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## Carry On!

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IN the days of our youth, when our knowledge of the principles of the revolutionary movement was overwhelmed and swept along by a rushing tide of enthusiasm, we were wont to remark, with due emphasis, previous to every election, that "something was going to drop." By that we meant that at last the workers were going to rally to the standard of revolutionary Socialism in vast numbers, and the solid "plunk" of their massed votes was going to bear evidence of the efforts we had been putting forth to dispel class ignorance. We were going to witness a manifestation of an immense improvement in the class-consciousness of our fellow-slaves. The years of work in distributing literature, holding meetings, arguing on the job—in short, the ceaseless activity carried on by our little bunch of kindred spirits was bound to have its effect. All that work and utilisation of spare time (we did not call it "sacrifice") was bound to show results. Buoyed up by these enthusiastic hopes we would joyously sally forth from headquarters with our literature and soapbox, and after politely allowing the Salvation Army to gather our crowd for us, would proceed to put in some more licks for the revolution. The fact that the expected solid "plunk" landed on the other side of the fence, witnessing to the desire of the vast majority of slaves for more wage-slavery, did not dishearten us for long, although some of us would get downhearted. The joy of the scrap was sufficient recompense for most of us and the sense of humor possessed by others enabled us to bear up under our disappointment. The resiliency of spirits which is the priceless possession of youth would not allow any moping, and after a brief respite we would grin and "carry on" as before, however, relieving our feelings by telling the horny-headed sons of toil exactly what we thought of their intelligence. The revolution was still "just around the corner," and with a little more work and a few more converts we would soon get there.

"Them were the days!"

Much water has passed under the bridge since then. Ebullient enthusiasm has disappeared in face of an increasing knowledge of the implacable facts and forces operating in the social organism. The multifarious channels by which capitalism is able to divert the mind of the slave from dwelling upon the why and whereof of his unhappy lot are still functioning efficiently—not, perhaps, without more care and attention than in the past, but still they are functioning. Capitalism has been "carrying on" also—concentrating and expanding, bringing more and more populations under its sway, concentrating the socially created wealth into the hands of a few whose power over the multitudes increases as their numbers decrease, swelling the mass of propertyless wage-workers and making the struggle for existence of all those subjects to its exploitation an ever-increasing problem. A world war generated by the contradictions contained within the system of production itself has strained the structure of capitalism beyond repair, so that "he who runs may read." The fissures and rents are beyond concealment, as is also the futility of the efforts of the capitalist statesmen and diplomatists at reconstruction. The war that was to be the last has but uncovered fresh causes of war, and the victors are even now laying

plans for another orgy of mutual destruction, erstwhile allies to be the combatants. Over all looms the workers' republic of Russia, a black cloud of menace to capitalism, an inspiration to its victims.

Class rule and institutions have reached their zenith and society has entered upon a period of flux, a process of ejecting the dross and retaining the good for incorporating into the new social organization to come. As in all transitional periods, the mental attitude of the mass reflects the confusion and uncertainty of world conditions. The political structure of international capitalism, with its well-defined national boundaries, and alliances with their distinctive policies, which had endured from the inception of the Anglo-French entente, provided the ordinary man with established points of reference with the aid of which he could get an idea of "where he was at" when international affairs attracted his attention, as lights along the coast enable the mariner to fix his position—without, of course, anything approaching the same degree of exactness. They appeared to be the naturally established order of things and engendered habits of thought in keeping with their appearance. The war and the treaty of Versailles, with the endless conferences succeeding it, have changed all that. The old landmarks have disappeared. National boundaries have been changed again and again, old policies have been discarded and new ones announced, to be discarded in their turn, antagonisms have flared up between the national groups of capitalist interests which had but recently sworn eternal friendship and amity, and in all countries the spectre of revolution rears its head. Everything is unstable and shifting, changing with kaleidoscopic swiftness almost from day to day, affording all the symptoms of a period of social evolution approaching its revolutionary climax. Previously accepted codes of morals and ethics influencing human intercourse are losing their validity. Fortune telling, crystal gazing, spiritualism, table-turning, all the paraphernalia of the charlatans of the occult is in the field to supply (for a price) the demand for mental "points of bearing" which material conditions fail to provide. And over all and through all, forcing its way into the secret council chambers of the rulers and influencing their policies, permeating all the complex ramifications of capitalist society, is the note of the class struggle, gaining in strength and bitterness in spite of all attempts to smother it—and that is where we, as Socialists, come in.

The tremendous events that have taken place in the last seven years have undoubtedly called for and received from the revolutionists of Canada the interpretation and explanation necessary. The materialist interpretation of history is the key that infallibly unlocks the door and provides the solution. In conjunction with the knowledge of the law of surplus value and of the principles of the class struggle it provides an unfailing compass and guide through what is to others an inexplicable and bewildering maze of confusion. Nevertheless, he would be an optimistic comrade who would maintain that results commensurate with the efforts that have been put forth are to be seen in an appreciable increase of class consciousness amongst those we have been striving to reach. Is it not in order now to pay

more attention to the dissemination of the fundamentals of the Socialist propaganda necessary to the production of intelligent revolutionists against the existing order? Preoccupation with great world events seems to have induced us, unconsciously and unintentionally, to neglect those fundamentals, but if our movement is to gain strength and momentum it is essential that such knowledge be widely diffused. Probably 50% of the workers of Canada have their sympathies enlisted with the Russian revolution, and this sentiment is being exploited to the limit by sensational speakers of different organizations, but it is apparent that there is more enthusiasm and sympathy animating them than knowledge of their class position in capitalist society. Comparatively few can give an intelligent reason for the fact that they are forced to offer their labor power on the market as a commodity, and yet an understanding of that single fact is the first letter in the alphabet of a slave's education. They are a long way from grasping the fact that government is an institution which exists for the purpose of perpetuating the exploitation of their class, and that all attempts to reform the present system in such a manner as to benefit their class are useless and a waste of time. Some Socialists have been carried away in contemplating the evidence of enthusiasm for Russia and have jumped to the conclusion that the workers of Canada have in some mysterious manner become class-conscious revolutionists and that all that remains to be done is to "organize them for the revolution," while the actual situation is that they are like a ship drifting without a rudder, fair game for every sensational windjammer equipped with a mouthful of revolutionary phrases, and destined to be piled on the rocks of disaster in a crisis, as the result of their ignorance of social forces and the manner of their operation.

Our task is still one of education, and there are multitudes of our class who have still to be introduced to the kindergarten stage. So long as it remains in that condition it is a source of weakness to us and strength to the enemy. With all the din and confusion created by the "revolutionists in a hurry" in the ranks of the working class movement the task is harder now than ever it was, but for the same reason it is all the more urgent. It is not suggested that the interpretation of current world events should be abandoned, but that it should be balanced by an equally efficient and persistent exposition of the fundamentals of Socialist teaching. In this line of education lies the obligation and opportunity of those comrades who do not feel competent to address a public meeting in an analysis of international affairs from the Marxian viewpoint, but who have the knowledge and ability to show their fellow-slaves how and where they are exploited and can give intelligent and correct summaries of the materialist interpretation of history, the law of value and the class struggle.

The season for open-air meetings has arrived and the voice of the soap boxer is heard in the land. Speakers drawn from the ranks of the workers themselves (and the S. P. of C. has no others) intimately acquainted with the manner of life and thought of their fellow slaves, and equipped with the necessary

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