

Readjustment

"BACK to normalcy" has captivated us. Like its predecessor, "the long way to Tipperary," it has a pleasing jingle—and the same quality of meaning. Therefore is it of much acceptance amongst us, for it is always easier to chase away care with a song than with logical deduction. Still, catch words do not solve problems, any more than reforms can abolish slavery. The remedy for both is knowledge. And through bitter disillusionment knowledge is slowly thrust upon us.

"More production" is yet a common cry. "We must work harder and live harder," says the press. "We must throw off our coats and work," say the lords temporal, while the lords spiritual, in their wanton beefiness, translate the order into the slave ethic of "grace," "patience," "humility," and "regeneration." More production! Yes, But how? Every individual seems as eager to ward it off as Britain is to avert the "dumping" of the indemnity.

Briefly stated, readjustment means markets. It means the conversion of industry from the necessities of war to the necessities of peace; the substitution of the market of construction for the greatly diminished market of destruction. How is that to come to pass?

Since everything is produced for profit, obviously nothing will be produced which does not furnish profit. Individual industries, looking at market conditions and finding them unstable and uncertain, slow down on operation which, in turn, increases unemployment, diminishes purchasing power, limits reinvestments and augments the condition of instability. More production thus appears as the necessity of capitalist society, while its opposite ties the activities of separate operators. There is the irreconcilable contradiction, founded on private property and resulting in the antagonism of class. Yet, patently, all production cannot stop—or society must perish. As patently, production cannot be carried on under the old conditions of anarchic competition. And what then?

War time activities have carried the modern machine industry to an unequalled pitch of excellence. Its efficiency is greater; its co-ordination more harmonious; its organization more perfect; its direction and control more complete. As a corollary there is less necessary labor required, less duplication of effort, less waste of competition, and the decay,—in ever-growing degree—of individual power, and with it individual safety.

But here advanced production is barred by retarded distribution. The new methods of the former are at variance with the old means of the latter. The traffic in war commodities has resulted in the most abnormal exchange conditions—conditions whose results cannot be offset by any financial wizardry. Cancellation of war debts would but precipitate the social climax. And how could an increase in the volume of commerce change the situation if the profits and accumulation are to remain with the creditors? Countries of low exchange are prevented from buying, i.e., importing. They must, therefore, to the uttermost, develop their native resources. But they can sell on the world market at less price than can their competitors with high exchange, because they can produce for less. Hence the involution of exchange conditions, to that extent, threatens the power of "creditor" nations. True, such conditions cannot obtain indefinitely, since all countries are interdependent on each others commerce, but they can—and probably will—obtain long enough to usher in a new menace and a higher level of industry.

Society cannot be rescued from its present economic slough by any haphazard methods, or tentative experiments. Financial exigencies have already determined that. Production, in nations of low exchange, is forced by the exchange situation itself to greater economies and cheap production. That is to say, more efficient industrial organizations,—or in other words, greater and more powerful combinations of capital. The industries of the Central Powers, caught between the indemnity and the necessity of domestic exploitation, must be highly or-

ganized and concentrated, i.e., corporately capitalized. French and British industry, to meet the crushing weight of reparations, and maintain their "commercial victory" must follow the same way, and all Europe fall in with the methods of the strong arm. The ambitious Stinnes, the progressive Louchet, the consolidation of iron and coal, the recent mergers in British industry and finance, all point the moral of the tale.

But this process reacts on the strong "creditor" nations. They cannot stand by, mere passive spectators of this desperate struggle with destitution for greater profits. They cannot afford to quarrel with market conditions. They must produce competitively on the terms offered by the world market—or lose their places in the sun. They too, must key their industries to the power-shaft of new necessity. And out of this new need comes the higher industry and the new menace. For this new industry will be individualistic competitive industry, but interlocking, international groups organized co-operatively, collectively directed, and controlling production to the effective market: colossal monopolies, with their inevitable supremacy of power, in a death grapple for permanence and privilege. And because this control of production and exchange cannot possibly satisfy the needs of society, we of the laboring class may find ourselves in the grip of a tyranny unequalled, of a misery unmeasured, of a slavery unfathomed and spirit breaking.

True, there is the possibility of revolution. But, today, the proletariat seems to be in no hurry to assert itself. It still retains faith in the prosperity of tomorrow, and consorts with the most grotesque reforms. It is capitalist minded, riven with dissension, divided in policy, international only in name, pitifully shackled by love and want to the whirling wheels of gain. What the psychological factors in the situation may be we cannot gauge, nor their influence. But we do know that society is indomitable in its endurance of misery. Certainly, the conditions for revolution are rosy ripe, but who dare say that the powers to effect it are as mature? And if not, the mighty struggle for markets must go on, and with that struggle, concurrently, the greater subjugation of the mass, the wider spreading misery, the snapping tensivity of class conflict, the fiery furnace of new war.

Before Socialism can be, the mediocre, reactionary middle classes must cease to be. Then the industrial overlord and the industrial slave will face each other in the fog clear issue of the class struggle. That may be the final achievement of capital. And it is going to its task splendidly. The "Manchester Guardian" says editorially (substantially) that it is really alarming, the way in which the prerogatives of parliament are passing over into Cabinet direction and control. No doubt. And if the "Manchester Guardian" would look at that, and kindred phenomena in the unflickering light of fact, and not through the chromatic lense of idealist preconceptions, it would easily recognize that those changes in governmental procedure were the indisputable evidences of changes in economic power, and that Cabinet control was but the political reflex of the modern colossus of monopoly. And the "alarming" element in it is that it sounds the knell of the petit bourgeoisie, its Liberal perversions, its reactionary individualism and obsolete competition. But to us, the toilers and wealth producers, it is a call for further "preparedness," for it marks a step forward towards the final reckoning,—and emancipation. R.

RUSSIAN STUDENTS IN ENGLAND

Riga.—According to reports of Moscow papers the English government has given permission for 200 Russian students to attend universities of England and Scotland.—"Rosta Wein."

The S. P. of C. and the 3rd International

IN REPLY TO W. A. P.

It is with painful surprise that I have read Com. Pritchard's contribution to the controversy in the "Western Clarion" re the Third International. Many articles have appeared, pro. and con. and in some cases good arguments for and against affiliation, and it rests with those who have read these articles to decide which of the opposing sides has given the best reasons, i.e., the truest statements of facts, and have shewn the most capable insight of present day events.

How have the mighty fallen!

Rat-hole and sewer-pipe denizens, assisted by U. S. gold (looks like stolen from the capitalist press) is a poor argument, and places Com. Pritchard in the same class as those he condemns. I have no brief for the articles that were printed by the Committee of the Third International of Canada, but has he forgotten that in Russia, for many years prior to the revolution, education on Marxian lines was conducted in so-called rat-holes, and that that education has borne splendid fruit and has enabled the Soviet Government to so far maintain its position, or does he think that Lenin and Trotsky, and a few others are solely responsible?

One chief argument against affiliation to the Third International is that Canada is not yet ready educationally for a revolutionary movement! Was Russia? Notwithstanding the underground education, already referred to, the percentage of the Russian people having a proper understanding of capitalist society was small, yet a revolution took place, practically eliminating capitalist production and distribution. Why then did this happen? Economic conditions, which had at length reached an unbearable stage, due to the collapse of capitalist society in Russia, forced the people to revolt, and there being a certain percentage of the population possessing the proper knowledge, these were able to take the helm.

I maintain that what has happened in Russia will also happen in other countries, and that economic necessity will oblige the people to revolt, and make a change, in spite of the ignorance of the majority as to the true causes of their misery, and that therefore a world-wide organization of the revolutionary working class is necessary to assist in the inevitable struggle for mastery that may be forced upon us far earlier than some of us anticipate, if only to reduce to a minimum the loss of life and chaos that must ensue.

I will not enter into the discussion of the Theses of the Third International. Of one thing I am convinced; nothing is static, and as time develops, and it is found that the conditions laid down cannot function properly they will be changed. Some of our comrades seem to think, notwithstanding their supposed understanding of the absolute, that it does not apply to the Third International.

Kautsky's have developed in the last few years in every country among the Socialists, and if before doing so they did good work, more is the pity that they have ceased to continue.

Lenin stated Kautsky wrote well eighteen years ago.—Nuf said.

O. MENGEL.

RUSSIAN PRESS OVER THE AZORES

Moscow.—"Gudok" writes over the intention of the American government to purchase the Azores for the erection of a naval base. "The possession of the Azores ensures the control over the sea route to India as well as to China and Japan by way of the Suez Canal. As the European capitalists are not hurrying with the payment of their war debts and the Anglo-Japanese alliance is a threat of war to America the latter seeks in this way to obtain possession of the key of the sea route to India so that in case of conflict it can cut England off from its allies."—"Posta Wein."