

## Confessions

THE climax of any penny thriller is the villain's confession. Such a climax to the recent "Mystery of the Paper Peace" seems to have been inadvertently supplied by Lord Wester-Wemyss, G.C.B., Admiral of the British Fleet, and by William S. Sims, Rear Admiral of the U. S. Navy in a debate in the May issue of "Current History."

In their eagerness to show that the respective State each represents has been favored least by the Naval Limitation Treaty, they let slip an occasional candid remark capable of shattering the faith of the most gullible in the ideals of the "last" war, in the effectiveness and intent of the Washington Conference.

Surely Wemyss hauls away Mr. Lloyd George's election rope from the neck of the Kaiser when he writes: "To Germany, without natural frontiers and therefore always open to invasion from east and west, a strong army is a primary condition of national existence; and her so-called militarism is not due, as is so often advanced, to the Hohenzollerns, but rather are the Hohenzollerns the product of her military needs."

But Wemyss is not allowed to walk off with the laurel wreath for materialism, for Sims throws this bomb into the camp of the "blood-is-thicker-than-water" foolosophers: "How is admiral Wemyss going to explain this: that three generations ago, in the heyday of the good old 'Anglo-Saxon blood,' the American people were pretty generally strongly anti-British, while today the more the good old 'Anglo-Saxon blood' gets watered and the thinner it becomes, the more strongly does the idea of a closer co-operation with the British Commonwealth of Nations take hold of us. The answer is, of course, that race has little or nothing to do with the matter . . . 'Identity of interest,' says Thucydides, 'is the surest of bonds, whether between States or individuals.'"

This identity of interest he finds in our "Anglo-Saxon liberties and institutions and ideals. Presumably he refers to the liberty of exploitation, the game of spreading the buncombe.

If admirals persist in holding such a flagrantly materialistic attitude toward the ideals of universal slaughter and the alignments of the plunderbund, how are the doctors of delusion going to enlist the masses in support of their masters?

The two prattling admirals are just as cynical in their discussion of the effectiveness of the Treaty. Wemyss writes thus: "The submarine, naturally enough, has incurred the odium which the introduction of any new weapon has ever evoked. The vehemence with which it is now being denounced was equalled, if not surpassed, by the severity of the condemnation of firearms by the clergy and laity alike on their first advent; while, to go further back still, the cross-bow was banned as being murderous and barbaric by the Council of the Lateran in the year 1139, on which occasion it was France that bowed to the decision and England who steadily refused to abandon its use. It is not without significance that the cross-bow was eventually reintroduced into France by Richard Coeur de Lion and continued to be used by all the European armies until superseded by the firearm. Thus does history ever repeat itself, the international conferences of today taking the place of the Church councils of yore, and the attitude of countries being at times inverted." Surely the feeble clause in the Washington Treaty forbidding the use of poison gases is but a faint echo of the futile damnations of the medieval church.

The great American people in their religious observance of the Almighty Dollar have so far neglected to furnish their murder caste with sufficient of the magic shekels that Sims gets peeved and lets the cat out of the bag. He says: "Since there is no specific limitation upon anything but battleships—craft of over 10,000 tons and over eight inch

\* Think, fellow slaves of the white race, how much you and I have coming from the exploitation of Asia.—F. W. T.

guns—it follows that the nation that has the greatest number of other craft, or which plans to build them, is, or will be, superior to us, because our people will not hear of a building program. . . . This program of retrenchment, coupled with a complete apathy towards the navy . . . is the true explanation of our alacrity in accepting the new order. Our present policy makes us a bad third. Britannia not only still rules the waves but rules them more economically now." So Mars is still hungry and weak about the knees, with 93 per cent. of the budget! No wonder cheaper warfare was needed. But the new policy does not seem to be designed for peace, for Sims concludes with a favorite aphorism: "You should if possible allow no one to have a fleet but yourselves, or if this is impossible, whoever is strongest at sea, make him your friend."

If the purpose, aside from the bargains in murder of the Washington Conference, was not peace, what was it. The two admirals let us in on that. But it surely demolishes the scrap of paper that speaks about "respecting the integrity of China." Admiral Sims makes a delicate forecast in this way: "Regarding the woefully misunderstood Monroe Doctrine, just how that policy prohibits American interference if another power intervenes in China it is hard to see." Perhaps it is with an idea of the Philippines as a naval base that he proceeds to this gem of humor: "China is a famous example of the superiority of moral over material forces."

Admiral Wemyss is even more open. He contributes this evidence: "Much has been heard of the bogey of the yellow peril, but it is not likely that all that has been written and said about the union of the Anglo-Saxon races and of the solidarity of the English speaking peoples may raise the bogey of a white peril in Asia, a fear of the desire to exploit Asia for the benefit of the white races?" \* "The War has stirred up national and racial feeling to such a pitch everywhere as to make not unlikely the raising of the cry, 'Asia for the Asiatics.' And if that should happen, it would be to Japan that the nations of the East would naturally turn in their search for a leader, as did the German States to Prussia before 1870. Those smaller German States had no love for their big neighbor, nor have other Asiatic nations for Japan, but they recognise in her, as did the German States in Prussia, the only possible power that could lead them to their goal. **The Four Power Pact would be valueless in such an eventuality.**"

Eastern nations may find in Soviet Russia a more suitable leader against imperialism than in Japan, but Admiral Wemyss' statement that the value of the Four Power Pact would be annihilated by a successful resistance to Western aggression on China is proof that the purpose of that Pact is to provide for the exploitation of China by the four great powers.

Wherefore I conclude my sermon with a text from Job: "I would that mine enemy would write a book."

F. W. THOMPSON.

### PAY PER HOUR

"STATE age, experience and wages (or salary) expected." The foregoing, of course, is the Holy Trinity of a situations vacant advt., thrown on to a competitive labor market. No ripened experience of age is desired, but an experience combined with the prime and flower of early maturity, at the lowest possible cost to the buyer. Speed, that is, quantity, productiveness, is the object, for that means Profits. Hence the application of machinery of increasing speediness to industry, and of the various "Systems" to remove unnecessary motions by the worker.

Even in cases where the workers can influence the wage rate by means of some trade or industrial union, the subject of the pay per hour is none too clearly understood; for illusion clings thick and fast to the whole wages question. The worker holds out an empty hand on pay day, and then withdraws it, grasping a money envelope or a pay check,

and he thinks he has received—a gift! The feudal serf had not nor could have, any such idea. Scores of workers who know they always produce profits, are still unaware that, in relation to profits and prices, their wages may be regarded from the nominal, the real or the relative standpoint. It is they who "fall," every time, for the various shop "bonus" schemes.

To such innocents "a fair day's (or hour's) wage for a fair day' (or hours') work" covers the whole ground. They do not know that, side by side in the same shop, one worker may be getting less than, another worker more than, and a third all, the value of their labor-power; at a time when all three of them were getting exactly the same pay per hour to a fraction of a cent.

The solution of this mystery lies in Marx's statement that "an increase in the productiveness of labor causes a fall in the value of labor-power, and a rise in surplus value; a decrease in the productiveness causes a rise in the value of labor-power, and a fall in surplus value."

A worker who is fortunate enough to demand and get \$44 for a 44 hour week, will, by doing a simple division sum, tell you he gets a dollar an hour. He may or he may not. If his boss has a job on hand that usually takes ten hours, and if an hour's labor is worked up into two dollars, then that job will be worth \$20 plus the extra time values of raw materials, etc. The worker who took ten hours to do it got \$10, this sum divided by the ten hours give \$1 an hour, all right.

A new man is taken on at the shop, a regular "Babe Ruth" for speed and vitality. He gets a similar job to do, at a nominal \$1 an hour wage, but he finishes it in eight hours, and therefore got \$8 in that time. But the normal time for the job being ten hours, divide his \$8 by the time taken (10 hours) and we find this phenomenal speed artist only got eighty cents, and not a dollar an hour. A returned soldier is the next guest at our industrial paradise, but, having been a fighter for "liberty" (whose?) and got rather badly battered and bent in the process, when he got "another of the same," he took fifteen hours to complete it. In that time he would draw \$15 pay, which, being divided by the normal ten hours the job takes, works at, neither \$1 nor 80c. an hour, but \$1.50. As the job can only sell at its market price on a competitive market, this heroic quality of labor-power cuts too deeply into the capitalist's profits, and so, our Great War Veteran is invited to keep working at this rate of speed—We Guess Not!!

The speed, that is, quantity and production, demand is one of capitalism's greatest curses. It murders quality and artistic finish, because, as these necessitate extra time, therefore, extra expense, which the depleted and harassed pockets of the people cannot afford, the embellishments and ornaments of a "quality" civilization must be cast aside. The speed call is a burden to the weak, the maimed and the elderly, and is itself a powerful factor in prematurely creating in the young and strong, the very conditions it abhors. But "the more haste, the less speed" and contradictory capitalism, when it is not compelled, that is, when it doesn't "have to," will preserve the most backward and out-of-date industrial appliances if it can achieve its end—profit minus them.

And so, as Voltaire said in another connection, "Ecrasez l'Infame"—Destroy the Rotten Thing—and substitute Socialism.

"PROGRESS"

### AN ESPERANTO LESSON.

"It's takin' the brecks off a Hielanman," answered Comrade Macmanus in Moscow to some proposal or other. Whereupon next day, Pravda solemnly reported: "With regard to this question, said Comrade Macmanus, the matter was similar to removing, as it was said, the trousers from a man of the Highlands of Scotland, a part of England, this being impossible, as these garments were not worn in those regions."