of paternal bunch of tools to vote millions upon millions to the railway magnates.

Socialists are against wars.

A class conscious worker is a power to himself and his fellows.

Under capitalism just what does the term "honesty" convey? What does it mean, anyhow?

Capitalists fight Socialism, for it will exterminate their class, and force them to become useful producers with the workers of the world.

Twelve million rounds of ammunition, claimed to be worth \$300,000, have been condemned at the Quebec arsenal. The cartridges, both for small arms and field guns, have been found to be unsafe. Sabotage?

The paucity of arms has lost its attractiveness for Canadians. And the master class are getting anxious as they are well aware that their hired murderers are all that stands between the workers and their freedom.

How much of the \$15,000,000 cash gift that Parliament voted to Mackenzie and Mann will find its way into the campaign funds of the two political machines? If this question were answered truthfully it might explain volumes.—Grain Growers' Guide.

Every additional worker who gets a toe hold on Socialism causes a flurry in the ranks of the capitalists, for they know once he is wise to the robbery practised upon him, he is lost to the "slave" and "beef tea" arguments of the robbing class.

Capitalists hitch the workers to machines and drive them till they are worn out and useless for the making of profits. Then they are hived in jails, asylums, and houses of refuge till they die. From there it is a short jaunt to the house of refuge cemetery, or a midnight ride to the medical college.

Cabinet ministers of the Canadian capitalist government are touring Canada with their families in their private cars. This is done under the guise of ministerial business and education. What do Borden's ministers care for the welfare of the country? They do as they are told, and take their rewards like little men.

A new spirit is being born into the masses. It is the spirit of thought. Once a man uses his brain more and his hands less, he becomes a person who will help his comrades to widen the breach between the robbers and the robbed. He chafes in his chains, he creates a feeling of unrest among his fellow slaves. He is doing a noble work for the only class which is worth while—The working class.

From the cradle to the grave, we are the unfortunate victims of the evil effects of organized capital. The latest trust in Canada is the coffin trust. The promoters say the casket manufacturers have been cutting each other's throats. This will be stopped, and the throat cutting operation will in future be performed on the survivors of the gunk who croaks. Organizers of the new concern say the price of funeral supplies may not go up, but profits will be greater. This means lower wages for those who make the caskets.

Sir Thomas Shaughnessy says the banks have the situation well in hand. There is nothing startling in this information. The banks of Canada are full of wealth filched from the working class. The workers are poor, and the banks with their tremendous power keep the producing class as close to the bread line as their greed of profits allow them to do in safety. As long as the workers are content to make millionaires out of what would otherwise be good working men, the banks will have almost any situation well in hand.

Dr. Alfred Bernstein, a Prussian Socialist, has been advocating the idea of a "birth strike" in Germany. He declares that most successful pressure would be exerted on the government if mothers would make some such announcement as this: "We will bring no children into the world to become citizens of this state unless better rights of citizenship are accorded." When the supply of wage workers is cut off the capitalists will be up against it. They cannot run the machinery of the world; they cannot conduct the facilities of transportation and distribution. The women of the world have the situation in their own hands, and if women of other countries followed the method advocated by the German Socialist the reign of Capitalism would be that much nearer its finish.

Everybody is looking for an easy time. The toilers in the shops lace in and try to beat the speeding-up system, buoyed with the hope of securing a fatter position, where they will not have to slave so hard, and perhaps have the privilege of keeping an eye on the slaves who have taken their jobs when they have been promoted. Push the other man aside is the motto of today, and underhand tricks are pulled off every day in the mills and factories of the masters, in order to gain some fancied advantage. But it rarely comes. If a fatter job and a larger salary is gained, the masters of today invariably force the bolstered slave to commit acts of dirty work which they would not do themselves. There is no easy time for the producer under capitalism. The only ones who enjoy the easy time are the takers of rent, interest and profit. They rest at ease, while their tools do the dirty work, and scourge the slaves who produce the wealth.

Socialism does not mean free love. Socialism does not mean dividing up.

Socialism will give the capitalist justice. It will give him all he produces—nothing more.

Capitalism is for the rich few. Socialism is for all, and for the benefit of all.

Millions slave in order that the few may sit in high places and direct the financial affairs of the world.

Socialism has never yet been tried. Capitalism has, and has proved a cruel failure. A system which has produced crime, misery and degradation should be changed.

The right to work is even being exploited by the grafters. The system is rotten which compels a man or woman to come across with money in order to secure a job.

The daily papers are the friends of capitalism; they hold no brief for the working class, yet the working class dig down and come across with their good money for the support of the sheets which are used to keep them in subjection.

The "New Zealand" visited Vancouver harbor, and the only naval display to greet her was the watchman of the Canadian "fleet," who leaned over the rail of the dismantled "Rainbow" smoking his old clay pipe. A noble patriot he.

The toiling masses are becoming educated. They will not be satisfied with a little food and poor shelter for their long hours of toil. Even now they are refusing to listen to the spellbinders of the capitalists in political halls and pulpits. They are becoming class conscious, and have a desire to attend to their own affairs, and conduct the distribution and production of the wealth they produce. They are sick of the rule of blood and murder.

Infant mortality in Montreal is steadily increasing. No cool spots for sick babies. No shining but furnace-like rooms in the slums, and in fact a year old being fed on pea soup would increase the mortality of any community. This is what capitalism hands out to the children of the poor and unfortunate. What do the capitalists care about a few hundred children dying every week in a city where slaves are numerous and thousands more joining the ranks every day? Nothing. If the slave class were wise they would refuse to breed children to fill the mills of the masters.

There promises to be trouble on the Intercolonial. Canada's government owned railroad. The men demand a decent increase in pay, and the officers of the railroad offer the clerks the huge increase of \$2.50 a month and laborers ten cents a day. The men threaten to strike. For forty years the Intercolonial slaves have tamely submitted to their lot, with never a protest. They have numerous other grievances besides low wages. All the government officials of course are arrayed against the men. Canada is "prosperous," but of course the men who help to produce the wealth should not have the audacity to ask for a little larger share of what they produce. Oh, no, the prosperity must go to the masters. The government cannot afford to give the railway workers a decent wage, but it coolly hands over \$15,000,000 to Mackenzie and Mann to build their railroad.

Montreal papers claim that the impure milk being sold in that city and the consequent spreading of disease is due to the small dealers, who in their struggle for existence against the large concerns are forced to resort to trickery and unfair treatment. The large dealers spend their money and have the facilities to secure the utmost purity of their milk, while the small dealers have no money to spend, and their product does not receive the attention it should get. In the struggle the little fellow is sure to go under. He will sell his watered and chalked product for a time, but big business will swallow him in the end. Little business cannot bust the trusts; the old party politicians cannot bust the trusts; reformers cannot bust the trusts. It has been, and is being tried every day, and is a dismal failure. Socialism will bust the trusts by taking over the means of production and distribution and putting them in the hands of the whole people for the benefit of the whole people.

Toronto plutes love and foster militarism. The Boy Scout movement is in full swing in that city. To the west on the Humber river complaints have come to the police of depredations committed by the Scouts. Now they have turned their attention to the eastern section of the city. They overrun the farmers' fields, and break down and destroy his fences. At Scarborough Heights overlooking Lake Ontario recently a crowd of Scouts were attempting to rob the nests of the cliff swallows. One of the number fell and was killed. Did the Scout master order the boys to rob the nests? Does he order the boys to practice rifle shooting near picnic parties? Does he order them to rob gardens and fruit trees in the suburbs of the city? From reports of late Toronto will soon have its fill of Boy Scouts. They have become a nuisance in every community in which they are organized. They are a standing menace to the freedom of the working class, and no thinking workingman's son should ever don a uniform.

## Christianity and the working Class Movement

Christ

Elsewhere in this issue Comrade T. Edwin Smith points out that class antagonisms bias the reporting of history. He shows that the histories of the world have been written from the viewpoint of the master class, and that the workers have recently had to interpret history from their own standpoint.

The circumstances leading to the death of Christ is a case in point. The master class have had looks upon books written about this question. It is only recently that the death of Christ has been treated from the workingman's point of view.

If we take the history as reported to be true, we will find that Christ was crucified, not because he proclaimed himself the son of God, but because he was stirring up the multitude.

Christ was a workingman. He gathered twelve workingmen around him. He went forth preaching the end of the then existing dispensation. He preached the exaltation of righteousness. The common people heard him gladly. They groaned under oppression. Heavy taxation was upon them. Soldiers were quartered upon the people. The daughters of the people were at the mercy of the ruling class.

When Christ went abroad preaching the new morality, the common people heard him gladly. They wanted to be led in revolt. They clamored for freedom. Then the same struggle that later confronted Karl Marx confronted Christ. Marx had to fight for delay, for educating the people, for the organizing and solidifying of the working class. The anarchists of Marx's day wanted to fight the capitalist class at once. Hence the fierce factional fights that arose.

The people of Christ's day wanted hasty action. Christ declared that his doctrines had to be carried to the ends of the earth. A premature revolt would be crushed in blood.

Christ went to Jerusalem and was seized by the hierarchy. He admitted he was the son of God, and blasphemed in the sight of the Jews. He was taken before Pontius Pilate and the priests accused him of blasphemy against their religion. There was nothing in the eyes of Pilate. Pilate represented the Roman Emperor. Within the empire all religions were allowed. Any religion could build a temple at Rome. As long as pagan Rome received her tribute from the subject nations, she cared not for their religious disputes. But she checked them when the religious disputes began to lead to fighting. The Jews could have their religion subject to their allowing all others to hold their religion. Hence, when Christ was brought before Pilate and the Jews accused him of blasphemy their God, it was nothing to Pilate.

Then the accusers changed their tactics. They said that Christ was stirring up the rabble to resist Rome. That he was opposing the civil power. That his doctrines were subversive of the ruling power. This is the same charge brought against Socialists today.

At this accusation Pilate took notice. He was a weak ruler, and his rule was troubled with factions. If this Christ was stirring up the people, Pilate's job would be in danger. So he handed Christ over to crucifixion.

Christ was crucified, not because he proclaimed himself the son of God, but because he taught the people to stand firm in their own dignity. He instilled into the ancient lowly spirit of independence. Such independence in a slave class boded ill to the ruling class.

Christ was railroaded to death because his teachings were not liked by the plundering classes, in the same way that the Haymarket anarchists of Chicago were railroaded to death.

### Primitive Christianity

The death of Christ did not stop his doctrines. They spread over the Roman empire, chiefly among the slave class, the lowly and the oppressed. Saint Paul sounded the keynote of the new religion when he declared that there was neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free, but all are in Christ. Such a doctrine appeals mightily to the bond slave and the lowly. The ruling class heard such teaching with astonishment, rage and terror. What! The slave were lowly. The ruling class heard such doctrines as crazy! They will overthrow society! In such manner the ruling class thought, and the whole might of pagan Rome was turned against the Christians. Nero smeared them with pitch and burned them alive as torches to light his gladiatorial shows. The proconsuls throughout the empire had orders to exterminate those who preached this new doctrine.

Rome allowed all religions. The reason why Christianity was banned was because of its ECONOMIC teachings. The power of pagan Rome was based on chattel slavery. The Christian doctrine of freedom to the slave was subversive of the power of the old ruling class. Hence the persecution by the ruling class of the Christians. Hence the hatred of the beneficiaries of the religious graft of the early days of our era to the Christian religion.

Today the Socialists advocate freedom from wage slavery. They say that life is too sacred a thing for any capitalist to buy another man's life from day to day for a pittance wage. And today the ruling class persecute the Socialists as much as

they dare. They jail them, fine them, blacklist them.

Christianity stood for peace, and Socialists stand for peace. Then and now those who struggle for freedom are lied about, called free lovers, and blamed for wanting to stir up a bloody revolution, when the early Christians wanted, and we today want to bring about justice and right dealing between man and man upon this earth.

### Subsequent Development

The Christian lowly were persecuted and grew in power and numbers. The Roman authorities could not deal with the great number of Christians. The Christian cause seemed on the point of triumphing.

Then—the Emperor Constantine, who ruled from Byzantium, or Constantinople from 323 to 337 A. D., turned the course of history. He saw the power of the Christians, AND HE DECLARED HIMSELF A CHRISTIAN. He said he saw a vision of a cross in the sky as a sign of victory in war. He made Christianity the religion of the empire.

At once the battle was on between primitive Christianity and the Christianity established by Constantine. Many Christians refused to recognize him as a brother. They said he had come in to pervert the movement. He was using the movement, not for the emancipation of the oppressed, but as a bulwark to oppression. He had come in, not as a brother working for freedom, justice and right, but as a traitor to ruin the movement, turn it from its aim and sap its strength.

Under the Christian emperors, persecution was practised against the stalwart Christians.

Persecution has ruled since.

Today we see the plunderers occupying the chief seats of the temples of worship. Christianity has become a bulwark to robbery. Throughout Canada the big labor skinner is the main supporter of what is known now as Christianity.

Socialists aim at the emancipation of the slaves.

They work for the establishment of the co-operative commonwealth.

They preach justice to all on the economic field.

The beneficiaries of privilege in the name of Christ call us all kinds of vile names.

And in spirit we are nearer to the primitive spirit of Christianity than any other movement on earth.

Walt Whitman, in his piece "To Him who was Crucified," says: "My spirit to yours dear brother. Do not mind because many sounding your name do not understand you. I do not sound your name but I understand you."

I specify you with joy O my comrade to salute you, and those who are with you before and since, and those to come also.

That we all labor together transmitting the same charge and succession.

Were Christ present today, and heard a preacher paid by the labor skinner denouncing the Socialists, it is my firm conviction he would say, "God forgive him, for he knows not what he does."

The Christian Guardian rips up the apple packers and says some of them are dishonest. It also says that "the man who starts out to get rich by fraudulent means will be apt to find before long that the way of the transgressor is hard." Just what constitutes honesty for the Guardian? The big robbers of Canada flim-flam millions from the government; lesser robbers gamble in stocks and rob their fellow gamblers; masters of mills and factories deliberately exploit their workers of a large percentage of what they produce. But concerning this class of dishonesty the Guardian is mum. The apple packers are of the working class. A large profit is made from their efforts by railroads, express companies, shipping companies, and the middleman who handle their goods before they reach the consumer. The packers know they are robbed, and they play the game, and the capitalist press jumps on them and calls them dishonest. What Christian consistency!

"Do we want sober soldiers?" asks the Christian Guardian. No, we don't want sober soldiers or any other kind of soldiers. We don't want them because we don't need them. We want sober producers, and more producers, and less production and of a better quality. We want the parasites who now fatten on labor to come down with us and share in the production of the country. Soldiers are non-producers, and wasters; they are unnecessary to a sane system.

The Swiss guard at the Vatican have mutinied, and a little war is right on tap, ready to start at any moment. The pope is tired of being followed around by armed guards. He wishes to disband the whole pack, and live like any other man. The authorities are arranging to drive the whole Swiss guard from the Vatican where they will be captured and deported to the Italian-Swiss frontier. Big-business is having its troubles.

Secretary of State Bryan of the U. S. gets \$12,000 a year, and raises a howl for a large increase. He says he cannot live on the salary. This is as much as the average salary of 26 men who are the real producers of the country. They have to grub along on a little over \$400 a year, and pay rent and raise families, and give them education enough to enter the mills and shops of the class which supports Bryan and his high-flying followers.