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WHAT IS BOLSHEVISM.

The following article by that excellent writer the former Berlin correspondent of the Christian World will well pay perusal, especially by the workers:—

The Socialist Federal Republic of Soviets is the official name which Russian Bolsheviks have given to their administration. Soviets or "Councils" are legislative, executive, or administrative in accordance with the duties immediately devolving upon them, and in the absence of all elected and representative national and provincial assemblies of popular deputies. "Soviet" is also the name given to all governing and controlling bodies throughout Soviet Russia from the Supreme Soviet of Moscow, which includes the Ministry, to the humblest Council in charge of the affairs of the most insignificant village. It is also the name applied to all collateral bodies to whom the oversight of special departments has been delegated, e.g., The Supreme People's Economic Council, the Central Executive Committee, the Bureaux of Social Welfare, the Factories and Workshops Committee, and so on all through the various ramifications of the remarkably complex system of government which has been elaborated during the past eighteen months. Roughly speaking, the Soviet Government rules over 100,000,000 of the 170,000,000 of the old Russian Empire. The Ukraine, the Caucasian Republics, and various other little Republics in Siberia and Central Asia do not recognise the authority of Moscow. But it is safe to say that nowhere among these hundred millions, not even in Moscow itself, does a state of affairs prevail which by any stretch of imagination can be called representative, orderly and regular government. Many of us in this country are toying with what we consider the ideas and ideals of Bolshevism without in the least knowing what Bolshevism is in practice. An active and remarkably skilful propaganda is being carried on among our working classes in which stress is laid upon the admirable decrees emanating from Moscow, and covering every phase of the economic, social and political life of the Russian people. These decrees are, and must be, in the present condition of Russia, meaningless; but the unsophisticated and uneducated man or woman looking through the haze and soothed by the glamour of specious phrases, concludes that Bolshevism, carried out on the lines laid down by its prophets, will mean a new heaven and a new earth for the workers. Never was a greater and more perilous illusion.

Let us examine one or two of the events which led up to Bolshevik rule. After the March revolution the Provisional Government issued two very

important enactments, one being the re-formation of trade unions of all kinds, the other providing for the election of the Petrograd and other town councils. All adults, men and women alike, were given a vote for the Town Council. Very few Bolsheviks were successful, and it is clear that hitherto they had nothing to do with the making of the revolution. Bolshevism must not be confused with the original Soldiers' and Workmen's Councils. In Tsarist days the trade unions had never been allowed to grow naturally. Masters and workmen formed unions, re-formed them, swallowed up old unions. Between one union and another there was no connection. All were at sixes and sevens. Each union was a law unto itself. During the early days of the new unions, in which Kerensky's Provisional Government found the greatest difficulty in carrying on the business of the country, disintegrating forces were at work, the chief of which was the desire for peace by the soldiers. In Kerensky's phrase, Russia was worn out. Chaos spread, and it was into the midst of this chaos and irresolution that Lenin stepped with his simple programme: Do you want the land? Then take it. Factories? They are yours. Money? The banks belong to the people. Peace? Certainly! there must be peace at once. The Lenin propaganda worked with tremendous effect among the war-weary soldiers. At the beginning of November, 1917 the Bolsheviks, with Lenin and Trotsky at their head, occupied Petrograd, and the town-council was at once dispersed. Lenin and his adherents thereupon formed a number of Soviets, and the elections to these bodies then and ever since have been a farce. No candidate for election was permitted who was not chosen beforehand by the Bolsheviks leaders. In some cases candidates got elected clandestinely who were not Bolsheviks. Their election was promptly declared null and void. Candidates considered dangerous were arrested on trivial charges, and two of the finest types of Russian democrats, Shingiroff and Koloshkin, were murdered by Bolshevik sailors whilst they were lying ill in hospital. All the administrative posts in the city were seized; quiet men and women were cowed. All offices were filled by Bolsheviks selected by the "Supreme Authority," and the Bolshevik position was consolidated by terror and by the edict that none but avowed Bolsheviks could be elected for any post. This rule prevails till the present day. We hear of elections to this or that administrative post, to this or that Soviet; but who the electors are and where the elections take place, no man knows except the few behind the scenes who pull

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