

ITEMS OF NEWS FROM ALL PARTS

A CONSUMERS' LEAGUE.

A movement is on foot for the organization of a Consumers' League, and an esteemed contemporary refers to it as a movement unique in the public and semi-public life of Canada.

It is a curious fact that governments seem to exist for the benefit of sections of the people rather than for the benefit of the people as a whole. On every hand there are laws, regulations and restrictions for the benefit of special interests. The general public is treated as if the chief purpose of its existence was to furnish taxes and profits. Tariffs, bounties, prohibitions and restrictions are all imposed for the benefit of special interests. It might almost be said that the only way in which governments recognize the existence of the general public is by the imposition of taxes and restrictions.

The fault, of course, is primarily with the general public. It has the kind of government it permits. The interests know what they want and how to get it. The general public is content with being allowed to amuse itself at intervals with a general election, when it enjoys the excitement of dividing into factions and fighting against itself. It is only during periods of unusual stress, like the present, that the general public is forced to a recognition of its own helplessness. The demand for the organization of a Consumers' League is such a recognition.—Stratford Herald.

DEFEAT OF THE REFERENDUM ON POLITICAL ACTION IS REPORTED IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

While no official announcement has yet been made, it is understood that a recent totalling of the returns on the referendum vote as to whether the British Columbia Federation of Labor should enter the political field, indicates the defeat of the proposal. The vote on the proposal is said to have been very close, thus indicating that, even should the suggestion finally be declared as shelved, it represented the will of a very large percentage of organized labor throughout the province. It is understood that the sentiments as expressed by the locals were very decided either for or against the proposal, the percentage of cases where close votes on the subject were reported being very small. The referendum was held as the result of discussions at the January convention of the B. C. Federation of Labor at Revelstoke. The call for the ballot was sent out by Secretary Wells about March 1, with instructions for the vote being taken during the month. Whatever may be the final result of the referendum, it is certain that the widespread discussion of the subject has brought the question of Labor taking a political stand home to the trades unionists of the province in a forceful manner, and the defeat of the measure by a narrow margin would probably be a condition which would lead to its being again presented for a representative vote of the membership.

ADMINISTRATIVE HEROISM.

The premier, in the House of Commons on Monday, stated in a modest manner that it required some courage to do as his government had done in the matter of supplying the farmers of the Dominion with seed grain to the value of 12 million dollars, when a crop failure threatened the west. Most people who have followed Canadian politics for some years will agree with the premier. It certainly requires some courage to do anything for the people, particularly under the administration as constituted. It takes no courage to follow the example of the present (or

late) government in many cases; it has never been a particularly daring thing for the government—present or past—to accede to the wishes of the magnates, not for modest sums of 12 millions, but for amounts that would make the necessities of the western farmers look paltry indeed.

But the premier's statement is significant. Evidently the leader of the government considers that it was a magnanimous thing to do, this aiding the farmers. Not only was it generous, but it required courage. Why? Whom did the government fear? Since when has it become courageous for an administration to safeguard the basic industry of the nation?

The people would be interested to know more about this display of courage at a time when the country was wide open to war contract grafters, railway promoters, patronage touts, and all the evil brood of profiteers.—Ottawa Citizen, January 24, 1917.

THE CLAIM OF SOCIALISM.

I have looked at this claim by the light of history and my own conscience and it seems to me so looked at to be a most just claim, and that resistance to it means nothing short of a denial of the hope of civilization.

This then is the claim:—

"It is right and necessary that all men should have work to do which shall be worth doing, and be of itself pleasant to do; and which should be done under such conditions as would make it neither over wearisome nor over anxious."

Turn the claim about as I may, think of it as long as I can, I cannot find that it is an exorbitant claim; yet if society would or could admit it, the face of the world would be changed; discontent and strife and dishonesty would be ended. To feel that we are doing work useful to others and pleasant to ourselves, and that such work and its due reward could not fail us. What serious harm could happen to us then? And the price to be paid for so making the world happy is revolution.—William Morris.

All over the world the news of the Russian revolution has been received with great joy. Participation by the Socialists has prevented a serious split in the revolutionary ranks and the dream of Russia as a republic will shortly be realized. M. Kerenski of the Russian Revolutionary Socialists, has accepted a post in the new government as Minister of Justice, and his first act was the immediate publication of full amnesty.

Appearing before the Socialist assembly he mounted a table, with flashing eyes and passionate utterance, he announced that he had accepted the post of Minister of Justice. His address is as follows:

Comrades, in entering the Provisional Government, I remain a republican. In my work I must lean for help on the will of the people. I must have in the people my powerful support. May I trust you as I trust myself? (Tremendous cheers and cries of "We believe you comrade!") I cannot live without the people, and if ever you begin to doubt me, kill me! I declare to the Provisional Government that I am a representative of democracy, and that the Government must especially take into account the views I shall uphold as a representative of the people, by whose efforts the old Government was overthrown. Comrades, time does not wait. I call you to organization and discipline. I ask you to support us, your representatives who are prepared to die for the people and have given the people their whole life.

Our comrades of the Second and

Fourth Dumas, who were banished illegally to the tundras of Siberia, will be released forthwith. In my jurisdiction are all the Premiers and Ministers of the old regime. They will answer before the law for all crimes against the people.

"Show them no mercy," many voices in the crowd exclaimed.

"Comrades," M. Kerenski replied, "regenerated Russia will not have recourse to the shameful methods utilized by the old regime. Without trial none will be condemned. All prisoners will be tried in open court."

Comrades, soldiers, citizens, all measures taken by the new Government will be published. Soldiers, I ask you to co-operate. Free Russia is now born and none will succeed in wresting liberty from the hands of the people. Do not listen to the promptings of the agents of the old regime. Listen to your officers. Long live free Russia.

Los Angeles Socialists are trying to secure the adoption of the following proposal by their State organization with a view to having it ultimately incorporated in the National Constitution: "Any labor union, farmers' organization or co-operative enterprise, or any number of members thereof, shall be permitted to become Socialist Party locals, without regard to political subdivisions or geographical boundaries."—American Socialist.

JINGO WAR-SPITES OF U. S. A. TRY TO OUST SCOTT NEARING FROM HIS POSITION IN TOLEDO UNIVERSITY.

A crusade of lying calumny, supported by big business Plute's, is being waged by the daily liars (the Capitalist press) in order to wreak vengeance upon one of the most powerful anti-war spirits of the United States. The movement is likely to become a question of national concern by the way the Socialists and Labor men are taking things. Happily the intelligent section of the workers in the States have had ample time to learn the truth, "That speeches of Presidents and Premiers are valueless tokens in defence of democracy and liberty, when dictated by the big interests," and like we in Canada, are becoming familiar to the international character of Prussianism. We take pleasure in presenting Mr. Nearing's side of the question as a worthy pattern of courage and manliness.

How many of the presumed defenders of democracy in this country have given publicity to this attack of Prussianism in the U. S.

"I am opposed to tyranny, despotism and irresponsible power, whether vested in a king, kaiser or any other individual or group of individuals.

"I believe in democracy and in the brotherhood of all men. No community can endure which ignores the Golden Rule, the basic law of social life—'Each for all, and all for each.'"

"Millions of people the world-over are to-day seeking to overthrow German militarism. There are two methods of securing this result. The first way is to militarize all of the great nations. I am opposed to this plan, because I believe that the dearest liberties of democracy must be sacrificed in the process.

"There is another method of overcoming German militarism—to promulgate a higher ideal than the ideal of militarism.

"Ideas and ideals are the most powerful and permanent things in the world, as your own history shows. A century and a half ago our ancestors immortalized themselves by broaching the idea of political democracy to a king-ridden world. Since that time the idea has encircled the earth.

"The only possible way to save the present-day world from militarism is to cut to the root of the problem and establish an industrial democracy,

which in its turn may prove a beacon light to mankind. If we adopt militarism, we lower ourselves to the level of German militarism. If we adopt industrial democracy we have an opportunity to raise them to our new plans of justice and liberty.

"I oppose militarism because I believe it stands for the brute in human nature, and that if we adopt it, the democracy is doomed. I hold to the doctrine—'Peace on earth and good will among men,' because I believe that only thus can the spirit of man be emancipated and the human race be saved. They that take the sword shall perish with the sword. It is only those who are willing to overcome evil with good that can attain to the full promise of manhood.

"I revere the government that represents democracy. I honor the flag that stands for liberty and justice. So strong is my feeling on this point that I resent seeing the government turned over to an irresponsible plutocracy or an irresponsible bureaucracy, just as I resent having the flag, which is the symbol of our democracy, used to cloak special privilege and shameless exploitation.

"Militarism is the madness of the past—dragging us down and destroying us. The spirit of brotherhood and good will among men is the voice of the future calling us to a higher plane of life than humanity has ever known. To that future I have dedicated my life, and so I purpose to continue to the end of the chapter.

"SCOTT NEARING."

LOANS.

There's a war-incited nation

After loans;
Filled with hope and wild elation
With the loans.

There are many joyous cables,
There are papers full of fables,
And the international Babels
Tell of loans.

There's the people of the Kaiser

After loans;
And the British, nothing wiser,
After loans;

There's a subtle press, romantic,
Makes the French and Russian frantic
And the Serbian cut an antic,
Over loans.

There are clamorous Italians

After loans;
There are Turks in fierce battalions
Fed on loans;

There's the little yellow Jappie,
There's the Austrian fierce and snappy,
And the Belgians are made happy
With their loans.

When the war some day is ended

Over loans,
And the battered buildings mended
With the loans.

When the interest on reverses
And on vict-ries touch both purses,
There will be some fearful curses
Over loans.

The subject who is truly loyal to the Chief Magistrate will neither advise nor submit to arbitrary measures.—Junius.
—Toronto Globe.

Canadian Copper Company have been granted 236 acres at the rate of \$3.00 an acre. All they expect to get out of the deal is nickel.—Toronto Star.

....PARTY ANNOUNCEMENTS....

ALBERTA PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Meets on the First Wednesday in each month, at 8 p.m., at Mrs. A. Martin's, 10528 98th Street, Edmonton, Alta.

Locals and Executive Bodies may have their Advs. in the Directory for the sum of \$3.00 per year.