

Western Clarion

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VANCOUVER, B. C., APRIL 1, 1921.

A WORKING CLASS WELCOME

DURING the past week-end demonstrations of working-class fellowship, parades, meetings and receptions have welcomed Comrade W. A. Pritchard back from a Manitoba jail to the ranks of working class educational activity from which he has been personally separated for a year. The surging throng that shouted a welcome to him on his first appearance in Vancouver since his jail sentence indicates first, that W. A. P. is held high in working class esteem, and secondly, that his imprisonment along with that of his fellow "conspirators" has been the means of awakening an interest in their own affairs among the wage workers of Canada.

Press comments on local events are always a sure guide to their reliability on world affairs, in so far as they affect working-class matters. Now and then there protrudes a show of decency or indiscretion, particularly in the early editions of the daily press, but when we actually see a true statement of local happenings of working-class interest glaring at us in front page headlines, we are astonished at the inexperience of the news-vendor that allows him to be truthful, even for once. "The World" (Vancouver) actually had it that a bigger crowd met Pritchard an arrival than had met the Prince of Wales. Even "The Province," though it tried to hide its knowledge of the event, was compelled to print on an inside page a two inch item noting W. A. P.'s arrival, with special gratuitous mention of his sartorial equipment. "The Province" did not see fit to contrast Bill's reception with that accorded the Prince of Wales, to be sure, but its grudgingly snail notice of an event that it could not afford to completely ignore, serves as a guide to its working-class readers hereabouts of its estimate of what is good to withhold from their attention.

Pritchard's address to the jury in his own defence against the indictments seditious conspiracy and common nuisance provides an invaluable handbook of information covering the details of the trial and the events leading up to it. This book should be read by everyone; it covers a vast field of literature and Socialist propaganda matter, and as a Socialist propaganda pamphlet it is worthy of a place in the literature stock of any body of workers bent on the education of their fellows.

W. A. P.'s health has suffered through his imprisonment. Comrades throughout the country will join with us in wishing him a speedy recovery to his usual robust fighting form.

LANSING'S BOOK.

ROBERT Lansing, former U. S. Secretary of State, has written a book called "The Peace Negotiations." We have not read the book which, we are informed by "The Province" (Vancouver), concerns the Paris Peace Conference, but we are interested in the discovery by "The Province" through Mr. Lansing, that the testimony of Wm. C. Bullitt before the Senate Committee of the U. S., September, 1919, was colored by a little political bias. Looking over the "Clarion" review (February 2, 1920) of "The Bullitt Mission to Russia," we find our comment on this particular point as follows: "Some notes made from various conversations with and about people prominent in the political life of the United States are included in

the testimony. These are obviously intended to exert some personal influence in U. S. politics and their presence lends an unworthy aspect to an otherwise very interesting document."

Wm. C. Bullitt went to Paris with Mr. Wilson. He was a member of the American Commission at the Peace Conference. He went in February, 1919, accompanied by Lincoln Steffens and Capt. Pettit to Russia to study political and economic conditions, and to report back to the Commission. His mission was undertaken with the knowledge of Lloyd George and Balfour, but was a secret mission so far as the general knowledge of the Peace Commission was concerned. His report was in favor of peace with Russia, whose peace terms, handed to him in Moscow 14th March, 1919, he conveyed to Mr. Wilson. Mr. Wilson prevented the publication of his report and it was not made public until Mr. Bullitt testified before the U. S. Senate Committee of enquiry into foreign relations. This is the report which Mr. Lloyd George professed not to have seen, but which Mr. Bullitt charges him with having read in company with his secretary, Philip Kerr, General Smuts and Sir Maurice Hankey. No doubt Mr. Lloyd George's silence was observed under agreement with Mr. Wilson. The report contained an outline of Mr. Bullitt's experiences and observations in Russia, and these were so favorable to that country and so contrary to the prevailing press lies that their publication could not be sanctioned by the Entente.

Seemingly, if we are to be guided by "The Province," we are to discredit Mr. Bullitt's testimony because it has a little political color shewn to them by Mr. Lansing. But we discovered the political coloring for ourselves something over a year ago, and that testimony, in spite of its drawbacks contains the official text of the peace proposals made by the Soviets in 1919. They have travelled a long way since then. Perhaps Mr. Lloyd George feels a little irritable when he looks at the Soviet's peace proposals of that date and the trade agreement now.

JOHN HOUSTON.

News of the death of John Houston on the 11th March reached us too late for inclusion in our last issue. Old John was for several years an organizer for the S. P. of C., and his educational efforts were fruitful in many places from coast to coast. His friendship and admiration for the late D. G. McKenzie, whom he called "the great Mac," lasted over the years, and had an influence on his outlook on affairs and in some measure tempered his judgment. The workers of Canada have lost a willing and earnest co-worker. We are asked to publish the following:

International Association of Machinists.
Victoria Lodge No. 111

Montreal, March 18, 1921.

To the Editor "Western Clarion."

Dear Sir,—Kindly publish the following resolution of Lodge 111, I. Ass. M., and oblige,

H. A. Spence, Rec. Sec.

Whereas, in the passing away of our ex-Bro. John Houston, the working class loses a fearless defender; and

Whereas this lodge and the organization with which the ex-Bro. was connected at the time of his decease, differed in policy with him at times;

Resolved, that Old One Eleven never questioned the sincerity or devotion of the late John Houston to the cause of the worker, and we will always recognize our ex-Bro. as having been an indefatigable fighter in the class struggle;

Resolved, that Lodge 111 Int. Ass. Mach. tenders this testimony to all and sundry.

H. A. SPENCE,

Rec. Secretary.

SECRETARIAL NOTES.

In our last issue, in Comrade Harrington's article, page two, col. 3 (quoting Comrade Kavanagh) "... Marxism, theoretical and practical, in the period we are not entering upon," should read "now entering upon." Also page three, col 1, "African" colonies should read "American" colonies.

Comrade W. S. Matthews, secretary Local Victoria, writes us to say that Local Victoria has held four or five meetings in discussion of Third International affiliation. They are ready for the referendum any time. By the same mail A. B. Shaaf, Alta. P. E. C. secretary, writes to say that Local Edmonton comrades are greatly interested in the written discussion, and expresses the hope that the referendum will not be taken until the matter is fully discussed. H. H. Hanson, writing from Seal, Alta., expresses his satisfaction with the discussion so far as it has progressed, and hopes the matter will be fully thrashed out. His article appears in this issue. Comrade Kavanagh promises another contribution for next issue, commenting upon Comrade Harrington's in our last. So, too, Comrade Stephenson. We have been promised a contribution from him for our next issue.

Comrade Cassidy, last heard from was in Calgary. He has been round the Alberta farm neighborhoods, and indicates that he is likely to take refuge in Edmonton for the summer. At the same time he promises an article on the Third International for our next.

We are hunting up prices for binding and mailing charges for bound volumes of the "Clarion" for 1920. We expect the total cost with pre-paid mailing charges will be around \$4. Every Local should harbor a bound volume. See announcement in next issue.

Local No. 1 celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Paris Commune in the usual enthusiastic and robust manner. A surplus in cash of \$30 (per G. Sangster) has been handed to the "Clarion" Maintenance Fund.

"THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO."

ONE approaches the task of writing about "The Communist Manifesto" with some trepidation. For the "Manifesto," small in bulk though it be, stands in a class by itself in Socialist literature. Not an idea of value is fermenting in the revolutionary movement today but can be traced in its few pages, if only in the germ. No indictment of a social order ever penned can rival it. The largeness of its conception, its profound philosophy and its sure grasp of history, its aphorisms and its satire, all these make it a classic of literature; while the note of passionate revolt which pulses through it, no less than its critical appraisal of the forces of revolt, make it for all rebels an inspiration and a weapon. Well might even a hostile critic (*) say of it—"Though a man devote many years to the social theory, he will continue to find new, unexpected and striking truths in "The Communist Manifesto."

To attempt in a few paragraphs to summarize its contents would be foolish. It can be obtained so easily, and is so eminently readable, that to do so would in truth be "carrying coals to Newcastle." What we may profitably do is to consider the "Manifesto" in the light of events which have transpired since it was written, and so form an estimate of its present worth.

Written in the year 1847, by Marx and Engels, at the request of the International Communist League, many parts of it are of necessity antiquated, as, indeed, the authors point out in the preface to a later edition. In particular, sections iii. and iv., dealing with contemporary Socialist literature and the relation of the Communists to opposition parties, are now only of historical interest. The march of time has also rendered obsolete the tactical proposals at the end of section ii.

But the first portion, treating of the development of the modern capitalist class and its counterpart the proletariat, is still the best and most convincing exposition of the Marxian point of view, and well repays the time spent on reading and re-reading it. Here for the first time the world learned of that conception of history by which the study of social development matured into a definite science. The Materialist Conception of History runs through the historical part of the "Manifesto" like a golden thread. The transient nature of capitalist society is emphasized, and in contradistinction to Utopian Socialism—the rights of the workers are shown to be in accord with their social responsibilities.

To those who suffer under any social system is allotted the task of changing it, for they, and they alone, are stung to revolt by its injustices. But

(Continued on page 6.)

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