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Cotton's Weekly

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The independent-tempered worker is making the short-tempered plate.

Sixteen soldiers guarding a bale of hay in Nanaimo is enough to make the whole of Canada laugh.

In the Port Arthur Labor Day parade was a Woman's Suffrage section, the first in Port Arthur history.

Do you notice the change in the ideas of the people? Just a little while ago Socialism was idiotic. Now the people are getting to think Socialism is all right, but is a long way off. The change in outlook is tremendous.

Lord Haldane, Chancellor of Great Britain, says the cause of peace is afar off. He is pointing at the situation from the master class outlook, and he sees some mighty, big storms brewing in England for him and his class.

The minister used to make the worker shiver with his pictures of hell. Now no matter how the parson lets his imagination rip, the worker just yawns. He lives in an earthly hell making profits for his masters, and the preacher cannot give him any pointers on that subject.

With forty millions a Harry Shaw can have himself proved sane or insane as he wishes. With the thousands of dollars worth of wealth you have produced and the forty cents you have in your trousers' pocket ought to be enough to prove insanity if you voted either of the old party tickets.

There have been strikers and soldiers at Dublin, strikers and soldiers at Nanaimo, B. C., and at Pretoria, South Africa, and at Barcelona, Spain and elsewhere. The lords of rent, interest and profit are feeling the heaving working class beneath them straining to burst the barriers that keep them in slavery.

Has labor not advanced? It has advanced mightily. It is a far cry from the conspiracy laws when two workers could not talk over their wages together without committing a crime, to the sight of a million miners on strike at once. We have seen the latter event. Surely the day of complete emancipation is not far off.

Capitalist papers report trouble is brewing in the English trades unions. Why? Because so many unskilled workers are flocking into the unions that the "conservative" trade leaders of the skilled workers are alarmed. The capitalist papers have a way of glossing and making to look pleasant some facts mighty uncomfortable to those who rule.

Scandals of grafting have been uncovered in the police forces of New York, Edmonton, Montreal, London, Paris and elsewhere. This system is sure a graft breeder, but even when the system is stinking under the noses of the old citizens, they think it is something else. Their noses are good, but their reasoning powers are mighty poor.

There is a chain of Socialist and labor papers across Canada. There is the "Worker", B. C. Labor News, the Cowansville Cotton's Weekly, the Toronto Industrial Banner, Hamilton Labor News, and Port Arthur Wage Earner. In Port Arthur is also published a Finnish Socialist daily. There is the Winnipeg Voice, the Edmonton Alberta, Federationist, the Fernie Ledger, the B. C. Federationist, and the Western Clarion. Labor has sure progressed some in the past few years.

The price of milk is to go up in Montreal. You have not heard anything about the "milkmen's union" striking for more wages, but the price is advanced just the same. You did not hear anything of the "ice-men's union" demanding more pay when the ice-dealers boosted the price of ice. But the price went up just the same. However, labor strikes for more pay, how must be. Why, these advancing prices at the door of the tyrannical worker. Its a cheap guy who will fall for the song that rising wages compel a rise in prices.

Toronto financiers are adopting many strange pets. Fish, squirrels, big snakes, and the like are being housed in Toronto for the pleasure of the financiers. Did we hear any one say there were slums in Toronto? How absurd. Just visit the luxurious place, the snakes are kept in, and you will be persuaded that there can be no slums where the kind financiers are so careful of animals. The rumors of the slums must originate with the discontented Socialists whom the ministers say are such dreadful people. Just look at the snakes and do not investigate further.

Canadian papers report that the Barcelona strikers are being led by Spanish anarchists. Of course they must be. Why, these strikers are day after day working. They actually have the audacity to make demands upon their law abiding, profit squeezing, blood sucking masters. The nice, kind, gentlemanly worker who will crawl for a job and say, "Thank you sir," when given an opportunity to be robbed, would do no such things. Hence anarchists must lead the strike. Now the plumes have called so many people anarchists, such persons as Tom Mann and Ben Tillett and Bill Hayward and Jim Larkin of Dublin, and the workers have found these people on their side, good comrades, true comrades, fiery agitators against oppression, that the worker is ready to say, "If these people are anarchists, then God bless the breed."

A social converse is the best appetizer, is the message that comes from a bunch of hygienists who have met in Balafo. We are so pleased to know this. When the coal miner is eating his slops in the cells of Nanaimo jail, let him remember this and commune with himself. When the slum child is munching its lunch from the garbage barrel, let it commune with itself and find its repast appetizing. When you are eating on the jump so as to get back to your slavery ere the whistle blows, remember this and commune between your gulps. When you sit beside the road, you workers on the Cowansville streets or elsewhere, eating your tripe, and the automobiles of your masters whizz by, giving your food a pleasant, gritty flavor, remember that social converse will make the sand appetizing. Are you not glad, fellow slaves of Canada, that this deep pearl of wisdom has come from the wise ginks who have chimed at Buffalo?

Capitalist Tyranny on Vancouver Island

By GEORGE PETTIGREW.

The strike situation on Vancouver Island has developed into a serious proposition, and one which cannot be studied too closely by every member of the working class in Canada. To give the readers of Cotton's Weekly an idea of the real conditions, I will endeavor to give a brief review of the whole situation. The production of coal on the island commenced many years ago, and has been gradually developing. With the course of such development the mines on repeated occasions have changed hands, with the usual expected results—worse conditions and lower wages for those employed. At various times the workers employed have made attempts to organize. Through various reasons (mainly the employers getting control of the unions) they have failed.

With the desire to make larger profits safety was neglected, and in October, 1909, a serious explosion took place at Extension Mines near Ladysmith, and thirty-three men were killed. Notwithstanding this terrible slaughter, the mines were placed in no safer condition than previously, although a mining law to prevent such accidents has been passed, and as usual, wages were lowered to make up for the damage to property through the explosion.

The men soon found the only remedy for such oppression was through collective action, and this through the form of industrial organization. An effort was made in 1910 to get the United Mineworkers of America, or the Western Federation of Miners to come and organize. Neither of these unions, being then engaged in large fights, would do as desired by the men on the island, and for the time being a local union was formed, known as the Canadian Federation of Miners. This local organization was formed only for the purpose of proving to the larger body that the men were ready to organize. It had the desired result, for the U.M.W. of A. took over the whole organization in September, 1911, and a district was formed in December of the same year, known as District No. 28, U. M. W. of A.

The organization grew rapidly in Ladysmith, South Wellington and Cumberland. In Nanaimo, however, it was slow, for the Western Fuel Company had a splendid spy system, and whenever a man was known to grumble, the bosses were immediately notified, and he had to get out. Many a score of miners had to go through this spy system, and the spots they had, these men generally had good places and conditions, and made good wages. The company, every two years, pretended to make an agreement with the men, but as a rule nobody attended these meetings except the hired funkeys of the coal company. Any man having a grievance knew, did he voice his opinion, he had to get out. Even though the agreement contained certain conditions, the company violated these every day, and without a union the men had no redress. Still, they had not the courage to join the union. In the other camps mentioned, the union had grown to nearly 90 per cent. of the miners, owing to the exceedingly bad and dangerous conditions.

Owing to the recent explosion and heavy death rate and the then existing conditions of the mines, the men in the highly organized camps decided to take advantage of Sir Dickie's much boasted Coal Mines Regulation Act, which contains a clause to the effect that the men shall either have appointed or elect two of their number at their own expense to examine the workings and to report to the men and the chief inspector of mines with regard to dangerous gas in the mines.

In the month of June, 1912, the union felt strong enough in Ladysmith to have the courage to elect two members of the union on this gas committee. After having examined the workings, the committee found a small quantity of gas, and reported it.

In July the committee again made their examination, and found a larger quantity, so large that it was considered dangerous. The company to try and prove these men inefficient, brought the inspector of mines to examine, and he verified the report made.

THE BLACK LIST IN OPERATION.

The company, because it had to meet some expense in clearing this gas (which in other words meant a reduction in dividends to that extent), decided to have these examinations ended. It dismissed one of the inspectors on the pretext they had no place for him to work. He went from day to day seeking work while strangers were being employed. The union at this time, not being in a position or desirous of making a fight, induced this man to seek employment elsewhere. This he did, and it soon was evident he was blacklisted. For wherever he went, he could get no work.

The dismissal and blacklisting of this man gave the coal companies more courage, and the men active in the union in all the camps were openly discriminated against and had no means of finding the reasons.

This gas committee was sent to Cumberland and was fortunate in getting work from a contractor. However, he was only three days employed when the superintendent informed the said contractor this man must go, and made as the excuse he could not pay the wage of \$3.85 per day, although other men employed by him received this wage. The contractor did not desire to part with this man owing to his experience and ability, but was promptly ordered to do so.

When this man was fired, the union thought the coal company had gone a little too far, and a meeting was held and a deputation was elected to interview the said superintendent, but he informed them he would meet no one representing the union. Another meeting of all employees was held, and a deputation composed of union and non-union men alike met with the same fate; only this time the superintendent said he reserved the right to hire and discharge unquestioned.

THE BLACKLIST FOLLOWED BY LOCKOUT.

The men at their meeting decided to have a holiday as a protest, there was a great demand for coal at this time, and on Monday, September 16th, threw the mines idle. The following day a notice was posted telling every man to draw his tools, and before he could be again employed he had individually to sign a contract on the old conditions for two years. This they refused to do. On Wednesday, 18th, the men in Ladysmith took a holiday to protest against the action of the company in Cumberland, and the following

day a similar notice was posted for them. This started the lockout, which has gone on since. In October, 1912, a convention was held representing the whole men of the island and a wage schedule was drawn up and presented to all the coal companies for higher wages and improved conditions. This was completely ignored. J. P. White, the International President, sent a communication to all the coal companies asking them to meet him and a delegation of mine workers, to discuss a proposed agreement. This also was ignored.

McBRIDE A SNEAKING CAPITALIST TOOL.

Meantime Sir Richard had been asked to investigate the trouble at Ladysmith and Cumberland, seeing he was Minister of Mines at \$5,000 per year. He refused to do so, on the plea that he did not desire to interfere between capital and labor. In the meantime the 600 Chinese and Japanese had stood loyally by their white fellow-workers, and because of the desire of the coal company to work the yellow man against the white, application was made to the government to send 300 special police. Not being desirous of interfering with capital and labor, this was granted by Sir Richard and his cabinet, and Chinatown and Japantown were surrounded and the inhabitants ordered by the police to work on the threat of imprisonment and deportation. Through fear, the yellow men went to work with a few yellow white men. Since that time the coal company has scoured the whole of Canada, United States and Great Britain for men to break the strike, and has been unsuccessful.

Seeing the other coal companies had been doing their best to defeat the strike on the island, by supplying the market with coal, a move was made to get the International Executive Board to grant power to finance a general strike on the island. This was given and on April 30th, 1913, a circular was issued to all men at all mines declaring a general strike on May 1st. The men in Nanaimo, although only organized at that time to about forty per cent., took advantage of the call, and the company spy system was thrown out of gear by the way things had been done so quietly. The men joined the union, and by the end of the first week of the general strike ninety-seven per cent. were members.

COAL BARONS TURN ANARCHISTS.

For some time these companies in Nanaimo did not attempt to scab their mines; but it seems the whole of the companies had made an organized move to scab the mines, make trouble, get in a large force of police and militia, and get things their own way. The only way this could be done was to get the scabs to make the trouble, because in July and August in Cumberland the scabs sent a challenge to the strikers that they intended to clean them out of the city. The men made up their minds if they were to be cleared out, they would be cleared out in a body, and not individually, and gathered to meet them. The result was when the scabs marched into town using all the filthy language they could and challenging the strikers to fight, one or two fights did take place, and the police, who accompanied the scabs, only arrested the strikers, and the scabs were allowed to go free. This roused the strikers to the point. They organized and chased the scabs and police alike from the city. In Ladysmith, the scabs in the scab camp, hotel, hearing of the attempt at Cumberland, became more bold than usual, also used dirty language, and on Saturday, August 9th, four Southern Italian scabs made an attack on two strikers, and freely used the knives. The case was given in charge of the police and they would only arrest the man who was supposed to have used the knife, and the others were allowed to go free. Previous to that point scabs had been taken from scabs, and they were not prosecuted, but on the other hand strikers who only used the word "scab" were heavily fined.

In Nanaimo several women had been heavily fined and insulted by the magistrate for being on the picket line.

The point of endurance reached its limit the beginning of the week of Sept. 18th, when the men decided, since there was no law to protect the striker, they must protect themselves.

SCABS START SHOOTING AND KILLING.

Later in the same week the scabs being on strike, and the men of the strikers, and an open fight must have taken place, as later the scabs had to take refuge in the mine tunnel, and one man was shot in the abdomen by them. When the news of the shooting spread to all the districts, naturally the desire among the strikers was to defend themselves, and avenge the shooters and clear out the scabs. The scabs were cleared out to the sea, and the strikers some houses were burned down. Special police were brought in from Vancouver and Victoria, but they were as promptly and willingly bundled back again.

The military or militia forces were then mobilized, and brought into the strike district. The question now is as to who sent for them. Whoever did it, they are here, and doing what it would take Russia hard to beat.

A BLOOD-LESTING COLONEL.

On Monday, September 18th a meeting of miners of Nanaimo was held in the Athletic Club. Between twelve and fifteen hundred men were present to discuss a proposed agreement between one of the coal companies and the U.M.W. of A. The meeting started at 7.30 p.m. About 8 p.m. it was announced a move of some kind was on, as the troops were surrounding the building. At 9 p.m. the commander, Colonel Hadd, asked for the chairman to come out and speak. On doing so, Hadd showed him around the outside of the building, letting him see the troops on all sides, and informed him each man had fixed bayonet and ball cartridge in his rifle, and plenty more in his belt. He said he would give the chairman two minutes to start and clear the hall, and ten minutes to have it cleared, and each man must come out in single file, and if not cleared a big gun at the back door would be set in action to help them out at the front. Business was suspended to comply with his orders, when he sent word to let the meeting go for one hour. The meeting had only been a few minutes started when he again sent word he desired to address the meeting. On being received, he stated he was tired; he wanted to go to bed

with the assurance there would be no disturbance when the meeting finished, and he would allow the men as long as they wished to conduct their business. On this assurance being given he went out, but later developments proved he did not go to bed, and had no intention to do so.

It is the opinion of all present that this man gave his first order with the expectation of a general stampede, so he could order fire on them, and make it appear the men were anxious for riot. Had the men not been warned to keep their heads cool, this would undoubtedly have taken place, and a few lives been lost. Had such happened then Colonel Hadd and he alone would have been responsible.

When the meeting did close at 11 p.m., the order was given that only ten men could get out at a time. These marched single file through soldiers with fixed bayonets and loaded guns to the provincial court house. Each man was examined to see if he had any arms, and his face examined by a large number of special and regular police. If he was an active man in the union or supposed to be he was arrested, and if not he was allowed to go outside to again stand with armed soldiers on guard till 6 a.m.

A WORKINGMAN'S HOME IS THE SPORT OF THE SOLDIER.

While this was on in Nanaimo, the soldiers and police were going through the houses of the men in Ladysmith, South Wellington and Extension. The result is over one hundred and twenty men have been put in prison and more going every day, and more women would be going the same journey only for lack of space in the jails.

Col. Hadd told the president of the union the following day his men had seen gas, etc., being handed out at the meeting to the men. For two days the empty hall has been guarded by ten or twelve special police, the whole place ransacked by the militia, even to the length of tearing up the floor, and not one gun or other weapon has been found.

When the prisoners are brought to and from the jail to the court they are in between four armed soldiers, and a policeman holding each. Special trains have been chartered to run the prisoners to and from the jail, and Ladysmith, Victoria and elsewhere. Among the prisoners is Jack Place, M.P.P. for Nanaimo, and several international organizers of the U.M.W., including all of the local officials of all the local unions.

BOWSER AN AGENT OF THE MINE OWNERS.

Bail has been refused in every case, and each man remanded for eight days. In many cases the authorities had no direct charge, and had to make it unlawful assembly.

The crew of the Princess Patricia (C.P.R.) struck work one night and refused to man her when the troops were being brought from Vancouver to Nanaimo. The Chinese took their places, and these soldiers are the men who have enlisted against a possible Chinese invasion.

At meetings held in Victoria and Vancouver resolutions have been passed by the B. C. Federation of Labor protesting against the use of the militia and asking a referendum for a general strike.

Bowser has said he will spend \$2,000,000 but he will chill these miners into submission; he is certainly doing his best to spend the money, and the way things are going at present, \$2,000,000 won't last long. A wagon with one bale of hay was going up the street, the other day with two mounted men in front, eight kilites on either side, and two mounted men in the rear. This can be seen scores of times per day, only with small commodities other than hay in the wagon.

THE LESSON.

What is the lesson? Who should benefit by it?

We, the workers in Canada, should benefit, for it is not only the miners in Vancouver Island who are looking down the muzzle of a loaded rifle, but the whole working class. The lesson is, it is time we were united as a Socialist Party and fighting together for the overthrow of such class governments. The only way is to get together on one stand. By doing so, we will be able in Vancouver and Victoria to overthrow Bowser and McBride, and all their followers. Let us, on the political field, not forget that because some men may not be so well grounded in economic questions as others, he is none the less sincere and determined. By getting into one party we will be the better able to educate each other and be able to do much propaganda in a more effective way. Let our I. W. W. realize that these things have happened, and will happen, and they are partly responsible. For taking no part on the political battlefield, let each remember similar fights will take place in the future before the overthrow of capitalism, and they can help man or win the fights. Let each man in the I.W.W. remember if the fight on the industrial field is to be one of success, the best way to make it so is by building up the present unions on industrial lines, the same as is being directed by the U.M.W. of A. and W. F. of Miners. The A. F. of L. can and will be changed in policies if only men imbued with such ideas will get in and work for the change.

In conclusion I will again appeal to the Executive Committee of the S.D.P. to ask the Executive Committee of the S. P. of C. to get together and try and work on one common platform for unity. The sights I witnessed have made me feel that parties must not stand in the way. I feel this more strongly because of the attempt to form a labor party. It may have failed in the west for a short time only. It may be discussed again soon, but the end is sure if we have Socialist unity.

The fight is on in earnest in Canada by the other side. Let them know it is on our side also. When the masters are prepared to do such things against those of us who demand better wages and conditions in the only two constituencies where Socialists are returned in the west, what are they prepared to do when we demand all?

Marx said: "Workers of the world unite; you have a world to win, you have nothing to lose but your chains."

The little boy stealing jam does not like it when the cook finds him out. The capitalist stealing labor power does not like it when the Socialist says, "Ha, ha!"

Once a Socialist, always a Socialist.

When the plate says, "I'm it," the worker says, "I'm hit."

The world will pass from the night of capitalist horrors and awake into Socialist peace.

Socialism and Liberty, or McBride, Bowser and bayonets. B. C. workers will have their choice at the next election.

The worker works all the time and has nothing. The capitalist works not and has everything. Queer, is it not?

No, Gussie, under Socialism you would not be deprived of your terrapin and champagne if you earned them by working.

The producing class of Canada is robbed each year of \$600,000,000 in rent, interest and profit. No wonder the profit lords think this system the best ever.

"Be meek," preach the preachers. Why be meek? So your bosses can see how meek you are and slice a dollar or off your pay each week and add it to their profits?

How foolish it is for people to say that the capitalist system will last a long time. It has lasted a bare hundred years (the feudal system lasted a thousand) and already the capitalist system is going to pieces before our eyes.

The working class build the mansions of the capitalist and the shacks of the workers. They give the palaces to the capitalists and then, not content with such lavish generosity, they pay the capitalists large sums of money to be allowed to live in the shacks they have built for themselves! Foolish workers.

A farmer will feed his horses during the winter when there is no work and he calls this business. The capitalist will pay Salvation Army bunnies and handout dens money to feed their workers when there is no work to do, and the capitalists call this "charity." What rot.

The critics of Socialists want us to lay down some cut-and-dried plan. They want us to draw a golden picture and set everybody in it like a wooden frame. We have no cut-and-dried plan. Society is an evolution. We wish the workers to seize the public powers in order to change production for profit into production for use and abolish rent, interest and profit. Just how the workers will arrange the laws and society we have no way of saying and no desire. The workers will know what to do when they get the power.

You want to have good clothes, to have a nice house to live in, to see your wife well dressed, to see your children comfortably dressed and playing with toys which children like. This desire in you of a praiseworthy one, yet you cannot fulfill it. The banker must have his rake-off, the bondholder must have his interest, the manufacturer must have his profits, the landlord must have his blood money. Socialism would give you your praiseworthy desires. Then why not support a movement which will raise you, your wife and children to a better position in life?

The 45th regiment of Lindsay, Ont., wear the Mackenzie tartan on their headgear. An inquisitive mortal once asked an officer what a Scotch tartan was worn by other than a Scotch regiment for. The officer replied:—"S-h-h-h! Sir William Mackenzie gave us a thousand dollars." The men wear the Mackenzie tartan and the band plays a Scotch regimental march. The officer who made the remark is a German, and a lover of his Fatherland. He has said openly that if war between Germany and England broke out, he would support the Kaiser. And he wears the Mackenzie tartan in Sam Hughes' home regiment, of which Sir William Mackenzie is Honorary Lieut.-Colonel.

No taxation without representation has been a cry of liberty that won many battles. Yet the railroads tax the greater part of their earnings away from the railway workers and the workers have no say. The manufacturers and employers of labor tax the workers three-quarters of what they produce, and the workers have no say. The workers are not represented on the boards of directors of the companies they work for. They do not choose the company officials who guide the affairs and give the orders the workers must obey. This is the worst taxation without representation that there has ever been in the history of man. Yet Borden and Laurier and their political benchmen have the effrontery to tell the producing class they are free!

Do you think that the masters built a rifle factory at Quebec for nothing? Do you think they pay a high-priced expert in the art of legalized murder such as Sam Hughes for doing nothing? Do you think the hired press of the capitalists is fostering the Boy Scout movement and urging the expenditure of large sums on the militia for no definite purpose? No chance. The masters see far ahead, and realize that a strong militia force is the only thing that can save them from oblivion. First they send the special police and hired thugs, then the murderous militia. Workers of Vancouver Island know what it feels like to be bulldozed by a force of arms and having a trick worked on them where, if the plans of the officers had carried out, the men would have been massacred.

Lord Haldane, Chancellor of Britain, has been in Montreal attending a law gabfest. He says the burden of defending the empire is getting too heavy for Great Britain. You see, the plutes of England have starved the common workers till a million a year of them die twenty years sooner than they should. The master class ride in luxury on the backs of these underfed slaves, and say, "Now defend for us our swag from all quarters of the world." The British slaves reply, "Masters, The burden of you is already too heavy for us. How shall we go to get killed when we are already nigh to death?" So Haldane trots over to Canada and hints and bems and haws and wants us to bear the burdens of defending the British plunderings. Go to, old fellow, go to. Betake yourself back with this message from the working class of Canada: "We stand for suffering labor the world over. If the British lordly wish war, let them put their lordly and pulled-up carcasses where the bullets are seeking flesh."