

THE BURNING BUSH.

(Continued from page 5.)

in "wage labor and capital." (We need not burden a harassed Caledonian, scant of space, with quotations of the obvious.) We note, to prevent confusion, that we do not mean mere poverty and physical deterioration, but positive social degradation, the progressive inhibition of the social forces, means, and potentialities. The manifesto is explicit against specific attention to reforms—and as already noted that specification is augmented. In "Value, Price and Profit, (p. 77) the watchword is "abolition of the Capitalist system." And as, and "for reason already given, Socialism must struggle to fulfil its function, it must find itself, in the byeplay of opportunist politics, in direct opposition to all who cannot in first attention, carry the flag.

In "aspects of social change," "C" sums up his particular issues on the Party—"Anti Labor Party; Anti-reform, apathy for constitutional change." Nos. 1 and 2, may fairly be accepted, on the first count, but not on the second, i.e., not Marxian. We think they are Marxian. That is, they find their necessary place in the philosophy of the materialist conception. In brief, that, in that facile gospel of social change, economic conditions inevitably create class conflicts; that those conflicts must be fought out between the classes in the ideological concepts of their consciousness, and that in spite of wavering appearance and medial issue, the fundamental interests of class organisations must clash, sharp and imperious, on the final field of political emancipation. The clear concept of the new must clash with the romantic tradition of the old. If the concept is not clear, i.e., not extricated from the old tradition, it must seek conciliations with affects. Because it cannot walk alone in the darkness of its confusions. But if the concept is clear, it must be anti to those effects. Hence, it must be anti to parties organized primarily to grapple with those efforts. That is, anti "practical politics," which includes both labor and reform, but which also harmonises it with proletarian identity, without separate interest or currency.

Says "C," again: The function of revolutionary parties is not to destroy the workers' organisations, but to act as a special environment of education and criticism, along with the complex of forces making for Socialism." Quite so. But that is not "C's" philosophy of reform. On the contrary. It is the philosophy of straight Socialism. The application of which by the S. P. C. has earned for it the romantic titles of the troglodyte. That "special environment" is, of necessity, the unmisted concept of the class struggle, else it had no critical value. To have critical value it must oppose false organisation and illusory interest, and consequently it carries with it, as a direct sequence, political hostility to whosoever cannot fly the red flag of Capitalist abolition.

"C" wanders on in faith sublime to "argue for revolutionaries to influence the future in feasible ways." But he "does not throw down the class struggle." In that confusion alone he violates his own contention. For, if he does not throw down the class struggle—in effect, if not in theory—he will find himself, almost immediately, in political antagonism to labor representation everywhere, save in the parties of the straight issue. The straight issue is not step at a time ameliorations, but abolition of capital. The incidents of the daily struggle are efforts of property rights. The incessant encroachments of that right on labor compel that struggle for preservation. But the right of property to itself turns that blind struggle to futility. The sequence alters the tempo of the process, but not its direction; alters its conditioning, but not its conditions. In the last resort it is abortive, thus forcing the struggle to the issue of power. That is the class struggle. And it is anti-thesis of reform. And "feasible ways" are the ways of truth. Not the temporisations of expediency. The ways that make the meaning and significance of life conscious to itself. Not the subterfuges of the political. The ways that declare the reality of things as they are.

Not the puny antidotes that would leaven a finitive lie for social purpose. Society cannot thrive on a lie; it cannot be regenerated on deceit. It must know itself, or perish; know the truth, or languish in superstitions.

The class struggle is the ideological aspect of Socialism. The terms of equated interest. The clear recognition of that struggle implies the clear recognition of our slavery—the bondage of wage-dom. The recognition of our slavery manifests itself in unmistakable opposition to property right in the means of life. Not joint management of its exploitation. It involves the complete shattering of traditional freedom. Not the dim travesties of conciliation. Therefore the class struggle, implicit in the daily occasions of existence, against a rapacious master class, must be organised for the abolition of that class. It cannot keep political house with temporisations. While the same perception prevents it from fantasias in the industrial field. To organise a party entails perception of the reasons for the organisation. And therefore, explicit principles. If the reasons do not appeal, the principles cannot apply. And the reasons can only appeal when time condition quickens necessity. Thence the principle is not to be achieved by the forced marches of "intelligent minorities," nor the diplomacies of co-operation, however skillful. Consequently, "the creation of institutions as instrumentalities for furthering our interests" are finally dependant, in formation and permanence, on the class consciousness of a social majority.

Moreover, the only "indispensable institution" for the promotion of our well-being, is knowledge of capital relations. The social organisation and discipline which its necessities have developed are ripe to our will for the furtherance of our interest—the socialist commonwealth. Whenever the idea of its benefice kindles the passion of intelligence. The awakening of that knowledge is primarily the development of the capitalist system. The steady, unalterable, antipodal accumulation of its excess, destroys the forms of its institutions; shatters the content of their traditions; and unveils, like morning dawn, the livid night that is past, the day that is to be. Our function is the "special environment of education," which in accord with the unproven sequences of time, may forward their complex of forces to the triumph of "constitutional means." That environment is the oil on the turbulent waters of change, which alone can abate the last terrors of insatiate privilege. It is the symbol, lifted up and understood, for the comforting of peoples, and the healing of the nations.

R.

A DIALOGUE ON WAGES.

BY WM. P. BLACK.

(With apologies to E. T. Kingsley and others)

Comrades and Friends:—

All of you have heard in the past times of men and women having to work for their board, a state of affairs which always creates the greatest sympathy, for the victims. Now, if this state of affairs creates sympathy, a case where a man or woman worked for nothing and boarded him or herself would create much more, wouldn't it? And if you heard of a man or woman who worked for nothing and boarded themselves and paid the employer for the privilege of doing so you would say he or she who did so should be in the house for the feeble minded; yet there are millions of men and women doing this very thing. Maybe you think not, but let me tell you there are lots of folks doing it right here in Vancouver, and there would be many more if there were jobs for all workers here at present, and any of you working women and men who are in possession of a looking glass can see the gink or ginkess any time you want to if you get into a room by yourself and take a good look in the mirror. Those words—gink and ginkess—sound slangy, but they express what we are better than calling ourselves men and women, we won't be men and women in the full sense of the words until we abolish the condi-

tions that make us wage slaves to a small portion of society.

Now it is up to me to prove that the state of affairs outlined above exists.

To begin with, one cannot think of wages without thinking of money, and cannot think of money without thinking of wealth, as the average citizen thinks that money is wealth.

So we will analyze the word wealth and find out what it means.

What is the meaning of wealth? Of what does it consist? Is it gold, silver, diamonds, paper notes, stocks and bonds, deeds or first mortgages? There is wealth in gold, silver and other valuables when they are viewed from a commodity nature point of view, and then only, when any of the above metals are used as a means of exchange in the form of money. They are simply a means of exchange; that is what money is—a means of exchange.

Wealth consists of all kinds of commodities created by the labor power of workers from nature's products, that is the meaning of wealth. Jewelry is wealth because of its commodity nature, people wear it, especially "culled" folks and the ladies.

Now that the word wealth is disposed of we will take the word wages.

What are wages? Wages is money or goods paid for labor power when it is delivered!

What do wages do for the working class? They keep them in food, clothing and shelter of a kind.

Where do wages come from? Wages are produced by the workman employed on the job, as a rule.

We have just concluded that wages only amount to food, clothing and shelter on the average for the worker; then he works for wages and pays his own board.

Now at the end of the year, what has the worker saved from his earnings? How much has he got in the bank on the average? They haven't saved a bean; so that will just prove that he has worked for nothing and boarded himself; does it not?

But that is not all, as there is a percentage of our citizens who do not do any useful labor, how do they live? They live from surplus values created by the workers, which is an incontrovertible fact.

Now when such is conceded to be the case, the worker creates this surplus value and the bourgeoisie live on it, do they not? Where they do that, they must be paying the boss for the privilege of working for nothing and boarding themselves.

In short they go to work and pay their own wages, and board themselves, work for nothing and pay the employer for the privilege of working for nothing and boarding themselves.

Now what keeps the working class in such a state of mind as to allow such a flimflam game to be worked on them?

The chief instrument in the hands of the ruling class is the church, the great lying church, as Carlyle calls it, and there will not be a better social system on this planet until it is destroyed, root and branch. People stuffed with this dope cannot do their own thinking entirely. "The preachers do not think themselves and they squelch all progressive thought in others."

How are we going to destroy it? By education of a kind. What kind? That which is dispensed through the columns of the Western Clarion.

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