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**Cotton's Weekly**

W. U. COTTON, S.A., B.C.L., Editor

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# Burk's Falls Editor Shoots His Arrow at Socialism But Suffering from Mental Myopia, complicated by Astigmatic Strabismus, He Misses His Aim

## A Peck from a Daw

A comrade, who has plunked thirty-ty sub into the region served by "The Arrow," of Burk's Falls, Ont., wants us to answer the following, clipped from that illustrious paper. We do not usually consider it worth while to answer the pecks jackdaws may direct our way, but to oblige an active comrade we publish the skit in question.

There is a paper published in Montreal which thinks all employers of labor are rascals and thieves and we don't know what. It never has a good word to say about what it terms the "capitalist class" or matter what they do. Now, the latter have many faults like all other ordinary mortals, but it is a fact that many of them risk their money in shaky ventures when they could have invested it in safe bonds and enjoyed life in more peaceful pursuits. That they took the former risk was certainly beneficial to the workmen, whether the wages were on "the union scale" or otherwise. But the Montreal paper aforesaid can see no benefit in industrial enterprise unless one side is getting all the money and the other side the experience. "Cotton's Weekly," by the very furthestness and unreasonableness of its tirades against what it is pleased to term the "capitalist class," does more harm than good to the cause it champions. If the condition of the workmen today calls for cure, the hands of some fanatics like this Montreal editor, let that comrade be directed at the proper parties—and not at the men who pay them wages two or three times greater than they received less than twenty years ago. Some employers may be even more tyrannical, but that man is an ass, even if he be an editor as well as a lawyer—while all employers are alike reprehensible and detestable. Wages should be paid in proportion to direct earnings of each and every big or little concern—not in this world, well, perhaps in the next.

There is really no argument put up by the Arrow editor worth mentioning, but Socialism needs to be explained and its viewpoint, in contrast to that of the bourgeoisie, needs to be shown. Hence we will use this little article as a peg to hang our discourse on. If, in our peripatetic reasoning, we trample all over the little editor, let him not take it personally. We will do it in all kindness of heart, with the sole motive of advancing humanity.

## Risking Money

The first point raised in defence of the capitalists is that many of them "risk" their money in shaky ventures when they could have invested it in safe bonds and enjoyed life in more peaceful pursuits. This, the Arrow claims, is beneficial to the working class. Had the editor reasoned further than the end of his nose, he would have seen how foolish his remarks are.

Let us leave aside the question of the money being "theirs" for the moment, and enquire about the risk being beneficial to the workers. This is all nonsense. A little reasoning will prove it.

Let us suppose that a capitalist has a choice between risking "his" money by hiring workers to develop a mine, or of placing it in city of Montreal bonds at four per cent. In the former case he hires workers to dig and sweat, and may be silver is discovered, and may be not. If silver is discovered he cleans up a big wad. If silver is not discovered, he gets nothing. (Unless he wild cats and ropes in suckers at 2 cents a share for five million shares, but this is apart from the question). If he chooses the latter case and invests in Montreal four per cent bonds, the city takes it and hires workers to dig and sweat making new streets or shovelling snow, or the city buys new fire-fighting apparatus with it, and then the money goes to workers who make fire reels and the like. In this case also, the workers get wages, just as much wages, mind you, considering the cost of living, as though the money were risked in a shaky venture. In either case the money has been paid out in wages, and the "risk" did not benefit the workers one bit. But of course—we cannot expect little country editors whose eyes are blinded by the beauty of the big parasite to reason logically.

What? The little editor of the Arrow is not satisfied yet? Do we hear him say that perhaps the money loaned Montreal is paid out in graft and the workers do not get it? Tush, tush. The grafter takes the money and spends it on an automobile and the working class build the automobile and get their wages just the same. Or perhaps the grafter blows the money in on wine, women and song, and the workers make the wine and the clothes for the women and the pianos and the sheet music, and get their wages.

On see, the little editor did not say at all. He just heard some "big man" say that the capitalists "risked" their money and the workers benefited, and he repeated it parrot like. He did not stop to think that all money goes through the hands of the working class eventually as wages, and that all the workers get is wages, while the capitalist class get the enjoyment.

## Why It is Risked

Capitalists sometimes risk their money. They do this for numerous reasons. Four per cent bonds do not appeal to all people. They want more. So they go and try and get some method of getting more revenue. Thus some persons invested in Crown Reserve at three cents a share, and it is now worth over \$3 a share. They wanted that big revenue, and so they took a risk. They might have lost what they put in, but they made big.

Did these gentlemen put their three cents in Crown Reserve so as to philanthropically pay wages to poor Cobalt miners? Not at all. They wanted to get rich quick. When they had to pay Cobalt wages they damaged the miners up and down, and gruntingly came through with the wage. But when it comes to talk about their philanthropy, they tell how they risked their money and the workers benefited.

Another reason why risks are taken is that safe channels of investment are not open all the time. There is so much capital now that it has to hunt for a field to get what the capitalists call a "fair return." So just as the worker in an overcrowded slave market has to emigrate to new lands, so capital in an overcrowded old country like France or England has to emigrate too. It goes into new countries, where the workers have gone, or maybe capital goes first and the wage slave has to follow. Then the capital seizes upon the worker, enslaves him, robs him of all but a bare living and gives the surplus to the parasite capitalist. When the worker complains the capitalist says, "I risked my money and should get big returns. I did you good by giving you work." That the worker tore up his old home, migrated to new scenes, risked his happiness, his limbs and his life in the lumber camps, on the railways, in the wild mining country, that is nothing. He should be happy to slave like blazes and get enough to eat, the lazy beggar.

But after all, the capitalist does not risk as much as the average man thinks. Some little rascal who has saved a few hundred dollars answers a get-rich-quick ad and is stung for all his little pile. He thinks he "risked" his capital and lost it. He risked nothing. The fool threw it away on a come-on game. The big capitalist does not do that. He plans and controls the governments. He goes ahead and plays a winning hand all the time. It is a fiction that such gentlemen risk their money. Of course if they get overbold and booze and lose their grip they go under. But the cool insiders play the game to win and they play with stacked cards. Cotton's exposes them, and a little country editor rushes to their defence and tells us breathlessly how they benefit the workmen by risking their capital. Credulous little chap, that editor.

## Their Money

We have analyzed the risk and the benefit. We have now to consider the ideas embodied in that expression, "their money."

To a country editor a dollar looks as big as a cartwheel. There is paper to buy and ink to get and type and the wage bill to meet, and the country editor has to persuade his townsmen to part with those bits of paper called one dollar bills in favor of the editor in order for him to meet his obligations. To such a person, "money" seems a wonderful wizard and happy the man who holds it. Before the advertising bill is collected it is the merchant's money. After the bill is paid, it is the editor's money. "Tis his, tis mine, it will soon be gone," that is all the editor knows, and armed with this knowledge, he goes forth to battle for the plute.

Such little superficial knowledge gets us nowhere. We have got to analyze the nature of money a little to discover what the capitalists mean when they speak of "their money."

You hand Cotton's Weekly to a plute and he throws it on the street in disgust. Cotton's Weekly is quite a size piece of paper. It rouses his ire. But a banker will hand that plute a very much smaller piece of paper and the plute will place it carefully in his pocket, go to a swell hotel, and stay there weeks, living, if we use the language of the Arrow editor, on that piece of paper. He does not eat it. It does not make his bed nor brush his coat. Wage slaves do all these things. But that magic bit of paper handed the plute compels all this service.

That bit of paper said, "The so and so bank will pay bearer \$1,000." That bit of paper represented gold, and gold represents congealed labor power which was spent to take it out of the earth. In other words it represents work done.

Let us speak in simple language, for we are trying to make a country editor understand this point. It is simple, but we must make it even more simple for his benefit. In the country farmers have bees. One farmer will call his neighbors in and they all work. When the bees is over work has been done for that farmer and to pay back the work to the other farmers he goes and helps them when they have bees. Work done calls for work to be done. In the same way those thousand dollars represent work done and calls for work to be done. So when the plute takes that \$1,000 bill to the hotel keeper he can get \$1,000 worth of work to be done. We Socialists say that money represents congealed labor power, but these words are too big for the editor of the Arrow, so we will just say it means work done.

So when a plute says "my money" he means "my work done." When you see in the daily paper that a big capitalist has paid \$2,000,000 of his money for a big textile mill, that means that the plute has surrendered \$2,000,000 worth of his work done in return for a big mill which represents \$2,000,000 worth of work done by other people. Just as farmers swap

work at bees, so the plute swaps work represented by money for work represented by the mill.

But there is a vast difference between the farmers' bees and the capitalist. The farmers do the work. The capitalists do no work. The farmers can talk of "their work done" because they do it. But when the plute says "my million dollars" worth of work done, he lies. For he does no work. You do not see him laying brick or polishing stoves or down in the caisson gasping in the heat of the compressed air chamber. You see him sitting in the lobby of the high-priced hotel, or rolling along in a private car or cutting coupons. The workers do the work, but when the work is finished, it is found the work done belongs to the plute, and the workers have nothing but the memory of the grub they ate and the hard days they put in.

Where does this lead to? It leads to the conclusion that when the plute talks about "my work done" he means the work done by the working class. When he speaks of "my money" he means the tokens of congealed labor power which rightfully belong to the working class. They produced all the wealth, but the robber laws put that wealth into the clutches of the parasite plutes.

The inevitable conclusion is that when the little editor of the Arrow talks so weepingly about the plutes risking "their money" he means that the plutes risk the money which belongs of right to the working class. The legalized thieves have it, but they have it unjustly.

Supposing a burglar breaks into Arrow office, rifles the till, takes therefrom \$2.50, goes back and gets his calling cards printed at the Arrow office and pays for them with the \$2.50 stolen out of the till. When the editor discovered the trick would he not hop and blankety blank the air! And would he not get raving should another burglar come along and tell him that he should be thankful for getting the job and having work given him, as he was being paid in good hard cash? That is just the trick the capitalist class is working day in and day out on the working class. And the editor of the Arrow gets down on his knees and thanks the plutes. Queer little chap, is he not?

## Experience and Money

We are accused of seeing no benefit in industrial enterprise unless one side is getting all the money and the other side all the experience.

What we have said before will apply here also with a little added explanation. Modern society is divided into two classes, a non-enjoying working class who get wages which just covers their living expenses, and an enjoying non-working class which take and enjoy all the rest of the wealth created by labor. These are the two sides today—the useful workers on the one hand, and the useless capitalists on the other. Socialism aims at educating the working class so that they may seize the reins of political power, expropriate the useless capitalist class, run industry collectively for the benefit of all, and do away with the capitalist class altogether.

The capitalists are legalized thieves, nothing more nor less. By our laws they are allowed to own what the workers need to produce things that are necessary to humanity. Through this ownership they control industry and force the working class to give up all they produce save what the workers actually need to live.

We are living in an age of lawful burglary. The capitalists are the burglars. They steal and steal and steal. They make contracts among themselves as to what burglars shall have what robber dens and how the spoils shall be divided. These contracts are enforced by the courts. Some burglars give up a good stand for a worse one in hopes that they may make it better even than their old one. (This is called the "risk of the capitalist.")

We Socialists want to abolish the whole burglary business. We want the wealth creators to abolish the whole structure and erect a just one in its place. Whereupon the Arrow editor woefully complains that Cotton's wants the workers to have all the money and the burglars have nothing but their experience in order to force them to become useful workers. Funny little chap, this editor.

## Fury and Unreason

Cotton's explains the facts as they are, in far more tempered language than the situation calls for. The language is dubbed furious and unreasoning. We are told that such tirades do more harm than good to Socialism.

The Arrow, by declaring that capitalists risk their money in shaky ventures and benefit the workers, has exhibited a deep ignorance of economics. It has shown its utter non-understanding of Socialism and its aims. Not knowing what we aim at, it tells us our language injures our cause! This is like an ignorant person telling a surgeon his instruments are a drawback to surgery, a doctor his medicine injures medical practice, a lawyer his pleadings injure law, a radical his radicalisms injure politics. We would laugh at such a fool, but a country editor can talk just as foolishly about a Socialist paper and think he can get away with it.

We once saw a series of pictures in

a funny paper. Two boys leaning over a high stone wall were shooting peas out of peashooters on the bald head of a negro who was bent over busily hoeing beneath the wall. The old man never felt the peas. Finally a big stone toppled off the wall and hit the colored gentleman on the head. He looked up and said, "You boys stop shootin' dem peas at mah head."

You use civilized language on the capitalist class, and they do not feel it. You explain to them apologetically about the prostitution and slums and prisons and stunted childhood and degenerates their system is producing, and they smile and say, "How sad. We'll get Parson Boo to say a few words." You yell, "Thief, robber, parasite, skunk," at them, and they feel it about as much as that old dorky felt the rock.

You see, they are thieves. They steal. They plunder the working class. The evils of our civilization are due to them. They are unnecessary. They differ from the common so-called thief in that their operations are perfectly lawful and their pilferings are protected by politician, judge, policeman, soldier, and the ministers of God in the various churches. Their pilferings are even considered respectable in the eyes of many of those who are pilfered.

To the capitalist and to the editor of the Arrow, Cotton's is full of fury and unreason. To the hundred thousand people who read Cotton's, (for every paper is held to be read by over three persons; this is the basis which newspaperdom figures on) Cotton's appears temperate and the only paper in Canada that tells the real truth. We do not intend to abate one jot or tittle of our "fury and unreason"; rather we will cling to them until the plundered slaves of Canada come to see with our eyes the horrible truth about the capitalist class. Then when they see, they will act, and the operations of the capitalist will be legislated out of existence.

Because the law has enthroned justice, robbery, extortion, slavery, misery, worry, all to the profit of the unnecessary capitalist class, the Arrow editor thinks the capitalist is the law and the gospel of life. Foolish little chap, that editor.

## Censuring the Workers

If the conditions of the working-men today call for censure, let the censure fall on the workers. Don't blame the capitalists. This is the next bit of advice we are given.

When a thief steals, the cry is raised of "stop thief!" The people do not stop and say to the victim, "You must be censured for carrying valuables round on you and not having a padlock on your pockets." No. They chase the thief.

When the capitalists steal surplus value from the working class, Cotton's raises the cry of "Stop thief," and the little editor gets sore.

It is true that the capitalist class come day after day, week after week and year after year and steal all the working class produce beyond a bare living. And some of the working class do not know they are being robbed. Should we therefore censure them?

Not at all. It is their misfortune, not their fault, that they are ignorant of the robbery. If they knew it they would raise a great outcry. Those who do know it do raise an awful fuss wherever they are. They are known as Socialists, and the thieves call them agitators and lawless, discontented beggars because they are not willing to work hard for the benefit of the thieves. And many preachers say God does not love these workers because they will not stand for robbery. Nevertheless, these Socialists along with Cotton's raise a huge cry throughout the land of "Stop thief," and so loud is that cry that the capitalist thieves are getting scared and they have hired Sam Hughes to teach soldiers to shoot and to sharpen up their swords and have guns ready to fight the working-class when they really make up their minds to make the capitalist thieves stop stealing.

Those workers who do not understand how they are robbed are not to be blamed. You see, the thieves who control the courts and lawmakers and the schools will not allow the workers to be taught how the capitalists are big plunderers and create the misery of the world. Instead the capitalists make the children of the working class go to work long hours till they are too tired to think, and then they provide cheap moving picture shows for them to spend time as not to think on their own condition. And the thieves go abroad nicely dressed, smoking good cigars and in expensive buzz wagons, and the workers have none of these, so they think the plutes must be wonderfully beneficial to humanity in order to have humanity give them such nice things. You see the workers work hard producing useful goods for which they get little reward. And they naturally think the plutes who get such big rewards must produce things of far bigger worth to humanity. And the preachers tell the workers that God loves the plutes because they have so much. And all the time the workers are kept slaving so hard for these useless capitalists that they have little time or energy to reason out the skin game.

And the editor of the Arrow wants us to censure the working class. Nutty little chap, that editor.

## More Wages

The capitalists are paying more wages now than formerly, and we should not censure the dear, kind creatures.

Of course the cost of living has gone up, and the workers have had to fight like blazes for their increase of pay. They have had to strike, and they have had their heads broken by policemen's clubs. Even now at Porcupine, Ont., and at Lady-smith, B.C., the workers are facing the guns in the hands of the thugs of their employers. But this is nothing.

When the garment workers of Montreal went on strike, police bulls beat them up and rushed them before Recorder Dupuis and that benchman of the thieves gave the strikers the limit of the law unjustly. But this is nothing.

The cost of living has gone up. Sausage which formerly contained meat now contains flour and crackers. Clothes that used to be made of wool are now made of shoddy. Shoes that used to be made of leather are now made of paper. All these things do not go nearly as far as they used to, and the slaves were catching cold and growing weak when they struck and suffered untold miseries before the masters came through with more pay. But this is nothing.

A funny little editor at Burk's Falls, Ont., considers the plutes worthy of much praise because they came through with more pay when they could not possibly do otherwise. Sing ye praises unto the thieves for letting the workers live on this earth so the thieves can rob them. That is what the Arrow editor really means, though he does not know it.

## An Ass of an Editor

"That man is an ass," we are told, "even though he be an editor as well as a lawyer, who says all employers are alike reprehensible and detestable." Amen, say we.

We hold the above to be true equally with the Arrow. For as one star differs from another in glory, so one capitalist differs from another in reprehensibility.

There are thieves and thieves. There is the thief who will sneak a bottle of milk from a baby if he can sell it for two cents, and there is the thief who will fling a beggar a dime from his pilferings. There is the thief who will shoot you in your tracks for the sake of the few dollars in your purse, and there is the thief who will relieve you of your roll and hand you back a little of it so you can take a car home. There is the thief who steals on a grand scale, who cracks a bank or forges a check for thousands, and there is the thief who sneaks coats out of the front hall or pyjamas out of the back clothes line. There is the thief who engages in the game from the sheer love of stealing, and there is the thief who is forced to steal a few pennies to feed his starving children.

So it is with the capitalist class. There is the capitalist who works only skilled men and pays them good wages—because he has to, and there is the capitalist who grinds the life out of the child worker. There is the pious-sounding capitalist thief who scatters charity doles, and there is the capitalist skindint who takes every ounce of energy he can out of his workers and who not only skins the worker, but puts sand in the sugar, sulphur in his cigars and preserving fluid in his canned goods.

There is the kind-hearted capitalist thief who takes his swag home to his family, and there is the immoral capitalist thief who flings his stealings away on mistresses and boozes himself to death. There is the big capitalist thief who rakes in all he can from the mere joy of getting his hands on it, and there is the little capitalist thief who gouges and sweats his help to take care of a sick wife and send her to Colorado.

Cotton's has never said that all capitalists are equally detestable and reprehensible any more than it has said that all thieves are equally vicious.

But the funny little fellow who runs the Arrow thought he would be big and smart and so said something he thought awfully vulgar, and what he said does not apply to Cotton's at all. We are a little sorry because we would-out of sheer kindness, have liked our editorial confrere to have exhibited a little sense somewhere in his article.

## Heavenly Pay

How our economic surroundings shape our idealisms! Our friend declares that wages should be in proportion to earnings, and there should be no millionaires. He runs a little printing shop, and his returns are small. Therefore his ideal notion of society is to have his wage slaves get about \$3.99 a week and raise a family on it. But for the big railway, let the workers there get \$1,500 a year each. If wages were paid in proportion to earnings that would be the result. Few persons, however, would consider that to be proper industrial conditions. The Socialist idea of industrial democracy transcends this as the light of the sun transcends the capitalist-produced street light.

Our little friend despairs of ever seeing such conditions, as he pictures exist on earth, and so he says perhaps they will exist in heaven. We hope not. We would hate to think that in heaven there will be wage

slaves and that wages will be paid according to earnings, and the little printshop would exact twenty-four hours a day, (for there is no night there,) of work and pay a wage in proportion to its earnings.

Our little friend does not even promise the workers a mansion in the sky, up on high, when they die. He only allows them an industrial slavery under what he considers ideal conditions. This is an illustration of Karl Marx' idea that our ethical, moral and religious conceptions are founded on our economic interests. The old Norseman who lived by plunder pictured his heaven as a place where he would sally out and fight his enemies every day and conquer them. The North American Indian, who lived by the chase, pictured heaven as a happy hunting ground, and medieval Europe, which considered wealth to consist of gold and precious stones, pictured heaven as filled with these things so you could pick great handfuls of precious jewels out of the walls and up there gold would be like dirt beneath your feet.

Times have changed, and our little editor pictures heaven as a place where you pay your slaves according to the cash receipts in your till, and there'll be no unions there.

All of which buncombe and balderdash is considered good reasoning by the yaps who howl for the rights of capital and spew about justice to the worker and to the employer. When such rot goes for reasoning it is no wonder that third raters like Borden and Laurier are regarded as eminent statesmen.

Having got through with our Socialist lesson, the specimen object may now get up from the operating table and betake himself home to his Arrow office.

## ANOTHER PECK

Burk's Falls is located in the district of Parry Sound. A few miles south of this place, over the border in Muskoka, is the village of Huntsville, which also boasts a paper called the Forrester. In its issue of February 27th, it publishes the extract from the Arrow which we have dealt with so fully, with the following introductory words. The last paragraph is kind of twisted and makes no sense, but we publish it as it is.

COTTON'S WEEKLY.

The Burk's Falls Arrow has something to say of a certain paper published in Cowansville, which thinks all employers of labor are rascals, and thieves, and we don't know what. The English language has not sufficient adjectives to properly besmear the individual who would dare to spend money in giving employment to men or women who are not able financially or mentally to put the wheels of industry in motion.

We commend our contemporary for having the foresight and courage to take a task and attack it. The ordinary mortal would say that this editor is only fit for an asylum. It is marvelous how such men can build a host of these men whom he calls the dupe of the employer and grow fat on the success he has in their destruction.

Below we give what the Arrow has to say in the matter, and consider that every reader of the twisted and made-up well-being of our working men at heart, who have knowledge and know that every man has not the ability to be a statesman, nor an employer of labor. Not even such an expert in falsifications and abuse as this editor, who says it is time to stop before we become like the Turk and the Allies, or like the city of Mexico.

This is interesting reading, particularly when we know the inside of the ownership. Huntsville has a population of about 2,400.

Mr. George Hutchinson is the editor of the Forrester. Mr. H. E. Rice, his son-in-law, is associate editor and manager. A son of Mr. Hutchinson owns the paper. Mr. Hutchinson's son is the owner, or chief owner, of the Muskoka Wood Company, which employs about 200 hands. Mr. Rice, the son-in-law, is mayor of Huntsville. Another son-in-law is schoolmaster. Another is a business man. So you see there is a sort of regular back woods family compact. The school, the press, and the business, besides the chief town office are controlled by one happy family. The school teaches the young idea how to shoot and the press maintains the shaping of the ideas after the school age is passed.

Into this little town bursts Cotton's Weekly with its messages of social revolt. Those two hundred wage workers will be reading it, and will get over the notion that their employer is a benevolent chap who gives them work for the joy of letting them live, and takes from them all the wealth they create beyond a bare living, for their own good, so that they may not have money for the devil to tempt them into wicked extravagance.

In Huntsville, evidently the capitalist element is in full control. To such Cotton's Weekly is anathema, accursed, vile, Turkish, Mexican, a dupe of those poor workers who have not the knowledge (being educated by the son-in-law of the editor) to rob two hundred wage slaves of their surplus products.

(Concluded on page Two)

EXPLANATORY NOTE.

For the benefit of our friend, the Arrow editor, we may explain that myopia means near-sightedness, astigmatism means indistinctly seeing, and strabismus means a cross-eyed squint.

IT'S PAID FOR.

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