

By the Way

IF these notes should continue to appear in the Clarion, no doubt readers will find reason from time to time to disagree with what the writer has to say. In such case I hope the grounds of disagreement will be valid ones. That I bring before the reader questions that matter and stimulate thought upon them, will remain to console me. Sometimes it may be with malice prepense that the writer is deliberately provocative, desiring to stir up thought out of the rut of routine, repeating and conformity.

That bad mental habit leads to the "thoughtlessness" characteristic of the creeds. Their principles are held to be fixed rules covering facts in all times and places, as a thimble covers a pea. They betoken a habit of mind hostile to ideas and an outlook on life reluctant to acknowledge change. On the other hand, as I understand it, Socialism is a science whose principles are methods; methods of interpreting and of judging the facts of an ever changing, ever unfolding social process. So considered, principles are simply aids to intelligence in dealing with new situations.

In the last issue I referred to the necessity of working class education on the social problem, but, be one however eloquent on that subject, it can never be done justice to. There is then left the constant repetition of the exhortation: Educate. And the Clarion. Spade workers in the Socialist movement, do not forget our unique instrument for that purpose! Get new subscribers! Support it every day, in every way you can!

"Permanent war or revolution," says Trotsky; "It is a race between education and catastrophe" says H. G. Wells: and many others ring the changes on the same theme. Some of them in despairing tones, others more hopefully. Civilization, all of them say, is in peril. The social problem is a world problem. It is not particularly a British, or French, or German, or Italian, or Russian, or American problem to be solved by approaching it with a mental bias in favor of any one of such national entities. Look at European conditions, fruit of the economics of predatory nationalisms on the physical plane of material wealth. It is oil, it is coal, or coke, or iron, or it is strong places strategically important in case of war the nations compete for like "monsters in the prime," as though industrial power could not create a sufficiency for all. In the finer arts, literature, music, etc., in scientific discovery, in the art of healing, medicine, surgery, etc., competitive rivalry is characterized by friendly emulation and international intercourse that yet is efficient in stimulating creative activity. But such interests are void of the profit principle! Here difference of nationality sets up no barriers. In fact such differences are recognized as advantages, for they mean diversity of effort in diverse lines of endeavor, the results a contribution to the common good, varied and rich.

Nevertheless, another code of rules for another department of life, where profit holds sway, presided over by the great god Capital. Here the press and the pulpit, whose special care is our spiritual welfare, are careful that we do not lose our sacred social superstitions and those nationalistic prejudices that make possible the beastly struggle within the human family.

In British Columbia we have had another mining disaster, taking its toll of working humanity. The Editors are to the forefront, of course, with copiously worded regrets and consolations. I would not disparage the value of any consolations to the bereaved, nor would I care to deny the common human feelings to editors, but—Oh for consistency. We remember the venomous slander with which those very editors pursued those very miners a few years ago, when mine conditions were the bone of con-

tention between the miners and the companies. It was under cover of a flood of misrepresentation by the press that the then Attorney General felt confident to say to a delegation of miners interviewing him on gas in a mine: "My answer to you is a thousand bayonets in Nanaimo tomorrow morning." So bayonets and machine guns covered the operations of thugs, and professional strike-breaking agencies. Wholesale arrests and convictions were then the order until the miners were forced back to work. To this day they are without an organization recognized by the employers.

The present calamity calls too loudly for an expression of sympathy for those closely affected and the mining community at large for the press to ignore it, yet even so, the editors could not forget their lackey's function to put an edifying face on capitalist operations of industry: "The cause of the explosion is wrapt in mystery, etc, etc." The spokesmen of edification stretch their philosophy to its limits: "Thy will be done," is the refrain that blunts and checkmates the public interest that leads to the search for material causes. At least one editor ought to be elected President of the Amalgamated Boosters' Club of B. C. After cutting up to the tune of "In Christian truths are to be found our consolations," he prints a spurious list of mining disasters which had taken large toll or life in various parts of the world. I call it a spurious list because it omits to mention any British Columbia mining disaster, whereas there have been many with large losses in human life, and because its effect and, I think, its deliberate intention was to deceive the B. C. community, if not also the larger community outside. Else why not mention the Fernie disaster of about 1903 with over 500 lives, or Morrissey, with somewhere around 100. There are many others of magnitude of which I can not give exact detail.

A syndicated article, in a recent issue of a Vancouver daily paper, concerning the threatened world revolution which so many feared and others hoped for immediately after the war, asks the question: "What has become of it?" and inconclusively answers by saying that "something has happened to change the opinion of the people." Socialists, with their sense of an historical process, might say that far from the world revolution having disappeared, on the contrary, it is now on; and that any change in the opinion of the people is still in that direction. Nevertheless, neither the hopes of one party nor the fears of the other materialized in the shape they had in mind. We all underestimated at least one important factor in the situation, and that was the force of lag in social change. And our failure to make an effective study of social psychology led, I think, to that. Men do not, can not, change deep-rooted social habits, whether of thought or of action, as they would change a shirt. As a social being, man is a creature of habit. Born into a society ready-made, from his birth he learns by precept and example and by many compulsions to satisfy or to curb his impulses, wants and desires, according to already socially established standards of conduct and ways of doing things. However, my space is already exhausted, and further comment along these lines on this subject may be taken up in a succeeding issue.

A last word: The Clarion needs more subscribers! C.

Some Notes taken from an address on

"PROFITS AND WAGES"

Delivered by J. G. MORGAN, at the Central Mission, Vancouver, B. C., Feby. 10th, 1923.

BEFORE entering our subject proper, let us define a few phrases that we may use in our discussion; this will tend to lay the ground which we will try to unfold.

In order to live, it is necessary to have an in-

come, and we are concerned here to find out what this income consists of and how we get it.

Wealth is a continuous stream of products which, we can say for general purposes, is produced and consumed annually.

Life is a process of assimilation and dissemination of these products.

The human body can be compared with a machine as an accumulator.

For the act of production we must have labor and the necessary tools to be applied to the land, to appropriate the necessary means of subsistence.

This productive action is a matter of changing the form of the material objects to suit the wants of man.

There is nothing creative about this process; man moves these objects about and with the help of nature they acquire the desired form, place and time utility.

A normal man is capable of exerting a force equal to that of 1/7 of a horse power.

Primitive man, like most other animals, is capable of working collectively. His means of communication have developed enormously. He also accumulates and records knowledge.

With this co-operation, we notice the division and sub-division of labor. All of which results in a condition of affairs in which a man is able to produce more than he—by reason of the limits set by the price of his labor-power—is able to consume.

This division of labor gives rise to a section of society who administrate, who later develop as dominators; and later still to an idle class who do nothing towards the production of the things necessary to meet the wants of man.

With this we notice the development of property rights, which necessitate the development of the state.

Our time is limited, so we will jump into the epoch of the production of commodities by a working class who live by the sale of their labor-power.

Some people state that labor or labor-power is not a commodity, but we can say definitely that the laborer sells his Body-Force, Energy, or power to labor to the capitalist for a price, or money-wage.

This price or wage may be looked at from three different angles: Nominal Wage, which is the amount in money the laborer receives: Real Wage, the amount of necessities he can buy: and Relative Wage, the proportion he receives relative to the total product which results from the use of his labor.

The industrialist obtains the necessary means for the productive-process: land for which he pays rent to its owner; finance for which he pays interest; and labor for which he pays wages to the laborer, who buys the means of existence to allow him to appear on the job the next day.

Our trouble now is to find out what brings these Values into existence. Land and Machinery are the constant factor, so they cannot create values. Labor is the active factor, and when applied to the constant factor it brings all values into existence.

Admitting property right to the capitalist class it follows that they control us, our actions, and that they own all that results from our actions, excepting of course that which is necessary to maintain us as a working class, which we receive in the form of wages.

C. CROOK.