

The Anarchy in Capitalist Production

JUST in proportion as the individual adapts himself to the laws of nature, seeking to obey instead of ignorantly disregarding them, so will he or she develop physically, morally or mentally. These are simple facts universally accepted.

However, to the great majority it is utterly impossible to conform to the requirements of nature under present economic conditions. If it were not so we would beyond doubt have a very different race of people on this old earth today.

This being so, it necessarily follows that we should study social evolution, should study the laws that govern society that we may guide our actions accordingly, that is, that instead of using up our energy in trying to scheme out Utopian plans for the good of society, which, however pleasing in their appearance, would be found to be nothing but the product of a misguided brain. We should instead devote that energy in seeking out the reason for the contradictions within society. For instance, if a sufficient number of workers understood why it is that on one hand we have land and raw material in abundance, and the most perfect labor-saving machinery man has yet been able to devise for turning out in greater quantities than the human race could consume, all the things necessary to satisfy man's wants, and on the other hand, countless numbers in abject want, begging to produce but denied the right—if they understood the reason for this anarchy in production, it goes without saying that they would take any measure necessary to remove the cause of such a glaring contradiction, and bring into harmony the wants of the people and the means of production for satisfying them.

When it is realized that each and every advance in methods of wealth production continually lessens the amount of human labor expended, and that our system of distribution remains the same or stationary as it were, and that we have blundered and brought upon ourselves the state of affairs referred to, because we failed to change our methods of distribution to conform to our methods of production: when we have discovered that a glutted market, overproduction, and multitudes starving and in want go hand-in-hand, it is not sufficient that we investigate no further and merely appeal to the reason of the people in general to correct the methods of distribution, as Utopian reformers are wont to do; for, while we have found the cause for misery and want, we have not yet found why the cause is effective. By investigating a little further, we find that there is a class, numerically weak, yet well fortified, who benefit by this system. A class that owns not only the natural resources and machinery of production, but who also own the multitude of wealth producers as well. This statement is not far-fetched, it is absolutely true, because, in owning the only means that the workers have of producing

the necessities of life, they hold them at their mercy. In short, we have master and slave.

This brings us to the class struggle. The masters struggling by every means in their power to maintain their ownership of all the essential means of wealth production and their mastery over the toilers thereby, and the workers to wrest from the master class their control of the means of life and thus break the chains of servitude.

A little more study and we discover that this economic control is maintained by the capitalists through their political machine, the State. This very valuable weapon, the only weapon in fact of importance, has been given into their hands in all countries by the workers; but when it is realized, that once in power, capitalist governments control largely the minds of the entire people, because of their control of the schools and of practically all avenues of in-

formation, or more strictly speaking, misinformation, then we no longer wonder why it is that the masses have been so blind as to hand their own weapons to their enemy.

As time goes on, however, even the blind begin to see and become restless, and governments are forced more and more to show where they stand. Note the Winnipeg strike of last summer, and the present strike of the miners of the United States.

A few more such lessons, and the workers will arise in their might and beholding how they have been so shamelessly deceived, murdered, tortured and bled of their birth-right, nothing will then stand between them and liberty.

In that day, the last barrier to freedom will vanish and give birth to human progress, happiness and natural development.

J. PILKINGTON.

Art and the Worker

(From "Socialist," Glasgow)

THE delight of the artist in his art, the contemplative and genial enjoyment of beauty, may seem out of harmony with the burning need for social change. But this is quite a superficial view. The man who is deeply impressed with the beauty and harmony of nature and the play of life-forces going on around us, will see more clearly the ugliness and discord of human society today. Capitalism will disgust him altogether. All the higher and finer impulses of his personality will rise in revolt against it. This explains why men like Maxim Gorky, Jack London and countless other artists have been with the labor movement in its upward struggle.

It is imperative that the artistic side of man should be developed—that he should become a complete man—though some boasted "materialists" scoff at the idea. Yet there is nothing in the materialist, or as it is better termed, the Monist Philosophy of Life to warrant anyone adopting that attitude. By doing so, they merely give credence to the silly slander that their school of thought is committed to what is low, base and mean, and therefore unable to rise to the appreciation of higher and finer things. The reason why some Socialists view art with a measure of scorn and will have none of it is easily explained. There is so much cant talked and written about the "selfishness" and "lowness" of the workers' material aims that the Socialist is often inclined to say to the artist: "Away with it all. You are only out to swindle us with pretty nothings while your friends keep hold of the material things, to our detriment."

Such an attitude, however, shows lack of discrimination. Because hypocrisy is mixed up with art, because

art today is often prostituted, we should not condemn or despise it. So soon as it is prostituted it ceases to be art. We should remember this. Our opponents are like that man in the fable whose touch turned everything he handled into gold—but with this difference—that everything they touch turns to dross—they defile everything. True Art is on our side because truth is on our side.

One thing is sure, if the artistic perceptions of the workers can be awakened they will make short work of capitalism. By "artistic perception," I do not mean that the workers should be induced to wear funny hats and curious ties, to live on chopped straw or to indulge in the eccentricities of any particular "Art School."

That sort of thing may be left to those who can do nothing else. I mean that they should get a real insight and see the possible glory of life and its actual shortcomings. They should realize that life is a wondrous thing, but hideously marred by Capitalism. They should feel stirring within them the power to put things right.

When the workers get such a view, not all the "reconstruction," shorter hours or higher wages will save Capitalism with its unutterable sordidness and rottenness. It will have to give way to something clean and beautiful, something healthy, free and sane. It is important, then, that the dulled sense of beauty and love of harmony should be awakened in the worker. For we are marching forward to life, and the song and inspiration of the artist is ever found in the thick of the battle, urging us forward in the struggle and illuminating the heights which we have to gain, as the crests of the hills are gilded by the sun.

R. M. FOX.

The Proletariat

From Apprentice to Proletarian.

ORIGINALLY it took forcible methods to secure the supply of proletarians necessary for the Capitalist system. Today, however, such methods are no longer necessary. The economic power of the system has become sufficient to accomplish the desired result without breaking the law of private property.

That the number of the proletariat is steadily on the increase is such a palpable fact that no one attempts to deny it, not even those who would make us believe that society today rests on the same basis as it did one hundred years ago, and who try to paint the picture of the small producer in rosy colors. Indeed a change has taken place in the make up of society, just as it has in the system of production. The capitalist form of production has overthrown all others, and become the dominant one in the field of industry; similarly wage-labor is today the dominant form of labor. A hundred years ago the farming peasantry took the first place; later the small city industrialists; today it is the wage-earner.

In all civilized countries, the proletarians today are the largest class; it is their condition and modes of thought that tend to control those of all the other divisions of labor. This implies a complete revolution in the condition and thought of the bulk of the population. The conditions of the proletariat differ radically from those of all former categories of labor. The small farmer, the artizan, the small producers generally, were the owners of the product of their labor by reason of their ownership of the means of production. The product of the labor of the proletarian does not belong to him, it belongs to the capitalist, to the owner of the requisite instruments of production. True enough, the proletarian is paid by the capitalist, but the value of his wages is far below that of his product.

When the capitalist in industry purchases the only commodity which the proletarian can offer for sale, that is, his labor-power, he does so for the sole purpose of utilizing it in a profitable way. The more the workingman produces, the larger the value of his product. If the capitalist were to work his employees only long enough to produce the worth of the wages he pays them, he would clear no profits. But his capital cries for profit and finds in him a willing listener. The longer the time is extended during which the workmen labor in the service of the capitalists, over and above the time needed to cover their wages, the larger is the value of their product, the larger is the surplus over and above the capitalist outlay in wages, and the larger is the per cent. of exploitation to which these workmen are subjected. This exploitation of labor finds a limit only in the powers of endurance of the working people and in the resistance they may be able to offer to their exploiters.

(To Be Continued.)