

THE RED FLAG

A Journal of News and Views Devoted to the Working Class.

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Our Office Safe and the Social Revolution

WE have again achieved that bad eminence of a police raid. We were not on the premises at the time, so any unpleasant experience can not be counted to our charge. We are at all times ready to give any of our literature to any and all who will undertake to read it. We are not so free with our correspondence, still anyone possessing governmental authority can have access to that any time of the day. If advantage is taken of this offer much trouble can be avoided.

For instance, we have a safe, weighing some tons or so. It is empty except for a mortgage or two, in fact there never was a safe the contents of which were less known. Like most of the office furniture held by the tired business man, its uses were manifold. No one ever opened it, sometimes someone sat on it, and in the cheap dead days beyond recall when credit still stalked the earth, and there still was honor amongst thieves and tired business men, we got a little consideration on the strength of the safe.

It had another use in those bygone happy days when the Fraser River swarmed with Sockeye and Hastings street with suckers. Sometimes its sunk hinge, combination locked, bomb-proof, enameled bulk supported at convenient height—a keg of beer. Ah! those were happy days for the "great middle class" when the Bolsheviki was as little known and less feared than the Jaberwoki, general strikes we knew only through brief items of news concerning France, Italy, and other remote and unknown regions, and the Saturday Evening Post solved every problem in life.

Well, the Mounted Police have taken our safe, and we trust they will have less trouble opening it than they will have with "Capital" in three volumes by Karl Marx: We know they will have much less trouble with the reading matter inside. Lugging a 'steen-ton safe, void and empty of any useful material, all over town, is not within the ordinary duties of a mounted policeman. No! no! 'tis the peril of the unrelenting man-hunt in the frozen north, or the limitless expanse of the bald-headed prairie, through page after page of the Suckers' Magazine, or from cover to cover of the Boy Scouts' Mental Weekener.

But the safe will be accounted a small item when the official bean encounters "the cycle of P" in Capital Vol. II, or the analysis of Rent in Vol. III, not to speak of "the Great Contradiction."

But aside from these and without doubt a few other unpleasant tasks for the official mind, there will be found in the letters and pamphlets some sound science and excellent advice, which might start some process of thinking in officialdom. We were not put to much trouble, or inconvenience, except that a chair had to be brought in to replace the safe. And we have not the thought on our mind that the poor policemen had to be up all night as they were in Winnipeg. We have no idea what all this raiding is about, although they have with mild persistence sought entrance to our idea-refinery. It may be that hope is entertained of discovering something whereon to hang a case, or haply that the official mind really believes all

that stupid mouth-frothing peculiar to "Citizens' sheets. We have, however, long regarded the official mind as inscrutable, a causeless nonentity which functions in a sphere where all known signs fail. This is not scientific, but it's safe.

Take the "Citizens'" sheets, published as they boast, "without brains or information." Who writes the "news" which appears therein? Some citizen? Not on your life! Busy as they are framing strictures and invective, not one in a thousand has the ability to set his thoughts on paper in such order and terms as to be printable.

Here and there on the fringe, some miserable word-butcher earning a bare livelihood, can be found with gall and experience sufficient unto the evil thereof. He, of course, cares nothing and knows less about the issues at stake. It is a question of screaming and yelling, and lying, at so much per scream, per yell and per lie. Hecuba is nothing to him, nor he to Hecuba; he is paid to froth at the mouth, pull out his hair, and otherwise act the fool, because Hecuba had her brains dashed out, or because the tired business man has had his summer sales spoiled.

Being paid to scream and yell and lie, this scribbler, usually an ad-writer, or business booster of some kind, screams and yells and lies in season and out; it really means nothing to him; any more than emptying a midden does to the scavenger. If the noisomeness of the task ever forces itself upon him, he comforts his offended sense with the assurance that the pay is good, at least better than he ever had before, and anyway, the Lord tempers the wind to the shorn lamb. So as we suggested, these hired screamers might have screamed so loud and so artistically that the official mind may have been disturbed, and may really expect to find all those things which the hired liars have invented.

Of course officialdom knows what it wants, and we do not. If officialdom wants to know the real truth about Bolshevism, how it operates, when and why, we can tell them. This Bokhevist-stuff may be a blind. They may really have a good reason for sneaking around radicals' meeting places and homes, in the hope that some stray letter will give them some information urgently required. And again as you say, they may not.

But as we say, if it is Bolshevism and revolution they are looking for, we will let them into a secret. Revolution is in some respects like unto the promised advent of Christ, no man knoweth the hour it cometh; when it does come its high priests will one and all repudiate it.

When it comes more-over it will be born of the economic needs of a vast multitude of human beings, and not of the brain of a few agitators. The plan will not be found locked up in a dilapidated roller-top desk of some Labor Hall, but will arise surprisingly new from the conditions of existence, and behind it will be, not the club or the bomb of the anarchist, but the accumulated experiences of a hundred thousand years, and the irresistible might of humanity en-route for new pastures. This is a secret, we would not tell everyone. But with our Government so earnestly searching for truth, and light and justice, we'll break a custom.

This revolution has happened many times in man's past, as our Government might discover by reading one of the strange books called histories, used at our public schools. We might be tempted to say that Koskiusko, Garibaldi and Washington are altogether too much in the limelight. They all believed in overthrowing Constitutional Government by force. More than that, they all attempted and the last named two accomplished that object.

We protest against this insidious propaganda upon young and impressionable minds. The children are taught to honor and emulate those men, and when they say a few words in opposition to the accepted orthodox squint of the "Great Middle class."

"Monsters of the prime.
That tear each other in their slime,
Were mellow music matched with him."

We are however of good cheer. They may silence our voices and suppress our activities but the pregnant forces of capitalist production and their own supreme folly can only come to a period, by a revolution. J. H.

What Is Socialism?

With the Social Revolution now in birth it may seem, at first blush, to be somewhat late in the day to be bothering with the subtleties raised by this question. Nevertheless, it is one that is still quite frequently asked—indeed, at the present juncture, more frequently and with more evidence of an earnest desire for knowledge than ever before. Usually it is not the 'plug' who asks. If the truth be told he is not over-much interested in the theoretical basis of Socialism these strenuous days. He inclines more to something with an 'up and coming' flavor to it. 'Bolshevism' has won his fancy. Doubtless this is due to the intensive advertising given that article by the daily press.

It is the more superior (?) type of wage slave who at this late hour is thus manifesting a suddenly awakened interest in Social and Economic problems. More often than not the enquiry is followed by some such evidence of mental perplexity as this: "What I can't understand about these Socialists is, they can not agree even among themselves."

Now it is a fact that there exists today a wide diversity of opinion on certain subjects among those calling themselves Socialists. But I contend, and shall endeavor later on to show, that the real issue is not so much between Socialist and Socialist as between Socialism and something less than Socialism.

However, let us begin at the beginning. First, to clear the ground—to get rid of some rubbish. Socialism today is not what Socialism used to be. This must not be taken as an admission that the Socialist has retreated from a position he once held—on the contrary.

Astronomers at one time held the earth to be the centre of the Universe. Today any man holding to that idea may call himself an astronomer if he pleases, but he will not be considered worthy of serious consideration. There was a time when the name Socialist was given to persons who were obsessed with the idea that society could be organized in accordance with some preconceived plan, into an Ideal State. They were Utopians and Idealists—good men in their day, but that day is long since. Today that is not Socialism—it is nonsense. Some few specimens of that archaic mind still exist and serve to remind us that even the most serious subjects have their humorous aspects.

Modern Socialism is essentially Scientific. The only Socialist worthy of serious consideration or, indeed, having any real claim to the title, is the Scientific Socialist.

So far, so good.

There is a branch of human knowledge which has been named 'Sociology.' Sociology is a science. Science is knowledge reduced to law and embodied in system. Sociology is the science of human progress. Its field is the sum total of human achievement. All other sciences, inasmuch as they touch upon that field, contribute in that proportion to the science of Sociology.

Let us draw an analogy. There are a number of sciences which treat of the nature and origin of all these diseases to which the human organism is subject. The Physician applies the knowledge gained from those sciences in an endeavor to ascertain the underlying cause of certain unhealthy symptoms which his patient manifests. He makes a diagnosis and formulates a theory.

In like manner the Socialist applies the knowledge gained from the science of Sociology to the existing form of society with intent to ascertain the cause of those manifold ills and objec-

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