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A Happy New Year

"A guide New Year to ane an' a', and' mony may ye see." So sang the modern ancients. But those were the days when "Old Highland" was sixpence a gallon (generous); when dope was but a diamond in the rough; and Boston had not yet vanquished the sphinx. But in our days of unstinted civilisation the gay and festive season is garlanded with other aspirations. Its form delighteth the eye, in the same way as a tombstone gladdeneth the heart. The heraldry of the prophets has given way to the profits of "heraldry" and the "good will" that was once cordial with a "dram" is now unctuous with a suggestion.

At this joyous season, that "nobleman of nature," the freeborn plug, pleasantly travelling to and fro over our charming earth contrives to return quite ostentatiously to the bosom of his family, yea to the sanctuary of his indefeasible hearth, there to enjoy the worshipful season in the sweet tranquillities of peace. Being of a fervent spirit his mind is calm in the quietude of content. And having been diligent in his industry, waiting—obediently as becometh the lowly—with respectful patience on the will of his appointed master, and being frugal withal, he hath garnered to himself plenteous stores of "good"; and amassed much treasure whereof no moth may ravish and none covet.

So he hasteneth to his castellated house, where none may despoil him or any make him afraid. His coming maketh his household glad. For they have been forward in the garnishings of festivity, waiting the feasting but for him who cometh with great reward and whose diligence is mightily esteemed. He rejoiceth in his little flock; yea he maketh merry, with his comely little ones; it maketh his heart glad that they are comely and fair to behold. And having performed his ablutions—as is the formality of his custom at this season—and arranged him in grateful raiment, he sitteth down, even he and his little ones, at the laden tables of his riches. And as he surveys the snowy board with its polished ware and glittering number, its sparkling crystal, its bowered decorations, its choice and tempting viands, its rich and varied vintage, his heart filleth with gratitude to the great giver of all good, who hath manifested himself so wondrously and rewarded the laborer so abundantly.

Having feasted and made merry for a space, dispoiling the "crackers" of profit with the bon mots of obsolete yesterday and the yet more obsolete tomorrow, and delighted the young shoots with the multitude of toyland, he giveth himself up to seemly and profitable meditation. He observed how cunningly the earth was devised for the habitation of man; and how nothing befell contrary to his great good. Even those visitations, which in uncharitable moments were spoken of as calamities, were but the chastenings of affection. For if the master called some home unto greater glory, did he not inspire others thither in their stead? And did not those very manifestations open up new and wondrously savory opportunities for the further achievements of man? He remarked how all men were of a common indulgence. He saw that as the good father had prospered him he prospered all who had been diligent in endeavor and of a contrite countenance. He perceived how swiftly corruption and contumely had been humbled and dismayed, and rancorous disobedience to appointed authority brought to naught. And he was conscious of the amplitude of infinite

wisdom, that to the uttermost ends of the earth attested the ancient verity that "never will the seed of the righteous beg for bread." O, the wonder of abiding omnipotence.

He was comforted, as with balm of Gilead, to reflect that amidst the multifarious duties of life righteousness increased her borders and yielded succor and pleasantness to the heart. Meditating reminiscently on his fruitful journeyings through the inspiring marts of fame he was magnificently impressed with the devout fervor of common life. He remembered sweetly the guileless faith that "felt the guiding hand" in the sore days of trial and adversity; and the unrestrained acclamations of those whose secret prayers had prospered even their carnal expectations. He remembered those—a mighty multitude—who having bathed in the ruddy tides of salvation, had come forth white and shining, even militant with humility. Others again he knew, had been mightily purged from disease and affliction, merely by gazing upon the holy man, lo, even a Yogi from the land of the great Freedom. Abundant as the hosts of heaven were those who had been born again, and had acquired a new heart. Even it was said—and witnessed by the holy eyes of faith—that some, by an especial act of mercy, had inherited a new leg, even a new kidney, and whose ears had been restored to the normal proportions of the field. Once he had questioned why faith had never been vouchsafed a new head. But it had been startlingly revealed to him in a vision of the night, how little occasion the godly have for a helmet. Everywhere he looked, life was honeycombed with the sentiment of religion. He had heard a peasant from the hinterland affirm by the "treed coon" (one of those loving allusions to the cross, so indicative of intimate communion with the spiritual), that the country was "going to glory." He had listened to a carpenter proudly declare to his master, by the "spiked Jese" (another of those tender touches of divinity), that his work "was as square as the mansions of heaven." He knew any number of saintly men of business who had become affluent by selling their merchandise in the stoke-room of a liner, who habitually testified to their credibility by the "smoking ransom" and "the flying hammers of hell." He knew one who had acquired a competence as an artist in a gravel-pit (and who attributed his success to divine protection), who invariably accredited his statement "by the bearded ghost of grace." And he had overheard, but recently, a doughty woodsman testify to a comrade "by the branching buds of Lucifer" that this story was "the sacred truth of God." (He was quite at a loss to appreciate the symbolism of this spiritual outpouring, but undoubtedly it emanated from an unusually deep spring of holiness.) Even the most apathetic seldom engaged in a matter without the most solemn oaths to God, and even in the trivial affairs of life they constantly appealed to the crucified Christ to witness their asseverations.

In every walk of life this integrity of holiness prevailed. Men of probity struggled with the "demon rum," or the "drug fiend," to preserve the immortal souls of the people. Corporations, knowing the evil of money, strove with unceasing ardor to keep the people from its corroding touch. Governments, perceiving the tyranny of the "mailed fist," and violent dictatorships, admonished the multitude against the blandishments of organisation. Tariffs

were manipulated to lighten the trials of daily life. Indigence was solaced with comely pensions. Industries were regulated nicely to the necessities of the people. Labor was adjusted by the sliding scale, lest the bounteous standards of life should be imperilled. The most meticulous care was exercised in the operation of industry, lest life and limb be endangered. Beautifully computed structures were erected for the worthy co-partners of capital. Shipping was regulated, lest men should perish in the hungry sea. Freight commissions pleaded with penurious railroads for the rights of the public. Food laws were enacted, lest the unscrupulous should vitiate the tabernacle of clay. Even enactments on speech and thought, so that man might not be tempted unknowingly to evil, and contaminated by iniquity. Here or there throughout the world the kindly master forbids eager man to work, fearing he may become exhausted through over exertion. Anon he wisely urges him to toil, that the times and the seasons may be made worthy of the Merer. And over it all the sweet councils of fraternity and the dispassionate justice of equality, safeguarding to all, without respect of persons, the common rights of prosperity and life.

In the anointed courts of state, whose watchword was, "God and right," he saw the flower of manhood, battling with ancient tyranny for the rights of man and nation, and who esteemed justice and honor of infinitely greater value than life itself. For the perpetuation of truth and liberty he saw whole kingdoms surrender their dearest possessions. He observed the great leaders of men tempted like the man of Uz by a polyglot devil now speaking in the barbarous gutturals of Deutch or Slav, or anon using the flowery culture of modern Gaul. But, sustained by high conscience, inflexible honesty and resolute will, always they put the evil thing behind them, to beguile their enemies. He was lost in admiration for the altruistic self sacrifice of the mighty captains of industry, who unflinchingly bore the burden of giant armaments for the preservation of the sacred peace; who formulated international leagues, lest eternal freedom be overwhelmed; and who sought in the exalted spirit of God-fearing humanitarianism to convey and implant the sublime message of civilisation to distant and downtrodden lands and peoples. And above them all, beautiful in life and purpose, those Christly ministers of love, who had been esteemed stewards of many talents. By prodigious labor, unremitting thrift and superhuman intelligence, their talents had multiplied exceedingly. And now they stood ready, eager, nay accounted it an honor to the glory of the master to lend, upon condign considerations, to worthy and properly constituted people the last of their substance, to save humanity from ruin and extinction.

But it would be impossible to narrate the heroic epic of king and state and noble, for the continuing beatitude of human kind. Not to mention those, romantic, charming, unmistrusting, long distance followers of the spontaneous Jehovah and his parthenogenic son, who, by song and story, by screen and show, sometimes by dance and revelry, occasionally with bread and wine, seek to enfold the dear people in the undoubted "spirituality" of a "providence" undeniably "divine," and to confess them in a "civilisation" whose "goodwill" is as abundant

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By the Way

THE working class of today, living by working for wages, came into being as a class when large-scale production and the mechanical inventions which initiated the age of machine production had displaced as a characteristic form of industry the handicraft method of production. This working class historically is a new social class and, as might be expected, under the impact of its group experiences, its common needs and conditions of life different from those of other groups in the community, is developing a consciousness of itself as a class. It finds itself faced with problems that affect it as a class, and it could hardly do otherwise than view these problems and all the relevant facts and causal influences, or the proposed remedies and anticipated consequences from a class viewpoint. In course of time there appears a more or less consistent body of social philosophy critical of things as they are and permeated with aspirations for an improved state of things. The common desire for improvement, of course, since the class is made up of individuals, has many individualized expressions, many programmes issuing out of diverse reasonings on the problem.

Used of organic growth, born of historical processes in society analogous to the organic processes in nature, working class consciousness is a response to the stimuli of the environment. In nature, the character of the response depends on the nature of the stimuli and the nature of the organism responding to it, a matter of the reciprocal action upon each other of environment and organism. So it is with man and his social environment. There are forces in man, if frail in comparison, as well as in the environment. The resultant in social life at any time is the outcome of the inter-action of these forces from each side. The forces of the environment are impersonal, mechanical in their action as chemical elements, without purposive direction or end. Man alone has sentient sensibility, capability of purpose, sense of "ends to be achieved." Even those sensations of his which come up into consciousness, uninitiated or unaccompanied by reason, as physical pain for instance, they also have functional "ends in view." Rising up the scale of sentient consciousness itself is functional; the power to reason, an innate disposition, is a factor in survival; knowledge itself is functional, its character is of the nature of use. "is inchoate action (action only begun, rudimentary, direct) inchoately directed to an end"; which is to say, "The Idea is essentially active." I write the above weird stuff against the persistent notion that evolution as a process has only a progressive trend and that somehow nature has an "end in view." Hegel, Bergson and the *elan vital*? Consciously or unconsciously the reasoning of my opponents is permeated with that old fashioned concept. Perhaps man is by nature animistically inclined to dramatise and scientific mechanism is alien to his spirit.

Granted, then, the permanence of the social conditions that produced an economic-social class in society, we may expect a response to those conditions among the members of that class in degree of their varying sensitiveness and vigor of innate or acquired characteristics, physical, moral and intellectual. Arguing a priori, that is, arguing from pre-existent knowledge or from prejudice or from some general principle e.g., that the response of a class to political or economic oppression will be to throw it off—arguing so, is no guarantee of the result. It may be they may attempt and fail, or it may be that subservience and abject submission will be the line of response. A priori (J. H. B.) there is no foretelling; the given, the immediate circumstances will determine the outcome; the resultant as we examine it at any particular date, now or in the future, is the outcome of the play of the whole complex of factors engaged at any such date.

My critic in last issue, J. H. B., says that the revolutionary movement must prove equal to its task or history is falsified (emphasis mine). O Rome, O

Nineveh, "I passed by the walls of Balclutha and they were desolate!" Life never falsifies history; it is the material of history. The history books and men's interpretations of history—why, that is another story. Those may be falsified if we take them to be more than expedient guides in a world whose essence is, not uniform repetition but infinite variability. That is why I reason that we should cultivate an experimental attitude on the future and not that of a fixed routine. Should a biological-social history of bees ever be written, aeons of time, I suppose, would register few changes of social structure based on subdivision of labor. Hundreds of thousands of years of social stability might supervene between changes of structure during which there would be nothing to record of historical significance so far as the social development of the race was concerned; merely the commonplace round of things, vital statistics, births, marriages and deaths, etc. would interest an annalist only. Thus historical generalizations could be drawn exactly depicting over immense periods both the past and the future. But in two hundred years man has transformed his world, transformed both his material culture in ways and means of life and; allowing for some lag, his immaterial, spiritual culture also. "Other times other manners."

This transformed world has its own particular problems. Things are not going well in this modern world. Among its problems is what is to become of a new social class that has appeared, restless, discontented. There is a bitter competitive life between individuals, between classes, between the national entities; concurrently there exists a condition of world-wide mutual dependence due to an interlocking system of economic relations such as calls for a pooling of the world's resources in the common interest. The latter condition is the result of a change in the state of the industrial arts; the former is a condition of life which suited a state of the industrial arts now passed away, that of the small self-sustaining economy of the localities of the pre-machine age and the individual production of the handicraftsman. The social problem appears as one of maladjustment. To the student of society the state of the industrial arts, the material productive culture, underlies and conditions all the rest of the cultural features. Maladjustment occurs in degree as the rest of culture lags behind the former. Are the social evils of international war arising out of the industrial and commercial rivalries of the great vested interests, and the poverty, insecurity and deprivations of life of the underlying populations due to the principle of private ownership in-so-far as it relates to social means of production? Then the legal and political institutions which support and enforce that principle need changing to rectify the maladjustment, for, lagging behind human needs they are unable to function for a healthy social life. Institutions are the organs of the body politic, as the heart, lungs, etc., are to the human body.

But the seat of the problem lies deeper yet; institutions are secondary effects in the chain of causation. The prestige of the law and the military power of the State rest finally and find ultimate sanction in the opinion of the community. Whatever of force and fraud may have established those institutions in their inception; or however the force of tradition, or the inertia of settled habits and ways of thought, or lack of education may continue to maintain them through retarding advance to a more enlightened opinion; behind the institutional lag lies the lag of opinion. In this age of universal political enfranchisement in the advanced nations the institutions are representative, and not even bourgeois legal theory claims for them any other basis, either of divine or other kinds of right. The idea is essentially active, knowledge is functional. To spread knowledge, to create opinion, to organize ways and means through which opinion may become effective in a civilized way is the work of those who

wish to take up the lag and remove social evils.

Whether control is seized by violence or by legal means, both must alike have the massed opinion of the community in support of the social programme. Particularly is this so in advanced communities, where a universal literacy and an active political enfranchisement have obtained for generations, and, as a consequence, where opinion is an active principle. "Violence passes, but the law abides," said a Frenchman of Mussolini. Which is to say that, after all, Mussolini is not absolute dictator; he must trim his sails to the winds of opinion or he has but a short time to strut the stage of political life. Subsequent enquiries continue to show that behind the spectacular military seizure of political power in Italy Mussolini had with him a great majority opinion in that country, in the sense that he gave voice to ideas and a practical programme to which that majority at least had no strenuous objection, or the revolutionary workers would have countered Fascism with more success.

"To assume that the transformation from the last form of slavery to freedom will come merely as the result of slow changes in social viewpoints and patchwork reforms secured by or granted to the slaves by the masters appears to be as visionary and unpractical a state of mind to me as does revolution by force to C." says J. H. B. I did not use the term "slow" in connection with social changes so far as I am aware. I said the process was one of "gradualism" and history bears out the truth of that descriptive term for the past, while the years since Saint Simon down through Robert Owen and Marx bear tribute to the ideological preparation that necessarily precedes great social changes. Since the Laissez-faire school dominated social theory approximately at the beginning of the same period, and to whom social reform was anathema, it has been an age of experimental social reform, as for instance, in social hygiene, in the nature of factory legislation, shortening of working hours, reduction of child labor, the establishment of hospitals and public clinics, public parks and playgrounds, etc. Great educational systems and public libraries have been established, successive extensions of the franchise have taken place and the anti-combination laws against trades unions abolished. During this time the centralized state, that mere policeman of the Laissez-faire school, has taken to itself more and more of social powers. More and more, contrary to its own will and against the theory of self-help and individual enterprise, the state is concerning itself with the community as a whole as a going concern. State socialism, state capitalism, which you will, a rose by any other name will smell as sweet—or stab your finger. Further, who can estimate the contributions of science to this ferment; in anthropology from Lewis H. Morgan down, in economic and political theory, in history, in social psychology and the rest of them. It has, in fact, been an age of a vast preoccupation with the social question, an age of preparation for greater adventure in social experiment.

Has all this been the work of masters and slaves? Bah, let us not make a perverted use of words in seriousness. Push the class struggle with all vigor, but in a civilized way. Patchwork reforms! Is an anaemic working class, stunted physically and mentally, and morally degraded, a likely instrumentality for transforming the world? Is not a strong, vigorous, self-reliant, intelligent and knowledgeable working class the desirable instrument? J, at least, am sure so and say, scrutinize those reforms I have mentioned, and if the battle be to the strong and skillful see if they can not be regarded in more ways than one as preparations, if unconsciously designed ones, for the social revolution. Preparation! Leaving out palace revolutions, every political revolution with a new social purpose must have been prepared for. And power came to the modern capitalist class all

along the way down from the burgesses of the towns in the middle ages, not by one means but by many ways and means and by gradual accretions of power.

Pessimist, J. H. B. says I am. I deny the imputation! I am only concerned with bringing those into action, into the revolutionary educational movement, into the political labor movement, into the organized labor movement as their bent inclines them, who now sit idly by, committed to the policy of drift and the reign of accident in social chaos. Forlorn hope! Visionary, am I! Well, there are others! I have this fundamental insight into life, however, I know the huge part that fate plays in it. I know that luck has a way of favoring those who deserve it. I know that so far as we may control the future, within the limits set by fate, it is done only by establishing control in the present, by influencing events in the present, by doing things now in the light of a future objective as wisely as we can, and leaving the rest. So may we set in train a course of events along the line of material causation which may bring the objective nearer realization. Without vision we perish, but let it look out on the world and not too much inward on our desires.

In referring to my antagonism to the doctrine of violent overturn my critic says, "Comrade 'C' seems to be obsessed with the weight, power and efficiency of the capitalist regime, its industrial and economical efficiency...."

He misreads me. I never considered its efficiency in such a connection. What I have said was, in effect, that the continued livelihood of any community, local or national, rested precariously on maintaining economic relationships with the rest of the world. Based as those relationships are on a system of international credits, in the case of a civil war in any country over revolutionary issues those relationships would be snapped, exports and imports would cease automatically, the internal economy would be disrupted and famine and deprivation of all the necessities of life would work havoc among the population of the great commercial and industrial cities. Chaos and a common ruin was the prospect, rather than success for the revolution. I referred to Great Britain, whose population of forty-five million lives from hand to mouth, importing from overseas 70 per cent. of its foodstuffs. It seems to me that the irresponsibility of sheer madness or idiot folly alone would plunge such a community into civil war. The parasites could be purchased out at a cheaper price and would be only a flea bite on the national economy, so long as the means of production were set free for the community's use. It is not what a parasitic class can consume that is the burden, but their control.

What the parasites consume is but a fraction of the surplus they rob the community of, the rest is turned into more means of production either at home or abroad and entails a further aggravation of a state of things where there is a greater productive capacity than there are means for purchasing consumable goods. Thus there is not alone a direct robbery of the surplus products of labor but an indirect sabotage on the community by a deliberate limitation of the production of goods. In fact, capitalism has become a gigantic conspiracy against civilization in that respect, for the progress of civilization is marked, on its material side, by a continual increase of desires and wants and ways and means of satisfying them. "Controlled" production, tariff barriers, to destroy competitors, to beat down the standard of living of the producing masses, to "charge all the traffic will bear" are the ways to a profitable price, are the only ways to survival in the competitive life of capitalism. But, at the same time, they are ways of sabotaging the underlying peoples of the community. And yet, if capitalism is assumed as the final goal of society, world without end, they are the only solutions of its inherent contradictions. We are all caught in

the coils of the system, wage-worker, farmer, business-man, the great vested interests, the national entities, and must play the game against each other and against our social instincts and against civilization with what success we may. But if civilization is to progress, if capitalism is not the final goal, if we are to break through this impasse to a co-operative social life, to a pooling of human resources for the common good, then there must be a transference of control to the communities with what expedition is possible, consistent with the continued operation of economic processes.

First things first and next things next is the way of life. But progress has hitherto been blind and confused because "ends in view" have conflicted and these have been working at cross purposes, have been vague and confused, have been little, anti-social and mean. Progress has been slow because men have lost sight of great ends they set out for and loitered to worship ways and means; they worshipped the prophet and forgot the meaning of his message, they forgot God and became churchmen (excuse me). Means have become shortsighted "ends in themselves." The social class struggle has been turned into a trades union class struggle. Labor has not had the community point of view; it has not ranged itself with the community and become initiating and authoritative against the system of capitalism. Labor has assumed capitalism and played its own hand against its capitalist rivals for a share in the wealth turned out by industry and—the public be damned. A narrow purpose and the stronger resources on the side of the opponents. It is time Labor assumed the initiating and authoritative role in social change assigned it by history.

But by civilized ways. The advanced modern communities, technologically, are great enterprises which must be considered in a responsible manner as going concerns. "Business as usual during alterations." History denies the universality of violence in social change and abundantly supports the possibility of other ways and means. (I am not considering here, violence of the scope of mere police affairs). The science on the modern social situation is with me: the millions expect reform by civil ways, hope for it and abhor the thought of violence. And any social philosophy, or political party, or economic organization in which the doctrine of violent overturn finds harbourage will meet with closed ears from the broad masses of the communities, will become sectarian, sterile, an excuse for Fascism and a danger to the working class movement in general. True enough, violence may come. One way to bring it is to expect it and do nothing to prevent its coming. Another way is to hope for it and to work for it. But as I see its consequences, we should all be involved in a common ruin,—therefore I am against the doctrine of violence. Moreover, I desire open ears and minds to our philosophy of a new order of life.

GEOGRAPHICAL FOOTNOTES TO CURRENT HISTORY.

The plans of French Imperialism are maturing and bearing fruit. What Fabians and Liberals have called merely French "folly" and "economic ignorance" is now seen to have been a deliberate policy devised in the interests of French capitalism. Under the cloak of the League of Nations and an "impartial" commission the gradual Francification of the Saar coalfield has been effected. The valuable Ruhr coalfield has been occupied by French troops and French engineers, and a careful policy of "eviction" of German inhabitants has been carried out. Under pressure of military occupation the German industrialists have come to an agreement with the French for a joint exploitation of the Ruhr resources. Now by clever political intrigue a separate Rhineland Republic has been proclaimed under French inspiration and control. As for the rest of Germany, the Reich is breaking up. Bavaria is Fascist. Thuringia and Saxony have a Workers' Government, which, thanks to the treachery of the Social-Democrats (including the "Marxist" Dr. Hilferding), is being crushed by the machine-guns of the Reichswehr. The Government in Berlin is a puppet in the hands of the very industrialists, captained by Stinnes, who have made a covenant with the French in the Ruhr.

What is the significance of all this? It is that French capitalism has secured both economic and political hegemony over Europe. Under the Peace Treaty, France secured the Lorraine iron area and the Saar coalfield. Before the war she had only about a sixth of the coal production of Germany, a third of the pig-iron production, and a quarter of the steel production. Alsace-Lorraine, the Saar, and Upper Silesia together produced a third of the German pre-war coal production, and Lorraine alone produced seventy-five per cent of Germany's iron ore.

Further, France secured "political independence" for her puppet States, Poland and the Little Entente; and French capital in league with French diplomacy proceeded to fasten a band of French control down the centre of Europe from Dantzic to the Black Sea. Then, by the clever manipulation of the results of plebiscite most of the valuable Silesian coal area was deducted from Germany and brought under Poland.

Now, although seventy-five per cent of Germany's pre-war iron ore production was in Lorraine, Lorraine had produced an insignificant amount of coal (about 1.5 per cent.), and only twenty-five per cent. of the blast furnaces. Lorraine needs both coke from the Ruhr and the Ruhr blast furnaces to smelt its ore. Hence the latest move of French capitalism: the subjugation of the richest industrial area of Europe to the Comité des Forges and the Paris banking syndicates, with the German industrialists co-operating as junior partners!

On top of this comes the news that a special arrangement has been made for the exploitation of the valuable Galician oil resources. Special privileges are to be given to companies operating with French capital, and a new oil syndicate has been formed in Paris. So, with the oil of Galicia and Rumania at her command, France will no longer be dependent on the Royal Dutch-Shell or on Standard Oil for her oil supplies. The French Empire is as great a menace to British capitalism as the German Empire ever was—that is the "great thought" with which the fifth anniversary of Armistice Day provides us!

Whereas the French Empire is fast becoming an economic unity and has the advantage of geographical proximity, the British Empire is not as yet a unit economically, and is geographically separated. Hence, the counter-move of British capitalism is the development of Empire Trade, the Imperial Conference, Protection plus Imperial Preference. Meanwhile unemployment grows, the standard of life of the workers falls, and international Fascism, the tool of international heavy industry, unblushingly throws aside democratic form to crush the workers by force.

M. H. DOBB. c

—In "The Plebs" (London).

SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA

PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

EVERY SUNDAY

THEATRE ROYAL

SUNDAY DECEMBER 30th.

Speaker: C. STEPHENSON.

All meetings at 8 p.m.
Questions. Discussion.

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VANCOUVER, B. C., JANUARY 2nd, 1924.

RING IN THE NEW.

THE year just gone, every day of it marked by human strife in field, factory and workshop, in national councils and in international relationships, and every day of it witnessing the pitiable conditions in which the tormented peoples have striven to live may be marked down as a year well gone. It is not that we would parade and trade upon cumulative misery and rejoice that it continues, rejoice, that is, that present increased suffering betokens the break-up. But it would seem that in viewing society and its welfare as the great consideration we are still far below Wad's "last and highest landing in the great staircase of education."

While the industrial and agricultural workers of this American continent have had their immediate every day problems, in the former case the general problem of work and wages and in the latter case the serious business of making ends meet as producers and marketers of foodstuffs of one sort or another, while their problems have been acute enough they are almost beyond comparison with the conditions that have obtained in certain parts of the European world. The once powerful national fabric of Germany has been broken and her people reduced to a state of famine. The peace seems worse than the war, and still there go along powerful military preparations ostensibly to preserve the peace.

There remains in 1924 the same causal relations existing between rich and poor that have marked these past years, yet aggravated the more by policies of conquest and oppression set afoot by national groups and powerful combinations who have still more to gain. How long these courses may be pursued is quite naturally a matter for wonderment by all. The new year carries with it the problems of the old. Surely they cannot magnify.

JOHN MACLEAN IS DEAD

SEVERAL terms of imprisonment during the war and after operated seriously against the health of John MacLean, of Glasgow, Scotland, a man well known and widely respected throughout the world of Socialist educational and propapanda circles. We learn of his death from "The Forward" (Glasgow):—

"De mortuis nil nisi bonum. John Maclean was a sore thorn in the flesh of the Labor and Socialist Movement in the West of Scotland during recent years, but none ever doubted his sincerity. His conviction that machiavellian attempts were made to poison him and that he was surrounded by cabals seeking his destruction, colored all his later years and rendered him gey ill to thole. Towards the end his organization was simply an anti-Labor Party, one trading largely upon his personal sufferings and sacrifices of its founder.

"But now that he is dead, we think of him rather as the man who in earlier days of the Socialist Movement conducted a great and thankless propapanda at the street corners. Peace to his ashes!"

In the war years the practice of "doctoring prisoners' food (C.O.'s, politicals and such like),

resulting in various ailments to mind and body was much complained of. It was in self-defence against such pressure, presumably exerted officially to break the prisoners' morale, that John MacLean adopted the hunger strike practice. His release from his first term found him, therefore, reduced physically, and mentally from that time on, by all reports, he had suffered all sort of imagings concerning various designs made for his personal hurt. His trust in human nature was wrecked, and some of his friends were not beyond his suspicions. That is what "Forward" means when it says he was hard to bear in the later years. We join with all comrades in the general sorrow of his passing. His devotion to the educational field among the working class is well shown in the "Foreword" to "First Principles of Working Class Education" (Clunie), written June 1920:—

"The growing demand by wage-earners for knowledge of history in all its branches and of economics from a worker's as well as a capitalist's point of view is a natural reflex of the war, the Russian Revolution, and the growing tension between Britain and America in the rush for world economic supremacy.

"The Government's jugglery with its Bradburys and the consequent rise of prices, the rapid amalgamation of companies into trusts and interlocked trusts, the transformations inside works along the lines of scientific management, and the perpetual repetition of the "increased production" cry are more immediate stimuli inciting the more thoughtful of the workers to plumb to the depths the principles of human and social evolution and of political economy.

"These are the main circumstances that have led to the permanent establishment of the Scottish Labour College, the start of the Connolly Memorial College in Ireland, the desire for other Labor Colleges in England besides the Labour College in London, and the movement just beginning in Canada to establish a string of Labor Colleges right across that vast territory.

"Very soon every village and hamlet in Scotland will have its classes working in conjunction with the Labor College. A tremendous thirst for knowledge will then manifest itself. Unfortunately, tutors and suitable text-books are scarce. However, these will emerge in due course once the pioneer work of getting finance and organization machinery has been accomplished."

MacLean in his early years had himself witnessed some evictions of the Scotch Highland crofters by landlords' agents and, as he himself expressed it in "Condemned from the Dock," his class bitterness had its root there and became an obsession. Perhaps that accounts in some measure for the fact that in these past few years he ran out of step with most groups in the West of Scotland, working class and otherwise. Anyway, another sincere and able working class educator has passed from among us.

HERE AND NOW.

WE suppose that Socialists being akin to the wise men, never make resolutions. In spite of all temptations they meander along solaced, if not comforted, with the thought that all things come under change—and that includes resolutions

Now in case any should fall from the straight and narrow path of the dialectics, and should be enticed into the camp of the resolutionists—they abound in plenty among the heathen—in such a case we would be amiss in neglecting an opportunity

Resolved, then, say we Here and Now, that in 1924 the Clarion subscription list will be extended!

As we write, the moon is on its last quarter—and so are we. Come, all ye faithful:—

Following, \$1 each: John James, C. C. Kennedy, C. W. Blair, J. G. Randall, J. C. Budge, J. Carson, E. Erwin, J. H. Moon, T. De Mott, E. S. Robinson, C. Woolings, F. Wood, C. F. Orchard, M. J. Knudsen, J. Caxon.

Lee Wilson, \$5; J. A. McDonald, \$4; W. Cunneham, \$2; C. Lester, \$2; G. R. Donald, \$3.

Above, Clarion subscriptions received from 15th to 28th December, inclusive, —total, \$31.

CLARION MAINTENANCE FUND.

Following, \$1 each: T. Richardson, J. G. Randall, J. Carson, W. Cunneham, T. DeMott, E. S. Robinson, Oscar Motter, F. Neale, Miss Williamson, J. Caxon.

Dave Watt, \$5; P. A. Askew, \$2; Alex, and Peter Shepherd, \$5.40.

Above, C. M. F. receipts, from 15th to 28th December, inclusive—total, \$22.40.

TO E. RHODES.

This notice is inserted here on the offchance that Com. Rhodes may learn that several letters await him in Vancouver and also a parcel. It might be (in view of the season) that the parcel contains—say—a plum pudding, and it would be a pity to have to hold a post mortem on it. Hurry! Let's know where you are.

TOOLS, THOUGHT AND LANGUAGE.

Sociability, with its consequences, the moral feelings, is a peculiarity which distinguishes man from some, but not from all, animals. There are, however, some peculiarities which belong to man only, and which separate him from the entire animal world. These, in the first instance, are language, then reason. Man is also the only animal that makes use of self-made tools. For all these things, animals have but the slightest propensity, but among men, these have developed essentially new characteristics. Many animals have some kind of voice, and by means of sounds they can come to some understanding, but only man has such sounds as serve as a medium for naming things and actions. Animals also have brains with which they think, but the human mind shows, as we shall see later, an entirely new departure, which we designate as reasonable or abstract thinking. Animals, too, make use of inanimate things which they use for certain purposes; for instance, the building of nests. Monkeys sometimes use sticks or stones, but only man uses tools which he himself deliberately makes for particular purposes. These primitive tendencies among animals show us that the peculiarities possessed by man came to him, not by means of some wonderful creation, but by continuous development.

Animals living isolated can not arrive at such a stage of development. It is only as a social being that man can reach this stage. Outside the pale of society, language is just as useless as an eye in darkness, and is bound to die. Language is possible only in society, and only there is it needed as a means by which members may understand one another. All social animals possess some means of understanding each other, otherwise they would not be able to execute certain plans conjointly. The sounds that were necessary as a means of communication for the primitive man while at his tasks must have developed into names of activities, and later into names of things.

The use of tools also presupposes a society, for it is only through society that attainments can be preserved. In a state of isolated life every one has to make discoveries for himself; with the death of the discoverer the discovery also becomes extinct, and each has to start anew from the very beginning. It is only through society that the experience and knowledge of former generations can be preserved, perpetuated, and developed. In a group or body a few may die, but the group, as such, does not. It remains. Knowledge in the use of tools is not born with man, but is acquired later. Mental tradition, such as is possible only in society, is therefore necessary.

While these special characteristics of man are inseparable from his social life, they also stand in strong relation to each other. These characteristics have not been developed singly, but all have

(Continued on page 8)

The World Economic Situation of 1923

BY EUGEN VARGA.

THE hopes entertained by the capitalist world of an improvement in the situation of the world's economics in 1923 have met with but a very slight degree of fulfilment. The improvement only extends to the United States, and certain parts of Europe: above all to France and Belgium, though it is very doubtful whether the improvement in the two last-named countries is of a real character. It appears to be bound up with the slow depreciation of the rate of exchange. As we have learnt by experience, and especially by the example furnished by Germany, a depreciation of currency only causes a boom so long as the purchasing power of the money standard is considerably higher in the home market than in the world's markets. So long as these conditions last, the country concerned is capable of exporting to the world's markets. But at a certain point a change sets in—which can be observed at present in its crudest form in Germany—the depreciation of the rate of exchange no longer conceals the fact that in such countries production is objectively dearer, calculated in working time, than in countries with a more stable valuta, this in turn involving a rise in prices beyond that of the world's markets, despite a depreciated and falling rate of exchange.

The collapse of the capitalist world market is still proceeding, and in even a more acute form. One symptom of this is the fact that the currencies of the neutral European countries, which for so long maintained their value as compared with the dollar, are now on the down grade: the Swiss franc, the Dutch florin, and the currencies of the Scandinavian countries, are now all showing a decline in relation to the dollar.

It is interesting to observe in this connection that two different circles have been formed in the international exchange of commodities, corresponding to the rates of exchange; the countries with depreciated currencies also form a circle among themselves. The exchange of commodities between countries with a high value and countries with a low valuta is becoming more and more difficult and restricted.

A glance at the various great economic areas yields the following picture:

The United States of America.

The boom in the United States reached its highest point in the spring (March-April). During the summer a certain slackening was observable. This is evidenced alike by statistics as to production and foreign trade statistics.

Production amounted to:

	Crude iron	Steel	Balance of steel	Consumption
	(In thousands of tons)		trust orders of	(In 1000 bales)
			cotton	
May	3868	4196	6981	621
August	3435	3619	5415	492

In the course of the month of September a slight improvement seems to have set in again, but the data concerning production have not yet been published.

The point of decisive importance for us is the fact that the American boom was incapable of raising European economics to a higher level. And all hope of it now doing so is past. Whilst the boom in the United States reached a culmination during the months of March, April and May that the balance of the United States showed an excess of imports over exports, in June a change set in: foreign trade showed a preponderance of exports over imports. This means that more American goods were thrown on the world's markets than America purchased abroad. There is thus no further hope of America exercising a favorable influence on European markets already suffering from a crisis. The imports of the United States, which amounted to 398 million dollars in March, sank to 275 million dollars by August. The hoped for revival of the

European market by means of extensive purchases on the part of America has thus proved illusory.

The American economic reports are still optimistic in tone, but more and more voices are to be heard, especially in banking circles, expressing the opinion that the favorable state of the American markets cannot be maintained unless the European markets are restored. They point out that even in 1922 Europe absorbed 54% of the exports from the United States. The farmers are also in favor of action for the restoration of Europe. The price of agricultural products in the United States is determined by the world's market prices, and these are determined by the prices which Europe is able to pay. The very limited purchasing power of Europe is absorbed to an increasing degree by Russia! In America, wheat has been used for feeding the cattle of late. It is suggested that credits be granted to Germany in the form of wheat supplies, etc. The readiness of the United States to take part in some sort of solution of the reparation problem is to be ascribed to these facts.

The British Empire.

England is still in the most difficult position of all the countries of Europe. Her situation has grown steadily worse during the period just elapsed. The number of unemployed increases from week to week, and it is calculated that by the New Year there will be as many out of work as last year, if not more. The benefits derived by England from the occupation of the Ruhr have already ceased. Besides this, the situation of the textile industry continues to be extremely bad, and the restriction of cotton production is being prolonged from month to month. The English political economists appear to be more and more inclined to abandon the hope that England will be able to feed her population by exporting industrial articles in exchange for food and raw materials. Absolute perplexity prevails. Attempts are being made to improve English agriculture, and to organize emigration to the English settlement colonies; all the traditions of English political economy are being called into doubt; protective duties and inflation of currency are being demanded!

The British Imperial Conference has been engaged in the attempt to convert the Empire into a self-sufficing economic whole, able to remain aloof from the rest of the world behind its system of preferential duties. But the deliberations showed that the economic position of the various English colonies varies far too much to allow of the possibility of such a plan being realized. Canada's interests lie in the development of its industries, and it is already much more closely bound up with the United States than with England. And in other colonies independent industries have also sprung up since the war, and these would be very unwilling to submit to a new policy. This is especially the case with India. While on the other hand there is in England itself a strong party of industrial and commercial capitalists which is strongly opposed to the idea of a self-sufficing British Empire; these circles stand in fear of increased prices of food, which would result in higher costs of production, and ultimately in decreased competitive power in the world's markets.

It would seem as if the divergence of interests is so great, that it is impossible for any unified economic policy to be arrived at. The confused condition of English economics is aptly characterized by the tendency being shown by very influential circles of industrial capital to take up the idea of an inflation policy, though perhaps not openly. In this regard the speech made at Glasgow by Geddes, the president of the powerful Federation of British Industries, is extremely characteristic. In the course of this address he expressed his doubts whether the country would be able to bear, in addition to all other difficulties, the sacrifice demanded by a continual

improvement in the value of the currency. Deflation had been carried on to a great extent for a number of years. For a number of years the value of the pound as compared with the dollar has been raised; there had been a frightful burden of unemployment; taxation had been terribly heavy. There should certainly be some sort of connection between the country's financial policy and the economic situation. In international commerce, a policy of continuous deflation and continuous sinking of prices signified a displacement of trade, an increase of the burden of international debt, and a constant exertion to adapt prices and costs of production to the constantly sinking price level. It seemed to him (Geddes) that this added an unbearable burden to those already being carried. These burdens could be lightened by a policy less exclusively devoted to the improvement of the rate of exchange with America, and more to the restoration of permanent economic conditions. The speaker further announced that the report of the commission appointed by the Federation of British Industries for the purpose of studying this question would be published within a few days. The idea of introducing a system of protective duties** and of bringing about neo-Malthusianism, are best proofs that the English political economists have lost all hope of the restoration of the conditions once vital to England in the economics of the world.

France and Belgium.

At the present moment the economic situation of France and Belgium appears to be the most favorable of all Europe. The number of unemployed recorded is very small; France employs more and more foreign labor. As already mentioned above, this is to be chiefly ascribed to the gradual fall in the rate of exchange. This renders it possible for French and Belgian industry to sell their goods on the world's markets, and to enter into keen competition with England and the United States. The English press has lately been filled with complaints about the intrusion of the products of the French wool and metal industries into the markets of England itself. The Bradford Chamber of Commerce recently demanded that the government should introduce protective duties in favor of the English wool industry. Within the last few days the French newspapers published reports as to an agreement said to have been come to between France and England, in accordance with which the products of the Ruhr valley, which have accumulated during the period of the Ruhr occupation, are not to be dumped on to the English markets. (Matin, 25 October*). As already mentioned above, French and Belgian economics appear to be flourishing in the same manner as was the case with Germany in the years 1921 and 1922.

Germany.

At the present time, Germany's economic situation is characterized by a complete reversal in the matter of prices. After the middle class has been entirely expropriated by means of the inflation, a state of affairs has been arrived at compelling the middlemen selling to the final consumers—the small dealers, craftsmen, inn-keepers, etc.—to resort to calculating in gold marks, in order to avoid being left absolutely without the means for renewing stock. This has swept away the last appearances of cheap production and economic prosperity; production in Germany is in effect dearer than in the world's markets. This has given rise to an acute

** The Prime Minister, Baldwin, again expressed himself a short time ago as decidedly in favor of the introduction of protective duties.

* The organ of French heavy industry l'Usine, Oct. 27, confirms this report, and observes that this has been a friendly service, and that the reserve stock of iron accumulated in the Ruhr has not exceeded 100,000 tons.

(Continued on page 6)

Scabbery and Unionism

WHAT mighty import lies in these words when used in conjunction! It is obvious that they are abstract nouns and express a condition or state, but it is not quite so obvious that this state is actually a state of war, or as Tennyson puts it:

"Civil war, as I think, and that of a kind
The viler, as understand, not openly bearing
the sword."

Yet the series of battles of this nature that are fought at different times and on different continents, are one and all of momentous importance to the whole human race.

They are important because they are part of a chain of conditions that accomplish the arousal of a man from lethargy that is always detrimental to an evolution which must be attained by continual battling with adverse circumstances incidental to climate, to wild beasts, or to his brother man.

Climate and beasts are no longer formidable, therefore the scheming that man finds indispensable to his business ventures remains the only dynamic stimulant to mental effort. Sheer necessity compels him to concentrate the wealth of the world more and more by means of trusts, or unions of manufacturers, and these by reason of the constant attempts to reduce their income inflict never-ending embarrassment on their wage and salaried dependents. To this course they are forced in part, if not altogether, by competition and often by the competition of men using cheap labour in foreign countries.

But these unions of manufacturers who operate the large industries through the agency of hired subordinates, together with the proletariat constitute two factors of which society is the sum: therefore the work done en masse by both is a social effort, and being of such a nature no individual from either division has a right to say what the recompense received by the other members of his class shall be. That is a corporate affair and can only be decided by the majority of the interested members of the corporation to which they belong: in the case of the workers, this corporation is known to the world as a union.

The eternal rivalry between this class of union and those of the employers is nothing less than the metamorphosis of the struggle for existence that started hundreds of thousands of years ago in the jungle; and that must last until the economic emancipation of man is complete, since it is to a large extent through the medium of these instruments that humanity struggles upwards. Each is functioning in a manner essential to the needs of future society—the former developing industry and commerce for its use—the latter developing a race that can appreciate and utilize to the best advantage its munificent inheritance.

In the meantime it would be interesting to consider in what light we ought to regard our necessarily interesting friend "the scab," referred to more politely as a strikebreaker, and admitted by his patrons to a full measure of respectability by the use of the euphonic term "replacement-man."

Perhaps he is not so much to blame after all. Let us hope that for the sake of the reputation and honour of humanity that he does not realize the import of his actions; that he thinks in the terms of the last century when his forefather using his own tools worked as an individual and had a right to dispose of his labour-power in any manner he chose. To such let us be kindly-disposed, and demonstrate to his satisfaction that he is an instance of atavism and that his ideals are gradually becoming extinct.

It may be that he helps in furthering human evolution, but his efforts can only be compared to a crawling insect that in trying to satisfy the needs of its stomach, pinches man and forces him to consider that his condition is not such as it ought to be.

But this is not all for which he is responsible,

since a final victory of scabbery over unionism would mean that there could be only one obvious culmination to the ever-dwindling standard of living: it would sink to the lowest possible ebb consistent with the merest existence.

The strike-breaker therefore not only covers his name with obloquy, but he is battling for a system that would presently land millions of the industrial proletariat in a condition of penury that obtains to a large extent in India today, where according to the Rev. D. M. Rose of Kangra, India, who made the following statement to the Vancouver members of the Women's Canadian Club on March 10th 1921, the conditions are as follows: "Eighty per cent of the people have no interests outside their farms; there is wealth" Mr. Rose continued, "but the mass of the people have to eke a mere existence from the land. The curb of wealth descends abruptly to poverty. An average family lives on \$75.00 per annum"; to which we might add that that means \$6.25 per month, and a dearth of everything that goes to make a man fitted for world citizenship and therefore, under favourable circumstances, a tool of those war-lords belonging to any one of the great powers, that have often proved a menace to the existence of civilized society.

Compare this condition with that of the youthful Maharaja of Cooh Behar whose picture, with this information underneath, appeared in the Family Herald and Weekly Star for November 28th last. This scion of a royal house is seven years old and receives an income of \$150,000 per month, a sum sufficient to support 24,000 families, or allowing an average membership of four to each family, a population of 96,000 people.

Usually the possession of such an income is defended on the ground that it is a fair recompense for brain-power, but here there can be no such excuse for an infant of seven who by the time he is twenty-one will have—whether a genius or an idiot, saved, squandered, or used up the colossal sum of \$25,200,000, while the average income of one of his subjects in that time, according to the figures quoted above, amounts to \$1050.00. It is hardly possible that the most ardent capitalist desires to see such conditions develop; nevertheless that does not help the case at all since sentiment is powerless in this instance.

Whether we like it or not, the inexorable laws of competition force drastic action amongst the combatants, action that is of supreme importance in sharpening the wits of the race.

Let us hope that the "scab" environed by all the appurtenances of strike conditions will receive a mental shock sufficient to make him realize his true position.

When that happens he will become a valuable acquisition to the great labour-union army.

Let us hope that the time is not far distant when a world awakened to a sense of its responsibilities will leave no pretext for the presence of dehumanizing "scabbery" and that the time will soon be here when the unions of the world of all descriptions, amalgamated by necessity, shall materialize the dreams of the prophets, poets, and sages of history in the "Federation of the World, The Parliament of Man."

F. W. MOORE.

ECONOMIC CAUSES OF WAR

By PETER T. LEOKIE.

NOW READY

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THE WORLD ECONOMIC SITUATION OF 1923.

(Continued from page 5)

crisis in the finding of markets. Unemployment grows from day to day, and when we call to mind the unemployment in the Ruhr district, concerning which we have no data, we can estimate the number of those out of work as far exceeding a million and the number on short time at several millions.

The transition to the gold mark calculation reveals the absolute impoverishment of Germany. Those shops which sell articles of general use, clothing, footwear, etc., are bare of customers. The general impoverishment of the whole middle and working classes is such, that there are no purchasers for such goods at the present prices. The profits which the tradesmen hoped to gain by adopting the gold mark calculation are not realized owing to the lack of buyers. Since prices have risen the foreigner has disappeared as a buyer. The rich peasantry are already well supplied with industrial articles; the poor peasantry are equally unable to buy, for they are heavily burdened by the new taxes, and the frightful rate at which money loses in value renders them afraid of putting their slight surplus of food products on the market. German economists have thus become involved in a crisis of such acuteness as is probably unexampled in the history of capitalist economics. The unsolved reparation question, the tendency to disruption in the Reich itself, the hopeless situation of German finances, all these contribute to increase the hopelessness of German economics.

In spite of the fresh taxes, in spite of the abandonment of the resistance in the Ruhr area, expenditure rose more than the dollar in the 10 days between the 10th and 20th October. Again the state revenues do not cover one per cent of the expenditure; 99% is covered by the printing of banknotes. And no bourgeois government will be in the least able to alter these conditions.

Japan.

Japan is an ultra-European great power whose economic progress has received a severe set-back owing to the earthquake catastrophe. The inner economics of Japan naturally show, at the moment, a certain revival as a result of the extensive work of restoration, but there is no doubt Japan is paralysed for a time as a factor in international economics. The Japanese catastrophe has caused certain favorable economic effects in other countries, especially in the silk industry of Italy and France, in the same way as the Ruhr occupation improved the trade of other countries; this, however, is devoid of significance for the world's economics as a whole.

To sum up, we can only repeat that, with the exception of the United States, where a satisfactory amount of economic prosperity may be looked for for a considerable period, although the boom of this spring may not be repeated, the economics of the whole capitalist world, and above all of the European capitalist countries, are still in a state of chronic crisis. Indeed, we may safely assert that the situation of European economics has rather deteriorated than improved during the period just passed through.

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Marginal Utility

By F. J. McNEY.

THE marginal utility theory of value is the theory that is used by all the professors of economics in all the universities throughout the capitalist world at the present time, to explain why, in the majority of cases, it is necessary for us to give something in exchange for anything we want instead of getting it for nothing. This theory is therefore the only one worthy of consideration as a rival of the labor theory of value.

For many years it has been the custom of the opponents of the labor theory of value, when writing a book on economics, to state the theory much the same as it was first stated by the classical economists, without making any distinction between individual labor and social labor, between necessary labor and waste labor, or between labor and labor power, and then, after having confused the proposition as much as possible in this way, proceed to abolish it, and replace it by some other theory of value more acceptable to the capitalist class, and since the invention of the marginal utility theory it appears to be the favorite for that purpose.

At the present time, however, very few of the professors of economics take the trouble to mention the labor theory of value at all, or if they do give it mention, it is merely to remark that even the Socialists have abandoned it. The fact of the matter is that they have found it a dangerous theory to monkey with, so they try to avoid it by ignoring it altogether, and represent the marginal utility theory as the only possible method of explaining exchange value.

Now this marginal utility theory of value as it is generally defined and explained by its exponents is somewhat difficult for an ordinary person to understand, and it has cost me a considerable amount of study and meditation to get to the bottom of it, but I think I have solved the problem at last, and if I am mistaken I hope the columns of the Clarion are open to any person who may wish to correct me. To make a long story short, the theory has never been explained to my satisfaction, so I have decided to explain it to suit myself, and if possible make it clear to others as well, taking as the basis of my analysis a few of the definitions and illustrations supplied by two of its foremost advocates.

Before commencing our investigation however, it may be well to point out that our aim is to find what determines the exchange value of commodities, or on what basis do commodities exchange one with another. This is the question that the marginal utility theory is supposed to answer. We must also remember that buying and selling is merely trading, using money as the medium of exchange.

Let us now examine some of the evidence. Our first exhibit is a definition of marginal utility given by Professor Richard T. Ely in his book "The Elementary Principles of Economics." He tells us here that marginal utility is "Utility under a condition of scarcity. To possess value, a thing must be able to satisfy wants, and it must exist in less than sufficient quantity to satisfy all wants."

Read that definition again, and ponder over it, and meditate on it, because it contains the keystone of the whole marginal utility theory. It also contains the snag that punctures the balloon. Note, that no matter how useful a thing may be, it has no value unless it is scarce. And conversely, if a thing sells for a price, it must therefore possess value, and this fact in itself is conclusive proof that it is scarce, because if it existed in sufficient quantity to satisfy all wants it would possess no value and consequently could have no price, so in that case we would get it for nothing. You can't get away from the logic of the argument. It is impregnable.

Our next witness is Fred Rogers Fairchild, Professor of Economics in Yale University. Professor Fairchild is the author of a book just off the press entitled "Essentials of Economics." It is, right up to date in every respect, and as we wish to be up to

the minute ourselves we will follow Professor Fairchild from now on. In this book the Professor tells us that "the marginal utility of anything to any person decreases with every increase in the quantity which he possesses." This decreasing tendency of the marginal utility of anything to any person is called the "law of diminishing utility." Professor Fairchild illustrates how this law works in buying baseballs, evidently under the impression that buying baseballs will be more interesting to university students than anything else. However, as the majority of Clarion readers are, no doubt, pig philosophers like myself, I will give the illustration in loaves of bread. The idea is to show how the utility of anything to any person decreases from the highest point of utility, which is called final or marginal utility. This lowest point is reached whenever utility comes in contact with scarcity. In other words, it is a collision of diminishing utility with scarcity that determines value. But if there is no scarcity, there is no margin, and consequently there can be no collision, so the utility keeps on diminishing until it disappears altogether, and with it goes value, and both are lost forever in the unfathomable depths of abundance.

Now suppose you were out on the desert somewhere starving to death, and just when you were about to croak, a bread merchant came along with a wheelbarrow load of bread and offered to sell you a loaf for ten dollars. You would not stop to haggle with him over the price, you would not have time, and besides, a loaf of bread would appear cheap to you at ten dollars, under such circumstances, because its utility to you would be absolute, it would save your life. So you would give him the ten dollars, and devour the loaf. But now that your hunger has been appeased to some extent, you would be in a position to bargain over the price of the second loaf. You would want another loaf of course, but you would not want it so much as you did the first one, consequently you would not pay so much for it. You would perhaps pay eight dollars for the second loaf, and so on down the scale until you had consumed ten or a dozen loaves, and were fairly well "fed up" for the time being, then you might buy one more loaf at the price of say a nickel, to take with you in case you got hungry again on the way home. But that would be all. Your wants are now all satisfied, and as far as you are concerned the bottom has dropped out of utility entirely. No doubt, the bread merchant would offer to sell you the remainder of his stock for a nickel a loaf, but you would tell him to take the remainder of his loaves and go "over on the other side" where Conan Doyle's friends live. Bread would have no more exchange value to you just then, because you could not use any more of it. But suppose there had been a scarcity of bread. Suppose the peddler only had six loaves, and ten were necessary to satisfy your wants. Then the last loaf would still have considerable exchange value to you, because the utility value of bread to you had not yet been exhausted.

Of course you understand that nothing like this actually takes place, it is merely a supposition, a theoretical proposition to illustrate how the law of diminishing utility works from the highest point, absolute utility, to the lowest point, the margin of utility which is supposed to determine exchange value. What actually happens is as follows:

You walk into a bakery to buy a couple of loaves of bread. You may not even be hungry at the time, but you know you will be in a few hours. You find that loaves of the same weight are all the same price no matter whether you buy one or fifty. But you don't want fifty loaves, they would only spoil before you got them used up, so you buy two or three loaves at, say a dime each, enough to do you for two or three days. And now, your wants are all supplied in the matter of bread just for the present, and so

far as you are concerned the remainder of the bread in the bakery has no more utility to you, and therefore no exchange value. Yes, but you are not the only pebble on the beach. There are other people who want bread, and who are coming in to buy it every minute of the day. We are not all supplied at the same time. And so long as there is always somebody who wants a loaf of bread bad enough to pay for it, or give something else in exchange for it, why, bread must be scarce, because if it existed in sufficient quantity to satisfy all wants, it would have no exchange value, and consequently could have no price, so everybody would get it for nothing. Do you get the idea? Then we would have a state of affairs in which something would exchange for nothing, instead of one commodity exchanging for another in certain proportions. Now if you understand what the marginal utility theory of value is, we will go on to the next proposition.

The next thing on the programme is the proofs of the correctness of the marginal utility theory, and the first one we come to is what might be called the air proof, or the air test, for want of a better name. This test is very popular with the majority of the exponents of marginal utility, and Professor Fairchild is no exception. It is also very appropriate because they spend most of their time up in the air. In fact, if they had kept a little closer to terra firma they might have noticed the leak in their theory before it was too late, and saved themselves from becoming the laughing stock of future generations. Here is part of what Professor Fairchild has to say about air:

"Air, the most useful thing in the world, therefore has no value. The only things that have marginal utility and so have value are those that are limited in quantity, so that there is not enough to satisfy everybody's wants. This condition is called scarcity."

Everybody will admit that air is a very useful thing. It is indeed, it is useful for many purposes. And it is so abundant that it has no exchange value. In fact, so abundant is air that the greater portion of the professor's book on economics, consists of air, of a high temperature. But there is one thing that this air test does prove, and that is that the whole theory of marginal utility is based on the idea of scarcity. And the scarcity superstition appears to be based on air.

After circling around in the dizzy heights of the atmosphere for considerable time our Professor descends to earth at last. He is now adrift upon the waters. He points out that when we are out in the country, or in the mountains, where there are numerous springs and streams, water is abundant, there is plenty to satisfy the wants of everybody, and consequently it has no exchange value, but when we are in the city, ah! here we are on the trail of the beast again, that same old skunk scarcity. The Professor explains thus:

"Here water is scarce. It must be collected at great expense in reservoirs and brought in, often from long distances. It is therefore owned, either by a water company, which sells it to the citizens, or by the city itself. Here water has value."

The difference between the water out in the mountains, and the water in the city, is a difference of "great expense." There is "great expense" connected with bringing the water into the city, and this "great expense" makes it scarce, and the scarcity gives it exchange value, and there you are. Why it is as simple as falling off a log, and I never noticed it before. There is one question yet to be answered, however: the Professor has forgotten to state, and I have not got the least idea myself, what it is that causes this "great expense." Why there should be any "great expense" connected with building reservoirs, digging tunnels and ditches, and

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MARGINAL UTILITY.

Continued from page 5)

laying pipe, to bring the water long distances into the city, is a mystery to me, and why this "great expense" should make the water scarce after it is in the city, is a greater conundrum still. But everybody knows how scarce water is in the average city under normal conditions. And it is the "great expense" that makes it scarce. And—well there you are. Professor Fairchild is some logician that's a cinch.

Let us now sum up our analysis and see what conclusions we have arrived at. Our first conclusion is, that according to the marginal utility theory of value there is not one single commodity at the present time, that is, not one single thing that requires labor for its production and distribution, that exists in sufficient quantity to satisfy all the wants of society, not even the commodity labor power. The idea is a joke, of course. It is so absurd that I doubt if it would be possible to find many exponents of the marginal utility theory who would even attempt to defend such a hypothesis if it came to a show down. But suppose we grant them their premises; we can even afford to do that. Let us assume for the sake of argument that there is a scarcity of all commodities in human society at the present time, and that it is this scarcity that gives them exchange value. What then? Now we are forced to follow this assumption up with another one. We must assume that if we were to speed up industry to such an extent that it would be possible to supply all commodities in sufficient quantity to satisfy all the wants of society, then exchange value would disappear altogether, and those stubborn contrary articles of commerce would absolutely refuse to be exchanged one for another on any basis. In other words, according to the marginal utility theory of value, it would be impossible to trade a bushel of wheat for a necktie if both wheat and neckties existed in sufficient quantity to satisfy all wants because in that case neither would have any exchange

value whatever. And I say unto you that not even Solomon in all his wisdom was arrayed with a head that could have concocted a theory like that.

Now, if you have read this article carefully you know as much about the marginal utility theory of value as I do, and it is possible that I know almost as much about it as some of its exponents. However, I may be mistaken; I may have overlooked a point or two, and if I have, I hope that some person who understands the theory better will correct me as soon as possible. That will be all for the present.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR

(Continued from page 1)

ant as the truth of Christ, and as conspicuous as the creating "god." That is for why—as aforementioned—we fare so sumptuously, with reverence and thanksgiving, in the twilight days of the year, when Hyperion turns his chariot once more towards the green foothills of Boreas. R.

Correspondence

Editor, Western Clarion:
Dear Comrade:

Comrade Lester visited the Stanmore Local and spoke in the Municipal Hall at Stanmore on Thursday evening December 13th, and at the Westover School on Dec. 14th. Both meetings were well attended and some literature sold. Owing to the fact that the population of the district has been reduced by at least one half during the past year, the audiences were not so large as the former meetings of Com. Lester. But the sympathy and interest of the audience was easily discerned, there being instead of opposition signs of encouragement and hope. In working in our district Com. Lester has a fertile field: 95% of the farmers are so deep in debt, (heavily involved, as the banks put it); they are beginning to see that there is positively no hope of them ever having a home they can call their own. By a heavy provincial debt, a heavier federal debt, besides private debts, which altogether according to Mr. Fream the drought commissioner averages \$9,000 per half section farming is a burden so heavy that those with the strongest backs and weakish heads are beginning to weaken and are reversing the place of their strength.

Family after family has moved out and still they go. Some are dazed and do not know what happened to them, nor how it happened. They do not know it was a well planned skinning game from the beginning. The homestead laws were so framed that he was doomed in the beginning. He got 320 acres and in order to secure patent to the land a \$300 house had to be built and at least 80 acres broken, etc. This required more capital than most of us had. The machine combine had agents traveling in all directions, inducing the future farm slave to buy machinery. No difficulty was experienced in buying a complete outfit on time. Not much difficulty was experienced in getting an extension of credit until the homesteader had proved up. After he had proved up he was forced to pay up. The only way he could pay was to borrow; he was now the owner of 160 acres. The loan shark appeared and like the machine agent he was working on commission and therefore anxious and keen for business. They had beautiful arguments to prove to the future farm slave that since he was borrowing it was wise and "good business" to get all he could.

The trick was done. Now the farm slave toils, his wife and children toil, but there is no hope. He was caught in a web so carefully woven that there is no hope of escaping.

"Let us build elevators of our own" was their first attempt at emancipation. It failed. Other red herrings follow in rapid succession; farmer "organizations," "co-operation," "education," "group government," "farmer government" and recently the wheat pool. The farm slave has been more or less successful in his bogus attempts at bettering his condition, but his misery and poverty continues and deepens. For him there is no hope under the system. This fall the farm slave's wagon has made deep ruts in the roads by hauling the master's grain. Although he has raised so much wheat that the hauling has ruined the roads, his own condition is not improved. Most of them are beginning to see that all they need from now on is a thorough explanation of his proper function in capitalist society. He is a slave of the farm and the next thing is to point the way of emancipation. In this task Comrade Lester is doing splendidly and the comrades of the Stanmore Local have pledged themselves to assist, each according to his means and ability in this as yet unthankful but encouraging and worthy task.

And why not? The farm slave has "nothing to lose but his chains, and a world to gain."

Yours for Socialism,

S. V. VALISCO,

Stanmore (Alberta) Local No. 110.

Dec. 17th, 1923.

TOOLS, THOUGHT AND LANGUAGE.

(Continued from page 4)

progressed in common. That thought and language can exist and develop only in common is known to everyone who has but tried to think of the nature of his own thoughts. When we think or consider, we, in fact, talk to ourselves; we observe then that it is impossible for us to think clearly without using words. Where we do not think with words our thoughts remain indistinct and we can not combine the various thoughts. Every one can realize this from his own experience. This is because so-called abstract reason is perceptive thought and can take place only by means of perceptions. Perceptions we can designate and hold only by means of names. Every attempt to broaden our minds, every attempt to advance our knowledge must begin by distinguishing and classifying by means of names or by giving to the old ones a more precise meaning. Language is the body of the mind, the material by which all human science can be built up.

(Continued in next issue.)

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PLATFORM

Socialist Party of Canada

We, the Socialist Party of Canada affirm our allegiance to, and support of the principles and programme of the revolutionary working class.

Labor, applied to natural resources, produces all wealth. The present economic system is based upon capitalist ownership of the means of production, consequently, all the products of labor belong to the capitalist class. The capitalist is, therefore, master; the worker a slave.

So long as the capitalist class remains in possession of the reins of government all the powers of the State will be used to protect and defend its property rights in the means of wealth production and its control of the product of labor.

The capitalist system gives to the capitalist an ever-swelling stream of profits, and to the worker, an ever increasing measure of misery and degradation.

The interest of the working class lies in setting itself free from capitalist exploitation by the abolition of the wage system, under which this exploitation, at the point of production, is cloaked. To accomplish this necessitates the transformation of capitalist property in the means of wealth production into socially controlled economic forces.

The irrepressible conflict of interest between the capitalist and the worker necessarily expresses itself as a struggle for political supremacy. This is the Class Struggle.

Therefore we call upon all workers to organize under the banner of the Socialist Party of Canada, with the object of conquering the political powers for the purpose of setting up and enforcing the economic programme of the working class, as follows:

- 1—The transformation, as rapidly as possible, of capitalist property in the means of wealth production (natural resources, factories, mills, railroads, etc.) into collective means of production.
- 2—The organization and management of industry by the working class.
- 3—The establishment, as speedily as possible, of production for use instead of production for profit.