

RUSSIAN SOCIALISM

THE very worst thing that can happen socially is for a section of the people to live to themselves, thinking of themselves, working for themselves, plotting and planning for themselves. Selfishness is at the root of all our miseries. Our great misfortune is that owing to our rapid growth and our absorption in our daily work, we have not observed how the people have been breaking up into classes — each with its peculiar belief and interests. Race, language, religion and industrial conditions have all made it easy for class feeling to develop.

Perhaps the most distressing feature of all is that the great antagonisms which vex us to-day are not of local origin, but have been transplanted from foreign soil. Strange as it may seem, the nation we all looked upon as ignorant, semi-barbaric and ground down under despotism, has given us the men and women who have been foremost in fomenting discord. The arch-revolutionaries to-day in America are the Communists and more than half of them are of Russian origin. They are of kin with Lenin and Trotsky. They form the extreme Left of American Socialism. They believe not only that capitalism is the cause of all our social ills and must be destroyed, but that the only means for its destruction is an attack by force upon industrialism. As their policy is destructive rather than constructive, it is not surprising that everything connected with the present system of living comes in for abuse.

As a sample of the beliefs and proposed methods of the Communists, the following clipping is of more than passing interest. We may just as well know what we are facing on this side of the Atlantic. This overthrow of society as it is at present constituted is to these people their religion and there is nothing so hard to overthrow as a new religion.

Papers seized by United States Government officials in their recent federal raid revealed the plans of the Union of Russian Workers to bring about an overthrow of the government of the United States and a general strike. A manifesto contained the following statement: "We must consciously hasten the elementary movement of the struggle of the working class; we must convert small strikes into general ones and convert the latter into armed revolt of the laboring masses against capital and state."

"At the time of this revolt, we must, at the first favorable opportunity, proceed to an immediate seizure of all means of production and all articles of consumption and make the working classes the masters in fact of all general wealth. At the same time, we must mercilessly destroy all remaining of governmental authority and class domination, liberating the prisoners, demolish prisons and police offices, destroy all legal papers pertaining to private ownership of property, all field fences and boundaries, and burn all certificates of indebtedness—in a word, we must take care that everything is wiped from the earth that is a reminder of the right of private ownership."

"To blow up barracks and police administration, shoot the most prominent military and police officers, must be the important concern of the revolting working people. In the work of destruction, we must be merciless, for the slightest weakness on our part may afterward cost the working classes a whole sea of needless blood. . . . We go tranquilly, cheerfully, not because it is painful for us eternally to be calling to bloody combat—no. But because there, far beyond the corpses of heroes, beyond the blood covered barricades, beyond all terrors of civil war, there already shines for us the magnificent beautiful form of man without a god, without a master, and free of authority."

"We hate religion because it lulls the spirit with lying tales, takes away courage and faith in the power of man, faith in triumph of justice here on the real earth and not in a chimerical heaven. Religion covers everything with fog, real evil becomes visionary, and visionary good a reality. It has always sanctified slavery, grief and tears. And we declare war upon all gods and religious fables. We are atheists."

The following are about the best words that have yet been written on this subject:

"During the past three months the New York section of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers has held a series of meetings to discuss aspects of industrial unrest. Acting in accordance with the wish expressed at one of these meetings, a brief declaration was prepared on social and industrial unrest, which was approved at a general meeting."

"The text of the declaration is as follows:

"Social and industrial unrest result from the fact that human relations have not kept step with economic evolution."

"Competent directive management of essential enterprises is the logical solution. Such management must be free from autocratic control, whether by capital or by labor."

"Sharp social or industrial disputes are no longer private. Society is affected, therefore such cases must be subject to the decision of authorities based upon intrinsic not arbitrary law."

"Industry and public utilities must serve the people. There is no room for special privilege of

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capital or of labor. Strikes, irregular employment or arbitrary acts of ownership or of management are harmful, not alone to the immediate parties, but to society as a whole.

"Productivity and public service are absolutely essential."

"On account of the peculiarly intimate familiarity of engineers with industrial problems our responsibility is great."

"Therefore, we, engineers and members of the New York section of the Society of Mechanical Engineers, declare that the following essentials are established by facts and experience, urge all our members to uphold them, and invite other engineers to co-operate with us in having them unanimously recognized, viz.:

"Every important enterprise must adopt competent productive management, unbiassed by special privilege of capital or of labor, and disputes must be submitted to authorities based upon intrinsic law."

"Credit capital represents the productive ability of the community and should be administered with the sole view to the economy of productive power, that is, it should be granted only to those who are able to render valuable service."

GOOD MUSIC

ONCE every year there comes to Winnipeg from New York a Grand Opera Company. Once every year there comes from Minneapolis a Grand Symphony Orchestra. To these two organizations Western Canada owes a debt of gratitude for they keep alive the passion for really good music. That the temper, taste and ideals of a people depend upon the music they hear was recognized long ago in ancient Greece. Plato protested against the introduction of a new musical instrument, because he said it would breed revolution; meaning, of course, that it would give rise to a new set of emotions, which would be beyond control of the state. What would he think of the innovations of the last few years in America? In other words, what would he have to say about rag time and jazz?

Plato was not wrong. Any one who lives in an atmosphere of jazz will appreciate his point of view. There is nothing more upsetting, more calculated to destroy serious thought, than this very kind of music. It is not melody. It is not harmony. It is simply a merry-go-round of glamor and noise. It does not suggest high ideals. It does not educate the feelings. It stifles every tender emotion and destroys the sense of rhythm. As a joke it may pass muster; as a serious attempt at art, it is in the same class with the painting of the Cubists and the nonsense poetry of Lear and Carroll.

It is for parents to prohibit their children from contamination of all kinds. There is no contamination worse than that of bad books, bad pictures, bad music.

It is no argument to say that children and young people like it. They grow to like anything if the taste is developed early enough, but if a wrong taste is developed in childhood, nothing in the way of pure aesthetic development is possible later on in years.

The first care of parents should be to select wisely what their children hear in the way of music. In rural districts, where there is a gramophone in every home, care should be taken to select the best and only the best. There is a best and a worst even in comic selections.

There is a home in this city in which is played every night before the children are sent to bed, "O, Rest in the Lord." In another home is played, "Honey! honey! Kiss for Money," or some such selection. And the children find the spirit of the music in each case becoming a part of their lives. Does it not make some difference which family a young person happens to live in?

There are some rights which a child possesses, and one of these is the right to have that which is educative and inspiring. Western Canada can not afford to cultivate a taste for poor music. Material prosperity alone is nothing. The true test of greatness is found in the measurement of intelligent feeling and will.

LLOYD GEORGE

THERE is nothing more interesting to study than the career of a great man. There is no greater man of late years who is more worthy of study than David Lloyd George, the premier of Britain.

As a statesman, according to Herbert Sidebotham, he possesses the distinction of having been connected with three political parties, and has been beloved and hated by each in turns. As a director of manufacture of munitions he gained a reputation as the ablest business mind in Britain; as a member of the Council of Four he stood out as the man who was

able to see every question from all sides, and thus pave the way for the only possible compromise; as responsible in a measure for the success or failure of the armies in the field, he possessed uncanny power as a master of strategy, so that it was said by a competent war critic "Lloyd George had in him the making of a greater soldier than any one engaged on either side, with the possible exceptions of Foch and Ludendorff."

This wonderful talent is in part the result of his early association and training, in fact the result of his natural temperament, in part the result of his wonderful capacity for hard work, and in part the outcome of his religious and social belief.

No man ever worshipped rank and popularity less than he; no man was ever more ready to take a man on his own merits as he understood them to be, and not as the world estimated them. He was and is a Radical. Whether he was a Liberal, too, is open to doubt. For with a Liberal, tradition counts for a great deal, with a Radical it counts for nothing. This is no criticism of Liberalism, for it is needed in the world to-day as never before. At the same time it is an admission that the war would never have been caused according to the policies of either Liberal or Conservative administrations, but only by a Radical, who was bold enough to recognize the conditions as abnormal, and calling for unusual measures.

This explains Lloyd George's break with Asquith. It explains his anxiety to have a small War Council formed. It explains the formation of a League within the League. The only thing that the British premier wants is results, and neither tradition nor political friendships will stand in his way. Some people wonder why Lloyd George left the control of Parliament to another. Only on rare occasions does he enter the House. He is almost as much away from the central legislative power in Britain as President Wilson is from the Congress of the United States. This is easily explained when one understands how Lloyd George does not place as much confidence in parliament as most other men. He believes that many reforms can be effected much more quickly and effectively without submission to parliament, and as has been said, he wants results and has no time to waste. He does not win his great victories on the floor of the House—though there have been two or three recent victories of this kind. He wins them by his public speeches, his bold policies, his impetuous action.

To Lloyd George belongs the credit of lining up the whole nation behind the war. Until he took command a small coterie of military men assumed control. When he took the helm all industry and all professional ability were linked together for the winning of the war. This is no doubt one reason why he was so thoroughly disliked in some quarters.

That he has made mistakes in judgment no one will deny. How could it be otherwise in matters of such magnitude and complexity? And can any one wonder that he had little use for some of the "experts" in war, finance and statesmanship.

What is the future of Lloyd George? Personally, he, no doubt, would like to retire from public life. He has done a man's work and is entitled to a rest, but like Ulysses, he must continue his active life to the end. Shall he become the leader of a new party—neither Liberal nor Conservative, but composed of both, or shall he espouse the cause of sane Labor—for there is some very sane Labor in Britain? Shall he as leader of this party begin constructive policies that will give free effect to those views which before the war made him so unpopular with the people of privilege? This latter alternative seems to be the likely one. And if he can allay the unrest in Britain by a policy based on justice and prompted by genuine goodwill, he will have conferred the greatest possible benefit upon his people, and prepared the world for that social peace which is more to be desired than the peace among the nations.

MIGHT BE WORSE

THINGS are never so bad but that they might be worse. We think that butter, eggs and milk are high and so they are, but how do our prices compare with these: "In Petrograd, on November 8th, bread cost 300 roubles per pound; meat, 600 roubles; butter, 1,700 roubles; meal, 35 roubles; carrots, 65 roubles; and beetroot, 70 roubles." Or how do prices compare with those in Poland? Poland is in some ways in better condition than most of the mid-European states "In Warsaw a good dinner costs about 100 marks—to the average Pole \$20 or \$25. The average Polish workman must feed his family on one-tenth of that."

We think that when American exchange is quoted at 8½ per cent we are in a bad way, but the French franc is worth about 9½ cents—not quite one-half its value of four years ago.

Flour is high—but in Minneapolis wheat has been selling at \$3.40.

None of these things need worry us if we can only preserve an even balance in advancing rates. The trouble comes only if when the merry-go-round begins to move, some people are not taken "on board."

The men who have the adjusting to do have no easy task. They deserve all our sympathy. Give them a fair chance to make good. It is a mighty bad time to rock the boat.