

Western Clarion

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ILLUSTRATIVE.

EVERYBODY is familiar with the columns of figures commonly set forth concerning the vast expenditures on armaments made by the various nations for the purposes of offence or defence, or both. Ordinarily, in face of the comparative figures set forth in such cases, whatever lesson may be learnt as to sheer human wastefulness is prejudiced by the appearance of dread arithmetic.

Recently H.M.S. Hood, with attendant ships, cast anchor in British Columbia waters and stayed a week or more. The Hood is advertised as the biggest warship afloat, a matter in which we are not tutored. We are interested, however, in the following interesting comparison of power capacity as between that engine of destruction and the combined Stave Falls and Lake Buntzen power plants of the B.C. Electric Railways Co. Ltd. This appeared in The Buzzer of July 11. Ordinarily, the function of The Buzzer is to forward the idea that a B.C.E.R. street car is a public utility.

"One interesting fact about H.M.S. 'Hood' was that her 144,000 horse-power was more than the combined capacities of the Stave Falls and Lake Buntzen power plants of this company.

"This immense energy, of course, was mainly for driving the huge mass of metal through the water at 32 knots an hour, whereas the energy developed at our plants is used for a million lights, as well as for running motors, elevators, street cars, and the like.

"The total connected load of No. 1 elevator is 2,200 horse-power, but the maximum ever used during the last eight months was 1,100 horse-power. Imagine an industry using 144,000 horse-power!

"Another interesting feature about the 'Hood' was the safeguards against the breakdown of any part of the electrical system. Power to operate the signals, telephones, and so forth, could be sent half-a-dozen ways. If power for the signals failed, there were storage batteries. If power for the pumps failed, there were man-power pumps available. If one range-finder was shot away, there were others.

"These safeguards are reproduced on a lesser scale in a power system. It is not possible to use storage batteries to supply a city with current in case of breakdown, but by having duplicate transmission lines and substations dotted throughout the community, it is seldom that an interruption takes place longer than necessary to switch over to some other line."

Thus we have set before us a contrast, strikingly presented and illustrative of the useful and destructive plant combinations of this day and age. Even at that we sometimes get a red notice from the B.C. E.Ry. Co. threatening to cut off the "juice" if we don't pay up.

OPPOSING DOMINATION.

ON another page of this issue we reproduce from The U. F. A. (official organ of The United Farmers of Alberta) a letter from nine farmer constituency M.P.s. in the Federal House to their leader, resigning from the caucus of their party. It appears that they have been, at a later date, joined by several others of the same (Progressive) party.

While we are unable to locate any of these peo-

ple, by their utterances, as belonging precisely to our mold, there is no doubt whatever that incessant educational propaganda by our own comrades throughout the prairie country has shewn itself in the deliberations of the various farmers' organizations there and that their parliamentary representatives, in some cases, tend to throw off the appearance of the orthodox party hack.

We shall look with interest for further manifestations of spirited independence and stubborn loyalty to their mandate from those elected people. It should have a tendency to focus more earnest attention on the seriousness of the farmers' position and problems, and to emphasize the point that he is not just playing politics.

SECRETARIAL NOTES.

ON the 6th July, along with some others who took us with them to keep them cheerful, we found ourselves in the coal city of Nanaimo attending a Socialist picnic and eating more than the prescribed procession of calories properly allows a weak vessel like us to hold.

Whatever weakness the Nanaimo folks may have manifested in the way of electing a candidate was not apparent in their capacity for organizing men, women, kids and foodstuffs on the picnic grounds. Arthur Jordan appeared to be about as busy a man as we'd seen in any one day, and all others of the local group of workers and their friends alike were busy also. The women folk spread innumerable gargantuan feasts on the grass in magnificent fashion, and all hands turned to. Bill Grieve, we had heard, in recent months had "gone on a diet," which made us anxious. We are able to assure troubled friends, however, that he increasingly resembles the girth of Dickens' Aunt Peggotty. A good breath, properly inhaled, and Bill's middle vest-button is like as not to hit you in the eye.

In the correspondence columns Comrade John A. McDonald asks for an official answer to the question as to whether or not the Party attitude has changed toward the British Labor Government and the Canadian Labor Party.

The answer is that it has not changed its attitude toward reform parties.

(The British Labor Government and the Canadian Labor Party are just about as old as one another, hence we suppose John A.'s question to refer to the traditional Party attitude toward reformers in general. That is, the Party attitude could not very well change toward these, in particular, time being considered). The C.L.P. Platform or By-laws governing its proposed association of working class organizations and S.P. of C. Platform are mutually exclusive.

About eighteen months (or so) ago, particularly in Vancouver, class and local group discussion was carried on over a wide field. There appeared a tendency towards a lessening of surety among many of the comrades concerning the Party position, its success or otherwise, its attitude on politics, on trade unions and the like. At the same time all kinds of Party "heresies" were expressed. About that time, we recollect, we invited all hands in an editorial note to spread it around. "C." set to it from his particular angle, and likely as not he would have done that in any case. John A.'s "keynoter" point is not at all within the facts of the case. There is no doubt, however, that "C.'s" attitude has had its influences, especially in challenging accepted fundamentals, although sometimes the nature of an onslaught may determine the manner and range of his defence. It goes without saying that internal Party discussion is good. In the present case it appears to be an aftermath of all other world changes of the past few years and to accord with general scepticism of dogma in all quarters. Hence we have the "points of view," to which we would gladly add Comrade McDonald's. It would appear to us that even had the answer to his questions been in the affirmative a platform debate would hardly meet the case. It is not likely anyway that he could find anyone among us who would be altogether willing to accept responsibility for the position of the Labor Government. That is, there is as much criticism here, ap-

parently, of the Labor Government as elsewhere. But it is a good thing to have fair and informed criticism. We gladly look forward to an article from John A.

IMPERIALISM.

(Continued from page 2)

"Everywhere thrills the air
The maniac bells of war
There will be little of sleeping tonight;
There will be wailing and weeping tonight;
Death's red sickle is reaping tonight:
War! . . . War! . . . War!"

But if war is an inevitable complement of capitalism, and the everlasting world-wide preparation for it ought to serve as a proof that it is, and our youths must sacrifice themselves as soldiers, then let them at least know on whose altar they are being offered. Let them have some knowledge of the economic causes of war. Let them not imagine that we, because we belong to a great empire are more saintly in any way than the rest of the world. Let them not think that we are the only ones that shout vociferously: "What we have, we hold" and let us hope that when the next war materializes our youths will have learned to abhor that disgusting tradition that has disgraced the condition of military life for centuries—a condition implied in these words: "Theirs not to reason why; Theirs but to do and die."

Surely the abolition of sentimental drivel like that, is a world-wide necessity of the most urgent nature. With an enlightened army of soldiers who understood the economic causes of war, backed politically by an enlightened body of men and women there would be little danger of disaster to the empire: without this knowledge; without a consideration of the just claims of other nations; without the ideal involved in a final federation of the free peoples of the world, there cannot be even the proximate principles of a permanent peace discussed. Is it likely that monopolistic empire founded on, and maintained by force, and ready, if necessary to crush any weaker country that stands in the way of her ambition, could entertain these ideals?

We might as well ask if it is likely that the leopard will change his spots.

The imperialistic states of the world, which do not necessarily imply kingdoms, are even now struggling diplomatically for advantages.

The latest distraction of this nature being the exclusion of the Japanese from the United States of America: but whatever mythical excuse is used by the United States to prove that her action is for the benefit of the people as a whole, the real cause lies in an attempt to destroy the competition of the oriental business-man and agriculturist, by force. The case is just another example of the ever-growing pressure, due partly to the constant increase in the use and products of machinery involving a perpetual shrinkage in marketing accommodation, that different sections of the international bourgeoisie bring to bear on each other, and in the meantime it serves as an industrial straw to show which way the wind is blowing. The pressure referred to above is a constantly increasing quantity and therefore must some day become unendurable.

Pressure of various kinds, due to imperialism, put an end, by the sword, to all empires of past ages, and he who would look for a different fate for our modern institutions of the same nature, must indeed be deficient in reasoning power. There is just the one chance that they may be rescued from their suicidal policies by the increasing enlightenment of labour the world over. Was it not Wells that said there is a race on between education and anarchy? and never did he pass a truer remark.

If modern empires are not so rescued, we are bound to believe after a contemplation of the historical past, that they must once more bite the dust of humiliation, and be forced in the future as they were in the past to find relief in the less objectionable state of a virile barbarism.

That has always been the end of monopolistic imperialism; that is the inevitable curse that must dog its every step in the future.