

Western Clarion

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EDITORIAL

THE GERMAN LESSON

Famine and human distress are usually the parents of revolutions. The German revolution of 1918 established a republic, with perhaps a little hope engendered that the Allies would more generously treat with a government clothed in democratic draperies. The terms of the peace treaty and recent events have demonstrated the relentlessness of the Allies in pursuit of their objective.

The much advertized disagreement between France and Britain over the French advance East of the Rhine will not develop into a very serious rupture; indeed, if our masters' need arises British troops will share in the occupation of that region, and the objective will be the maintenance of the capitalist order to suit their needs.

The lesson read to the proletariat by their rulers is becoming well understood. The Jacobin "will of the people" of '93 found a new expression through the Communards in '71; the Bolsheviks in 1917 have proved their sound understanding of the lesson, and now the German workmen give evidence of their understanding of the terms of dictatorship—the dictatorship of the military at the direction of their capitalist masters—or of themselves—the proletariat.

JOIN THE NAVY?

Every letter that has come to us from the United States during the past few months has had its postage-stamp cancellation effected by an inked imprint which directs us to "JOIN THE NAVY." Now, we have no particular choice in navies. If we felt like joining the navy, the U. S. fleet of war canoes would probably suit as well as any other, for it's a perfectly good navy, in spite of the lying testimony of one or the other or all of those inglorious mud-pilots who have been so impolite, each to the other before the U. S. committee of investigation now sitting.

But in addition to the admonition on those postage-stamps, now comes a leaflet issued from the **NAVY RECRUITING STATION** entitled, "A Plain Business Proposition from the Navy." It is a statement of fact concerning wages and is directed to the attention of the impoverished wage-worker, and considered from that standpoint anyhow it has reached an appropriate destination.

After outlining the monetary reward accruing to the enlisted dupe, it says to the wage-worker: "It makes no difference what you are earning,—can you save anything like the above—under conditions now prevailing?" And it plainly asks, "How much have you saved." And, of course, this is a weighty argument, for if every hefty young male who could truthfully answer "nothing" should thereupon join the navy, the entire world's battle fleets and mercantile marine could never shelter the recruits.

A note of warning to the ambitious young man is contained in this passage: "Do you know—statistics show that at 65 years of age, 85 per cent. of the **MEN** then living are dependent on charity, relatives or children. **DO YOU EXPECT THIS?**" (The black face type belongs to the leaflet). "Do you know that at 45 years, 15 per cent. of the males are dead, 15 per cent. are wholly or partly dependent, 65 per cent. are still self-supporting, but only 4 per cent. have saved anything?"

Now, in recent memorable years, we have bashfully resisted persistent and pressing invitations to tilt a lance against the Kaiser's clattering legions of

ironmongery on the field of battle—invitations made to us upon the pretext that in so doing we would be protecting small nations and thereby safely securing the inviolate integrity of democracy, not just plainly saving ourselves selfishly from a lingering dearth by starvation.

But while we shall enter no dispute against the figures presented, we have paused to wonder how it is that the workers produce the world's requirements in food, clothing and shelter, build the railways and ships required to transport them, year by year in ceaseless toil, and still have a monopoly on poverty, with an official prospect of its continuance.

The truth of the matter is that those things are private property and are for sale—not human use, are produced for the realization of profit—not to contribute to human comfort and wellbeing, and as such are held under the ownership, not of the producers themselves but of their masters, in whose interest a full manned navy is essential and is maintained.

SECRETARIAL NOTES.

Contributions in our columns on Morocco, Egypt, and European affairs generally will appear shortly from the pen of Comrade Leekie, whose second article on the "Economic Causes of War," appears in this issue. His efforts towards working-class education will therefore benefit a larger section than hitherto, for his efforts have been largely confined to Ottawa, in lectures on economics and history.

The editorial by J. H. in our last issue **The German Revolution**, contains two errors: **November, 1917**, should read **November, 1918**, and **January, 1918**, should read **January, 1919**. This unfortunate mistake is due to an oversight on our part.

We are glad to say that "The Evolution of the Idea of God," by Grant Allen, will be on hand shortly, according to advices just received from Watts & Co., London, Eng. Those who have the book on order may expect delivery very soon. The price is 55 cents, post paid.

We are glad to announce that the S. P. of C., Hall and reading room at Smithers, B.C., is now completed and occupied. Any comrades and workers generally, visiting in and around that district are cordially invited to make use of it.

Comrades in Alberta and Saskatchewan will do well to note the address of the **Alberta and Saskatchewan Provincial Executive Committee**, and its energetic secretary, Comrade John F. Maguire, Box 785, **Edmonton, Alberta**. Correspondence relative to the affairs of Locals should be addressed there.

W. Bennett again heads the "Here and Now" list.

From My Notebook.

By H. M. Bartholomew.

A friend of mine has sent me a copy of a religious paper published in New York, which bears the title "The Golden Age." And when I opened it, a few facts and figures met my eye in an article entitled "England's Child Slaves." This is what this article tells us:—

"It is useless to claim that a child laboring in a factory is anything less than a slave. . . . The great city of Manchester boasts 6,000 little workers of seven to fourteen years, including 1,500 girls. Warrington has the distinction of having 700 child slaves. No mill city exists in England that cannot point with pride to its hundreds or thousands of these invaluable infants of the industrial and social order. Girls work twenty-one hours a week for 11 cents, or half a cent an hour. . . . Little boys if eight slave ten and one-half hours a day for 20 cents."

Such are the inevitable conditions which obtain in an industrial system which is based upon the private ownership of land and capital.

In contrast with the above read what Prof W. T. Goode says about conditions in Soviet Russia. You will remember that Professor Goode was sent by the "Manchester Guardian" to investigate conditions in Russia under Bolshevism. His report is to be found in his recently published book: "Bolshevism At Work," and this is what he says of child life in Russia to-day:—

"One of the things most carefully impressed upon me just before leaving Reval was that in Moscow I would find no children under ten years of age. All younger, I was informed, were dead. The truth is, that both Moscow and all parts of Russia I visited swarm with young children from babies in arms upwards, and in no country in the world with which I am acquainted is so much care and thought lavished

on children by any government as here in Russia. In saying that, I speak with expert knowledge for my life has been spent in educational work. Up to the age of sixteen food and necessities are supplied gratis, according to the rate of the highest category. . . . Education is gratuitous, and has been placed on a footing and planned with a lavishness that bids fair to cope with the dense ignorance of millions of illiterates."—(The italics are mine).

To make the contrast between child life under Capitalism and child life under Bolshevism more striking the reader should secure Professor Goode's book and read his vivid pen pictures of the lavish care expended by the People's Government upon the "citizens of to-morrow." Here is a quotation from "Bolshevism at Work," which tells us a little of the great work being done by the Moscow Soviet:—

"There is the provision of seven theatres in gardens and elsewhere, where on Sunday afternoon, special performances are given free for children only. I went to one in the Zoological Gardens, where I saw some 2,000 children of all ages up to fourteen intensely interested in "Uncle Tom's Cabin." I went among them specially to note their appearance and condition, and came to the conclusion that they would compare favourably with a similar audience of London children."

I see by the newspapers that the new British Ambassador to the United States is Sir Auckland Geddes. The representative of the Associated Press reports Sir Auckland as saying recently that:

"The chief possibility of friction or ill-feeling between the peoples of the two countries in the near future lies in the inevitable rivalry between the two because of their paramount position at the present time as the two greatest commercial powers in the world."

The truth will out at times! The Socialists have been telling the people for years that war and the whole militarist machine are the inevitable products of social production for private gain, but it is somewhat a departure for an ambassador of "a great power" to tell the people that international "friction" arises from trade "rivalry." I wonder if anyone has given Sir Auckland a copy of "Militarism"?

Some of our heaven-born statesmen seem to be wondering why there is so much discontent in the world at the present time. If they would read the report of the Women's Municipal League of New York concerning an investigation into conditions of home life in the great metropolis perhaps they would cease to wonder. This is what this report says:

"In one block there were 1,050 families, 165 white and 385 colored. Rents were from \$18 to \$33 in the Phipps houses (better houses built by a wealthy philanthropist), and from \$8 to \$14 in the old houses. . . . The character of the other houses varied with their owners, but in general they were old, dark, dirty, and not fit for human habitation. A high grade of cleanliness was not possible in the best of them, and in the worst there was practically no sanitation. The cellars were damp and full of rats, the halls were not even lighted by gas jets, the four flats on each floor were served by two toilets in the hall, the plumbing was old and often out of repair, so that the air was foul. . . . Physicians attending cases of illness in the block traced them in many cases to this filth. . . . These were the homes of the general run of wage-earners in New York."—(Italics mine).

Such are the conditions which fall to the lot of the real creator of wealth—the worker. If the reader wishes to contrast this condition of affairs with those which obtain in the charmed circle of the "suckers of society," I must refer him to the society columns of the press.

In a recent copy of the "Labor Leader" I read:—"Lancashire's luck still holds good." The latest story is of a man who secured £32,000 for shares bought for £4. Recent figures confirm the possibility of this. Springhead, £19 for 30s. shares; Grove Mill £29 given for £5 shares; Brooks and Doney, £45 for £10 shares. The Iris Mill, Oldham, has just paid 200 per cent."

That is enough to make the much lamented Shylock turn green in his grave with envy! It reminds one of that statement made by an Eastern manufacturer before the Pringle Commission some time ago: "We are not running our mill for the glory of God or anyone else." Socialists have told the workers that for a good many years, but when the same is told them by a boss who reaps a harvest of something like one hundred per cent. there is a chance that the truth will sink in to their dazed brain.

These capitalists who are reaping this rich and plentiful harvest seem to be taking a leaf from the book of wisdom of Omar. It was the Persian who sang:—

"How sweet is mortal Sovaranty!" think some:
Others—"How blest the Paradise to come!"
Ah! Take the Cash and let the Credit go,
Nor heed the music of a distant drum."