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Housing.

England, erroneously looked upon as conservative in her methods, is actually the most radical of countries when necessity presses.

The housing situation and the way in which it is being dealt with over there is a case in point.

Already there has come into existence in England a National Building Guild intent on what may be called an interesting and practical industrial experiment. The guild cuts out the middleman and it guarantees continuous employment to the operative, two conditions which, hitherto unsatisfactory, have militated against the larger construction of houses. Hence, a tripartite arrangement by which the Building Guild supplies the labor, the Co-operative Wholesale Society supplies the material and the Co-operative Insurance Society the necessary guarantee. The above sounds fairly radical to us. In England even the most cautious business men seem to be satisfied that it is a workable scheme.

As an addenda to the work of the Building Guild the Executive Council of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners have issued a circular letter to their members advocating the withdrawal of their labor from all "luxury" building until the housing shortage has been met.

Nearly two years have passed since the war ended, and yet it is argued, England has not really begun to build houses. Neither governmental subsidy—for which three million pounds and more have been voted—nor contracts with private builders have availed to set the necessary work going. Hence the formation of the guild, also the "direct action" of the Society of Carpenters and Joiners. Both these steps are looked upon as grave, but necessary.

Finally, under provisions of a bill recently introduced in the House of Commons, a local authority is given power to commandeer houses suitable for the working class—if withheld from occupation for a period of six consecutive months. A second clause of the same bill enables the Ministry to take action to check "luxury building" in certain cases not covered by the present law.

If London, as Alderman J. C. Wilson believes, is faced with a housing shortage in its history; if new factories preparing to locate here will, as contended, mean an accession of ten thousand to the population; if there is any such miserable and undignified situation ahead of us as that which would result from tent-villages and shacks on the outskirts of our at present orderly and dignified city, something must be done in London, Canada, as well as in London, England, more conclusive than at present is being done toward the solution of the housing problem.

The report of the London Housing Commission with its 107 houses completed or under way in eight months, under the contract loan system guaranteed by the city, is excellent; the best, the members of the commission believe, for the money expended, of all reports in the province. Alderman Wilson argues that a city-backed housing company, such as he suggests, should not interfere with the work of the London Housing Commission, but would merely be an auxiliary organization.

Speed up!

A National Memorial Day.

It has remained for a soldier to propose that all Canada observe annually a memorial day in honor of her dead in the great war. Major-Gen. Sir Edward Morrison put the suggestion in concrete form in an address delivered last Sunday at Hamilton. The occasion was a public service—the second in that city—in recognition of those who fell in Canada's battle line overseas and for the decoration of the graves of those men who died after their return home. There have been a number of decoration day services carried out in Western Ontario this summer on varying dates. These events appropriately express a general desire in the hearts of the people for whom these men laid down their lives to recognize that sacrifice and to proclaim that, truly, "their name liveth." On the part of kinsfolk and former comrades it is a personal tribute. This feeling of pride, gratitude and of mourning as well is not something that will soon pass away, notwithstanding the frailty of human nature. Witness the perpetuation of Decoration Day in the United States, where the survivors of the civil war, and the kin of those who died, still keep fragrant by this gracious act the memories of men who fell more than a half century ago.

By all means let us have a uniform date, when Canadians as a whole may, once each year, pay fitting tribute to their soldier dead, and think upon the historic corps which fought so great battles and never lost a gun; which never gave up a foot of soil that it did not afterward retake. And that fixed date might well be August 8, or the Sunday nearest. The battle of Amiens found three out of four Canadian divisions in the line at once. Before its close the battalions had driven back the enemy in an advance of nearly eight miles, the greatest depth penetrated by any allied troops on any part of the front at any period of the war, and left the battered City of Amiens well back in allied territory. It was the beginning of the end for the Hun, and thus, although losses were light, as little casualties were then counted, it was the day for which men died, in bloodier battles, from Tynes on.

"That Other Genius."

In an article more or less eulogistic of "that other genius," Trotsky, Dr. George Brandes, writing in The Politician, Copenhagen, describes how, when the Russian armies were gone to pieces, aimed unto death, and wishing nothing more than peace, Lenin's military congress, the mailed fist side of the Russian partnership, of which Lenin's bloody hand is the intimate associate, "created" anew from nothing, army

after army, the one more victorious than the other. The two armies of Denikine and Yudenitch, next the forces of Kolchak, and now Pilsudski's Polish army, says Dr. Brandes, have been cut to pieces. "Russia is being guided by a civilian, a genius, who pursues his aims and chooses his means—Lenine, of whom the newspapers say, as if that was the most important thing, that his name is Ulanof; of Trotsky while the sharpest sting of the world press against the head of the Russian armies, it has been noted, merely, that his right name is said to be Braunstein."

Dr. Brandes' words, of course, were written before the Bolshevik reverses on the Polish front. Their worshipping attitude is the attitude some men naturally assume toward material success, no matter how hideous a character. It is nothing to him, apparently, that the Russian Revolution with which the whole civilized world sympathized as the forerunner of a democratic regime in that autocracy-ridden empire, has been turned into a shambles by a set of tyrants compared with whom such bloody wretches as "Ivan the Terrible" seem clean. It is nothing to him, it would seem, that to quote his own words, "armies tired to death and wishing nothing more than peace"—to whom the revolution promised a return to their homes and their people—have been created anew, not for defensive necessities, since at that time Russia had no outside enemy but Germany and Germany was defeated, but conscripted for the sole purpose of imposing upon the Russian people a communistic system of such slavery and bondage that the most radical of our thinkers admit it to be the point where radicalism and reaction meet—a militaristic despotism whose object is to overturn the world.

That which is founded