

# Children's Corner

## THE HOTEL CAPITALISM

By C. LESTOR

ONCE upon a time there existed in a very large city a very large hotel. This hotel contained over three thousand rooms. It covered an acre of four acres and was sixteen stories high. So you can see that it was no small affair. Everything worked tolerably well, and although the numerous families had their quarrels and petty grievances still they managed to overcome these without disturbing the general harmony. One day, however, the foundation of the structure started giving way and the building assumed an uneven and curious appearance. The inhabitants all started complaining to the janitor. In some rooms the stove pipes had become dislocated; in others the water pipes had burst. Doors would not latch. Some would not open and others would not close. The different families started quarreling as they never quarrelled before. Children started fighting. Working men, heretofore sober, began to drink because they had no comfort. Everything seemed to go wrong. Pendemonium reigned.

The janitor kept sending for plumbers and carpenters and workmen of every description, but as soon as they had got one room fixed another would go wrong, and sometimes when they had made a special effort and apparently got things ship-shape the foundation would give way a little more and everything would go wrong again.

At last it dawned upon the tenants of the hotel that they would have to either make the foundations good in some way or another or find another residence that was more reliable. They started to examine the foundation themselves and found that it was absolutely impossible for any building to stand upon it and permanently retain stability, and they told the owner, through the janitor, that they were going to have another place to live in, and if he didn't provide one they would build one themselves. The owner and the janitor both protested that it was the best hotel, the biggest hotel, the finest hotel that could be built, and they said the tenants were unreasonable and hard to satisfy, and called them all manner of names. The tenants, however, met together and talked the thing over and set certain of their number to find a suitable locality where an hotel could be built, and gave careful instructions that the foundation was the main thing. Having found what they required they all set to work with a will and on firm solid rock they erected a building suitable to their requirements. The new hotel which defied both storm and frost stands today, and will stand for many generations. It is so much superior to the old that the older inhabitants are surprised. "To think," they say, "that we were so fooled as to think the old building was a home when it was in reality broken down."

Now, children, we are today living in an hotel called Capitalism, and just you notice that everything in the world is going wrong. We have wars and suicides, unemployment, murders and robberies, diseases and poverty and wretchedness of every description. Even you children are far from happy because you feel and know there is something wrong. You know and feel in a dim way the worries and cares of your parents.

The foundation of Capitalism is giving way. It is based upon slavery and no form of society based upon slavery can stand long. The slave owner is the capitalist. He can command the services of the working man and take from him what he produces. The owner of the chattel slave could do no more than that.

Some people are trying to repair the building, they are called reformers and are hoping to be permanently employed, but they can't reform the system. The only thing is to have a new structure, and therefore the Socialists have decided to build one, but not on the old foundation.

The Hotel of the Co-operative Commonwealth is going to be built by working men upon a foundation of liberty so far as liberty is possible. The working men and women are going to live there, and the key will have stamped upon it "Working class ownership of the means of life."

### BOOK REVIEW.

(Continued from page 7)

though our author suggests that the reputed recent purchase of sixty newspapers is exaggerated.

There is also a new line in trusts in this regard—horizontal and vertical. The first applies to those which merely produce the main article; the second to those which, to use up all the scrap, take in all manner of by-products.

There is some valuable information bearing upon the disposition of property in Belgium during the War, and also the development of industry since the declaration of peace.

There is an extended account of Stinnes' argument before the Allied Council on German coal reparations, and the outcome of the stand taken by him—that the demands could not be met.

It is interesting to note that Allied politicians did not harbour the same animosity toward Germany's capitalists which their working class at that time manifested.

The position taken by Stinnes on the After-the-War problems is that of a hard headed industrialist, and we make no apologies for quoting it in full (page 123)

"We are merely losing time through the chatter of politicians who are wound up like automatons by parliament and the newspapers. What we need is a conference of business men who can talk to each other without hate. There must be no more conferences at which everybody lays down his revolver at his side. This sick world can only be saved by a consultation of a few physicians behind closed doors. It would be insane on the part of Germany to declare its willingness to pay even the interest on a loan of 50,000,000,000 marks. If the Allies are figuring on any such sums they are going to have another disappointment. France could have had material and labour for construction two years ago, and no German would have refused to deliver them. France, however, was not really interested in reparation, but was seeking to humiliate Germany. At the present moment there are only two kinds of countries in the world—those which can buy raw materials because of the state of exchange, and those which can not do this. Both are bound to perish unless some form of co-operation can be agreed upon. Money is to be found, but only by giving the world an example of perfect co-operation. Every business man knows that money is to be had, only the politicians do not seem to know it. I am trying to save my country from destruction, and at the same time save the other countries."

Full of real meat for the Marxian student, it is a valuable book for the library. It contains the same material on a scantly scale than De Gibbins' "Industrial History of England," and, dealing with facts which can be applied to a proper understanding of society, would find a proper place beside De Gibbins' on the shelf, to be read in conjunction with the latter portion of that excellent book.

We can fully recommend the purchase of this book where possible.

J. HARRINGTON.

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