

VOICES FROM THE GRAVE

GERMANY THREE DEAD SOCIALISTS SPEAK.

By "Casey."

This week I wish to insert a few thoughts of three great thinkers—Liebknecht, Engels and Bebel. Their utterances seem prophetic to-day.

Wilhelm Liebknecht.

Wilhelm Liebknecht was the father of a mighty son, Karl, who is now in a German prison for advocating international brotherhood, just as men are imprisoned in England in thousands to-day. At the International Socialist Congress, Brussels, 1891, Wilhelm Liebknecht made the following statement: "Reporting on the resolution prepared in committee in regard to the question of militarism, I beg to say that between the French delegate, M. Vaillant, and myself, complete agreement existed on this point. And if the press of our opponents stated that differences of opinion prevailed between the Germans and the French that is an error, and if it was further stated that the French are good Socialists, but have jingo feelings, and would never give up the thought of revenge, there is not one word of truth in it. The word revenge has never been mentioned in committee. On the contrary, the press which tried to produce discord by starting the question of Alsace-Lorraine has been deceived. The question of Alsace-Lorraine is indeed a burning question for the ruling classes, but it has not been mentioned in our committee at all; for the simple reason there is no Alsace-Lorraine question for us Socialists, neither for the French nor for the Germans. And how could such a question arise if our ideas are realized—if Germany is Socialistically organized?"

"The Alsace-Lorraine question is an artificial question arising out of the present corrupted society. A question was raised in committee to discuss the ways and means to be adopted by the working class in the event of war. For instance, strike of the men called to the colors, rising of the workers at the declaration of war, etc. But the delegates of those nations who are suffering most under military pressure declared at once such a proposal to be impossible to enforce.

"There is a peace league in existence which has all our sympathy, but the social positions of all these friends of peace prevent them recognizing the cause of militarism, and condemn all their well-meaning endeavors to impotence. The question of militarism is a social question, and without class struggle, without class contrast, a war-like state is simply impossible. And how could an emancipated working class have any reason to institute a national agitation for wars against other nations? To what high measure the question of militarism has become a social question is shown by the fact that the parties of the bourgeoisie who formerly on principle took a stand against militarism are now voting millions of money for it in France as well as in Germany. This is not the place to discuss the consistency of militarism or the consequences of the next war. In the next war millions of men will be under colors, Europe will be armed to the teeth, whole nations will be against one another, a war will be enacted the like of which in the world's history has never been heard of before, and in comparison with which the last Franco-German war will appear as child's play, throwing back our civilization a century.

"The proletariat who carry the banner of progress have to try and prevent this, and to counteract it before our common culture is buried in a great disaster. We must exert ourselves to the utmost in order to avert this disaster. Once the brute is awakened in

man then the voice of reason is silent, and humanity hides its face."

Engel's Prophecy.

Now let us listen to Engels: "If it came to war again the Prussian-German army will undoubtedly have important advantages against opponents on account of its model organization; but never such advantages as in the last two wars—1866-1870. For instance, the unity of the chief command will hardly be as it was, thanks to fortunate circumstances at that time, and the corresponding absolute obedience of the seconds-in-command will not obtain. And the business relationship which now prevails between the agrarian and military nobility and stock jobbers may easily become fatal to the maintenance of the army on the field. Germany will have allies, but they will leave one another in the lurch at the first opportunity.

"And, lastly, there is no other war possible for Prussia-Germany but a world's war, and that a world's war of such extension and violence as never has been witnessed before. From eight to ten millions of soldiers will be eaten bare.

"The devastation wrought during the Thirty Years War will be compressed into a three or four years' war, spreading all over the Continent famine, epidemic diseases, general demoralization of the armies and masses of the people, brought about through acute distress, irrecoverable confusion of our elaborate machinery of commerce, industry, and credit, ending in general bankruptcy, breakdown of the old States with their traditional State wisdom, so that dozens of royal crowns will be rolling on the pavement with nobody to be found to pick them up, absolutely impossible to foresee how all will end, and who will come out of the conflict as victor. But one result is certain—general exhaustion, and the creation of conditions for the eventual victory of the working class.

"This is the prospect which at last will bear its inevitable fruit if the system of competition in war preparedness is carried to breaking point. That is where you, my sovereigns and statesmen, with your wisdom have brought the old Europe to.

"And if nothing is left for you but to begin the last great war dance—to us it will be all right.

"Perhaps the war may press us into the background for the moment, and we may lose some of our already gained positions, but when you have let loose the powers which you cannot subdue again, at the end of the tragedy you are ruined, and the victory of the proletariat will be won."—Friedrich Engels, London, December 15, 1887.

August Bebel.

Enter August Bebel, one of the founders of International Socialism, the banner of which now trails in the dust because of the apostasy of a few Nationalists in each country.

Bebel is speaking on the "Present and Future," 1893. He says: "During the last twenty years Europe has become a vast military camp. The weapons have been improved, the fortifications perfected, and the armies and navies increased gigantically. Large armies armed with the most perfect weapons and sureness of aim have been created, as never have been seen before, and which would have been impossible to imagine ten years ago. The technical revolution of the last decade, which brought about the improvement in industry, transport, and agriculture, has also been seized, even to a higher degree, by the military science, bringing the art of wholesale slaughter to perfection. And yet the competition of manufacturing the most perfect instruments of destruction is still continued amongst the nations with the greatest exertions, absorbing the vital

energy of every nation. And these enormous exertions are being made in order to keep the peace, which, on the contrary, is threatened more than ever in consequence of these preparations. These war-like peace conditions are a heavy burden, and are bound to lead to such a disaster that will put everything that has happened previously into the shade. Because it must be remembered that about twenty million men will be enrolled in the armies of Europe.

"They will march against each other armed with more superior weapons than in previous wars. According to the present political situation nearly all Europe will be involved in the next war, and its effects can only now be guessed at, not clearly overlooked. War above all entails the stoppage of exports, the whole export trade is paralyzed, and hundreds of thousands of workers are thrown out. Reaction follows at once, and other industries and trades become involved. By mobilization millions are withdrawn from work.

Wholesale bankrupts, and a general fall in securities, especially stocks, are inevitable, and react once more on the power of consumption and production. Another factor is the extraordinary increase in the prices of food. At first the armies claim disproportionate requirements for their maintenance, then through the blockade of our coasts and the prohibition of exports, the importation of food is difficult or impossible. A chain of events follows which will shake society, and render its continuation questionable. The events of the theatres of war will produce a feeling highly unfavorable to the existing conditions. The wholesale slaughter being so appalling will strike the nations with terror and alarm, it will supply a multitude of dead and wounded, so that the number of dead will hardly be buried and the wounded provided for. The war will perish of its own monstrous apparatus and the perfection of murderous weapons. And if the next war is going to produce this effect then another one is not possible at all. Therefore, I say boldly, the next war is the last war.

"After that no second of the same kind will come. What it reveals to humanity; that cannot be offered a second time. With these facts the Governments and the ruling classes of Europe will have to reckon, and with that a great revolution in the political life of the nations will accomplish itself.

"The people will endeavor to form a league of nations, and will settle their disputes by arbitration.

"Standing armies will then become unnecessary, and all the intellect, material, physical efforts, and sacrifices which have been made in their interest will now be applied to the wellbeing of humanity.

"Unfortunately, there seems to be nothing else but to drink the bitter cup to the dregs, in order to open the eyes of suffering humanity. But the future belongs to Socialism.

"It will conquer the world much quicker than Christianity has done. Its aim is the abolition of Capitalism, the removal of class contrast between the rich and poor, between possessor and non-possessor, by transforming the means of production, land, mine, means of transport, machines, tools, etc., into Social property. Only in this way can the happiness of the human race be obtained."

Thus have the dead leaders spoken

Class - Conscious Comments

By Phillips Thompson, Oakville.

How do Canadian workingmen like the prospect of a big rush of Hindoos

to Canada when the war is over? We can't exclude those who have fought for the Empire—England wouldn't let us if we wanted to.

Grit and Tory political campaigners try to make votes. Socialists should try to make Socialists and let vote-catching alone.

A Labor leader on a big salary is apt before long to acquire a capitalist mind.

The Toronto World urges every true patriot to hoist the flag every day. The Jacks for sale. Truly, as Cecil Rhodes said, "the flag is a great commercial World has a large number of Union asset."

The Greater Toronto Labor Party indignantly repudiates the idea that it is a Socialist organization. The more emphatically it does so the better. Its finish is easily foreseen. It will get a few pats on the back from capitalist organs, make a feeble and futile rally at the polls at election time, and then gradually fade away.

There may be, as our opponents say, 57 varieties of Socialism, but there is only one kind that capitalism fears, hates and penalizes—the class-conscious revolutionary kind—moreover, as somebody said, "There are many ways of going forward, but only one way of tanding still."

Believers in monarchy are hard put to it for arguments these days in favor of the maintenance of that discredited anachronism. N. W. Rowell the blatherskite leader of the Ontario Grits, who has recently achieved quite a reputation for patriotism from his persistency in urging increased enlistments, while he stays comfortably at home, says that the British monarchy forms a binding tie between the different parts of the Empire. And only a few years ago royal marriages were supposed to be a guarantee of peace among nations. But some how it doesn't seem to work that way.

Toronto has for long been a byword and a laughing stock throughout the continent by reason of the narrow-mindedness, intolerance and hypocrisy of its ruling class. The action of the City Council in urging the disfranchisement of naturalized citizens is quite in keeping with its reputation.

Free speech, a free press, respect for the rights of minorities, exemption from the curse of conscription, and free trade, were some of the things that liberal-minded Englishmen used to be justifiably proud. They are all gone now except free trade and that is going. What is there left of the once-boasted "British freedom" worth fighting for?

Hundreds of volumes have been issued about the cause of the war, which can be explained in two words—"Economic Determinism."

A farmer is an underpaid and hard-driven workingman who fancies himself a capitalist because he owns the tools of his trade.

Miss Laura Hughes has come so far already that she will probably go farther. It won't take such a brainy and progressive woman long to find out the futility of a so-called "Labor" movement that ignores Socialism.

Socialists can get up in the German Reichstag threaten the overthrow of the Kaiser and vote against war appropriations, without anything happening to them. But supposing any Canadian representative advocated a British republic and peace without indemnities or annexations at Ottawa!