

Disturbing a Reviewer

BY DONALD MACPHERSON,

AN editorial in the "Farm and Ranch Review" of February 5th, commenting on the U. F. A. (1923) Convention held in Calgary, makes very interesting reading to those who indulge in the social, political and economic studies from the working class point of view. This farm journal of the conservative type has no reforms or palliatives to offer to ameliorate the sufferings of wage and farm slaves under capitalism. It stands for pure, unadulterated, legitimate exploitation in terms of untrammelled legitimate business, legitimate profits, legitimate protection of private property, legitimate poor and rich, legitimate everything that will not encroach upon the safe working of the complicated mechanism of capitalism. Basing their reasoning on capitalism as a premise, they are logical when they ridicule the annual occasion on which the farmers display their voluminous outpourings in their resolution factory. Be it noticed also that they (the F. and R. R.) bewail the \$15,000 or \$20,000 that is spent annually by the farmers that they may meet in convention to be relieved of a twelve months accumulation of pent up hot air. To the "F. and R. R." this is sheer waste of good hard cash these hard times, when the farmers are asking for charitable aid from governments and municipalities. This money, according to their viewpoint, should make a nice deposit on tax arrears. To quote a passage from the editorial in question, one can see at a glance the logic of their argument against the piffle that is doped out at these conventions by freaks, quacks and ignorant sentimentalists who are upholders of the present system.

"The subjects ranged all the way from scrapping our entire financial system, and adopting a new fantastic fad in its place, down to amending the divorce laws, and calling for government inspection of the locks on hotel bedroom doors, &c., &c." It further says: "And yet the convention expects public men, and the public generally, to take its formal conclusions seriously. It is simply pathetic."

If the "Farm and Ranch Review" were not so conservative they could see at least one bright hope for the big capitalist interests they so ardently represent. As long as the farmers have U. F. A. conventions and other plans of amusement wherein to spend their energy harmlessly, peddling pure bunk, the citadel of King Capital is safe. It is a mere safety valve to let loose the energy generated by stress of economic forces, which not only moves the farmers to formulate organizations and conventions, but also moves the industrial workers to do likewise. When ever the farmers and the rest of the working class become conscious of their real ignorance of social and economic laws, and direct their attention towards scientific knowledge of how to become emancipated, the death knell of capitalism will have been sounded. The more advanced statesmen and other shrewd capitalistic interests realize this fact, and instead of combating the U. F. A. and trade unions harmless activities they rather encourage them, use them, and best of all they control them

at times through their leaders and officials who in turn become dangerous parasites on the backs of an unconscious working class.

A passage in this luminous editorial of the "Review" sounds rather comical to anyone who attended the talk fests of the U. F. A. It says: "The frankly communistic attitude of many of the speakers, particularly during the discussion on the bank resolutions, cannot fail to seriously affect the credit of the province of Alberta, and every farmer living within it. The "red" element was apparently largely of foreign birth, with a sprinkling of Yankee. If there has to be a "red" faction, I would much prefer to see it composed of Canadian and British born. It would look healthier."

The scribe who saw red at the convention must surely have been suffering from hallucinations, seeing visions of Bolshevik gold, red whiskers, other people's money being spent to incite the farmers to action, insurrection and what not. If this piffle on the financial question by delegates at the convention is communistic, then communism is poor dope. It does not stand the test of scientific analysis. Major Douglas, the arch exponent of this financial bug, the other day, talking before the financial commission at Ottawa disclaimed all connection with Socialism. These so-called "reds" couldn't possibly be Marxian Socialists if they blamed all the ills of society to the financial system. In regard to the farmers being adversely affected by the credit of the province. How can they when 97 per cent. of them are bankrupt and have no credit? The preference of the "Review" to British born "reds" is a little joke. The master class ignore nationality; these imaginary geographical boundaries are held conspicuously before the eyes of the slaves and generate and keep alive age-long bias, prejudice, spite and race hatred. If the slaves lose their nationality they will also lose their patriotism, which is so necessary to perpetuate and protect their masters' property, whether it be in Timbuctoo or in China. Millions of these so-called foreigners have been brought here to be fleeced by the master class. I am sure the working class of America did not bring them here, and could not if they desired to. "Farm and Ranch Review" please take note.

The function of the workers is to produce all commodities and get in return the bare necessities of life. Profits and more profits is the constant cry of the capitalists. He is an inveterate cosmopolitan. Nationality and patriotism is only for docile wage slaves.

In conclusion, I may say that the U. F. A., like all other reform movements that don't reform is not destitute of material. The hard conditions imposed by capitalism on the farmers for the last few years is awakening a nucleus of the young element. This field is fertile for the propagandists who understand the peculiar nature of this beast of burden. This young movement, when it gathers momentum, will ditch the old fossils from the movement, processes of clarification will go on until master class farm journals will view with real alarm the insecurity of capitalism. The dawn of day will arrive; the last vestige of slavery will pass away forever.

Clarion "Mail Bag"

THAT small adornment of the well-dressed lady, known as a vanity bag, would with care contain the whole of our correspondence since the last issue. But we should worry! Rather should we cheerfully grin while we relax and take stock of ourselves and that which is about us. If in the struggle for the riddance of that principle of wage payment by which the exploitation of the

working class is most surely accomplished, our efforts have not produced the results that we all desired, no good will be served by lamentation. If the workers have failed to recognize those revolutionary truths which our propaganda reveals, the deficiency lies with them and with no others.

Cold shower baths are repellant to those of weakened or anaemic constitution; and as unpleasurable to the minds of free wage-workers are the cold facts of capitalist society. To be enthused by fine and glowing sentiments is yet more preferable to informative studies. Mankind still delights in

the spectacular and glories in the illusion; his real motives always does he strive to hide. And he will not be denied the keen pleasure of setting up on a pedestal, his heroes; nor the exquisite joy of knocking them down again.

In our day the revolutionary urge will bring forth the strange and the fantastic; religious justification may be easily procured for the removal of property rights when the big battalions move—as they inevitably will move. Ritual and dogma can well be used to break down the intangible forces that resist even in this age of great achievements; high and fancy flying, far and accurate seeing, etc., etc.—and Marathon dancing.

In the necessary readjustment of social affairs, however, and for a more equitable distribution of wealth than obtains at present, it is certain that a greater degree of understanding must be in the possession of the working class. As revolutionary Socialists our material needs are composite, and our activities are but the practical response to a social urge from which we cannot escape. That which is spoken of as apathy is incidental and should not be viewed with alarm. Like the ominous quiet in Nature, which to the weatherwise presages the coming storm, so might we correctly observe the prevailing attitude of indifference among the great mass of the workers. A fundamental break in social relationships must come, by no form of witchery can it be avoided. Then will apathy give way to a mighty struggling for balance and security. Free access to the means of life will furnish that security; and around that need and its fulfilment must the warring factions rally for good or ill. Meanwhile our task is incomplete. Unpopularity is not evidence of the failure of past efforts. The emancipation of the working class is our objective, and to those who in the gloom are striving with us, in good faith and fellowship we cry: "All hail!"

Letters from Eastern Canada are few, but very welcome to us. Comrades in Billtown and Cape Breton send subs. and support for the Maintenance Fund; also appreciative remarks concerning the "Western Clarion." Toronto and Cochrane, Ont., are represented in a like manner.

Comrade Glendenning writes from Winnipeg in reference to the state of the movement in that city. While admitting that things are not satisfactory just now, he is hopeful for future development. That is the spirit we like. Stay with it Glendenning! this camp is all for you. Battleford, Sask., sends a sub. for the Clarion, but Alberta is without representation this time. British Columbia is in a better mood. Subs. come from Spences Bridge, Telkwa, Potlatch Creek, Lund, Cumberland, also a nice letter and donation to the Maintenance Fund from Courtenay. J. M. Wilson of Telkwa, sends regards to Pritchard and W. Bennett.

Writing from Seattle, Washington, Com. McCabe encloses a sub. and two dollars for the Maintenance Fund, also best regards to Chris. Stephenson. A sub. also comes from Elma, Washington. A very fine letter comes from Com. J. Knight, of the San Francisco Labor College. He says in part: "We are holding by far the biggest radical meetings in the city at present, and although it means a lot of work on a few shoulders, we intend to stay with the game and do our best to promote a spirit of investigation and activity among the staves of Sunny California." He encloses the Labor College prospectus for March and April, showing a splendid series of Sunday night lectures, also eighteen dollars for the Clarion Maintenance Fund (acknowledged in last issue "Here and Now"). Mr. Knight, you suit us uncommonly well; don't hesitate about writing again, and give our kind regards to the rest of the gang.