

## Western Clarion

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and Current Events.

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VANCOUVER, B. C., MARCH 16, 1921

### RELEASED FROM GAOL.

THE release of the Winnipeg prisoners on the 28th February occasioned gladness to their families and a warm welcome from the workers of the whole country. Those workers who were able by their presence to swell the welcoming throng in Winnipeg, voiced the sentiment and appreciation of the workers of Canada for their spokesmen, who had endured unflinchingly the jail term of one year inflicted upon them by the State resultant upon the general strike of May, 1919, and the "conspiracy" charges connected therewith. While Comrade R. B. Russell was sentenced to two years, he was released after having undergone a year's imprisonment in Stony Mountain Penitentiary, and was welcomed back among his fellows upon his release which took place a month or two before that of his fellow prisoners. Their bitter experiences under the administration of the forces of the State will temper the attitude and utterances of the three released men, who have been elected, while imprisoned, as members of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly. After his many years of effort towards the education of the workers, in season and out of season, on the street corner and in the halls, Comrade Armstrong will now find himself better able to carry the message of working class education.

Comrade Pritchard's welcome awaits him in Vancouver, where he is due to arrive on Sunday, 3rd April. Already various committees are active making arrangements to greet him.

PETER KROPOTKIN.

PETER Kropotkin died on February 8th, 1921, not many miles from Moscow, where he was born in 1842. His early years attracted him to studies in natural science, the investigation of which induced him to undertake some geographical expeditionary work which brought him notice in scientific circles in Russia. His first noticeable contact with working class matters and interests was in the '70's, when Bakunin's writings attracted him to workmen's and students' gatherings. In St. Petersburg he spent a few years lecturing to working men on scientific subjects. This led to imprisonment from which he escaped after two years. He lived for practically forty years in England, writing many books and pamphlets, thus making a meagre living, interesting himself in the promotion of anarchism. His anarchism was of course idealistic. With all the persecution he had undergone in Russia, he was an enthusiastic Slav still even in 1912, and while the Balkan war lasted. In 1914 he declared for the Allies, and exhorted his anarchist friends to war on Germany. He returned to Russia for the first time in 40 years after the March, 1917, revolution. He strove for the continuance of war on Germany. Yet following the November revolution, while he was in disagreement with the Bolshevik party, he raised his voice against the intervention of outside powers. His attitude towards the Soviets was expressed in his letter to the English workers last year—decentralization was required in order to meet his theories of anarchist communism. With all the drawbacks of his anarchist position Kropotkin was an earnest educator, and in spite of his "noble birth" his principles were the uppermost consideration always with him.

### SECRETARIAL NOTES.

Comrade Charlie O'Brien reports in a brief note that his case is again delayed. Propaganda work in and around Rochester, N. Y., is going on as usual, debates and lectures, classes on History and Economics have been well attended during the winter.

The discussion on the question of Third International affiliation has brought to us more manuscript since last issue than we have room for in the present issue. The latest to arrive is from Comrade Kohn, which we leave over until next issue.

Three new working class journals have come to us from other points in Canada since our last issue. "The Winnipeg Socialist" is published monthly for free distribution by Local No. 3 of the S. P. of C. Consequent upon the suppression of the "Western Clarion" by the censor in 1918, the Winnipeg comrades issued "The Bulletin," which had but a brief existence. In December of that year disruptive elements invaded the headquarters of the Winnipeg Local, burned their organizational effects in the street, and effected damage to such an extent that their propaganda work was for some time hindered and obstructed. Since then they have from time to time issued Manifestos and Bulletins as occasion arose, and the effort to establish a monthly paper for free distribution will provide a medium whereby they may address themselves particularly to the workers of Winnipeg, outlining their point of view on local questions as they arise. We cheerfully welcome the paper and hope for its success.

From Winnipeg also comes "The Soviet Aid," published by the Winnipeg Medical Relief Committee for Soviet Russia and Soviet Ukraine. Moneys for medical relief may be sent to the secretary, F. W. Kaplan, 196 Henry Avenue, Winnipeg, Man. The paper is published for free distribution in order to voice Russia's present need for medical supplies. Future issues are promised providing the first issue proves by results to be justified. We hope these future issues will contain more original matter, and less of the stereotyped statistical data that we have seen published before. Incidentally, we have a Caledonian kick to register: The bundle we received, by express collect, cost \$1.90; the same could have been sent by mail at a cost of 56 cents. The observance of efficiency and economy will enlist working class support.

"The Communist Bulletin," published by the Canadian section of the United Communist Party of America, vol. 1, No. 1, price 5 cents, comes to hand without announced date of publication or place of birth. The paper is of four pages of three columns, five of which are devoted to "The S. P. of C. and Communism." This title clothes what is intended to be taken for a review of the position and policy of the S. P. of C. up to date. But it is incidental only to a mirth provoking outburst of exasperated spleen and spite, pronounced (in borrowed phrases) against the "cunning" Comrade Harrington. Jack won't grow any grey hairs over that we know, but since this anonymous literary trifler evidently considers himself to be serious, his example may as well be followed for once, for his own betterment. Comrade Harrington will not doubt have a word to say in our next issue.

It is unfortunate that "The Communist Bulletin" voluntarily chooses the martyrdom of the underground channel. This is of course quite theatrical. It is not quite so heroic, however, as its phrases.

### THE S. P. OF C. AND THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL

(Continued from page 3)

istic mind of the average worker is demonstrated, wherever he speaks, wherever he marches in procession, wherever he utters a protest, or voices a resolution?

Undoubtedly, we are in the hands of the powers that be at any time, and at any given time there is always present the ready will to suppress and subdue—if circumstances will permit. But there is the rub—the circumstances. Individuals and minorities acting ahead of conditions, can be—and will be—crushed. But not so with society at large, because in society itself resides the power, the resultant of economic conditions. And although education is not our objective, although its acceptance is beneficial to society in changing social relations, still that education cannot be forced on society, cannot become its vitalizing energy, until social con-

ditions determine its advent. The unfolding of the economic process (and this implies the totality of social organization, effort, and activity), and the furious shocks of rude experience, is the only school wherein we learn, and is the only real source of power, equipping us, at one and the same time, both with the will—forced upon us by dire necessity—to re-model society, and also with the weapons requisite to compass the change.

We are asked, further, to dispense with the services of our representatives, in whatever department they may be, unless they prove themselves thorough-going Communists. But it is not mentioned how we are to recognize them, how we are to know (as a class) who really represents working class interests. And that is the crux of the question.

Changing their representatives, industrially, socially, municipally, and politically, is precisely what the working class is doing right along. It can hardly be supposed, that in doing this, the workers harbor the delusion that they are helping the capitalist class. On the contrary they harbor the opposite delusion that, thereby, they are acting in their own behalf. Those whom the workers elect as their representatives must be regarded in that status, and held to act with that authority.

If the workers choose another than Communist philosophy, then Communist philosophy must stand aside, for it is but a minority, facing the powers of the State, and supported by the mass of society. It must wait until the choice falls upon itself—or more probably, until opportunity offers the occasion of dictatorship, in the interests of classless society. Indeed the 18th condition sums up the whole matter—and incidentally begs the question at issue; "It is necessary that each rank and file worker should be able to distinguish clearly the difference between the Communist parties and the old official "Social Democratic" or "Socialist" parties, which have betrayed the cause of the working class" Exactly. Until the workers as a class comprehend the significance of capital, until they have acquired at least the rudiments of social understanding, nothing can be done. Or in other words, until they can "clearly distinguish" between a name and a principle, they must grovel along in their slavery.

It may be objected that tactics must change with changing conditions. Quite true. The tactics of the S. P. of C. is the propaganda of social education, because it realizes that without knowledge there can be no security. And while admitting that society has developed and changed, and with it, the working class, that development has been technical, the change has been in the organized relations of production. But outside of that technique, morally, ideally, intellectually, the working slaves, in the mass, are sunk in the black depths of social misunderstanding. Hence the tactics of the S. P. of C. require no change, since the prime condition of their existence is unchanged. Yet, in that persistent propaganda, in the truest meaning of the words, lies hope and triumph. Hope, because it works in harmony with the laws immanent in social evolution; triumph, because it is founded on incontrovertible fact.

To continue that propaganda of education, therefore, unfettered by restrictions that are meaningless, because impracticable, and aided most magnificently by the ever-quickenning urge of the economic forces, is the certain road to final achievement. By developing social knowledge we develop social revolution, because we develop the understanding of the principles, which make that revolution inevitable; and not only lay the foundation for success, broad and deep and secure, but at the same time render an assistance to our indomitable comrades in Russia, which, though it may lack the pageantry of the spectacular, is infinitely more effective because, in the crucial moment, it acts with the certainty of law.

G. ROSS.

\*Note.—Articles 6 and 7, and in a measure 8 and 9, are, with minor reservations, practically what we are doing now in critical form; while the rigid application of article 14, has earned for the S. P. of C. the scornful epithet of "Impossibilist."—G. R.

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