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W. U. COTTON, Editor

# Cotton's Weekly

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This is No. 112

COWANSVILLE, P. Q., CANADA, NOVEMBER 3, 1910

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## CRIME UNDER CAPITALISM

The newer modes of thought are penetrating all the activities of civilized man. The shifting of the economic basis of production causes the shifting of the ideological superstructures. This is taking place with regard to the criminal as well as in regard to other classes of society.

It was not so very long ago that the criminal was looked upon as a morally perverted creature. He was regarded as a wild beast. He was to be killed on the slightest provocation. He was to be cast into loathsome dungeons. He was morally perverted and was to be punished for his crimes.

That idea has largely gone. It lingers still only in the minds of Canadian judges and other like persons who cultivate such thoughts in order to earn their large salaries. That is why Canadian judges are looked down upon today with contempt by people of intelligence.

The idea in criminology is that the criminal is victimized rather than victimizing. There are two kinds of criminals, born criminals and made criminals. The born criminals are those men who have bred back to a type of virtue that has long since passed from the earth. At one time in the tribal history of man it was considered virtuous to steal from the enemy, to be brutal and powerful physically, to cultivate the brute virtues. Because the tribes who had many such strong brutal people would overcome the tribes that had fewer such men.

The born criminal is a man who has been bred to an antique type. He is no more responsible for his crimes than is a tiger for acting according to its nature. This type of criminal is rare. And when he happens to come to the front, he should be treated as an insane person, rather than as a responsible mortal.

The second kind of a criminal is the made criminal. To this class belong the vast majority of the persons now shut up in our penitentiaries. These are men and women who are ordinary people, but who, through force of circumstances have been forced to commit crime. The unemployed who steals, the girl who sells her body because she cannot get a decent living, the thug, who develops naturally in the slums our labor skinner prepare for the imperfect wage slaves, these are all criminals by circumstances and not criminals by nature.

The man who has wrapped his brains up in capitalist foolishness sees these things dimly. He realizes that our judges and criminal institutions and modes of punishment are unjust. But he cannot see any way out. He comes up against an insoluble problem. For he clings to the ideas that the rich must inherit the earth, the jobs must belong to the master class, rent interest and profit must be protected. As long as these conditions exist, vast numbers of criminals will be produced. If these criminals are allowed to go free then rent, interest and profit will be endangered. The garnered titles of the plunderers will be stolen continually. To protect rent, interest and profit, the criminals must be shut up. This is unjust because society has produced the criminals.

So the capitalist apologists basing their whole system upon injustice, cannot escape the necessity of causing injustice to that special class of society known as the criminal class.

## SKIN THE CRIMINALS

The capitalist apologists, having found the problem insoluble, have turned their attention to making an attempted solution profitable unto the master class.

Have you noticed the recent discussions with regard to prison labor? It has been much discussed recently. The plute politicians have been weeping copious tears over the sad lot of prisoners. The poor things. They are shut up. They are wearying with such leisure. THEY HAVE NOTHING TO DO. Let us therefore be merciful unto them and give them work.

There is the whole reason for the recent interest of the politicians in our prisoners. They have cast longing eyes on the idle hands of those whom the capitalist laws have emeshed. The prisoners cost the plute governments money. Whatever the prisoners can be made to do in the way of work will be just that much dead gain for the capitalists. Therefore the plute politicians, with tears of sympathy in their eyes for the prisoners, proceed to set them to

## THE SHACKLE, THE DUNGEON, THE HOSE — THE OREGON BOOT, THE LASH — BEHOLD THE INSTRUMENTS USED ON THE PRISON SLAVES OF CANADA THAT THE WAGE WORKER MAY BE MADE HUMBLE BEFORE HIS EXPLOITERS.

work without pay. This is what Hanna, Whitney and Reaume are doing in Ontario. This is what Roblin et al are preparing to do in Manitoba. Dr. Bruce Smith, Ontario Provincial Inspector of Prisons, recently with much glee forwarded to Mayor Geary of Toronto the report of the jail farm at Kansas City, Missouri. Instead of paying \$200 per year for the support of each prisoner, Kansas City makes a profit of \$100 on the labor of every prisoner. Is not that good news for the Ontario labor skinner in these days of the revolt of the wage slaves? Whitney is preparing the machinery to smash the labor unions. In this same Missouri the prisoners are let out on contract. One contractor has a contract signed for four years with the state running from February 16th, 1910, whereby he is to have the right of working the state prisoners upon paying to the state 70 cents a day for each prisoner employed. For the same work the prisoners do he is paying wage slaves outside the prison walls \$2.10 a day. Do you see how prison labor smashes free labor?

The National Free Labor Association of the United States has just issued a pamphlet with regard to prison labor across the border. In the United States prison made goods are flung on the market in competition with wage labor goods. The result is that wage labor is reduced to the starvation point if it is employed at all. Otherwise the wage workers join the army of the unemployed.

The pamphlet gives the prisons, penitentiaries and reformatories where goods are made in competition with outside workers.

The prisoners in the Alabama institutions are owned by the Tennessee Coal and Iron Company. The prisoners of five penal institutions of Connecticut work for five different contractors, and make workmen's shirts, shoes, shoe soles and chairs. Of course, Delaware is given a single line, "New Castle County Workhouse, Oppenheim & Co., pants." While Delaware has only one institution, the outside world might think that the prison labor of Delaware does not amount to much, but when it is remembered that this institution alone turns out thousands of dozens of pants every month, enough to clothe the working men of two or three states the size of Delaware, it does amount to something. Illinois has eleven such institutions and they make furniture of all kinds, brooms, brushes, etc.; in such large quantities that it causes people to wonder how manufacturers of such goods on the outside of jails can do business. Maryland has its baker's dozen of jails, in all of which a varied line of goods is manufactured by the wholesale and all the prisoners, as in other institutions are practically owned by contracting firms of high sounding titles. Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, Ohio, Tennessee, the Virginias and Carolinas and other states all have plenty of jails where the prisoners are sold to contractors. Pennsylvania is down for one, the Schuylkill county jail at Pottsville, where they manufacture hosiery.

## COST OF CRIMINALS

The cost of criminals comes high to Canada. There are jails and penitentiaries, reformatories and industrial schools. There are jury trials and special police officers. There are expensive judges to be paid. There are the North West Mounted Police. There are the city police and village constables. There is the cost of keeping and guarding the prisoners.

It is almost impossible to find the cost of the criminals of Canada. But with the development of the capitalist system more persons are forced to lead criminal lives and the cost of keeping the prisoners increases.

The total cost of the criminal by-product of capitalist exploitation is difficult to arrive at. The judging of criminals is done in many instances by judges who also decide civil cases. It is therefore impossible to find out what the criminals cost.

However, some items can be given. In British Columbia the Provincial

Police cost \$60,495 last year. The maintenance of the jails cost \$21,287. The summoning and paying of jurors and witnesses cost \$20,828. Prosecution and interpreters, \$7,822. Keep of prisoners, \$32,196. Special constables, \$17,493. Transport of constables and prisoners \$31,200. Medical attendance on prisoners, \$1,200. Miscellaneous expenses, \$6,525. Jails and lockups, \$9,392. These make a total of \$207,988.

In Saskatchewan, criminal investigations cost \$33,457. Jails \$21,450. Police and prisoners, \$103,707. Jails, \$17,498. These make a total of \$174,112.

In the province of Quebec the criminal prosecutions, police, jails, etc., cost \$525,000. In addition a new jail was built at Montreal at a cost of \$412,000.

In Ontario the police, criminal prosecutions, etc., cost about \$322,000 and the central prison and women's reformatory cost \$170,000, making about \$500,000 that the Provincial authorities spent for crime.

The penitentiaries cost the Dominion government last year \$545,000. The mounted police cost the Dominion \$650,000. The cost of criminal judges to the Dominion is at least \$200,000. This makes \$1,400,000 that the criminal by-product of capitalism costs the Dominion.

This cost worries the capitalist class. They do not like to pay the cost of their own system. They want to live on the labor of others and the brilliant idea has struck them of taking toll of the unpaid labor of prison wage slaves. There were eleven thousand prisoners convicted in Canada in 1908. This makes a noble army of men whose hands can be made profitable.

So Ontario sets her prisoners to work at the Guelph farm. She sends them up to Porcupine to make roads. She puts them to work in the central prison where there is a machine shop, a shoe shop, a wollen mill, and a carpenter shop in operation. The goods produced last year in the Central Prison AND SOLD amounted to \$55,000. YOU do not need to go to the United States to find competition of prison labor with wage labor. It is taking place right in Toronto.

The penitentiaries of Canada, produced \$40,000 worth of goods last year by prison labor. And the system is being extended. In Italy the government printing is done by convict labor. Who knows but that the Labor Gazette of Canada will yet be issued from Kingston penitentiary bearing the union label?

## MANITOBA, AND MINNESOTA

Manitoba is to have a prison farm. Between fifteen hundred and two thousand acres of land have been purchased for this purpose on the banks of the Red River.

Texas prisoners have earned \$11,000 for the state of Texas. Last year the state of Minnesota made a net profit of \$234,596.75 on the labor of her prisoners. Ontario has made a good start to work her convicts. Shall Manitoba linger behind in the rush to exploit prison labor? Not if Roblin can assist the labor thieves.

John Mackenzie, deputy chief of police of Manitoba, has been to Minnesota. He has returned with glowing reports of what Minnesota is doing to her prisoners. At Stillwater, Minn., is going up a gigantic prison. It is being built by prison labor. This is a summary of how Mackenzie looks upon the prison enterprises of that state.

The state of Minnesota, according to Mackenzie, is solving the prison problem on a broad-gauged and humanitarian basis. Labor is furnished the convicts with a minimum of competition with outside labor, inasmuch as the two industries carried on in the prison are not engaged in elsewhere in the state. These two industries are binder twine and farm implements.

Second, the prison products are distributed for the benefit of all the people, namely for the benefit of the tax payers.

Third, the new prison will have built itself; the profit of the present

industries furnishing the funds for the big new prison.

Fourth, a new prison, a new binder twine plant, and a new farm machinery plant will be built all to the glory of the state of Minnesota.

As to the treatment of the prisoner. The discipline is strict but humane. The rules compel the prisoners to attend strictly to business, to keep their cells clean and to be quiet and orderly. The prisoners are to be paid for their work, for overtime etc. The prisoners are taught that they must work out their own salvation, and they will be paroled if they are really good.

To sum up the effect on the prisoners, according to Mackenzie it is believed that the grading and parole system with its modern accessories now in practical operation is capable of and does teach by incentive, encouragement and example, the following principles:

First, that the violator of the law is an enemy to social order, and while thus making war upon society, he is destroying himself.

Second, that every human being enjoying the rights of liberty is responsible for his conduct to his Maker and to society.

Third, it teaches him to earn his living, respect the property rights of others and obey the law. Fourth, it is a helpful factor in separating the good from the bad, the responsible from the irresponsible and thus promotes justice, humanity and social order.

Lastly it teaches that the laws of God, the laws of government and the laws of society are good, and just humane, in so far as human intelligence can interpret the first and human justice the other two.

As to the first point, work for the prisoners and lack of competition with wage labor. The work for the prisoners is not provided in order that the prisoners may have work. The state authorities have found that the prisoners can be exploited for gain and the state authorities are after the profits. As to the lack of competition, the prison made binder twine of Minnesota drove the binder twine made by wage workers out of the market. The state sold binder twine three cents cheaper than did the outside employers. There is no competition because the prison made goods have killed the wage labor goods. Let prison goods drive the wage labor out of his job and then declare there is no competition and that the prison made goods is not hurting free laborers. Is not that a nice dodge to play? As to the farm implements, these things enter interstate commerce, and farm implements made in the prisons of Minnesota will kill farm implements in some other state.

As to the second benefit. The tax payers are not all the people. Taxes are paid by the exploiters of labor. The workers get only the bare cost of living. If taxes go up, then the labor skinner will have more to pay. If taxes go down, there will be more profit for the pockets of the labor thieves. Mackenzie is looking for the applause of the exploiters when he declares that prison labor will reduce taxation.

Third, this is a beautiful illustration of capitalist exploitation. The wage workers are robbed and with the products of that robbery the slave drivers set wage slaves to work to build bigger slave pens. Minnesota has simply transferred this operation to the prisons. The prisoners are exploited and with the results of that exploitation a bigger prison is made. Woe to the conquered. Ever through the ages the strong have made the weak enslave themselves. Minnesota is but following the course of the tyrants of the past ages.

Fourth, the glory of Minnesota is her shame. Had she an industrial democracy prisons would not be necessary.

As to the treatment of the prisoners. The factory regime is being introduced into the prisons. That is all. Let the prisoner be a profitable slave. That is what Minnesota is now demanding of her convicts.

As to the morals that are drawn

from the treatment of Minnesota prisoners the whole four of them are false, false as hell. The violator of the law is not an enemy to social order. The laws as they at present stand are the violators of social order. They are anarchistic, selfish, brutal. They are the laws passed for the benefit of the legalized thieves and plunderers. The laws are the violent means which force men and women into crime.

The second is false as at present understood. Neither in Manitoba nor in Minnesota is there liberty. The workers are sold into daily, weekly or monthly bondage for the bread of life. Man is a slave to the master of his job.

The third maxim is also false. What prison labor teaches is that the prison worker must help support the parasite capitalists. Prison labor does not promote justice. It promotes robbery by extending the robbery of the wage slave to the prison pens where the lash can be used.

"The law of God, the law of government, the laws of society are good." This is like all capitalist apologies. It identifies the robbery of the workers as coincident with the laws of God. The laws now passed and enforced are not good laws but bad laws.

One thing the capitalists of Canada are resolved on. They are going to try and break the backs of the wage slaves with prison labor. The prisoners are shut up. The prisoners can be chastized. They can be lashed under the orders of a lick spittle judge.

Therefore the politicians of the various provinces are pressing forward schemes for flinging the prison made goods on to the markets.

But the exploited workers are not asleep. The oppression of the master class leads to the revolt of the exploited. And Socialism is growing by leaps and bounds in Canada.

## OUR CONVICT LABOR

W. Lyon Mackenzie is Minister of Labor. That sounds nice. It makes the workers think they are protected. Meanwhile plans are laid to turn prison labor into competition with free labor.

The report of the Minister of Justice, A. B. Aylesworth, as to the penitentiaries of Canada for the year ending March 31st, 1909, has this to say with regard to the labor problem in the penitentiaries.

"The rapid increase in population intensifies the labor difficulty and makes it necessary to decide upon some solution without delay. The question of prison labor is not one of policy. LABOR IS IMPOSED AS PART OF THE SENTENCE AND IS AS OBLIGATORY AS DETENTION. The only question OF POLICY involved is that of determining the kind of labor to be adopted. The work required to maintain the institutions provides employment for about ONE-HALF the prison population. If the other half is to be employed, as the sentences require, what employment shall be adopted?"

"So far as we can see, there are but three courses open for consideration. (1) To maintain the convicts in idleness, in defiance of the sentence AND AT THE EXPENSE OF THE TAXPAYERS. (2) To establish industries and to dispose of them in the open market. (3) That the government shall utilize the labor of its wards in providing for its own requirements.

"The objections of the first and second proposals are obvious, but we see no valid or reasonable objection to the suggestion that articles required for the various departments of the government should be provided by the labor of those who are maintained at public expense."

This statement is signed by Douglas Stewart and G. W. Dawson, the Inspectors of the penitentiaries.

The penitentiaries of Canada contain those persons sentenced to two years and over. These are under the control of Aylesworth.

Have you noticed in the plute press the statements that the poor prisoners wanted work? Here are the government inspectors giving the case away. WORK IS IMPOSED AS

PUNISHMENT. Just think of Reaume and Hanna and Whitney declaring that they are doing a kindness to the prisoners of Ontario in turning them on to the roads of Porcupine as unpaid slaves! Our laws impose work as a punishment. It is ridiculous to watch the antics of our capitalist politicians as they declare that the prisoners just like to be punished with work.

The second point to be noticed is that the exploitation of the prisoners is possibly ONE HUNDRED PER CENT! Half the prisoners can supply all the prisoners. Therefore if all the prisoners work just one-half of what they produce will be profit. How the plutes of Canada want to get that profit.

Now see the proposal. LET THE CONVICTS WORK ON GOVERNMENT WORKS. Here is where little Micky King comes in. King is busy trying to persuade the workers that the government is in love with the workers. He is busy preparing tables to show that the government is paying fair wage schedules to labor. While at the same time plans are under way to have the government work done by convicts. The graft of the government printing bureau at Ottawa has smelled to heaven with rottenness. Here are the convicts with nothing to do. We may yet see the government printing done by jail birds. That idea that the Labor Gazette will be issued from Kingston is not so foolish after all.

The government forces the convicts to work. Let us see the punishments imposed. The population of Kingston last year was 733. Of these 357 convicts were punished. 209 were put on bread and water. 54 were deprived of cell light. 11 were put in the dungeon on bread and water, 11 were deprived of writing privilege. 11 were punished with a hard bed. 9 were shackled to cell gate DURING WORKING HOURS. 11 were given corporal punishment per court sentence.

St. Vincent de Paul, the Penitentiary of Quebec province, had 677 convicts. 10 had the hose turned on them. 671 were put on bread and water. 1 was deprived of visits for a year. 347 were DEPRIVED OF A BED. 87 were put into the dungeon. 104 were punished with cells. 44 were punished with cell and bread and water. 41 were shackled to cell gate DURING WORKING HOURS. 3 were made to wear the oregon boot.

The Alberta penitentiary had 140 convicts. 37 were given the dark cell on bread and water. 46 were shackled to the cell gate DURING WORKING HOURS. 2 were given the oregon boot. 4 were given corporal punishment.

Do you not see the scheme? Here are convicts. They are shut out of sight. They are punished in secret. They cannot kick. They have the hose turned on them. They are put on bread and water, deprived of a bed, shackled, beaten, AND THEY ARE CONDEMNED TO HARD WORK! Here is a supply of labor that cannot organize, that is at the absolute command of the master class, that can be driven to work, and can be beaten to their tasks.

Cannot you union men see the game of the Dominion government? Cannot you see what the provincial politicians are aiming at? Under cover of pretending to assist the prisoners, they are preparing the machinery to smash your unions in the interests of the exploiters of your labor. Get wise to the game before it is too late. You cannot trust King. He is in the game. He is one with Aylesworth, Laurier, Borden, and the rest of the henchmen of the big labor thieves of Canada.

You must rely upon yourselves for your own protection. And beware of the capitalist governments when they come with tears in their eyes over the sad lot of the prisoners whose tasks have not been made heavy enough to suit the rulers.

## THE REMEDY

As long as capitalism exists, there can be no remedy for the injustice practised upon the prisoners. They are victims of society. As long as society is based on injustice there cannot be justice. The prisoners, the prostitutes, the unemployed, the slum dwellers, all these are victimized creatures. The only possible remedy is the abolition of capitalism and the introduction of Socialism.

"But," you non-Socialists say, "that remedy is in the distant future. It will not come this year of the next. And meanwhile the prisoners suffer. Give us a remedy that will help the prisoners now."

(Concluded on last page)