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WE FIGHT THE BATTLE OF THE PLAIN PEOPLE

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## PATRIOTISM

What is patriotism? Patriotism is called love of country. Patriotism is also called the last infirmity of noble minds. Patriotism is something much discussed, little understood, and less seen.

Patriotism is called love of country. Patriotism is something more, it is an animal instinct. Patriotism is kin to homesickness. The homesick youth longs for scenes of his nativity. He is not happy away from them. The patriot wants his homeland to conquer in a war. He longs for the triumph and glory of his people. Patriotism is a root instinct in the hearts of men leading back to the primitive clan spirit of our aboriginal forefathers.

There may be beer, and landlordism and immortality in the home land. The patriot may be a drunken, worthless wretch, perhaps wealthy. He may have done many things that have injured the people of his native lands, yet should a war break out, such a wretch might be the first to lay down his life in the defense of his native land.

Our soldiers are called patriots and there is good deal of mollycoddle sentiment exhibited on their behalf. They are, however, the lowest type of patriot our country can boast. In France and Germany the armies are the stamping ground of immoral practices and degenerate traits of character.

The true patriot is one who wants to improve the conditions in his home land and, paradoxical as it may seem, he must give up the stereotyped form of patriotism to become truly patriotic.

## KAISER BILL

Kaiser Bill's babbling speeches used to flow from him after the fashion of a bubbling fountain. Now he is as mum as an oyster. Kaiser Bill used to show himself in various fine military feathers on every possible occasion. Now he secretes himself after the fashion of an eremite. The people of Germany have manifested their desires. They do not want to be ruled after an autocratic fashion. They want to rule themselves. They have informed Kaiser Bill in no uncertain nor polite terms, that he must take a back seat and he has heeded the warning.

Democracy is at last coming to its own in Germany, and the patient Germans may yet lead Europe in the paths of peace. Germany, not as big as the Province of Quebec, has a population of sixty million people. Germany is the birth place of Karl Marx and his doctrines are profoundly studied by the silent workers. The downfall of Kaiser Bill may mean the downfall of landlordism and the militarism which have bowed the backs of the plain people to hard and long toil. Germany may yet be the first place where shall be tried the experiment of a peaceful, but revolutionary industrial democracy.

## FREEDOM OF CONTRACT

"Ye that are strong should bear the infirmities of the weak." This is one idea. Over against this idea is the idea of the freedom of contract. Consent makes a contract. Once the contract is made all the machinery of government is put into operation to make that contract binding and to bring about its fulfillment in case either party finds the contract too onerous.

No two persons are born equal. There are superior persons and inferior persons. There are simple persons and cunning persons. If the superior cunning person can inveigle the more simple minded individual to once consent to an unequal contract the law does the rest.

The freedom of contract in operation makes the weak victims of the strong. The infirmities of the weak are taken advantage of by the stronger minded or by those who have some position of advantage. Sweat shops, underpaid shop girls, child labor, poorly paid laborers, contracting away their labor for a bare existence, all these are examples where the idea of freedom of contract is supposed to exist, but where the strong or the man with money is taking advantage of the infirmities and needs of others. Our whole civilization is based on the law of the beak and claw. They who can, get, no matter how. They who are weak go under.

## ROMAN LAW

Roman Law, in the Province of Quebec, is a name to conjure with. It is the basis of our civil jurisprudence. It is the fund from which we draw our economic rules for the guidance of men. Judges give decision under it. Courts enforce its maxims; advocates must know its principles. It is the fetish of the legal fraternity of the twentieth century Province of Quebec.

Rome developed a cruel civilization. Her laws reflect the cruelty. Under Roman rule the rich controlled society. The poor were crowded together into the slums of Rome. Luxury and surfeit were the lot of the few; poverty and toil were the lot of the many. There was no possible relief under the law of the land.

During the degeneracy of the Roman empire, Justinian codified the laws. It was from this codification that Europe and Quebec derive their statutes. Today we are governed by the laws of pagan barbarous Rome in the time of her degeneracy.

No wonder we have the overfed rich and the underfed poor. No wonder people starve in the midst of plenty. No wonder the barbarisms of cynical savage Rome show from out our civilization. A civilization cannot rise higher than its laws. Ministers may preach themselves black in the face. As long as Rome laws rule, our civilization will be unjust, selfish, savage.

## SOCIALISM AND INTemperANCE

In our last issue we published a letter from W. B. Hull, showing that the Socialists take no stand on the temperance question. We insert the following written by Olaf Norman and clipped from the columns of the Chicago Daily Socialist. It shows that International Socialism is more or less against the drink traffic.

"To concede that alcohol is an enemy of the working class, however, is far from admitting that all the ills to which workingmen are heir are due primarily to improvidence and the drink habit. Scientifically speaking, quite the reverse is true; and no less an authority on the drink question than the late Frances E. Willard during the last years of her life publicly admitted that from her observation and experience in temperance work it was poverty that caused drink and not the reverse."

It is not my intention to write or preach a sermon on temperance. A few thoughts on the subject of alcoholism as an international question, however, may not be amiss. American Socialists should not lose sight of the fact that the question of alcoholism and its restriction in most, if not all, European Socialist movements ranks as one of the big questions of political party policy.

In the Socialist parties of some countries, notably Belgium, Finland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, and to some extent in England, Socialism and the temperance and total abstinence movement practically go hand in hand.

Contrary to the predictions of alarmists, the results of this arrangement have been most gratifying to the Socialist movement.

In those countries the social democratic leaders early recognized the hopelessness of leading workmen addicted to excessive use of alcohol, as frequently the masses of them were, to think along economic and political lines in their own interest. The alcoholic drink habit was the one great stumbling block everywhere encountered by the Socialist pioneers. Workmen preferred to spend their idle hours in public houses and cheap drinking places to attending Socialist agitation meetings. And so, from the beginning, European Socialists, especially in the Scandinavian countries, were obliged to take a positive stand on the question of alcoholism.

While independent temperance movements are entitled to much of the credit for the work of reducing intemperance among Finnish and Norwegian workmen, it may safely be stated that the showing now made never could have been accomplished without the powerful temperance work carried on by the Socialists.

## JUDGES

Whenever we see a judge delivering a judgement according to the maxims of Roman law we pity him. The Canadian Judiciary is as fine a body of men as a country could wish under present limitations. A judge of the law is a high personage. He is clothed with all the authority of the enacted will of the people. He is looked up to and revered as the central figure and embodiment of our laws to whose word the minions of justice are obedient.

Yet his authority is limited. He must give his decisions according to the law of the land, and that law is the barbarous Roman law.

Therefore when we see a Judge upon the bench giving judgements we pity him. He is not free to decide according to the rules of justice. The exorable law must be delivered. That law may take the humble dwelling place of the poor widow away from her and give it to a rich corporation. That law may evict a penniless family in the dead of the winter from their home and turn the cold and shivering individuals on the street. The law may add great possessions to those who have and take away almost the last vestige of property from those who are on the verge of want.

Judges, while they are clothed with majesty and authority and power, are, nevertheless, bound hand and foot to the triumphant chariot wheels of a cold, hard, grasping, inhuman, legal system. Let them have their salaries and insignia of authority, if they so desire. They are forced to do the bidding of the legislators of Pagan Rome, who were brought up unknowing of the laws of love and who are now some two thousand years dead.

## CANADIAN PARTIES

There are two main parties in the political arena of Canada. These two parties are the Liberal and Conservative. The Liberal party, according to its members, exists for the purpose of carrying on the government of Canada in a pure, lofty and patriotic manner. Its leaders are blameless statesmen. The Liberal party, according to its opponents, exists for the purpose of bribing and corrupting the electorate in the interests of the grafters. Its leaders are selfish politicians who are plunging Canada into a slough of debt for their own private ends.

The Conservative party, according to its members, is the only patriotic party that ever dawned on the history of Canada. It is the only possible patriotic party and its leaders are blameless statesmen. The Conservative party, according to its opponents, is a combination of incompetency and roguery. Its honest leaders are incompetent and its competent leaders are dishonest. It exists for the sole purpose of harassing and annoying the Liberal government in the fulfillment of its patriotic governmental functions.

As a matter of fact, both parties are composed of honest men, intelligent men, fools, rogues, patriots, self seekers, grafters, and political thugs. Both parties want to hold office ostensibly for the good of Canada, but in reality principally for the political and financial advancement of their respective adherents. The common people listen to a lot of oratorical rot on both side, applaud, and get fooled.

## CREDITOR NATIONS

There are certain creditor nations whose inhabitants live on their loans to foreign powers or to the inhabitants of other nations. Of these creditor nations Great Britain and France are the chief. Great Britain's imports constantly exceed her exports. That means that other nations send Great Britain the means of subsistence partially for work done in return and partially to pay interest on loans borrowed.

What will happen when the loans are repaid? The United States is ceasing to borrow money and is beginning to loan abroad. Japan is tending to her own wants, and the borrowing nations are becoming fewer and fewer in proportion to the available capital.

A great deal of the unemployed problem is due to the fact that factories are

capable of turning out more goods than the workers can buy on their present wages. The surplus will be applied to extinguish indebtedness and the creditor nations will find their loans repaid and there will be no opportunity to lend their money again profitably.

France to-day is piling up great hoards of gold. If the production of gold keeps up and the modern nations keep themselves busy producing goods and products with which to pay their debts, France will find her gold useless to her. She, like England, will not be able to live on her interest but will have to produce everything she wants herself. The only thing that can keep up the demand for gold will be a great war and the capitalists of Europe are not above setting nations to the work of butchering their mutual inhabitants, in order that capitalists' gold may earn dividends.

## INTERPRETING HOLY WRIT

While occasionally giving editorials on matters of a religious nature we make no pretence that we are able to interpret Holy Writ as it should be interpreted. There are so many different doctrines and faiths drawn from the same Book that the ordinary man is bewildered in his search for the truth.

There are the three Catholic and Apostolic faiths, Greek, Roman and Anglican. These three churches, while each proclaims its own particular superiority in matters of faith, sanctity and doctrine, allow a tacit recognition of the faith of the others as partially correct.

But beyond these three Catholic faiths are the Protestant and Schismatic churches. Among these may be enumerated the Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregational and Baptist faiths. These all claim to found their doctrines on the Bible.

Beyond these more or less recognized Schisms may be found the ancient beliefs, popularly called, Jacobite, Manichean, Nestorian, Paulician and many others. All these also claimed to found their doctrines on Holy Writ.

With so many faiths, Catholic, Protestant and Heretical, all claiming the same authority, all relying upon faith as the mainspring of their actions and all claiming to represent correctly the contents of the central reservoir of truth, debating with each other with regard to Biblical interpretations, it is not surprising that a simple editor should not consider himself capable of drawing the correct and spiritual significance from the words of Holy Writ.

## HARD TIMES

Hard times are affecting Canada. There has never been a time when Canada was so well known and been so prosperous and yet in the midst of that prosperity hard times strikes the country and prosperity withers.

Some consider that the hard times in Canada are due to over speculation. A country cannot eat its cake and have it too. Western land deals, asbestos mines, silver mines, railroads and many other things have taken up the available capital of the country and the money that usually has gone into current expenses has gone into investments.

However this may be true of Canada, it cannot be true of the whole world and the whole world is feeling the same pinch of hard times. Australia, South Africa, India, Japan, England, the United States, and many other countries have been hard hit. Not only do we have international wars, and international Socialism and international trusts; we have also international hard times.

The lauded credit system upon which most modern businesses are run is greatly to blame. Credit given to a person is a discount of the future. When too many persons have discounted too much of their future and are called upon to pay, they find they cannot fulfil their obligations. Fear possesses the heart of the people and the whole of commerce must halt until everybody has paid his debts. When business is put upon a rational basis, hard times and panics will become unknown, and we citizens of the opening years of the twentieth century will be regarded historically as a most foolish lot of people.

## MARTIN LUTHER

Martin Luther is considered as the originator of the Reformation. He denounced the Papal authorities and looked to the Bible as the source of inspiration and authority. Ever since that date Protestants of a certain type have been denouncing the Papal authorities, and have been looking at the Bible as the source of all inspiration and authority.

Martin Luther has done great work for the intellectual development of Europe, but the good he did has often been misunderstood by those who consider that they walk the most closely in his footsteps. His great work was the setting up of another standard of authority and of giving an opportunity for the intellect of Europe to sharpen itself in mutual controversy.

All ideas and mental conceptions are due to two mental processes, comparison and assimilation. To get a true idea of anything it must be compared with something else. When the Pope dominated Europe and heresy was not allowed, Europe went through what was called the dark ages. Men's minds remained stagnant because they all believed alike and their wits were not sharpened by mutual controversy.

When Protestantism arose, there arose also controversy. Men's minds were sharpened by disputations and pious differences and we had the dawn of modern times. As for true religion it can be equally found among those who adhere to the Protestant and to the Catholic faiths.

## ANCIENT HISTORY

When a youngster goes to school or a youth to college his instructors set him to work swatting away at ancient history. He is supposed to enjoy that sort of thing and he is supposed to gain great profit from reading what one old antique wrote about another old antique.

Most of the ancient historians are liars, and they are not historians in the modern sense of the word. The modern world is democratic and history today, to be considered history, must be a faithful report of the acts of the people. In olden times, history was written about kings and princes and their actions, and the historians would praise their kings most fulsomely and would not mention their failings. Were history correctly reported we would know more about the conditions, hopes and aspirations of ancient peoples and our school children and college youths would now have fewer grandiloquent misstatements about third-rate ancient kings and rulers, to memorize.

We get the same kind of history today. The Liberal papers tell that kind of history about Laurier and the Conservative papers tell that kind of history about Borden. Then the Liberal papers tell what awful liars the Conservative papers are, and the Conservative papers tell what awful liars the Liberal papers are. In ancient days, however, there were no opposition poets and historians. They were killed off, and we are swallowing as history the stuff put out by the supporters of the ancient political parties in power.

Canadians are thankful that conditions in Canada are not so bad as they are in the States. The only reason is that we are a younger country. Give Canada time and, unless we are on our guard, identical conditions will develop here.

Man has risen only by searching out nature's laws and obeying them. When men are crowded together in city, tenements and in dusty factories, consumption develops. The rent-hunting landlord has murdered more people by a slow and painful death than many wars by bullets.

Victor Grayson, the English Socialist, will lecture in Montreal on April 13th. Grayson is twenty-six years of age and has been thrown out of the British house of parliament for raising his voice in favor of the hunger marchers. Grayson is a coming man. At present he is being starved as an infant prodigy.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

Dividends represent something a man gets for nothing.

Private wealth represents the squeeze that certain individuals have upon the labor of the world.

Man's economic condition determines to a great extent his morality. Environment moulds character.

Be good and you'll be prosperous was an old idea. Be prosperous and you will be reckoned good is the new.

President Castro has knifed Belgium and now a German doctor has knifed Castro. Turn about is fair play.

The man who works is the man who bears the burdens of the world. To him should be given the full reward of his labor.

The thought of most men is "How much can I get for nothing?" The tramp is the most successful in this line of endeavor.

The moment a man gets rich he gets selfish. There is so much misery in the world that can be relieved that a man, to remain rich, must be selfish.

Where there are palaces there are hovels. Our Canadian civilization, in building palaces for its rich, is rearing tenements and shacks for its poor.

It is impossible for any man to live on his money. If a man lives without work, whether he be rich or poor, prince or pauper, he is living on the work of others.

No, gentle reader, the Socialist does not believe in dividing up. Not at all. He don't believe in letting the capitalist have a bally thing. He wants it all himself.

The plain people distrust both the Liberal and the Conservative party. They feel that both parties are not swung in the interests of the plain people.

China's reform Mandarin has been dismissed. This may not be a victory for reaction. It may simply give an opportunity to the ultra radicals to spread themselves.

Many cattle are still tuberculous. We hope our Minister of Agriculture will devote a little thought to the question and endeavor to do something to help the farmers.

The ignorance of the average individual with regard to the principles of scientific revolutionary Socialism is colossal. It is pathetic to observe such massive, monumental and collective ignorance.

Our economic civilization forces men and women into slum life. And when the slums have done their work on the character of the inhabitants we say that it is useless to try to do anything for the inhuman brutes.

Dogs will sometimes fight for a bone. We have so organized our economic world that men must fight like dogs for business. Then we rear churches so that we may tell 'em to love one another.

There have been five great labor wars in Greece and Rome in ancient times. Millions of human beings perished, and history says little about the struggles.

The capitalist would have no chance to employ money in a healthy democracy. It is because our social organization is in an unhealthy condition that the capitalist gets a chance to add money to money.