

WHAT OTHERS ARE THINKING

Bright Clippings from
Wide-a-woke Contemporaries

ECONOMIC BASIS OF PROSTITUTION.

The writer, as secretary of the Canadian Vigilance Association, recently concluded a seven thousand mile trip through to British Columbia, down to San Francisco, Los Angeles, El Paso, and Mexico, and back by the way of Kansas City, Chicago, and Detroit, and thinking that several items from his report to the Vigilance Executive might be of interest to the readers of The Canadian Forward, has sent this communication to the Editorial Committee:—

"In speaking to one of the girls (Minneapolis) in an endeavor to ascertain why she had entered a life of shame (and this the writer did whenever a suitable opportunity presented itself), the information was given that her husband had deserted her, and that, as she was unable to support herself in a departmental store without supplementing her wages by illicit trafficking, she decided to 'go all the way.'"

In the mining city of Fernie, B.C., a very wide-open vice district was found. Here girls called to men 200 feet distant.

"One, a madam, told the writer that she had been on Sullivan and Considine's vaudeville circuit, and her weekly salary was reduced, upon the outbreak of the war, from \$200 to \$60. She said it was utterly impossible, upon the lesser salary, to pay travelling expenses and keep up the necessary elaborate wardrobe, unless she obtained revenue by violating the moral code. She, therefore, decided to run a sporting-house. She now has three in British Columbia, to wit, at Fernie, Elko, and Calhoun, all wide open."

Away down on the Colorado River, two miles from the Mexican State of Lower California, is found the flourishing little town of Yuma, Arizona. This is a typically wide-open town, where "everything goes."

"One of the girls (formerly of River St., Moose Jaw, Sask.) told the writer that she had started to work in a factory, but that starvation wages had forced her to become publicly immoral. She said that many other girls in Yuma resorts could tell a similar story."

These and many other incidents which could be published only tend to make more apparent than ever that the only effective way in which public prostitution can be abolished is by abolishing the "wage" system and ushering in the co-operative commonwealth, when all would have enough to keep them from having to offer their virtue for sale. So long as we have the candy factories with their starvation wages (sometimes, as the writer pointed out, nearly two years ago, so low as \$2.75 per week, as at Watson's Cough Drop Factory on Sorauren Ave., Toronto), so long will we have the temptation to prostitution. Socialism points out the way to emancipation, let us steadfastly follow the light we have received.

Meanwhile, by education and agitation, by demand upon medical officers of health and otherwise, let us fight for the enactment in our country of the well and favorably known "Norwegian system," by which it becomes incumbent upon every medical practitioner to report to the health authorities each case of venereal infection, and to secure, at the same time, a signed statement from the patient admitting that he or she has been warned of the severe penalty if infection occurs because of them during a certain specified period. Thus, we shall do our part to stamp out disease, and in the Socialist commonwealth to come, have far less of the burden of inherited maladies to

combat than otherwise would be the case.

THE WORKING CLASS WILL FOOT THE BILL.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Bonar Law announced in the House of Commons a few days ago that the total amount of votes of credit since the outbreak of the war was 3,852,000,000 pounds sterling, or in Canadian currency, about \$19,260,000,000. In order to really comprehend the vastness of this great war appropriation, we have to deal in terms of a single dollar, with which we are far more familiar than these billion marks, for it is in amounts of one dollar or less that the working class for decades to come will pay back into Britain's treasury the sums adequate for the liquidation of the principal and interest of this war of ideals.

A dollar bill measures, in length, seven inches. If the immense sum were measured by distance in inches, and reduced would form a straight line of dollar bills 2,127,840 miles' length. Allowing 25,000 for the circumference of the globe, at the equator, this world could be encircled by this long line of dollar-bills, joined end to end, no less than 85 times, with enough left over to reach from Toronto to Vancouver. Astronomers estimate the circumference of the moon at 240,000 miles. Britain's war debt would be quite sufficient to extend 8 times around the moon, with a balance which would encircle the earth 8 times and then extend from Berlin, Germany, to San Francisco, Cal.

The C. P. R. "Trans-Canada," scheduled for a 30-mile hourly average, would take 8 years, 1 month and 3 days to make the trip in one direction. And that is not all: Poor Henry Dubs will have to get on a tall horse if he ever hopes to catch up, for \$28,000,000 is being added to the debt every day, which means that the debt can travel or lay a line of dollar-bills 3,093 miles in length each day, while the C. P. R. can only travel but 720, in other words, it would take the C. P. R. 4 days and 7 hours to go as far as the debt can go in one day. "Some" appropriation!

R. B. ST. CLAIR.

AS TO TAR AND FEATHERS.

With election emphasis the Evening Telegram declares that a labor delegate who would do something corresponding to something suggested by Delegate James Simpson as a possibility in the event of something taking place, should be treated in Canada to a coat of tar and feathers. It is passing strange how the Telegram's enthusiasm runs persistently to tar and feathers. Figuratively speaking, there is seldom anything other than tar and feathers in our contemporary's editorials. As Dr. Lundah Singh or Mr. Albert E. S. Smythe would put it, the Telegram's ego manifests on the tar-and-feather plane of consciousness. The aeon of patience inherited by these philosophers must turn the edge of anger and sustain the flick.

Tar and feathers have played an important part in the early history of this continent, and although their sphere of influence is being gradually restricted, they are by no means confined entirely to the editorial department of the Telegram. This is true both figuratively and literally. Early abolitionists were persuaded to desist by tar and feathers. Prohibitionists, too, have been met by this peculiar combination of the adhering and the airily uncertain. For a time nothing was thought more appropriate or effective toward those who sought respons-

ible government in Canada than tar and feathers. The combination has been used incidentally from time to time with more or less effectiveness. Its practical application is growing rarer, perhaps because it is not in accordance with modern ideas of sanitation.

In a figurative sense tar and feathers can still serve as a substitute for argument. While the Telegram cannot claim to be the only exponent, it would be unfair not to admit our contemporary's wide measure of success. A maxim tells us that one can't handle tar without being soiled. The Telegram's freedom from stain is a flat contradiction. Day after day our contemporary pours the tar of perennial indignation, and scatters the some times heavy-quilled feathers of facetious banter and ridicule while continuing spotless and free—an exemplar in the journalistic fraternity.—Toronto Star.

PREACHER SPEAKS OUT.

(Special Correspondence.)

Nashville, Tenn.—A menial "bomb" was hurled into the camp of Methodist ministers at their regular meeting this week, Rev. R. B. Eleazer, editor-in-chief of periodicals issued by the Methodist Publishing House, addressed the weekly gathering of preachers. His address, in part, follows:—

"I wonder if it has occurred to most of us that the European war is exactly the same fundamentally as the economic battle that the people of the United States are waging in the daily struggle for existence. It is essentially an economic war for the means of livelihood as represented by additional territory, seaports, and markets. Not conflict of ideals, but conflict of material interests brought on the struggle, for whatever reason some of the contending nations may have been drawn into it. It is just the age-long battle for bread raised to an infinite power that is making of Europe to-day a charnel house, a desolation, and a waste."

Horrors Right at Home.

"We have occasional foretastes of its horrors right here at home. Troops sheltered in armored trains shoot down striking miners; hired soldiers set fire to strikers' huts and burn to death innocent women and children; striking car men attack 'scabs' who have taken their places; groups of the unemployed are fired upon in the streets by soldiers or police. These are but outcroppings of the underlying spirit of the economic struggle that goes on all the time under the competitive system of private ownership and profits that so many of us count sacred."

"Beneath the surface of the most prosperous and peaceable times run the conflicting currents of human interest—each man for himself, and each, whether he will or not, against the rest."

"The manufacturer is concerned to produce as cheaply as possible, and to sell as dearly. Consequently he pays as low wages as men will work for and exacts as high prices as men will pay. Precisely the same is true of the carrying agent and the dealer, the contractor and the farmer. Give to others as little as possible; get from others as much—this is the motto of business all along the line. The occasional notable exception only proves the rule."

Struggle of Wage Earner.

"Nor is the attitude of the wage-earner, essentially different, except that he has no chances to take profits from the earnings of others. He struggles constantly for higher wages, for a larger share of the values he produces. He petitions, or threatens, or strikes, as the case may be, and counts the man who is willing to take his job for the same wages or less an enemy just as truly as if the two occupied adjacent trenches and threw bombs at each other."

"For the vast majority of us life is one constant struggle to keep income up to the constantly rising level of outgo. The man who has a margin to

the good is the exception. He who is able to hold his own is fortunate. In the meantime, we are the wealthy nation in the world and are producing wealth faster than was ever done before. There is enough for all and to spare. The trouble is in its distribution. Christ might have prophesied for this very time when he said, 'To him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away.'

Hope in Socialism.

"Where is the remedy? Will the competitive order cure its own ills, or will they not rather grow worse and worse? Shall we raise wages by a high protective tariff? What use, when the very same tariff raises the cost of living in corresponding or greater degree? Shall we lower the cost of living by free trade? If so, then down go wages to match. Shall we enact anti-trust laws? Whenever was one effective?"

"But is there no remedy? I see none under the present system. Only in the public ownership of the means of production and distribution, the elimination of profits, and the substitution of co-operation for competition—in Socialism, in a word—do I see any hope of social justice, equality of opportunity, or real human brotherhood such as Jesus taught."

Rev. Eleazer's address was warmly received by his brother preachers, many of whom invited him to occupy their pulpits and explain the principles of Socialism to their audiences.

WHY NOT WEALTH, TOO?

The Winnipeg Saturday Post makes a tremendous attack on "a certain element in labor circles" who complain that before manhood registration is put into practice the registration of wealth should take place. The Post fairly storms at these people.

But after all, why should not the Post calm itself and discuss the question of having a registration of the country's wealth? Is there any objection to it? Why should not an inventory be made of the country's wealth as well as of its man-power? The man who lives on his wages has nothing to sell but his labor and not much to value but his life. If the country is in a position where it is necessary to mobilize the worker and all he has got, if the country has already mobilized an army of some hundreds of thousands of men who offer their lives for the country—is the country to hesitate a moment about registering, mobilizing, using the surplus wealth of the country? A man's life is his one first and last possession. If it be necessary that some give up this for the country's sake, can other men who give otherwise, and therefore give less, complain of any terms the country may exact of them?—Toronto Star.

A correspondent elsewhere directs our attention to the fact that loose-tongued individuals who mount "recruiting" platforms have been extending the speed limit in their railings—not in favor of recruiting—but in screaming at any and everybody who may be opposed to conscription. Despite the fact that the policy of the Labor movement is against conscription, and the Queensland Government at least is still imbued with that policy, these leather-lunged gentry hasten at every opportunity to scatter insults broadcast. From reports that have reached this paper it is advisable for the military authorities and those responsible for the censorship to lift some of these individuals "under the lug." It strikes the impartial-minded critic that the robust-looking man who can make himself heard for half a mile round an hour at a time surely ought to have sufficient wind for a ten-minute rush at the German trenches. That's all that is required in modern warfare in France in order to strike a blow for one's country, not the capacity

(Continued on Page Eight)