



(By Phillip Thompson, Oakville.)

We hear a good deal these days about "commercialized vice." Well, why not? We have commercialized religion, commercialized patriotism, commercialized loyalty and commercialized philanthropy. Why should vice be the only thing left uncommercialized in this highly commercial age?

Hon. F. B. Carvell remarks with the general approval of the capitalist press that Labor has no right to strike at the present time. Really the point is not worth arguing. Labor has not the right to strike, it has something far better the power to enforce its demands by striking. "Might makes Right" has always been the principle of capitalism, and it's a poor rule that doesn't work both ways.

In the old days when there were two men for one job, employers used to tell us that wages were regulated by the law of supply and demand. We don't hear much talk about supply and demand now that the boot is on the other leg, but it is a good phrase for workingmen to remember when the wage question comes up for discussion.

It has transpired that the London Free Press charged Major Cronyn, the successful Tory candidate for that city, 1,033 for editorials supporting his candidature. Whereupon The Globe is perfectly scandalized and berates its erring contemporary with all the righteous indignation of a clandestine harlot, who receives diamonds and champagne suppers in return for her favors, denouncing her squalid sister of the pavement who demands spotcash.

The Evening Star, like its rivals The Telegram and The News, appears to have some brains, but they work rather slowly. It says in a recent issue: "Apparently there are some who regard the war as a grand opportunity for the suppression of all kinds of radical opinions and for checking the growth of democracy; in other words, for defeating the very object for which we and our allies are fighting." Which recalls Lowell's sarcastic lines on Daniel Webster:

It takes a mind like Dan's, fact as big as all outdoors,
To find out that it looks like rain
arter it fairly pours.

The Kaiser's pious cant in the face of the hideous atrocities perpetrated by his order is sickening in the extreme, but there is one kind of cant in which he does not indulge—the cant about freedom and democracy. We get enough of that from other sources.

The Tories and Grits who are worrying over the alien labor question should remember that they are responsible for the presence of the foreign element. If successive governments of both political parties had not squandered many millions of dollars in an insane immigration policy at the dictation of the Big Business interests, there would have been few aliens here. How many of the blather-skites of the Mayor Church and Dr. Noble type, who are now hounding down these people whom we coaxed and bribed to come here, ever had a word to say against the policy of bringing them over to keep down the rate of wages?

Some damfool workingmen are joining in the howl against alien laborers because they get high wages. How would they like it if the foreigners were ready to work for low wages?

Come to think of it, old Doc Johnson was away off when he said that "patriotism was the last refuge of a scoundrel." It is usually the first move in his little game—his great standby from first to last.

Some people have a way of expressing the most obvious truisms with the air of having made a new discovery. At the National Council of Women the other day, Mrs. Laing made the observation that "in the matter of protection to women property was of more value in the eyes of the law than the honor of a girl or woman." Every class conscious Socialist knows by this time that law-makers, judges and officials are simply chosen as guardians of the interests of the capitalist class, all other objects being subservient, and that so-called justice is a hollow mockery. And the mass of the people don't care, or if they do care a little are a good deal more concerned about their rotten old parties or the sectarian cries and side issues raised to divert their attention.

RHYMES WITH REASON.

The Lord of the Land.

I'm the Lord of the Land, I'm the man in possession,
Thanks, thanks to the Law, and its power of oppression;
All my cattle I've paid for with money in hand,
But the women and men were thrown in with the land.

For you know, when I buy up the land where men dwell,
I buy up their souls and their bodies as well;
Some I scatter like sheep to pick up a living,
And to me, in the slums, some their life blood are giving.

Most precious are they, for, while they increase,
My increasing prosperity never can cease;
The poor devils poorer and poorer may grow,
While my "basket and store" and my coffers o'erflow.

In my country, where thousands of acres are hired
By a millionaire sportsman, few men are required;
Deer pay better—e'en grouse show a larger return:
And my fishing preserves, both in river and burn,
Are also let out, for the rivers are mine,
And no poaching allowed with spear, net, or line.
In fact, I'm the Lord of both Water and Land,
A law-made Land Lord, of superior brand!

But one thing, I feel, is a curse to the nation,
'Tis in giving the peasants too much education,
It breeds discontent, brings them out of their station,
And makes them forget I'm the Lord of Creation.
—A. Tain Ross, in New Zealand Liberator.

Does not patriotism consist mainly in covering your own country with fictitious whitewash, and the enemy with fictitious soot?—G. B. Shaw.

PROSPECTS OF PEACE AND SECRET TREATIES.

Discussed in the British House of Commons.

Philip Edward Morrell, Liberal, in the House of Commons recently started a debate on the question of peace by agreement and moving the following resolution:

"That this House desires that the Government will lose no diplomatic opportunity to settle the problems of the war by agreement, and that to that end it expresses its opinion that secret treaties with allied Governments should be revised, since, in their present form, they are inconsistent with the object for which this country entered the war, and are, therefore, a barrier to a democratic peace."

Restate War Aims.

In moving his resolution, Mr. Morrell said that the people were anxious about the progress of events and entitled to a restatement by the Government of its war aims and its opinion as to the prospects of achieving them. He charged that statements made in behalf of the allies bolstered up "Kaiserism." He declared that there was a passionate desire for peace in Germany if it could be got with security, but the Germans believed that the allies were unwilling to listen to reasonable terms, and that only by supporting the Emperor and the military party could they secure the peace they desired.

Mr. Morrell said that in June the British casualties averaged seventy killed every day, and that for the five months from January to the beginning of June the British losses in killed alone were seventy thousand, while the wounded and missing numbered three hundred thousand.

Philip Snowden, Socialist, in supporting the resolution, asked Mr. Balfour, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, to define what he meant by "peace offensive." He agreed with Mr. Morrell that nothing like a stable peace could be obtained until secret treaties were denounced.

Balfour's Reply.

Mr. Balfour began his reply by explaining that by peace offensive he meant any effort, by speech or otherwise, under the guise of seeking an honorable termination of the present war, to divide the allies and discourage members of the alliance.

Replying to Mr. Snowden's contention that nothing had been heard about Germany's desire to dominate the world in the early stages of the war, Mr. Balfour said that the British as a nation, had been slow to believe that other nations could be animated by motives so widely separated from the motives which moved their own people. But it was a fact that Germany was pursuing her universal domination with persistent and elaborate care and foresight and with a ruthless, cold blooded determination which left Napoleon tradition far behind.

"Is this a case where a sober historian would ever see the basis of a possible peace?" asked Mr. Balfour. "Is there any evidence whatever, that a suggestion like the Austrian Emperor's letter or any similar suggestion were made with a view to obtaining the sort of peace which even Mr. Snowden would regard as a reasonable peace, carrying with it some prospect of security for the future liberties of the world? We never rejected proposals which we thought had the slightest probability of producing such a peace and there is no evidence whatever that the German Government has ever been serious in making such peace offers."

Contending that Belgium remained the greatest blow to German honor, the Secretary asked whether Germany had ever in any document or speech openly or plainly offered to restore Belgium to absolute political and economic independence. He knew of no such offer. There had

been suggestions, but never a frank avowal.

Mr. Balfour proceeded to emphasize that in the matter of war aims there was not the slightest difference between Great Britain and the United States, and he denied that secret treaties were an obstacle to peace. These treaties were made in circumstances in which he believed any Government would have acted similarly, and it was quite a mistake to suppose that the treaty with Italy would stand in the way of peace.

"Certainly," he continued, "the Government are not going to shut their ears to anything that could be called to reasonable suggestions, if it should be to the common interest. Any proposal to the allies will be considered on its merits. These treaties were entered into by this country with others as members of an alliance. By these treaties we stand. Our national honor is bound up in them."

The Secretary did not doubt that if it should be the common interest of the alliance to modify the treaties the Italians themselves would suggest the modifications.

Mr. Morrell's motion was defeated without division of the House.

NORTH EAST TORONTO TO BE CONTESTED BY LABOR PARTY CANDIDATE.

William Varley, An Old-time Socialist and Labor Man, Will Oppose Dr. Cody.

After considerable discussion at a well attended general meeting of the Labor Party, Saturday evening, at the Labor Temple, it was almost unanimously decided to contest the election to be held in North East Toronto in June. Several candidates were nominated. James Ballantyne, James Richards, J. T. Gunn, Mrs. Hector Prenter, James Simpson, John Vick and Corp. Wm. Varley. All the nominees withdrew their names in favor of Corporal Varley, who was acclaimed the candidate.

Mr. Varley is a candidate who should draw the hearty support and co-operation not only of every workingman and woman in the riding, but also every progressive humanitarian who knows the need of labor having a voice in the Ontario legislation. As Conservatives go, no particular fault can be found with Dr. Cody. But he belongs to a political party and a church which believes in special privileges for the rich and powerful, and fight consistently every step of progress desired by the toiling masses.

The contest is one which will draw the class lines quite distinctly. It will not be a contest of personalities. Personally both candidates are all that can be desired. Varley stands for working class control of the public powers, and will be supported by all enlightened and progressive voters. Dr. Cody will receive the support of all those who desire to perpetuate the present capitalist class control of the public powers.

The issue is quite clear. Vote and work for Varley.

THE PROPER OFFICIAL.

In a recent examination paper for a boy clerk's post was this question:

"If the premier and all the members of the cabinet should die, who would officiate?"

Robert, a boy of fourteen, thought for a time, trying in vain to recall who came next in succession. At last a happy inspiration came to him, and he answered: "The undertaker."

"Somehow I have a sort of sneaking respect for Benedict Arnold."

"Why so?"

"He never went around bawling that he was loyal."—Louisville Courier-Journal.