

terests of France than those of Britain. The latter had no particular desire to see Austro-Hungary divided up into a jigsaw puzzle of tiny states drawing their financial and military support from Paris, but had to agree to it for, as we English say "needs must when the devil drives." France and Britain have spent four years in reducing Central Europe to chaos and its currency to ruin. The real reason for all this seeming lunacy has been a struggle, not between two ideas or between two empires, but between two groups of financiers, one of which rose to power in the early 19th century and held the Hapsburgs in the hollow of its hand, the other which has risen to prominence within the last quarter of a century and has become immensely rich in "promises to pay" since the beginning of the World War.

The old group may be summed up in one name—Rothschild. The new group in three names—The Banque de Paris et des Pays Bas, the Societe Generale de Belgique and the Banque de l'Union Parisienne.

This is the problem, the whole mighty problem of the Ruhr, the Ruhr with its mighty river, the Rhine, with its efficient canals, with its stupendous steel-works, with its wonderful cokeovens, with its gigantic collieries; the Ruhr, which if its coking coal and its machinery, are allied with the mighty iron fields of Lorraine and Normandy and the finely equipped harbors of Antwerp and Rotterdam, will be a producer and a vendor of steel, the basic material of capitalist production, at a price and in a volume with which British capitalism can in no way hope to compete.

Sooner or later, somehow or other the proud, unbending British bourgeoisie whose flag "has braved a thousand years the battle and the breeze" will find a way to break the chains with which French imperialism is trying to bind Britannia. The issue can, in my opinion, only be—WAR.

What the British workers think at the present time scarcely matters. They are thinking very little at all about the Ruhr. Even if they were thinking, the Trade Unions have been so hammered by the capitalist offensive (which has, however, seemed only to make their leaders more pudding-headed than before) that they could, in the circumstances of the moment, do little to help the German workers. It is for them a terrible danger, regardless of whether French capitalism enters the Ruhr alone or whether it comes accompanied—for the purpose of keeping an eye cocked upon it—by its fellow bandit, the capitalism of Great Britain.

In my constituency of Motherwell in Scotland where, in normal times, more steel is produced than anywhere else in Britain with the possible exception of Middlesbrough, the works, considered according to our standards to be relatively efficient, are like toys in comparison with the works at Bochum, Rheinhausen and Essen. For two years some of them have been virtually closed down. For two years there have been from ten to twenty thousand workers unemployed in an area whose population does not exceed 80,000. These men received in unemployment pay, inadequate to maintain them in decency and productive efficiency 15s. a week each, 5s. for the wife and 1s. for each child from the Labor Exchange, supplemented, in some cases, by parish relief. This payment is, whilst utterly inadequate, yet greater than the weekly pay of a German steelworker. This means that our employers, some of whom, to my certain knowledge, are financially interested in Krupp, can use and are actually using the German workers as blacklegs to beat down to yet lower levels of degradation and misery the men and women of this country.

The British workers, though not the workers in Motherwell, Barrow and certain other centres where the communist propaganda is intense and our influence strong, do not understand the significance of the occupation of the Ruhr. It is our business in Britain to point this out and to draw the only conclusion possible, that within capitalism only three things are possible—slavery, starvation and then slaughter.

"Count Your Blessings"

HEGELIAN philosophy, to which Marx owed so much, was recently treated in considerable detail in the "Clarion," and so the following Hegelian principles are offered as throwing some light on the eternal Problem of Evil, as well as serving to arouse to awakeness to what advantages (if any) we do, and ultimately will, possess.

Thirty years ago Wm. Minto, professor of logic in Aberdeen (Scotland) University, died in the same year as his logic book was published, in which he mentions "An all pervading Law of Thought which has not yet been named, but which may be called tentatively, the law of Homogeneous Counter-relativity."

He explained this by stating—Every positive in thought has a contrapositive; and the positive, and the contrapositive, are homogeneous; that is, of the same nature. Nothing, he says, is known absolutely or in isolation; the various items of our knowledge are inter-relative; everything is known by distinction from other things. Light stands opposed to darkness, freedom to slavery; poverty to riches, in to out, etc. This is based on the law of our sensibility that change of impression is necessary for consciousness; as the proverb has it: "We never miss the water till the well runs dry." A long continuance of any unvaried impression results in insensibility to it; custom blunts sensibility. Hence, every positive thought demands its opposite or contrapositive.

So much for the element of difference, or counter-relativity. But this is not the whole of the inter-relativity. The Hegelians, says Minto, rightly lay stress on the common likeness (or co-relativity) that connects the opposed items of knowledge. Therefore, he continues, "It is with a view to taking both forms of relation into account, that I name our law the Law of Homogeneous Counter-relativity." And, quoting Dr. Caird on Hegel: "If, then, the world, as an intelligible world, is a world of distinction, differentiation, individuality; it is equally true that in it as an intelligible world, there are no absolute separations or oppositions, no antagonisms which cannot be reconciled."

The professor refers in confirmation, to an author who had pointed out that in Egyptian hieroglyphics, the oldest extant language, we find a large number of symbols with each two meanings, the one the exact opposite of the other. Thus the same symbol represents strong and weak; above—below; with—without; for—against. This, says Minto, is what the Hegelians mean by the reconciliation of antagonisms in higher unities. They do not mean that black is white; but only that black and white have something in common—they are both colors.

"Let us," he continued, "surprise ourselves in the act of thinking and we shall find that our thoughts obey this law. We take note, say, of the color of the book before us: we differentiate it against some other color actually before us in our field of vision, or imagined in our minds. Let us think of the blackboard as black: the blackness is defined against the whiteness of the figures chalked or chalkable upon it; or against the color of the adjacent wall. Let us think of a man as a soldier; the opposite thought in our minds is, not the color of his hair, or his height, or his birthplace, or his nationality; but some other profession—soldier, sailor, tinker, tailor. It is always by means of some contrapositive that we make the object of our thoughts definite; it is not necessarily always the same opposite;

but against whatever opposite it is, they are always homogeneous."

This is quite a load of philosophy to remind us of what is known already by the proverbial meanest intelligence, such as the Henry and Harriet Dubbs, who frequent vaudeville shows; otherwise, a joke of the comedian, Sir Harry Lauder, would have been—what it never was—entirely wasted on them! The genial Scot, in one of his songs relates how he and a friend, McKay, spent a glorious summer holiday at a Highland Scottish seaside resort "'mangst the bonnie lassies up at Tobermory." During the visit one of the natives asked McKay if he were a tourist, and received the answer "No, Ah'm a plumber!" The humor, of course, consists in the fact that the contrapositives to the term "tourist" are either a native or a more or less permanent business resident of any place; and the reply that Mac was a burst-pipe artist, being a breach of Minto's law, was entirely irrelevant.

When we apply this law in considering the problem of evil, it is at once evident that humanity have always noticed its contrapositive character. God and the Devil, Ormuzd and Ahriman, Osiris and Typhon, Vishnu and Siva, and so forth; each of the foregoing pairs in their various world religions, respectively typifying the opposing principles of Good and Evil. Either phenomenon implies the existence of the other, and proves their inseparable connection. The evil, we are told, follows the light. The obvious remedy, therefore, is more and wider light. Thus, if it is impossible to altogether banish the darkness, we may at least reduce it to an irreducible minimum! For us Socialists, that amounts to an obligation that we put all our strength, means and energy into spreading the Light of Socialism for the ultimate material and mental salvation of mankind.

Besides, as Minto's foregoing book and blackboard examples indicate, contrapositives may take the form, not of actually existing things, but only of possible or potential phenomena. In an oldish illustrated dictionary of his, the writer could show to a modern boy a weird picture of a certain object; and if the rest of the page were covered and the boy asked what that object were, a correct answer would likely not be received. The picture represents the old-style neck-breaking high bicycle or "boneshaker," which was then the contrapositive of the low, solid-tired "safety" bicycle. Today, the contrapositive of the pneumatic or the motor cycle, exists only in a legendary or potential form, and not in actuality. So, in the future, will it be with most of the evils that are now so painfully obvious; for they, too, will vanish into mere misty and forgotten potentialities!

But when those happy Socialist days arrive, will they be appreciated as much as they will deserve? No! The numbers whom capitalist-bred misery and revolutionary ardor have impelled to study past history are, even today very small. How will it be when a long, calm, uninterrupted period of well-being and happiness has been prevalent? Change of impression, as before stated, being necessary to full consciousness, the future instructors will have quite a job trying to make contemporary pupils understand and take an interest in their immense advantages. There will then, far more than now, be considerable reason in the famous adjuration of the hymn to "Count your blessings, count them one by one."

However, the fact that posterity shall largely accept their advantages as a matter of course, will no more depreciate the benefits thereof, than does the unconsciousness of his complete and unbroken health and strength on the part of a perfectly sound man, make his daily condition and life any the less enjoyable or desirable.

So, fellow Socialists, on with the good work; and you other prospective Socialists, come amongst us!

"PROGRESS."