

# THE INTERNATIONAL

## THE ECONOMIC SITUATION IN BOHEMIA.

(Slav Press Bureau.)

New York City—According to the London Economist, an account has reached the Paris Temps from Prague by way of Zurich which represents the suffering in the Bohemian capital as very grave indeed. The brewing industry in Bohemia and Moravia had an annual output before the war of 14,000,000 hectoliters; now it has practically ceased to exist. The textile industries are at a standstill for lack of material; clothing is unobtainable; so is leather, and boots which cost 20 kronen (\$4.08) three years ago have now advanced in price five or sixfold. In some Bohemian towns there are twice as many deaths as births; half of them are from tuberculosis—intensified, no doubt, by the lack of fuel, fats, and nourishing food. Coal is very scarce, and lighting is reduced to the barest minimum.

The Russian revolution was the outcome of a food famine, and in Bohemia the famine is even worse. The governing classes in Vienna are therefore apprehensive either of a revolution or of a national collapse. During the first half of April, twenty new annual contingents of recruits were called up—the product of the fourth revision of lists of men available for service—and a statement was published (on the authority of the Minister of Public Works) that unless their advent enabled Austria-Hungary to strike a speedy and decisive blow against her enemies, a separate peace is unavoidable.

Meanwhile, attempts are being made to propitiate the Czechs by the suggestion that the Emperor may be crowned at Prague—which would mean the revival of the ancient kingdom of Bohemia, and the establishment of that "Trialism" which was so nearly achieved in 1871. But the Czechs are unresponsive and have refused to make a declaration of loyalty to the Crown—partly because the overtures to them have been accompanied by preparation for another political trial, this time of fourteen Czech political leaders, of whom one is a woman. Czech feeling has been further exasperated by the death of two released political prisoners, which is ascribed to their sufferings in prison. Throughout the war the treatment of the Czechs has been exceptionally severe, and they are now reaching the limit of their endurance.

## ARE READY TO CLOSE MINES IN EVENT OF CONSCRIPTION.

### Nanaimo Coal Miners Will Stand for Self Government in Canada.

Nanaimo, June 19.—At a mass meeting here Tuesday at which there were fully 600 present, about a hundred formed an anti-conscription league. Speakers were very outspoken against the conscription proposals from Ottawa. The meeting was unanimous against conscription and it was the consensus of opinion that should the Conscription Bill pass, workingmen of the district would lay down their tools. And, as the daily press says, "This would mean labor troubles of a considerable magnitude, the effects of which would be widely felt."

### Socialist Delegate to Duma and President of Russian Workmen's and Soldiers' Council.

(From the New York Tribune.)

There is no more powerful organization in Russia than the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies. It is the only body that absolutely controls the confidence of the masses, and is the only stable Governmental institution produced by the revolution. The Petrograd council operates through an extensive network of local councils existing throughout the country and in the army. At the head of this gigantic system stands N. S. Tschaidze, Socialist Deputy of the Duma.

The London Daily Chronicle prints a sketch and an interview with this remarkable man, a Russian of Georgian extraction. He is a highly educated lawyer, pacifist, an internationalist, a passionate speaker and a democrat of democrats. Next to Kerensky, Tschaidze is the most popular leader in Russia. What he has to say about the aims of the new Russia will be read with especial interest, as the Allies and Russia have not yet come to an understanding on the "no annexations and no indemnities" policy. This policy was formulated by the Council of Workmen and Soldiers, of which Tschaidze is president. The Daily Chronicle writer proceeds as follows:

M. Tschaidze, in appearance, is our own John Burns in duodecimo. He challenges the whole world by the carriage of his head. He squares up to mankind, in general. He wears the same full mustache and clipped beard as the old Lion of Tower Hill. And he affects a double-breasted, blue serge coat, a turn-down collar, and a bow tie. Nature has done badly by him in the matter of inches, but his soul is as pugilistic as you could wish. He is rather Jewish in features, with an almost disconcerting directness of eye. His eyelids tend to draw back while he is devouring you with his stare. All his movements are quick and vigorous, and so also is his speech. There were times in our conversation when I thought he would never stop. While we talked together in one of the apartments of his workman's flat, in the next room his very beautiful daughter, who had opened the door to me, sang an old Russian love song, picking at the strings of a balalaika. It was an odd experience, coming out of a sleigh and a snowstorm, to hear economic theories to a subdued obligato of that eternal desire of the heart for tenderness which is like to survive all systems of government.

After courtesies, this brisk little gentleman, sitting sideways on an upright chair, with both hands clasped on the back of it, announced that while with all the will in the world he would answer any question about Russian Socialism which I cared to put to him, he would first of all be greatly obliged if I would allow him to address a few questions to me on a matter of very first rate importance. His question did not at that time seem to me of very first rate importance. I now realize how important they were—nay, how important they are still. Indeed, the future of our relations with democratic Russia may turn upon the answers which Britain makes by her policy to these questions of M. Tschaidze.

Briefly, his questions come to this: Is it not true that the war has destroyed English Liberalism? Is it not a fact that we have surrendered all those liberties for which we profess ourselves to be fighting? What has happened to our right of public meeting, our free speech, our liberty of the press, even to our right of trial by jury? In a word, has not this war forced us to abandon the democratic principle of government which has been Britain's glory for so many years and obliged us to adopt the Prussian system of a military dictatorship, which we denounce?

Very earnestly did I seek to persuade M. Tschaidze that there is all the difference in the world between democracy's deliberate choice of a certain curtailment of its liberties, in

its own general interests, and an absolutist system of government holding in its iron grip a nation which has never been free to decide under what form of government it will live.

He saw what I meant, but was not convinced.

His point was that Britain's action had acted as a check to the democratic movement all over the world; that it had tended to discredit the democratic principle, and that those men who were fighting for freedom in other nations felt themselves depressed by Britain's submission to a virtual dictatorship.

"Is it not true," he demanded, "that your soldiers decide what shall be printed and what not?"

"Only in the interests of our strategy," I replied, believing at the time that what I said was true.

"Is it not true," he demanded "that your soldiers decide what meetings should be held and what suppressed?"

I made a like answer.

"Is it not true that your soldiers seize people and lock them up in prison without trial?"

I flatly denied this, not knowing at the time, that Miss Howston, for one, had been so treated—she has now been nineteen months in prison without legal advice and without a trial.

M. Tschaidze then held forth to me on the general question. War, he declared, is the most dangerous enemy of freedom. Rights are surrendered which may never be regained. The man of thought is displaced by the man of action. Reason gives way to force. The destinies of the human race are taken out of the hands of the thinker and intrusted to the soldier. With the soldier in power no one knows what may happen—no one is permitted even to discuss what ought to happen. The soldier thinks only in slaughter and destruction. He has no political instincts, no sense of statesmanship. His one business is to kill. He kills, and keeps on killing till there is nothing more to kill. It is not safe to trust the world to such a man. The thinkers must continue to think. Discussion must be free, so that truth may emerge.

Now this point of view is important. If we want to be friends with free Russia we must endeavor to understand it. It is a dangerous policy to dismiss the Russian Socialist as a dreamer, or to lament, as is done in some quarters here, that the people of Russia have fallen victims to the sentimental idealism of Tolstoy.

We must be very careful how we speak to these Russian Socialists. Do not let us in our natural annoyance say one word which will make the Russian Socialist think that we are Prussian-minded. He is likely to be the firmest ally in the future of all those who desire the lasting peace of the world. Let us at least try to perceive that it is a virtue in him that he should desire to achieve by conference that which others believe can be achieved only by slaughter. Rightly or wrongly (who shall say?) he trusts German democracy. He believes that the Germans themselves will destroy kaiserism. He is not, believe me, false to our ideals in this war. The trouble that he causes springs only from the fact that he hungers and thirsts with all the force of his idealism to get what we want by reason and not by force. We may think him wrong. But do not let us cease to admire him.

## SASKATCHEWAN ELECTION RESULTS.

The Martin (Liberal) Government has again triumphed in Saskatchewan. Out of a house of 59 seats no less than 50 go to the Liberals. All the labor, independent and non-partisan league candidates fell by the wayside.

This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it.—Abraham Lincoln.

## ITEMS OF NEWS

### From All Parts

(Continued from Page 6.)

would have been better had the men attended the meeting in full force, because if they will not attend to their own interests they will be forced into slavery, and love's young dream will be o'er. In other words, their names will be mud. The meeting was composed mostly of English-speaking men, a number of whom are classified under the classes above the sixth, according to the proposed conscription measure. The spirit of the meeting which represents the spirit of the whole community, was strongly opposed to conscription. However, the meeting decided that in order to prevent a false impression being sent out, it would be advisable to take a holiday on Tuesday, June 19, for the purpose of taking the vote on the "down tools" proposition. A small minority was in favor of taking the vote right away, but the majority thought that in view of the fact of there being an anti-conscription meeting on that day in Nanaimo, it would give every man an opportunity to attend that meeting.

B. C. Federationist.

## PRESIDENT OF TRADES CONGRESS ISSUES A WARNING.

I consider it my duty to sound a note of warning to the organized workers not to permit themselves to be shackled with the chains of conscription. In the event of its being established, any effort on the part of the workers to ameliorate conditions can be frustrated by simply calling them to the colors and placing them under military discipline, when orders must be obeyed on pain of punishment meted out by courtmartial. The experience of the railway workers in France should be an object lesson in that regard. The appeal to sentiment and the specious arguments advanced require careful analysis and it is imperative that the future welfare and cherished interests of the members of organized labor be safeguarded by our refusing to be moved by emotion, convinced by sophistry or impressed by unsupported statements; that clear-seeing, calm reasoning and sound judgment be brought to bear in the solution of the problem with which we are confronted. It is imperative also that organized labor should be untouched by the wave of hysteria which is passing over the country if the power to reason is not to be destroyed.

J. C. Watters.

## WHEN HE COMETH.

Jesus Christ came to Nampa, Idaho, the other day on a peace mission. Hooting jingoes spat and stamped upon him, finally driving him out of town.

He didn't come in person, of course. But his picture, on a huge banner, was carried into the midst of a mass meeting of jingoes. Beneath the picture was inscribed the words, "Thou Shalt Not Kill."

The standard-bearer was a daring Baptist minister, who received no protection from the Baptist minister who happened to be addressing the jingoes when his brother entered.

The banner bearer was driven into the street, the standard taken from him and knocked into the mud, while the more extreme among the jingoes took peculiar delight in stamping the likeness of the Saviour into the dirty ooze of the highway.

The local jingo organ reports gleefully that the peace-loving clergyman was driven out of town and at the hour of going to press had not returned. This same sheet denounces the carrying of this standard as being "Socialistic" and "seditious" and denounces the clergyman for hiding behind "a supposed religious belief."

Now He will know what to expect "When He Cometh."