

Scabbery and Unionism

WHAT mighty import lies in these words when used in conjunction! It is obvious that they are abstract nouns and express a condition or state, but it is not quite so obvious that this state is actually a state of war, or as Tennyson puts it:

"Civil war, as I think, and that of a kind
The viler, as understand, not openly bearing
the sword."

Yet the series of battles of this nature that are fought at different times and on different continents, are one and all of momentous importance to the whole human race.

They are important because they are part of a chain of conditions that accomplish the arousal of a man from lethargy that is always detrimental to an evolution which must be attained by continual battling with adverse circumstances incidental to climate, to wild beasts, or to his brother man.

Climate and beasts are no longer formidable, therefore the scheming that man finds indispensable to his business ventures remains the only dynamic stimulant to mental effort. Sheer necessity compels him to concentrate the wealth of the world more and more by means of trusts, or unions of manufacturers, and these by reason of the constant attempts to reduce their income inflict never-ending embarrassment on their wage and salaried dependents. To this course they are forced in part, if not altogether, by competition and often by the competition of men using cheap labour in foreign countries.

But these unions of manufacturers who operate the large industries through the agency of hired subordinates, together with the proletariat constitute two factors of which society is the sum: therefore the work done en masse by both is a social effort, and being of such a nature no individual from either division has a right to say what the recompense received by the other members of his class shall be. That is a corporate affair and can only be decided by the majority of the interested members of the corporation to which they belong: in the case of the workers, this corporation is known to the world as a union.

The eternal rivalry between this class of union and those of the employers is nothing less than the metamorphosis of the struggle for existence that started hundreds of thousands of years ago in the jungle; and that must last until the economic emancipation of man is complete, since it is to a large extent through the medium of these instruments that humanity struggles upwards. Each is functioning in a manner essential to the needs of future society—the former developing industry and commerce for its use—the latter developing a race that can appreciate and utilize to the best advantage its munificent inheritance.

In the meantime it would be interesting to consider in what light we ought to regard our necessarily interesting friend "the scab," referred to more politely as a strikebreaker, and admitted by his patrons to a full measure of respectability by the use of the euphonic term "replacement-man."

Perhaps he is not so much to blame after all. Let us hope that for the sake of the reputation and honour of humanity that he does not realize the import of his actions; that he thinks in the terms of the last century when his forefather using his own tools worked as an individual and had a right to dispose of his labour-power in any manner he chose. To such let us be kindly-disposed, and demonstrate to his satisfaction that he is an instance of atavism and that his ideals are gradually becoming extinct.

It may be that he helps in furthering human evolution, but his efforts can only be compared to a crawling insect that in trying to satisfy the needs of its stomach, pinches man and forces him to consider that his condition is not such as it ought to be.

But this is not all for which he is responsible,

since a final victory of scabbery over unionism would mean that there could be only one obvious culmination to the ever-dwindling standard of living: it would sink to the lowest possible ebb consistent with the merest existence.

The strike-breaker therefore not only covers his name with obloquy, but he is battling for a system that would presently land millions of the industrial proletariat in a condition of penury that obtains to a large extent in India today, where according to the Rev. D. M. Rose of Kangra, India, who made the following statement to the Vancouver members of the Women's Canadian Club on March 10th 1921, the conditions are as follows: "Eighty per cent of the people have no interests outside their farms; there is wealth" Mr. Rose continued, "but the mass of the people have to eke a mere existence from the land. The curb of wealth descends abruptly to poverty. An average family lives on \$75.00 per annum"; to which we might add that that means \$6.25 per month, and a dearth of everything that goes to make a man fitted for world citizenship and therefore, under favourable circumstances, a tool of those war-lords belonging to any one of the great powers, that have often proved a menace to the existence of civilized society.

Compare this condition with that of the youthful Maharaja of Cooh Behar whose picture, with this information underneath, appeared in the Family Herald and Weekly Star for November 28th last. This scion of a royal house is seven years old and receives an income of \$150,000 per month, a sum sufficient to support 24,000 families, or allowing an average membership of four to each family, a population of 96,000 people.

Usually the possession of such an income is defended on the ground that it is a fair recompense for brain-power, but here there can be no such excuse for an infant of seven who by the time he is twenty-one will have—whether a genius or an idiot, saved, squandered, or used up the colossal sum of \$25,200,000, while the average income of one of his subjects in that time, according to the figures quoted above, amounts to \$1050.00. It is hardly possible that the most ardent capitalist desires to see such conditions develop; nevertheless that does not help the case at all since sentiment is powerless in this instance.

Whether we like it or not, the inexorable laws of competition force drastic action amongst the combatants, action that is of supreme importance in sharpening the wits of the race.

Let us hope that the "scab" environed by all the appurtenances of strike conditions will receive a mental shock sufficient to make him realize his true position.

When that happens he will become a valuable acquisition to the great labour-union army.

Let us hope that the time is not far distant when a world awakened to a sense of its responsibilities will leave no pretext for the presence of dehumanizing "scabbery" and that the time will soon be here when the unions of the world of all descriptions, amalgamated by necessity, shall materialize the dreams of the prophets, poets, and sages of history in the "Federation of the World, The Parliament of Man."

F. W. MOORE.

ECONOMIC CAUSES OF WAR

By PETER T. LEOKIE.

NOW READY

Preface by the author.

132 PAGES.

Per Copy, 25 Cents.

Ten copies up, 20 cents each.

Post Paid.

THE WORLD ECONOMIC SITUATION OF 1923.

(Continued from page 5)

crisis in the finding of markets. Unemployment grows from day to day, and when we call to mind the unemployment in the Ruhr district, concerning which we have no data, we can estimate the number of those out of work as far exceeding a million and the number on short time at several millions.

The transition to the gold mark calculation reveals the absolute impoverishment of Germany. Those shops which sell articles of general use, clothing, footwear, etc., are bare of customers. The general impoverishment of the whole middle and working classes is such, that there are no purchasers for such goods at the present prices. The profits which the tradesmen hoped to gain by adopting the gold mark calculation are not realized owing to the lack of buyers. Since prices have risen the foreigner has disappeared as a buyer. The rich peasantry are already well supplied with industrial articles; the poor peasantry are equally unable to buy, for they are heavily burdened by the new taxes, and the frightful rate at which money loses in value renders them afraid of putting their slight surplus of food products on the market. German economists have thus become involved in a crisis of such acuteness as is probably unexampled in the history of capitalist economics. The unsolved reparation question, the tendency to disruption in the Reich itself, the hopeless situation of German finances, all these contribute to increase the hopelessness of German economics.

In spite of the fresh taxes, in spite of the abandonment of the resistance in the Ruhr area, expenditure rose more than the dollar in the 10 days between the 10th and 20th October. Again the state revenues do not cover one per cent of the expenditure; 99% is covered by the printing of banknotes. And no bourgeois government will be in the least able to alter these conditions.

Japan.

Japan is an ultra-European great power whose economic progress has received a severe set-back owing to the earthquake catastrophe. The inner economics of Japan naturally show, at the moment, a certain revival as a result of the extensive work of restoration, but there is no doubt Japan is paralysed for a time as a factor in international economics. The Japanese catastrophe has caused certain favorable economic effects in other countries, especially in the silk industry of Italy and France, in the same way as the Ruhr occupation improved the trade of other countries; this, however, is devoid of significance for the world's economics as a whole.

To sum up, we can only repeat that, with the exception of the United States, where a satisfactory amount of economic prosperity may be looked for for a considerable period, although the boom of this spring may not be repeated, the economics of the whole capitalist world, and above all of the European capitalist countries, are still in a state of chronic crisis. Indeed, we may safely assert that the situation of European economics has rather deteriorated than improved during the period just passed through.

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Obey that impulse and subscribe for the
WESTERN CLARION
Address P. O. Box 710, Vancouver, B. C.

Enclosed find \$.....
Send the Western Clarion to:

Name

Address