

millenium in lowering it until Bradford mill owners can undersell French cloths. However, to the extent that French trade prospers and stimulates development of industry (including the Ruhr industries) France, too, will become more and more dependent on the state of world trade, and her growing army of factory workers will be drawn into the pool of, potentially, surplus labor.

It is also quite wrong to suppose that unemployment is a product of over-population. Sir William Beveridge, at the British Association, dealt with this, and quoted elaborate statistics to show that

"Man for his present troubles had to accuse neither the niggardliness of Nature nor his own instinct of reproduction."—"Daily Telegraph," Sept. 18, 1923.)

Unemployment, he said, was "a function of the organization and methods of industry, not of its size."

The British Government has announced its policy of authorizing the expenditure of £50,000,000 on relief works for the coming winter. This, in face of the evident hopelessness of expecting any important trade revival in the near future, is merely an admission of the failure of the capitalist class to solve the problem. It is just a form of relief without, what is from their viewpoint, the drawback of idleness, leading to a loss of the habit of work. The capitalists as a whole, and their thinkers and apologists, are in the same fatalistic state of mind as one individual employer who was recently declared a bankrupt. He ascribed his failure to his anxiety not to dismiss some old employees, although he had no work for them. He just "hoped" that "something would turn up." It didn't for him, and it won't for the system as a whole. Nor is there any hope from Labor Governments. Labor Governments in Australia (including the one still left) were just as helpless as any other; they used precisely the same methods to reduce wages when prices fell, and treated the resistance of the workers with the usual brutality. Unemployment is as rife in Queensland as in any other capitalist state, and as little is done for them. In fact the unemployed are better off under our own government.

The Australian Capitalists, like those here and elsewhere, continually have one consideration in mind. At all costs the workers must be kept from determined discontent. First promises, flattery, or the illusive benefits of Labour Governments are tried, then the paltry bribe of relief and doles, and finally, if nothing else will serve, the open violence of the armed forces of law and order.

Our explanation of the problem is simpler than any of these. It may from one aspect be summed up in the statement that the inability of 1½ million British workers to find work although they wish to do so, is due to the frank determination of another million persons not on any account to spoil their

pleasant lives by painful toil. You work because it is your only means of getting the means of living. The things you need are the result of the application of your labor to the natural resources, but because these natural resources, along with the railways, the factories and steamships, etc., are privately owned by a small class of wealthy persons, they can and do live without having to work, and they possess the power not only to appropriate the proceeds of your labor, but also when they think fit to prevent you from working at all. In the early days of capitalism these people justified their rents and profits by the services they rendered. But by now they have, as a class, long ceased to render those services. Landowners are no longer the pioneers in agricultural science, they do not lead the way in raising the technique of the industry, or in encouraging their tenants to better methods of production. They lost 35 years ago their last semblance of being a necessary part of the machinery of government, when in 1888 the Justices of the Peace were all abolished and their powers handed over to the elected county councils. Industrial capitalists do not now bring brains, enterprise or directive ability to industry; these functions are mainly exercised by salaried officials, members of the working class. Far from promoting economic development, the growing tendency is for the controllers of the chief industries to restrict production in order to save themselves from the world shrinkage of markets. As for the so-called "risks" of capital, it is a commonplace for big business when in difficulties to get the State to help them out and take the risk from their shoulders.

The problem of permanent unemployment arises out of this one fact of private ownership. The owners return to the working class as wages an amount which will purchase only part of the total product. The balance cannot be consumed entirely by the owners and must in any event first be sold. The manufacturer of cotton cloth, for instance, might as well be propertyless as to have on his hands a great amount of unsaleable goods.

—Socialist Standard (London).
(To be continued).

ATTENTION, LOCAL CALGARY.

Local Calgary, Alberta, of the S. P. of C. has moved from 27 Central Bldg., to 134a—9th Avenue West. This is the headquarters occupied by Local Calgary during the past few years until recently.

History class is held on Thursdays at 8 p.m.

LETTER FROM MOTHER TO SON.

No. 2.

Dear Son:—

In my last letter I tried to trace shortly the evolution of political parties for your consideration.

When you presented yourself at the polls, you were required, if in New York State, to read a part of the Constitution of the United States to prove that you were not illiterate, literacy as so used, being merely an ability to read and write the English language.

A little more knowledge of constitutions in general, as well as the one in particular may not come amiss in order that you may know how they came into existence and also the purpose for which they function.

The subject is not irrelevant, especially as the American Bar Association recently made an appeal to the people of the United States to celebrate a "Constitution Week."

Constitutions are framed by groups for the purpose of serving the particular interests of those who comprise those groups. One has not only to study the constitution but also the previous history of the particular group instrumental in framing it in order to know just what or whose interests are being served by it.

National constitutions usually proclaim in a preamble that they serve all the people within their national boundaries. But as all society, no matter in what political subdivision, is divided into two opposing classes, a class which owns and a class

which does not own and as the latter is absolutely dependent on the former for the means by which it lives, the question as to who constitutes the "people" resolves itself into one of ownership.

Ownership in the means of wealth production is the fundamental basis upon which all governments rest. Sometimes it has been ownership in land and slaves, sometimes land and serfs, and sometimes, as at present, it is ownership in land and the tools of production and distribution.

This ownership, in whichever way it may be vested, brings into existence certain groups of people other than the actual producers whose business it is to help serve and conserve that ownership. Among these groups are the lawyers; who have their professional existence as a result of private property ownership and who are naturally interested in its preservation as an institution from which they derive their advantageous position. Seeing this institution attacked they fly to its defence, as in the case of the American Bar Association.

When the constitution of the United States was framed, the workers, with the exception of a sprinkling of artisans, who, by the way, were not enfranchised until 1820, were black slaves and indentured white slaves or bond servants as they were called. They were not people, but property, and as such were listed as chattels. They had no say in framing the Constitution; it was only their masters who voted and it was to the interest of those masters to so frame a constitution that would perpetuate their ownership.

However, "Man proposes but social forces dispose." In course of time ownership in the tools of production gained the ascendancy over ownership in land and slaves which precipitated a civil strife in which the ownership in tools negated the ownership in slaves. The constitution is amended again and again in order to eliminate old forms of ownership and to serve the newer ones.

Now, as I have said before, we, as workers, do not own anything but our labor-power. Constitutions belong to the owning class and serve their interests well. That is why we see the constitutions dragged out like pieces of porch furniture when convenient to its owners, and stowed away in the attic when they might be in the way. But as we do not belong to the owning class they concern us principally as a means of study which explain to us some of the things which puzzle us as a result of our previous training in bourgeois ideals. As this has become over long, will close.

Lovingly,

MOTHER.

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