

WESTERN CLARION

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CURRENT
EVENTS

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PHILOSOPHY

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Creative Revolution

A Study in Communist Ergotocracy*

In spite of the forbidding character of the title page, we can read this book without getting beyond our depth oftener than is usual in these days of revolutions and revision. Issued by the Plebs League, in paper covers, we have a foreword by the "Plebs" that betrays the prevalent apprehension of fatalism which today haunts the entire school of Marxian thought. The dread that determinism might be confused with fatalism is gradually clearing the ground, or fertilizing it rather, for a re-growth of the doctrine of Free Will: a poor thing flung by philosophy like Hagar's offspring into the wilderness because of moral testiness and doubtful parentage.

Almost any Socialist book published today exhibits this grave concern, and finds in Bergson, James, and such like bourgeois apologists some factors necessary to the modernizing of Marx.

Ergotocracy is derived from the Greek words, Ergates—worker; and Kratia—to rule; worker's rule. It might be suggested that such a study is somewhat in advance of the times, or that at least Russia affords the only opportunity for profitable study of the subject suggested, but the desire of our authors is not so much to discover what has been done in Russia, as what might be done elsewhere.

Many of the subjects discussed are such that formerly held but little interest for the Socialist movement in Canada, but of late, signs indicate that at last we are to have our share of Fabianism and Laborism. Blatchford, Scheideman, and their attendant right and left wingism. The earlier chapters deal with such subjects. To "Clarion" readers these questions have at best an historical interest only.

The shop stewards' movement (we read on page 67 to 69) is considered revolutionary. "It will once and for all abolish the rule of those who live by ownership, and will substitute for the dominion—the rule or rather the administration of those who live by labor; that it will replace bourgeois democracy by Communist ergotocracy." Such, we are told, is the conviction of the Marxists in the movement, also that: "Convinced as they are that economic power is the basis of political power, they are equally convinced that the shop stewards' movement is the germ of the means whereby the growing economic power of the workers will secure political expression." Some "pregnant sentences" (our authors' phrase) are taken from a pamphlet called "Direct Action." We select two of these: "As the industrial and Social organization grow strong enough it will be forced to fight the Capitalist State—not to take possession of it but to abolish it. The joint social and industrial committee would then have to assume many of the functions of the State during the period of transition."

Aside from the very revolutionary and entirely impossible determination to smash a social institution like the modern State, it seems a pity to proceed to such extreme measures when the State still has many functions to perform. At best all we can hope to do, however revolutionary be our "urge," is to change its name.

"Parliamentary democracy" is to be left to those who still have faith in it; co-operation is but as a

pea-shooter compared to a maxim gun; "in retrospect the shop stewards' movement may come to be regarded as the instrument of the twentieth century revolution, the revolution which inaugurates ergotocracy." This is not to be assumed as anti-political, but anti-parliamentarian.

The new movement is a class movement, not of craft, not even of industry as proclaimed by indus-

efficiently than at present, if not, good night. "The capitalist State will remain in being, and the control of industry by the workers' committee will prove to have been nothing more than a breath on the face at the waters." But the revolution must be ripe or "the workers cannot fulfill their historic mission," and the appraising feature of ripeness will be "the manner in which the active protagonists comport themselves in view of the needs of the hour." Thus, in short, the shop stewards' movement—now alas seeking jobs which are at present not in evidence, aside from the Bergsonian "vital impulses" all embodied in the propaganda of the Industrial Workers of the World, and all built upon great expectations.

In discussing the "Significance of the Great War" (chapter 5) we are unable to discern the "large measure of truth" our authors see in Boudin's pronouncement that "Textiles mean peace; iron and steel—war."

We cannot find any evidence of peace in history since man enslaved his fellow man. And surely the days of King Cotton were stricken enough.

This chapter is somewhat disappointing and clearly shows ignorance of its Caption. It has plenty of quotations, one from Rosa Luxemburg's "Revolutionary Socialism in Action" which we quote with entire approval. "The masses must learn to use power by using power." But this is not in our opinion Bergsonian though our authors designate it as such.

Chapter six on "the Russian Revolution" is not more edifying. Concerning the statement that the consummation of the British bourgeois revolution required the years between 1509 and 1918 to be effected we are inclined to claim Missouri as our birthplace, particularly when we are told in the next breath that the French revolution ended in 1875.

The statements however are apologies for daring to appraise the Russian Revolution, and for expressing the hope and the belief that the world revolution will be effected "in our lifetime, perhaps in the near future."

But that should not prompt us to assume the future historian will look upon the Russian Revolution of 1917 "as the inception of the world revolution."

That might be ergotocratic but it certainly is not Marxian.

Will the Revolution of 1905, the Paris Commune 1871, the inspiring days of 1848 be ignored by our hypothetical future historian in estimating the world revolution? We think not.

At times we feel inclined to invite our Communist friends to read this book, but when we read such sentences as this, we feel they might resent and misconstrue our good offices; page 100. "We realize that the teachings of Tolstoy, in conjunction with the experience of intolerable hardships and the reaction against unnamable horrors, were the chief immediate causes of the Tsarist regime." Setting aside Tolstoy, no one can deny that the unbearable misery of the Russian working class in Petrograd during the

* Creative Revolution: A Study in Communist Ergotocracy. By Edden and Cedar Paul. 224 pp. The Plebs League, 11a Penvern Road, London.

(Continued on page 8)

IGNORANCE IS A POOR EXCUSE.

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Questions. Discussion.

trial unionism, but of the working group,—of a class. "It is by class-conscious organizations able to carry on production that the workers can secure control of industry, expropriate the 'owners' and bring about the social revolution." Capitalism will not fall merely from post-war troubles, nor failure to secure markets, but largely from "the vital impulses" (enter Bergson) "of the bulk of the workers who even in such a land as our own—are showing greater and greater unwillingness to continue running the productive machine in the interest of the ruling class." The workers, however, must be able to run things when they seize control, even more

The Origin of the World

Action for Unemployed

CHAPTER I. OUR WORLD.

Editor's Note: Many Clarion readers, particularly in outlying districts, have written us asking if it is not possible to print an article now and then devoted to the instruction of young people. It seems that the young people are interested in nature studies and the older people find it difficult to meet the needs of the case. We therefore propose to print some selections from "The Origin of the World," by R. McMillan. (Publishers: Watts & Co., London). It should be noted that the essays are not supposed to be strictly scientific and technically exact treatises. Their writing was suggested to the author through questions asked by children, and he set to write "a simple book about the origin of the world." The author's "Preliminary" sets forth his intentions and tells how he came to entertain them.

There was a Greek named Aristotle who lived some centuries B.C. He said that man was a "hunter of the truth." When you asked your grandfather as to the origin of the world, I felt as if you were also a "hunter of the truth." Very few people have time to hunt for anything except the material things that perish. When you manifest a desire to know how the world began, I am filled with the desire to tell you, and the first thing I have to do is to ask if you have any idea of what the world is. Do you know how large it is? Or how pitifully small it is? Very few people know, or care; but I feel that the generation which is growing up is much more intelligent than the one that is going out. The world is never the same for two years together—no, nor for two minutes, or two seconds. It is always changing. Life is forever sweeping and flowing, never resting or pausing, but always and ever changing:—

Linked like a river

By ripples following ripples, fast or slow—

The same, yet not the same—from far-off fountain

To where its waters flow
Into the seas.

Life and the world flow on together, living their little span and then ceasing to be. But the world lives so much longer than we do that we think it is eternal, and before you can understand how brief is the time that the world will last you will have to change all your ideas about time and space, and life and death, and being and becoming. It seems odd to say this to one so young, but I am not going to "talk down" to you as if you were a baby. I am going to tell you what I know, and if you do not understand it today you will understand it tomorrow, or later still. You will never learn by clinging to simple things, so I am going to tell you, as clearly as I am able, how the world began.

All that I have to say to you is published in great books, which are read by the world's scholars in England and America, and in all civilized countries; but they are not taught in our schools, because, I suppose, children are too young to understand them, or they are too poor to be interested in them, or they are too stupid. None of these reasons appeal to me at all, for I think that poor people ought to get the chance to learn just as well as the rich, and children ought to be taught the truth, whatever the consequences are.

When you stand in a paddock on a starry night, and look up to the great wide sky, you think that the stars are very small and very far away. You feel that this world is the big, solid, enduring place, and the stars are tiny specks of fire in the sky. Perhaps you have learned to sing, as I did when very small:—

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are;
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky.

But the stars are not small! They are large, very large, as big as our sun, and every star you see in the sky is a sun! It is the stars that are so large, and we that are small. Do you see what that means?

You have to alter all your ideas, and it is not easy to do that, is it? This world is not very large, and the stars are. But they are so very far away that they look small. Our sun looks very large to us, but that is because it is so close. If we were as close to some of the other stars as we are to our own sun, we would soon burn up.

Shall I tell you how far away our sun is from Australia? It is over 92,000,000 miles. That is so very, very far that we cannot realize how far it is. You cannot think what a million means; and yet the sun is nearly ninety-three million miles from the earth, and if you look at it in the morning or the evening it looks no bigger than a cart-wheel. From the sun we get all our heat and light, life and power; and if the sun failed to rise, all life on earth would cease. Life itself, as Winwood Reade says, "is bottled sunshine, and earth is the sleek-footed butler who draws the cork."

Our great big sun is one million, three hundred thousand times bigger than the earth; and that is so big that it makes our world seem but a tiny baby compared with it. You have never been around the world, so you will think this world is very large; but that is only by comparison.

From Australia to London is about 13,000 miles (the figure varies with the part of Australia you measure from, of course), but the distance to the sun is about 93,000,000 miles. This world is very large compared with a ball of worsted, but compared with the sun it is very small. All the same, our sun is very small compared with some suns. Sir David Gill, the great astronomer, says that the star Canopus—and you can see lots of stars like Canopus in our hemisphere—is a million and a half times brighter than our sun. That is, Canopus is so much brighter than our sun that it must be immensely larger. And when you see Canopus in the dark blue of the sky it looks like Sirius, or one of the other stars that you can see any night. Our "great big sun" is only a little star-baby if you compare it with Canopus.

Do you understand now what I mean when I say that you have got to change your point of view before you can possibly understand the origin of the world? When I took in hand to tell you how the world began, I felt that I must first tell you what the world is, how small it is, and how insignificant in the universe.

One other thing I must tell you about the size of Canopus before I leave the subject. Suppose you were to drop our world into the sun (which is a great flaming fire), there would be a little flash, and a tiny blaze, and—that would be all! But if you wanted to fill the sun up with world-stuff, it would take a million of our earths to do it. And, in the face of a fact like that, we still think that the tiny little human beings on our mud-ball are important.

If you want to know how big Canopus is, then you must remember that it would hold thousands of our suns. One of the world's great teachers, Carl Snyder, says that to think of human beings in the universe is a very hopeless task. He says: "A microbe upon the surface of a microscopic drop of mist in a fog covering the Atlantic Ocean would not be more hopelessly situated in his endeavours to discover his whereabouts."

Somebody may say that I have no right to tell children such things as these. Nevertheless they are true, and I am never afraid of telling the truth to anybody. The only thing I am afraid of is ignorance.

Next Lesson: "The Depths of the Sky."

NOTE CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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Vancover, B. C.

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BY ONE OF THE UNEMPLOYED

"THE time for action is here," or, at least, I have heard so. So are we unemployed here. What is the line of action for the unemployed? There are innumerable possible lines. We could busy ourselves by stealthily repairing to the mountains to there dig immense underground caves for conducting the revolution. We could, with a splendid show of violence and solidarity, seize the churches and pray for work. We could even go on strike and refuse to eat. But I for one am so far back of more recent developments as to suggest that we restrict ourselves to intelligent action.

We unemployed have had sufficient experience of late to direct ourselves to a course of intelligent action. We have gone on parades and been sent away by police. We have sent delegations to City Councils and have been politely put off. We have sent communications to all manner of officials and have been turned down with the utmost discreet sympathy. We have everywhere met the State and have been forced to realize that it is enabled to use power and that we are not; and that therein lies the obstacle to solving our problem. From this must be built our course of intelligent action. We must act so as to acquire the powers of State.

The conquest of power can be achieved only by power. We unemployed together with our fellow-workers must attack and demolish the capitalist State. We must take to ourselves the powers necessary for administering society in our own benefit. But can we accomplish this? Many of us realize the necessity of doing it and want to do it; but we cannot for the simple reason that most of our class do not want to do it, and therefore we cannot do it. What becomes of our projected course of action?

At the convention held at Moscow last year of Red Trade Unions, a resolution was drawn up on Unemployment. In it the convention says to the unemployed of the world: "You were the first to suffer in the struggle—be the advance guard of the attack." How are we unemployed to function as that advance guard? The advance guard must lead the workers in action. Intelligent action can proceed only from knowledge. We unemployed must prepare ourselves to know what to do and how to do it. We must prepare ourselves to permeate that mass of workers who now hold us back from revolt with a desire for revolution. We must steep ourselves deep in the lore of the class-struggle, in the logical viewpoints and philosophy and moral code of our class. We must get clear in our heads the workings of the system we would destroy. We must derive every possible benefit from the experience of our comrades in revolt in the past—the traditions of the Chartists and the revolts of 1848, of the Communards of 1871, of the Russians in 1905 and '17, of the Germans in '18 and Hungarians in '19. We must have at our finger tips a knowledge of what our class is doing the world over. This means study.

The less the organization of our class is for smaller holes in the doughnuts and the more it is far smaller vacancies in our heads, the nearer is our emancipation. With us unemployed the time is here for study, the necessity is here for study, and the duty both to ourselves and to our class is here. For today the logical application of Moscow's injunction is—STUDY.

This leads on to further comment on "action," and the organizations that urge it. If I analyze their philosophy correctly it rests on two postulates. The first is that capitalism is now in the final period of disintegration, that it cannot re-establish itself from the war havoc. The second is that since the historic role of the working class is a revolutionary one, and that since the working class is expending its energy along an untold number of lines to mitigate an equal number of grievances, it is consequently the

(Continued on page 6.)

Geography in History

BY MARK STARR

(Concluded)

CHINESE civilization is not so old as those of Egypt and Mesopotamia. National unity after repeated invasions is first to be found under Shi-Hwang-Ti (200 B.C.), who ruled an empire spreading south from the Hwang-Ho and the Yang-tze-Kiang rivers. Then follow the Han dynasty down to A.D. 220, four hundred years of division between North and South, complicated by the presence of invaders, and then the Tang dynasty down to about 900. Down to the time of Jengis Khan in the thirteenth century, other dynasties headed the kingdom. After the vast conquests of the Mongols—who swept as far west as Poland—other names—Yuan and Ming—appear as the ruling houses. The Manchu conquest about 1700 lasted till recent years, when it was thrown off and a Republic declared. This record of changing dynasties seems to contradict our idea of a static China, but it must be remembered that in China, as well as in other Asiatic States, "the structure of the economical elements of society remains untouched by the storm clouds of the political sky."

Cathay was known to medieval Europe. Travelers, such as Marco Polo and Catholic missionaries and the traders of the Italian towns, got into contact with the court and land of the great Khan. The riches of Cathay were one of the incentives to the voyages of discovery in the fifteenth century, which found the New World of America. Trading contact has been continued right on through the absorption period of the Mongol and Manchu conquerors, and now there is an increasing demand, not so much for trade, as for permanent "concessions." Thanks to the Imperialism of the European powers, and of her near neighbour Japan, the sleep of China is gone for ever. After this briefest of historical outlines, we can pass on to the explanation promised.

China is located for the most part in 20 degree to 40 degree of latitude, which includes the 30 degree to 35 degree in which all the other early civilizations were located. Here there are no great extremes to overpower man, and stunt by great heat or cold his development. The changing seasons provide foresight and adaption of work methods by not too abruptly changing conditions. In a favored oasis near the Tarim Lake, and after in the sheltered river valley of the Wei Wo, and then on to the great deitac plain through which runs the Hwang Ho, and from this the Yellow River, spreading southwards, was born and developed the Chinese civilization.

But the early settlers needed protection from nomad foes, as well as a temperate climate and the fertile soil of the river valleys. Fairgreaves ("Geography and World Power") explains the earlier advances of Egypt by the more complete protection given to its fertile ribbon of land by the Sahara. Any orographical map will show a black patch to the west of China, the Tibetan plateau—"the roof of the world"—which flanks, by the aid of the Gobi Desert, the whole of the Western side of China. The Great Wall of the North (214 B.C.) was not needed on the western side. Not only did the plateau protect, but it tapped and still taps the rain-bearing winds, and thus is the watershed to the rivers on which Chinese civilization is based. The traditional isolation of China, her self-centred literature, and her past opposition to all outside influence is derived from the

isolating barriers which gave to the first Chinese the protected chance to dig and ditch, and use the early plough in their great and exceedingly fertile plain. The waterways of China, as irrigation and spade culture spread south, played the part of the Roman roads in preventing any great diversity of life and culture, and so preserving homogeneity.

This oneness of society was proof against the many invasions of the invaders from the steppes, who were again and again absorbed, because not only was this alluvial plain fertile, but extensive. Pressure was dissipated before the seaboard was reached, and the conquered people forced out to become subject to new geographic controls. From this arose the predominant peaceful character of the Chinese and the absence of continued war and slavery. Government remained a patriarchal despotism with agriculture, carried by small holdings in the rich loess, as the chief industry. The military caste of Assyria is absent, and the national hero is he who has engineered a canal or deepened the river bed to prevent the flood. The dominant caste is made up of the intellectuals who have mastered the intricacies of the revered classics. The cities are fortified and the people more warlike only in the North because of the constant attack and influence of the hardier invaders.

From these brief suggestions of the results of location and temperature, of the desert and plateau in affording isolation and protection, of the rivers as they bring down water and soil from the mountains to join with the light and friable soil (the loess) brought by the winds from the desert to the extensive land of rivers—from these we can turn to another factor which greatly influenced Chinese life.

China is a solid land mass of one-and-a-half millions square miles, with an unindented and relatively very short coast line of 2,500 miles. The numerous bays, inlets, and adjacent islands of Greece do not here beckon the early mariner to adventure on an inland sea. Contrast China with Norway. The Norsemen there were driven into seagoing by the sterility of their soil. The Chinese, though often practising infanticide towards the female children, have only in modern times been sending forth to America and Australia some of its huge population of nearly four hundred millions. The large returns of peaceful agriculture destroyed any possible attraction of trade. China was self-sufficient, and its inhabitants were not lured into schemes of conquest or to dare the dangers of the ocean by tales of accumulated riches in other outside lands. Wars were defensive and fought by landmen against landman invaders. No fiords helped them to sail their boats. A Mediterranean, with its many leaping off points and its nursery for seamen, was missing in Chinese conditions. Formosa, an island within sight of their quarter circle coast, was only colonized in the fifteenth century when European traders had already appreciated its products. From the brush with the Japanese in the latter half of the sixteenth century to the growing connection established by the traders, and on to the opium wars of the nineteenth century and the modern inroads of Imperialism, new forces, new ways of approach, and new invaders are coming in from the ocean, no longer the barrier of primitive times, but now a source of dangerous contact. China was static so long as she remained subject to the unchanging geographic controls. Her powers of absorption, and the reasons behind her isolation, can be now easily understood. But now new technique in transport, the economic needs of our modern social system and its "Powers," are threatening to revolutionize China and her ways. China was large enough to absorb her old land invaders; she is, however, now in danger of being swallowed up by the foes who come from the seas. Who knows there may yet be another land invasion by Russian Communists against the last stronghold of a decrepit Imperialism in China. The incalculable riches of bituminous and anthracite coal, the

ironstone and other metals, combined with a huge supply of cheap labor power of a to-be-appropriated peasant class—these are the attractions which will cause the "Powers" to remove for ever the isolation of China. The Manchus made the Chinese wear the queue (pigtail), but the Imperialists will force them to wear the less obvious but more degrading chains of wage-slavery. The land of rivers will become the land of steamboats, the railways and the telegraph. Already the isolation, the literature and alphabet, dress and manners, are being changed. China will not merely play a passive part in these great changes. The Japanese already have, especially, made rapid strides in European "culture."

Just as we have seen how geographical conditions determined that the Far East did not disturb the West, so we could trace the same control in the early development of the Western Powers, who now so aggressively approach the East. For, while commodities needing sale and capital seeking investment cannot be explained by natural geographical conditions because they result from artificial man-made social relations, if we attempt to explain why the outside Imperialist countries are in a more advanced stage of development, the early influence of the same factors and controls as we have examined affecting China would have to be considered.

This topic has more than an academic interest. It shatters once and for all the nonsense about the "innate" virtues of particular races. It helps us to understand world politics and acquire a world outlook. And, finally, it opens up to the mind the rich diversity of the earth and its contents awaiting the intelligent use of the world-wide Labor movement.

—The Socialist Review.

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.

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NOTHING SPECTACULAR.

It seems to be expected of the Clarion these days that it shall permanently enter the lists of controversy with those among whom the spectacular is something of a cult. The spectacular, we take it, insofar as it has literary application hereabouts, consists of a circus-like tendency whereby what has come to be known facetiously as a "policy"—not an accident policy, but an editorial "policy"—turns somersault every other week.

Fortunately, such vagaries and whimsicalities, emanating from the grave-yard of the working class intellect—the putative labor press—die young and are soon forgotten. The reward of innocent authorship, as Mencken says, is something akin to the satisfaction achieved by a hen every time she lays an egg—the high aspiration, of course, is akin to the satisfaction that came to Beethoven when he wrote the Fifth Symphony.

We are somewhat inclined now and then to suppress expression of our ideas on grounds of decorum, and while we like to be civil and obliging always we are not disposed to keep up a constant literary vigil over anyone who chooses to follow a "policy" written one week with the right hand and next week with the left. There is evidence enough that those who aspire to control events find it difficult to control themselves, and if we on our part are charged with being rigid and inflexible (which is the charge we have always had levelled against us by the reform elements), we plead hopefully that it is better to be rigid than to require a straight-jacket to curb a tendency toward political lunacy.

Programs, policies (so called) and action are favorite words these days. The spectacular performance is "the thing". Its opposite is visited with disgrace. The leader, newly arisen, despises the "academy" and for good reason—there is no room for leadership there, no room for the public chatter-box. "Policy" and "tactics," considered as articles of popular faith are found, when applied, to serve as excuses for a sort of calculated foolishness that passes for leadership where leadership is more of a nuisance than a help.

The socialist student is charged nowadays with wasting his time. He should be in the parade. Tactics should take first place in consideration by the working class, for, must not an army advance and retreat in the face of the enemy? Where would an army be if it stood rigid and sought no acquaintance with tactics? These are the common illustrations used to bring out the need for tactics.

Well, we have already confessed that we are not skilled in tactics, but we know this, that no army need ever enter the field without ammunition. Without ammunition there is no army of any account as a fighting force. Without ammunition tactics can never save an army from annihilation, to say nothing of its uselessness against the enemy in such a case.

The need of the working class is a knowledge of the class nature of the capitalist order. We want to destroy capitalism; they don't. They don't know why. Just as all armies depend upon the laboratory, upon the technique of chemistry, for their weapons of offence, so the working class must seek its ammunition in understanding.

The "academy"—the school of working class education—has been scoffed at. It is not popular, but it lives and it will live and thrive so long as working class ignorance remains to be dispelled as a stumbling block in the way of working class freedom. Against this there has been set persuasive leadership which, even though it be a new expression of the old vanity has had a brief innings hereabouts as an attraction and is already a forlorn hope. "The pleasures of sudden wonder are soon exhausted," as Dr. Johnson has it, and salvation from wage-dorm through leadership, as a new creed in the west, has already fallen short.

Politics, tactics, programmes—these may be of use as time arises. They can never be set down from a book of instructions for universal swallowing. As we see it, the need of the hour is understanding. Our closest ally in developing understanding is unfolding capitalism and the problem it presents more insistently day by day to the working class. Working class education must parallel industrial development. There is nothing spectacular in prompting working class understanding. The process is slow, but it is the most valuable, lasting work that is being done today. There is no possible alternative that now presents itself. Let us keep at it.

THE "WESTERN CLARION" APPEALS TO THE READER

Buddy, there is one fact about life which is worth keeping in mind; there is no purpose or understanding back of it urging and guiding it onwards to some pre-determined goal: no purpose or understanding other than our own.

When ever you are prepared to make a careful self-analysis, Buddy, you will find abundant evidence within yourself and, if this is not enough, there are all the facts which patient investigators have gathered in every field of science from astronomy to psycho-analysis, corroborative evidence which may convince you that this is so.

Life has been a procession from one form to another, a procession marked by an infinite number of more or less painful experiences along the wayside: experiences, Buddy, which are wrought into our physical and mental frameworks, and express themselves in us as instincts, habits, and customs.

When you were a child, Buddy, why did you "fear the dark?" Was it because remote relations of yours passed through such painful experiences in the dark they instinctively dreaded it?

For what reason do we exalt and glorify leaders? Is it because the most persistent habit of mankind at all times has been to make gods?

They have made them, Buddy, in divers forms to ward off disaster or social catastrophe. But never in one solitary instance did the gods prevent such from stealthily creeping upon the community and silently destroying it.

Why do we, the sons of slave parents, vote for our masters, even though in conversation before the votes are cast we roundly condemn them? Custom!

Buddy, let us look at a question which concerns our class and not our class any less than society in general: have we got a social concept akin to the social nature of production; or, have we got one developed during feudalism, when individual ownership of the tool lent character and substance to a private-property concept?

This is a question which you must think over, Buddy, and the "Clarion" will help you to think more clearly; it supplies you with facts which will enable you to get a new view point.

And, by the way, I spoke of purpose early on in these rambling remarks. What is your purpose in life? If not, why not?

Take the "Clarion" around to your friends, ask them to read it; and when they have done so make them "come through" with a sub.

The "Clarion" must have a circulation, by the end of this year, of at least 10,000 copies, all paid for. And an assurance in the shape of yearly subs.—will help the "staff" to continue their efforts to rob the boss, gain time for the work of digging for facts,

and explaining them when found.

To induce you to take up this purpose of rustling subs. the "Clarion" offers you two books, "The Positive Outcome of Philosophy" (Dietzgen) and "The Social Revolution" (Kautsky), as a prize for the highest number of subs. between now and the end of March. The next highest will receive "the Industrial History of England" (de Gibbins).

Now, Buddy, go get 'em!

R. K.

HERE AND NOW.

Modesty is our weakness, of course, but we cheerfully lay the Clarion before your attention and confidently debit your interest with a dollar for twenty consecutive issues. Send it now.

Follows the yield to the debiting process since our last financial prayer:—

We direct the attention of our readers, Here and Now, to the importunities of Comrade Kirk in another column.

If there is an hall-marked device known to sub-hunters which lends facility to the easy flow of subscriptions we are strangers to it. Yet the subs. must come. The one and only device upon which the Clarion has relied throughout the years for subs. has been a reliance upon truth telling concerning matters of interest to the working class.

We rely upon that and will continue to rest our argument for subs on that. We have no eye for sensationalism it is true, and thus we are not popular. We never were.

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The Conquest of Peru

The regular propaganda meeting of Local (Vancouver) No. 1, S. P. of C., was held on Sunday, 5th February, at the Royal Theatre.

The chairman, Comrade Powers, opened the meeting at 8 p.m. with a short address, and the usual announcements of our Economic, Psychology and History Classes held in the headquarters during the week. He then called on Comrade Harrington, who dealt with Peru.

In opening, the speaker stated that Peru, before the Spanish invasion, is generally accepted as the general experimental field for Socialism. Nowhere else on earth had there been such happiness. Everyone was looked after; all worked and yet it was not Socialism by any means.

The Spaniards found such wealth as even surprised them. In that country (where it seldom rains) we find conditions similar to those which existed amongst the Egyptians, insofar as they mummified, and in the fact that their king never married anyone but his sister. Now this might appear horrible to us, but it didn't to them.

Although in one sense there were many restrictions, there was enough for the wants of everyone; the people consumed all wealth. The Inca received probably a little more than the average share, but not much more. The Inca could have been rich in pearls, only it was considered too dangerous a task for his subjects. Pearls abounded in the Pacific.

There existed as the only beast of burden the llama, which the Peruvians had thoroughly domesticated and which, according to the Spanish conquerors was better tended than were the animals of Spain. The llama were usually gathered in and so many sheared, and the Inca had the wool distributed equally amongst the people; then the meat was distributed in slices in the same way, and where before the Spanish invasion one llama was killed per day by the Peruvians, the Spaniards killed them in the hundreds, for they discovered the brains of the llama to be very dainty, and they slaughtered them for that reason alone!

Now, about the end of the 15th century, the Inca had extended his territory so far as to penetrate the borders of Chile, and in the other direction, he acquired the province of Quito. The heir to the crown, the son of his lawful wife and sister, was named Huascar, while Atahualpa, a natural son, received the kingdom of Quito at the request of the dying Inca. Thus the empire which so far had remained solid under one Inca, found itself governed by two.

During a period of revolution that followed, Atahualpa finally overcame his brother, and he was the reigning Inca at the time the Spaniards discovered Peru.

Balboa, who was the first to hear rumors of Peru and all its wealth, was one day weighing some gold which he had collected from the natives when a haughty young chieftain struck the scales and scattered the contents on the ground, exclaiming: "If this is what you prize so much that you would leave your homes and risk even life itself for, I can tell you of a land where they eat and drink out of golden vessels, and gold is as cheap as iron is to you!"

Not very long after, Balboa achieved the impossible, that of scaling the mountain rampart of the Isthmus which divides the two mighty oceans from each other, and, rushing into the Pacific ocean he claimed this unknown sea with all it contained for the King of Castile, and he would make good the claim against all Christians or infidels who dared gainsay it!

It was several years later, however, before a successful expedition touched the borders of Peru; every enterprise had proved a failure. The first enterprise of Pizarro and Almagro was visited by such calamities that they were reduced to living on herbs and shell-fish; they had no shelter, and in one

instance a disease broke out amongst them; it took on the form of an abscess, and when pierced the loss of blood was so great that it often resulted in death. Another time this band of fortune hunters came into a portion of the country where they met with alligators and huge serpents. All this they suffered that they might plant their blood soaked cross!

Almagro, it was decided, should go back to Panama for supplies, and Pizarro was to stay on the Island of Gallo. Mostly all his followers deserted him, for the governor of Panama on learning of the condition of the men ordered them to come back, and when they didn't, he sent a ship to bring them. However, Pizarro did his best to induce his men to stay; drawing a line on the sand with his sword from east to west, and turning to the south he said: "There lies Peru with its gold and riches, here Panama with its poverty; now choose; for my part I go to the south," and he stepped across the line. He was followed by thirteen others; the rest went back in the ship to Panama.

Later we find Pizarro ascending the Cordilleras and meeting no resistance from the Peruvians, making entry into Caxamalca, where he invited the Inca to his camp. The Inca went trustingly, without arms, attended by a huge train of followers, whom the Spaniards absolutely butchered, although they reserved the Inca.

Pizarro with a small band of 150 men subjugated Peru and established a military dictatorship.

The Inca, realizing that the Spaniards had a stronger love for gold than for anything else, offered to fill the room they were standing in with gold if they would free him, and he nearly had the task finished when he was suspected of treason and condemned to be burned. When tied to the stake, Father Valverde besought him to become a Christian; the Inca was supposed to be a baroarian. He couldn't understand why the Christians believed in "Three Gods and one God, and that makes four!"

The same Inca, when the Spaniards first imprisoned him, when asked to accept the Christian faith replied: "As for the Pope of whom you speak, he must be crazy to talk of giving away countries which do not belong to him. For my faith, I will not change it. Your own God, as you say, was put to death by the very men whom he created! But mine," he concluded, pointing to the sun, "my God still lives and looks down upon his children."

But when tied to the stake he was told he would have an easier death by the garrote. As a result he became a Christian, and was strangled to death. With the death of this Inca the Peruvians were thrown into great disorder.

There was at this time a dispute about the booty, much of which took the form of articles beautifully carved as flowers, plants, birds; the most wonderful of all was the Indian corn in which the golden ear was sheathed in its broad leaves of silver, from which hung a beautiful tassel of pure silver threads. All this furnishes proof of superior skill and of a great civilization.

While the Spaniards advanced toward Cuzco, they were astonished at the roads, made in many instances of huge blocks of stone and rock smoothed so that the joints were hardly to be seen. Although the Peruvians had not reached the stage of the arch, some of the temples were superior to those in Spain.

The Spaniards through time founded colonies along the coast of Peru. Following this we find Almagro and Pizarro in arms against one another. This was the beginning of the first civil war, not Christian against infidel, but Christian against Christian, over certain colonies. Almagro had a large following in the capital, and on his death his son disputed Pizarro's authority.

Pizarro at a late age was assassinated by twenty-five men in his home, where, in his last moments, he traced the cross with his blood on the floor and said,

"Jesus receive my spirit,"—this Christian who, for revenge, caused the wife of an Inca to be stripped naked, tied to a tree and whipped to death.

Gonzola Pizarro, brother of the governor, now appointed himself governor; and through a series of struggles, subjugated the surrounding colonies, till finally he marches against the Viceroy Blasco Nunez Vela, first viceroy of Peru, whom he defeated. Word had reached Spain of the rebellion of Gonzola, and the Crown determined to send a commissioner out to investigate. Pizarro, however, was now undisputed master of Peru, returning triumphant to the capital, he was hailed by the people as "the Victorious Prince." Carbajal, one of his lieutenants, urged him to throw off his allegiance to the crown of Spain, seeing so far they had been successful, the only thing to do now was that Pizarro proclaim himself king!

Later, La Gasca, the commissioner from Spain advanced to Peru where he trusted for success to his power over the convictions of his hearers. He brought no army, but he represented constitutional authority and such was his power over the convictions of his hearers, the followers of Gonzola Pizarro—that they deserted and went over to La Gasca. Pizarro, the leader, was beheaded, while Carbajal, this veteran who had served forty years in the Italian wars, was to be burned. He was hauled in a thing that looked like a cradle by two mules to the stake. Such was the courage of this old conqueror that he joked and laughed with the men around him all the time with such remarks as "Well, boys, this is it from the cradle to the grave." Upon being asked to see a priest he answered that he had seen enough of them, and that he had nothing on his conscience except a debt he owed to a shop-keeper in Seville, which he forgot to pay before leaving the country!

The people of Peru, during the different squabbles of the Spaniards as to who should rule them, remained apathetic until one side or another became victorious, then they would join with the victors.

But in this respect the case of the Peruvians was not the only case; in Italy where two would-be rulers were fighting for control in the streets, the common people stood and actually cheered them on, so indifferent were they to their own destinies, that when one group tried to get the better of the other by going around a side street: the people would warn the other fellows by yelling: "Look out they are coming around the other way."

The human mind is a very peculiar thing; mankind studied the heavenly bodies and made himself acquainted with their actions before he knew anything about the mind. He knew all about the stars, and how many miles they were away before he knew his blood circulated through his body.

We are here to disseminate a knowledge of the things which control mans existence in order that he may better use his intelligence. Thus the lessons of mans history may be read with a present application to enable us to understand and interpret present events. Let us to our task!

ECONOMIC CAUSES OF WAR

By PETER T. LECKIE.

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Problems of The New Conference

THE Washington Conference has, Godlike, suspended its labors and refers its more practicable decisions to—Genoa. A camouflage, blending beautifully with the perennial verdancy of "public opinion." At any rate, it is much more pleasant to 'firmly resolve to find a solution for the European problem' under the genial skies of Italia, than in the somewhat strained atmosphere of the "greatest democracy." Besides, the new venue is at the heart of immediate trouble, and Italy, may be "wanted" by the diplomats.

The economic substance of victory presses sorely on Europe, dividing, rending, shattering all society in the callous struggle for commercial supremacy, threatening, more and more insistently, the whole polity of commerce. Tentative suggestions and proposals are put forward, aiming, more or less, at a U. S. of Europe. All such proposals ultimately resolve into a scientific exploitation of European peoples by Allied capital. But the beginning is continually voided by the unscrupulous ambitions of the Allies themselves. Commerce and profit are the concrete expressions of nationalism and individualism, and in the present stage of social development, such relics of ancient actualities are prolific with increasing dissensions.

But shifting the scene of discussion, does not exorcise the productive cause. That cause is constant, developing from its own inertia, its inevitable sequence of results. Delay, but fortifies the trouble and renders its fateful progeny more imminent. In the European question, Britain and France are opposing powers. Stripped of war morality, they face each other in defence of palpable, and urgent necessity. Both are dominant with prestige, both are trying to stave off bankruptcy, both are under bond to American Imperialism. To clear her feet from entangling social chaos, Britain required world wide interconnection of trade. But that requires a restored Germany, Soviet recognition, and Oriental tranquility.

But France wants the map of Europe of one color—La Belle France—i.e., the domination of Europe. Domination means power, and power means the control of the means of power. That is why the coal of the Ruhr is needful to the iron of Briery; that is why Silesia fell to Poland—the minion of France. That is why the bridgeheads of the Rhine are in French

hands, why the Supreme Council was dominated so long by France, and why France withdraws when that domination is countered. That is also why France is en rapport with the Turk (the violation of another scrap of paper). It helps to march the S. W. frontier of Russia; brings France into contact with Eastern oil, prospect, and resource,—and may offer a needful "base" to France in the Levant.

The French policy of recognition of Czarist debts by the Soviet Government isolates Russia—a policy, long countenanced by Britain in the hope of crushing that "haunt of tyranny,"—and by reparations, which now isolate Germany, comes at last, into open conflict with Britain. And conflicting interest entails—preparedness. The Allies, having failed signally at Washington to cheapen warfare, are now sternly confronted with European economies. Europe being in debt to America is, of course, under the thumb of her creditor, and America pipes a tune not at all to the liking of her quondam associates in democratic endeavor.

But the calm necessity of economic circulation takes no account of legal debt. Indeed, it opposes and transforms it into an actual handicap. Because, not gold alone, but trade (goods, bills and bonds) is wealth. If circulation stops with it stops the prestige of the circulating medium, and bankruptcy falls alike on debtor and creditor. Consequently the "open door," beloved of America, cannot awaken any sympathetic response in her commercial competitors. Trade where and how they will, is their common necessity, and trade they must, be it never so dangerous, and the claim of the creditor is thus weakened by the very urge of the debtor to meet his obligations.

Britain strives with redoubled subtlety—yet with a necessary increase of repressive force—to regain her normal financial supremacy, and with comparative success. America she consoles with flattering sentiments, while she turns her earnest attention to the immediate enemy at her gates, and in all probability, derives additional strength and assurance from the suspicions engendered at Washington to combat her rapacious rivals. She is at one with America on the submarine question, for a similar reason—the destruction of trade carriers, and although consenting to a reduction in capital tonnage it is perhaps reluctant, for, while costly, shipbuilding is a key industry in Britain, and any reduction there weakens her in the struggle for existence. Against her is France; strong with militarism, wide on the open sea, stalwart against a stricken Europe, more assured with her new possessions of coal and iron and seemingly confident of her strength in the

Near East, fatefully travelling in 1922 the tortuous paths of 1912. So perhaps do they pay court to the brunette senora of the olive groves—which that opportunist and frankly calculating dame may in good time upset. For to her the Mediterranean littoral is a goodly country—and mechanical power—like Jehavoh—is no respecter of persons.

To reconstruct Europe, in terms of capital, means credit—not the cancellation of indebtedness. To establish credit is to establish trade relations. But how can Britain, whose interests are in a restored Germany and a productive Russia, consort with France, whose interests are—the restoration of French finance, i.e., a disinherited Germany and an altogether un-Soviet Russia? And will—can—America leave Europe alone? If America refuses further credits, she will find herself all the quicker involved in the entanglements she is so fain to avoid. For Europe, left to stew in its own juice, becomes (seemingly) the vassal of France, exploited for the upbuilding of a French "Uber Alles." Thus cut off from common capitalist expansion it limits the activities of the rest; augments industrial chaos and hastens the march of the red god in the Pacific. On the other hand, if credit relations are advanced, the industrial stagnation may be partially and temporarily relieved, but Europe becomes then the vassal of the "great west"; her capitalists, but creditors' agents; her vanquished Germany (necessitously relieved) and Soviet Russia (implicitly victorious) admitted to the new comity of trade; and the last hope of France flickers out.

The latter course would seem the more obvious. Commercial interest, national equity. Imperialist ambition and (so-called) humanitarian sentiment seemingly converge on this direction. And France, seeing, prepares to meet it, albeit in vain. For the economic of today is a vastly different complex from its ancestor of previous days. Then the battle was for the gilded "glory" of nationalist supremacy, with scope for advancing accumulation. Now it is the naked Imperialism of international capital, straddling the world in completed development, of mechanical triumph, and social antagonisms. Empire faces empire in deadly rivalry and implacable necessity. Exist together they cannot; to amalgamate is an impossibility. There is no room for the one; no coherence for the other; no possible ground of common action against the rapidly ingathering forces of progress. And blindly, in the mad confusion of financial frenzies, the nations go,—probably—to their last accounting of war, but certainly to disaster, and through disaster to the democracy of proletarian supremacy.

ACTION FOR UNEMPLOYED.

Continued from page 2.

duty of a revolutionary body to lead the workers in these everyday struggles and to converge and co-ordinate their innumerable lines of action into one great stream of revolutionary progress flowing on to the social revolution.

Let the first of these two postulates for the time being pass for what it is worth, while our masters with the powers of State and the power of extending credits if need be, seek to negate it. But against the second I must place criticism. He would be indeed a conceited revolutionist who would suppose that he was necessarily capable of leading the workers in their everyday struggles and that the workers would be willing to be led by him. The mass of the workers so refuse to be led by anyone of their class as to belong to no organization. Most of those who are organized will not stand for radical leadership; they even resist radical membership, for radicals are irritating. Besides, to be honest with ourselves, the revolutionary element, jumping successively to the most diverse policies on the everyday

problems of the workers, have surely shown no capability for leadership, unless we confuse the securing of a small following with capability for leading.

There is further objection to be made. The labor movement in all its various phases does not lend itself to co-ordination, to unity of purpose. Let us look at some examples. In some places progressive workers are urging a thirty hour week; elsewhere equally progressive masters are enforcing a thirty hour week as short time, and the slaves are kicking. How here are the actionists to co-ordinate these efforts? Again, the tale has reached me that in a certain city the different tailoring establishments, in union assembled, voted for a reduction in wages; one very capable cutter, who was opposed, however, to cutting his own wages, approached the boss for increase and got it; he was practically branded a traitor by his union for not adhering to their policy. Where's the room for unity of purpose? One could fill reams with similar instances. The entire labor movement presents itself as an immense accumulation of contradictory activities, and in it there can be no unified action without closing off half of the

lines of action.

We are wage-slaves and cannot afford to be other than realists. We are, being class-conscious, united with our fellow slaves to secure better conditions under capitalism. We realize the hopelessness of any material improvement of our conditions, but at the same time we realize the necessity of keeping up the fight. In all our struggles conflicting policies present themselves. What are we to do? One thing, and only one thing is possible—to use our brains. It may be poor equipment, but it's all we have to use. Stereotyped orders even though they come by radio from Moscow, cannot help us. In all matters of policy, in the conflict of craftism and industrialism, of nationalism and internationalism, we can only apply what knowledge we have of the system to the situation, and strive to increase our knowledge to make it more useful; and above all things to keep the realism clear before us, to show our fellow-workers what it is that is worth fighting for. To make our fellow-worker a Socialist is of more importance than drawing up twenty perfect constitutions.

F. W. T.

Robert Burns—Rebel

By PETER T. LECKIE

THE usual annual orations of the genius of the Scotch poet, Robert Burns, ignore his greatest characteristic, that of a rebel. He was a man who fought against oppression, whether it be the oppression of the priest or the laird, the government or the Presbytery; whether the source of oppression and authority be the kirk or state, Calvinism or feudalism. His weapon was poetry. The case of the common people was stated as never before against caste, wealth and privilege.

The new echo of liberty found the first expression from Burns in his poetry against oppression.

The new world he discovered was a very old world. It was the world of the common people. The country folks; the poor, oppressed, honest man, the toil worn cotter; the buirdly chieftains and clever hezies, all those ordinary everyday folk upon whose "toils obscure an' a' that" depends and has always depended the entire fabric of society; as Burns puts it "the simple hind, whose toil upholds the glittering show." He was not only born in poverty but lived and died in poverty that is the fate of the common people. He never accepted poverty for justice, but saw its injustice. "Why should a'e man better fare an' a' men brithers."

The apologists for things as they are, who seek to ordain Burns in the popular mind as a high priest of the gospel of content are guilty of perversion.

The puritans who gloat over his social failings never did worse than those apologists. He may have said "Contented wi' little," but added "and cantie wi' mair."

His discontent was the expression of the discontent of the common people.

Born in a Calvinistic world and straight-laced puritanism, Burns did what the great poets of spirituality could not do, because they had no humor. Milton, we are told, made Satan a Titanic rebel. Burns made him a laughing stock. Dante made Hades magnificently terrible. Burns abolished it. Burns' satire of predestination and hell is to be found in numerous poems.

"O Thou, wha in the Heavens dost dwell
Wha, as it pleases best thyself
Send'st ane to heaven and ten to hell
A' for Thy glory
And no for ony guid or ill
They've done afore Thee."

It was not the people who were demanding a more liberal theology but the more liberal-minded church patrons who were thrusting their new theology down the throats of the narrow-minded and unwilling presbyteries and congregations. Burns took the side of the liberal minded and appeared to be against the people, and Burns' achievement was to set the people free, not from corrupt church government, but first of all from the slavery of their own minds. The common people of Scotland had not lost their sense of humor and Burns' satire and humor caught them more than anything else because it appealed to their common sense. "Curst commonsense, that imp of hell," as the narrow religious people naturally regarded it. The press censor during the war could hardly appreciate Burns when he said:

"Here's freedom to him that would read,
Here's freedom to him that would write;
There's nae ever feared that the truth should be heard
But they wham the truth would indit" (Indict).

Burns knew of his poverty before he had read Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations." He did not require Adam Smith to tell him that riches and poverty are correlated as cause and effect. He had a better grasp of the cause of the selfishness of man than most people today. He wrote to a friend: "But we are placed here amid so much nakedness and hunger and poverty and want, that we are under the damning necessity of studying selfishness, in order that we may exist."

It is no surprise a man like Burns should find himself in sympathy with the French Revolution and also the American Revolution.

All kinds of pretenders seek to associate themselves with Robert Burns at his anniversary, but no defender of privilege, no opponent of liberty has a right to claim that Burns was on his side.

"See yonder poor, o'er labored wight
So abject, mean and vile,
Who begs a brother of the earth
To give him leave to toil;
And see his lordly fellow worm
The poor petition spurn
Unmindful, though a weeping wife
And helpless offspring mourn."

He asks.

"If I'm designed yon lordling's slave
By nature's law designed
Why was an independent wish
E'er planted in my mind?
If not, why am I subjected to
His cruelty or scorn,
Or why has man the will and power
To make his fellow mourn?"

Burns' religious commentators harp on the beautiful picture portrayed in the "The Cotter's Saturday Night." But it was the social life of the Scotch race with some of its joys snatched from a dreary environment of harrassing care and toil and trouble. They are, as it were, the bright spots in a picture lit up by the genius of Burns. But the shadows of the picture are deep and somber with a background of poverty. The man who sits at the head of the table, the priest-like father, trudged "weary o'er the moors" only an hour ago, and his spade, his mattocks and his hoe are truer emblems of his daily life than is the big Ha' Bible. They are happy folks on the merry day the year begins. They deserve to be, for all the rest of the year their lot has been "to drudge and drive through wet and dry," "howkin in shenchs" and "biggin dykes wi' dirty stanes," getting old before their time.

"For, ance that five-and-forty's speel'd
See crazy, weary, joyless eild
Wi' wrinkled face
Comes, hostin', hirplin' owre the field
Wi' creepin' pace."

This is no poetic figure but grim realism. Therefore the background of the picture of Scottish life portrayed by Burns is poverty. In the picture it is true there is love, laughter, dram drinking and high spirits in plenty, but beclouding it all there is poverty. There are not only the "poor o'er labored wight so abject, mean and vile, begging a brother of the earth to give him leave to toil." Not only age and want, the ill-matched pair, but side by side with these are the Ayr Presbyters, Holy Fairs, and the Holy Willies with their three mile prayers and half-mile graces, with their narrow outlook, their intolerance and bigotry and all the tyranny of hide-bound creeds and ignorant superstitions which held the common people in mental fetters. A picture of a people priest-ridden and laird-ridden held in a double bond of material and mental poverty, which seemed to give the lie to the assertion that "a man's a man," and from amidst this environment Burns sent the message to the world, "A man's a man for a' that."

Burns was a great patriot, not a stamp of the patriotism of today, which says "my country, right or wrong." If it had been we would not have found him supporting the American Revolution or the French Revolution. He was a patriot of the common people, and internationalist if you please. In his "Tree of Liberty" he says:

"Wi' plenty o' sic trees, I trow,
The world wa'd live in peace, man;
The sword we'd help to mak' a plough,
The din o' war wa'd cease, man;
Like brithers in a common cause,
We'd on each ither smile, man;
And equal rights and equal laws
Wa'd gladden every isle, man."

Burns' whole life was a struggle against poverty because of the private ownership of the land which made him a lordling's slave. In lines to Ferguson, a brother poet, he wrote:

"Oh, why should truest worth and genius pine,
Beneath the iron grasp of want and woe;
While titled knaves and idiot greatness shine
In all the splendor Nature can bestow?"

And to Thompson, another poet, he wrote:

"To whom have much, more shall be given,
Is every great man's faith;
But he, the helpless, needful, wretch,
Shall lose the mite he hath."

All his contact with wealth and fashion, his belief in the freedom of the common people had remained. That is why we find him supporting the American Revolution, but herein lies the great tragedy of Robert Burns. He had lost some of his freedom through the very means he had taken to secure it. It was to secure his own personal independence that he took service in the Excise. To "mak' siccar" at least against the extreme rigors of poverty for his wife and family, and thereby follow the muse in his leisure hours without fear or favor, that is why Robert Burns became a gauger.

And the rock of independence became the rock of serfdom. Every word spoken in sympathy with Washington and the American patriots; every word of sympathy spoken of the common people of France was a word spoken against the British government, his employers, who held control of his material destinies. Had he been worldly wise and a time-server, he would have remained silent. That was impossible for Burns. So he spoke out and there was more courage in the speaking out than he has ever received credit for. But the knowledge of the possible consequences curbed the force of his expression, and democracy's greatest voice was stifled at the moment when it was mostly needed. His independent mind oppression might bend but it did not subdue. By the time the Reform Movement had emerged convulsively from the embryonic stage Burns' race was nearly run. While the Reform leaders were being transported to Botany Bay he was at hand grips with poverty and symptoms of deadly disease, precariously holding house and home together and still writing immortal verse on £50 a year, even that being threatened. He had been poorer than that in his time. In the years when his father had to fight the same heart-breaking battle: "The piebald jacket let patch once more." He wrote to Graham of Fintry: "On eighteenpence a week I've lived before." That was not possible now with a wife and family to keep and knowing the nature of Burns, we must come to the conclusion that his poverty in the last years of his life lost Burns to the Reform Movement.

There hangs the tragedy of Burns.

Strange it is that of all the annual orations to the memory of Burns the patriot, Burns the poet of brotherhood, Burns the nature-lover, there should be a common conspiracy to becloud and belittle and hide the figure of Burns the Rebel.

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CREATIVE REVOLUTION

(Continued from page 1)

early winter months of 1917 was the direct cause of the revolution, unless perhaps some labor jumping-jack, who for the moment perceives such a course will preserve his ten cent meal ticket, or salve his conscience for some act of chicanery.

Our authors should have allowed more than eight pages for a discussion of the Russian Revolution in a work dealing with Creative Revolution, and we mildly insist they should not have squandered six pages in discussing the attitude of Socialists toward the war. A very disappointing chapter.

Nor can we say more of the chapter on the Third International, concerning which we read some very curious statements: "The Third International is an International of revolutionary socialists who consider parliament effete; who believe that class-conscious workers must deliberately override what is spoken of as the popular will, in so far as that will is the expression of capitalist ideology, and of capitalist imposed illusions concerning the structure of bourgeois society;" In the first instance the Third is nothing of the kind, not now at any rate; in the second instance, they might override deliberately or otherwise, but it will be only in their dreams. So long as the popular will is possessed of capitalist ideology all talk of overriding is nonsense.

The 21 points are not discussed although the book was reprinted in March 1921, but the dictatorship of the proletariat is printed in extra large type, and the workers' council in similar type as the apparatus with which the revolution is to be accomplished.

The chapter would require drastic alteration to bring it up to date. The Italian movement has withdrawn; of those whom our authors expect to join in the immediate future (written in 1920) the I. W. W. have rejected the R. I. L. U. and in many European countries the extra-left-wingers have repudiated the new policy of the Soviet Government, along with the Third International; and so far as we can judge from this continent the Third International is composed of groups of reformers who can in no wise compare in courage and revolutionary activity with the reformers of the Italian Socialist Party whose expulsion has been demanded by the Third.

The "personal view" of the authors, we have it on page 121, is that the hour of revolutionary change is at hand and that participation in parliamentary and municipal activities is a sheer waste of time and energy, tending to promote confusion. They would participate in elections for propaganda purposes, but if elected, would not sit,—page 122.

A year or two ago such sentiments were common enough but today they are not accounted sound by the Third, and never were by any one who had given the situation serious study.

Again (on page 179) we find this sentiment: "An absenteeist policy is no longer impossible for those who believe that the momentous hour is upon us. The call to arms has sounded and we no longer have time in which to prepare and use all weapons. One who has the advantage of utilising a really up-to-date weapon of attack and defense, a Lewis gun, let us say, will be foolish if he decides that he will also make use of a knob stick. . . a man has but two hands. The revolutionary worker's best weapon in this country is not parliament but the British equivalent of the Soviet." In fact this is the recurring theme of the book, this and a vague vital impulse bred of Bergson.

Of course, for those who believe "the call to arms has sounded" this might be the proper course, but it is doubtful policy in any contingency to translate terms from one field to another entirely different. When the call to arms does sound, that group which does not possess arms of modern type will at best leave one more glorious page in the history of forlorn hopes. The Pauls display the tendency, common in the so-called left wing, to ignore the actual facts of life. One of which cannot be too much insisted upon; that the working class today, and for the past few centuries, supply almost the entire fighting force of society. Talk of knob stick and blowpipes is sheer nonsense, the fundamental question is: Do the working class want Socialism; and if not, why not?

Chapter 11 on Creative Revolution leaves one somewhat bewildered and to anyone not acquainted with Bergson, Freud, Darwin, and Marx, it will prove an entirely indigestible mulligan. It certainly does not enable us to grasp the meaning of "Creative Revolution."

For lack of space we take one of the several contradictions in this chapter: "Utterly false is that conception of Marxism commonly put forward by superficial observers, that it reduces the entire content of history to an automatic process, wherein the consciousness of the human units plays no part. In the first place it is the human intellect in conjunction with man's impulses and emotional likings, and urged on by the spur of man's desire which brings about the changes in the material methods of production. In the second, the material condition of production react upon the mass psychology of society, arousing new tastes, generating fresh impulses and desires, modifying the intelligence and thus leading to yet further advances"—pages 191, 192. There is much here requiring correction. Wherein, for instance, does man's desire differ from his emotional likings, and how can either be distinguished from his intellect? Sufficient for our purpose, however, is the fact that the intellect is given as a factor in man's development, an active and uncontrolled factor, sitting in judgment on the desires, impulses, likings, etc.

Turn now to page 198. "Psychoanalysis shows that our most trifling acts are rigidly determined upon the mental plane. Into all the reconsiderations, philosophical, psychological, and sociological, involved in this new idea of mental determination, we cannot enter ever in our time." But we are told that, "while it is the popular belief that the will is the servant of reason, the truth is that reason always has been and always must be to a very large extent the hand maid of will"—page 199. We conclude from reading this chapter that the will is free but not too free, than it is determined but not over-determined. Our authors themselves however were evidently apprehensive and call this chapter "brief and inadequate." We are inclined to agree with them.

At the close of the book this apprehensiveness is still more evident. "Human Freedom with all its inevitable limitations, is precisely one of those phenomena wherein is displayed the triumph of life over material causation. We grant for the purposes of argumentative discussion that this may be but another example of what Hamon has boldly termed "the universal illusion of Free will."

It is so for practical purposes also, and leads us to conclude, with Huxley, that you cannot put the generous new wine of science into the old bottles of theology. Further, it is useless to build up a revolution, creative or evolved, upon desires and impulses, vital or impelled.

We consider this book has value in so far as it emphasises the folly of trying to attach such moonshine creators as Bergson to our philosophy. It will serve as an example, not as a precept. The mists and obscurities of proletarian thought are sufficiently thick; what good purpose is served by adding to them?

J. HARRINGTON.

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