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FIVE CENTS

Of Matter of Fact

By J. HARRINGTON

AS the only conceivable form of perfection I am acquainted with is a perfect nuisance, I am free to don sack-cloth and ashes and murmur, "I have sinned." But in undertaking to

contrast
The petty done, the undone vast,"
let us stay with the facts.

This may seem a reasonable request, but it is evidently an impossible one. The primal curse is, was, and ever shall be—thou shalt kid thyself.

We are quite prepared to answer for our sins, and they are legion, both of commission and omission, but—sufficient into the docket be the ones we are guilty of.

J. A. McD. tenders some advice in the Clarion of Jan. 2nd which indicates that someone has been pulling his leg, or else he has squandered his time listening to some of the few consummate hypocrites whom we managed to get rid of years ago, over the twenty-one-point jumble, and who have been acting like hysterical kids ever since. It would be good news (and positively true) for him to learn that "linen and coats" arise in the economic classes only when they appear in the text, and "that the application of Marxian economies to social issues and problems" was always insisted on, by one of the most thorough students and competent teachers of the subject on this continent at least. Neither, and this by the way, did he confine himself to Marx, but brought a wealth of information relative to those modern economists who toil mightily in the interests of Salesmanship, when they are not specifically employed tearing at the Marxian analysis because of its disturbing tendencies (their own language) among the inefficient. He will be equally glad to know that the associates and country of Meronic and Caelo have never been mentioned in propaganda meetings, which is nothing to boast about, because a comprehensive understanding of historical materialism is hardly possible without a knowledge of what occurred between the collapse of ancient slave economy and modern wage economy; between machineless and machine civilization. The society which bridged these periods was almost entirely at the mercy of material conditions, and should be dealt with much oftener than it has been in classes, and certainly in propaganda meetings.

I did devote one talk to the Peruvian revolutions of conquistadore days, for the purpose of demonstrating that the majority of mankind do not care who governs them so long as they are free to follow their own paths of comfort. And that they have a deep rooted antagonism to any altering or encumbering of those paths, and will invariably support the old government, if at all tolerable, against the new, no matter what prospects it might proffer.

I might have chosen Florence, Milan or Bruges of the 13th century, Vienna, Paris or Berlin of the 19th—or a score of others. Peru, however, offered conditions well suited for an analysis, from which disturbing elements were absent, much as a vacuum offers in physics. The actors were as remote from the seat of authority as though they had been on another planet, almost; they were men for whom battle, murder and sudden death held no terrors; they had an extraordinarily well developed ego. They had great material advantages to safeguard, yet they surrendered without a struggle to the de-

putised authority of one man. Since that talk of some years ago, Peru has never been mentioned, which is another sin of omission. Some of the above mentioned hypocrites chucked a dummy on that occasion and, perhaps the enormity of my offence still lingering, they stick their piece of soap under the tongue and kick their heels on the cold and unsympathetic cobble-stones of Kearney Street (is it still cobbled?); if so Me. would be well advised to leave them in their tantrum.

As for the advice about making clear the struggle between the capitalist class and the proletariat at propaganada meetings, we always have and always will practice that. In fact, personally, I never speak on any subject without making it plain, or trying to, that the capitalist class, as a class, is worthy of that enormous contempt which the slave for some incomprehensible reason harbours for the slave who won't work. And if I happen to be talking on the, say—"Economic bearing on gas engines of Hannibal's failure to reduce Rome," I always make an opening for the remark that a capitalist idler is just sixty degrees below (into the bulb) the cur that beats the widow out of his board bill and decamps with the kiddies' penny bank, and should be treated accordingly.

Carthage must be destroyed. Something like that. And yet it is not conducive to successful meetings. Why?

Let us look at the facts. They may not be as noticeable as a cyclone, but they are sufficiently obvious to render Pickwickian excursions into philosophical bogs superfluous.

"C" says we are dying from the very thing that J. A. McD. claims will give us life.

Let's take a look-see. Go to Winnipeg, once a flourishing centre of propaganda. There you find S. P. of C. graduates, in various groups, O. B. U., W. P., S. L. P., F. L. P. and maybe other abbreviations, hurling epithets, expletives, jibes and sneers upon each other's revolutionary heads, with a venom and hatred they never exhibited toward the capitalist class. The same may be said of any town on this continent almost. Swift's imaginary brothers in the "Tale of a Tub" were hardly less bitter in invective, the public utterances of our modern brothers lacking perhaps, though the private remarks do not, "the imagery of the charnel house and the dung-hill."

Let anyone arise to address these faithful on the subject of the class struggle. What he says never registers. If they go to hear him it is to sneer, to question about the 1st, 2nd, 3rd International, the Besco, or such other matters which are related to the class struggle much as the cat to the tiger, Fit to watch a mouse hole, not to range the forest. No knowledge, nor wit, nor wisdom of his could charm them. He is yellow, renegade, Kautskian, or (God that I should have lived to see the day) Trotskian. This is regrettable but quite human, and need not alarm us, for when the working millions chance to move they will pay no more attention to such chatter than their masters do now. Or if they do, it will be to turn aside momentarily and clout some sense of proportion into their bewildered heads.

On top of this essentially practical state of affairs we have had several strikes, which further widen the breach. Not dialectical errors, nor philoso-

phical heresies, nor political renegeing, but the working out of every day matters in working class lines are responsible for the chaos in the labor movement today. And, coming so soon after the evidence presented during the discussion on Value, in the Clarion, it is something awful to find sentiments expressed which strongly suggest that the Marxian rule has suffered a complete reversal—not in the material conditions but in his mind must be sought the motive forces of man's behavior.

Today in Vancouver it is practically impossible to make meetings pay their way. And even if this were not the case, so far as the Party is concerned, we have not got one speaker available who would attract more than a handful of the faithful, putting aside the matter of expenses. Nor are the other groups much better off; perhaps they have more of the faithful, perhaps one speaker. There have been four meetings here on a Sunday night and the four of them would not make half of our regular Sunday night meetings of five years ago.

No Party can expand without a generous sprinkling of youngsters, and we have had no young blood for years. Our possible recruits are ambitious for super-sixes, or super heterodynes, and by day or night eat up space, on the King's highway or in God's own heaven.

Value, Price and Profit appear to interest them only from a practical point of view; they certainly conceal any interest they may have in their theoretical aspect. We do not, therefor, cleave to the Labor Party because they are stronger, for they are in the same sad plight as ourselves, but to make possible the chance of making a noise at all, at all.

Now here we have to consider another angle. The I.W.W., which befo' the wa' could not muster a dozen in this town, can now fill a fairly large hall on a Saturday night, say five or six hundred, a very large percentage of whom are youngsters, and this same organization is always asking us to send them speakers and teachers in economics, and, herein lies our chief and unpardonable crime. We are unable to comply. Well befo' the wa' to have even contemplated sending a speaker to an I. W. W. meeting, "except in opposition," would have been considered equal to a good catholic ejecting his quid into the chalice. Considering to what length explanation of our decline has already proceeded I have but small-desire to add my sum of little to that which hath too much. But the I. W. W. owes something of this popularity to its complete acceptance of that human failing (?) well known to Pope Gregory, John Calvin, Oliver Cromwell, Abraham Lincoln, General Booth, Mahon Abrams, Lobengula, and one or two others, that the human animal dearly loves to sing in unison. They have also, of course, justified their existence by maintaining a centre of resistance, when most other trade unions have been utterly routed. But the fact remains, that they offer an atmosphere more human and congenial than any we have ever maintained.

But, seems to me that I'll cut for this time, or else commit the "damnable error" of "C" and "R". And anyway, dealing with facts is a wearisome business, as all true philosophers know.

Not with entire stupidity did the schoolboy write "Philosophy increases thirty-two feet per second."

The Task of the Hour

(Continued from last issue)

"THE gist of 'R's' article last issue," says "C" (Dec. 16), is "he would not support an unclass-conscious proletarian movement." We said nothing of the kind. Instead (Dec. 1) we agreed with the manifesto on proletarian identity. What we did say was that we were opposed to political parties who could not carry the flag of abolition as a first issue. And we say it again. And the manifesto implies the same thing. We say moreover that the political parties of labor are not identical with the modern proletariat and do not therefore represent an "independent movement of labor," (the proletariat). (We hope "C" will not so confuse the issue, henceforth). Again—twice indeed—(Jan. 2) "C" garbles our statements: "R. says the struggle for preservation is a futility . . . since the issue is property, the conflict must first be settled in the mind, etc." "C" here transforms the equation from the issue of property to the "struggle for preservation." We said that the issue of social revolution must be first in the mind before it can be applied in society. And we say it again. We say also that it has nothing to do with "preservation." Yet again (Dec. 16) says "C," "Away with culture. I hear 'R' say." Would "C" expect fliers in the neolithic. Knowing that fog intensifies sound vibrations we can find excuses for our good Com. But we affirm he can find no justification for his words in our article. "C" reads me a lecture on my "speculations" on Marx's optimism of revolution. He says I am "quite wrong, and the manifesto furnishes a flat contradiction." Well, we return the flat contradiction. And repeat our statement. Either the workers of '48 were wiser than their modern brethren, or, Marx was mistaken in immediate revolution.

"C" seeks to identify political labor and the revolutionary proletariat. But the two are not identical. And there was a similar division in '48. The Manifesto itself is specially named to distinguish the revolutionary communists from the nondescript "revolutionary parties" of the time, i.e., bourgeois and utopians. The mark remains today—with names reversed. "The revolutionary communists (Manifesto) are the advanced sections of the working class parties of every country . . . which pushes forward all others . . . clearly understanding the line of March and general results of the movement. Their immediate aim is the same as all other proletarian parties—(i.e., revolutionary proletarian parties. R.)—the unity of the proletariat; overthrow of the bourgeoisie; conquest of political power. They support every revolutionary movement; (dominantly) instil recognition of class antagonism; put the property question foremost; labor everywhere for democratic agreement." That clearly describes the socialist parties of today—the lineal descendants of the communists—; specifies their functions; and differentiates them, politically, from modern "labor politics." Hence the Manifesto would seem to indicate that the Socialist Party are the "sole repositories of revolution." "C" notwithstanding.

The communists (Manifesto) "support revolutionary movement everywhere because the proletariat must first settle matters, each with its own national bourgeoisie. They labor for democratic agreement, because the unity of the leading industrial countries is necessary to the revolution. They follow their general programme, and emphasise the class struggle, in order that the German workers may straightway use (to their own advantage) the social and political conditions that the bourgeoisie must introduce—so that the fight against the bourgeoisie may immediately begin. The communists choose Germany chiefly because the bourgeois revolution is there carried out under more advanced conditions and because, in Germany, the bourgeois revolution will be but the prelude to an immediately following proletarian revolution." "The communists openly declare their ends attainable only by the forcible overthrow of existing conditions. . . Hav-

ing traced the civil war, raging within society, to the point of open revolution, and where the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie lays the foundation for the sway of the proletariat and having made clear their relations to the working class parties of the world, they call upon them to unite for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, which is the signal for their own triumph." All of which fits like a bee's wing into the historic setting of '48. If, then words are the symbol of thoughts, the expectation of the immediate issue is unmistakable.

Those letters of the General Council to America fall aptly into the same historic scene; Engels says that Marx trusted to the growing intelligence of the workers. And Marx said that nations ought to profit from each other's movements. The call of the Manifesto was premature. The proletariat was defeated. The Manifesto went into a long oblivion and the working classes mingled in the "prosperities" of liberalism. Just as the politics of 1914 induced Moscow to dream of world revolution, so the world politics of the '40's induced the same illusion in the Communists. The red army of 1917; Bolshevik propaganda; Third Affiliation; Moscow generalship; and the desperate devices to achieve unity; were chiselled from the same material as the '48 advocacy of force; the star-spangled banner as the symbol of the workers; the enforced patience of the cotton crisis; the rating of American "workingmen as the true political power of their own republic"; the illusion of their support of European emancipation; the notion that the civil war sounded the tocsin of the working class; and the sentimentality of Lincoln, the son of the working class, leading his country to freedom. * We are not mocking those aspirations for freedom; we but make them explicable on the basis of impending revolution.

Suppose we transpose the Manifesto of '47 to this present. "The communists fight for the attainment of the immediate aims, for the enforcement of the momentary interests of the working class; but in the movement of the present they also represent and take care of the future of that movement." Whence the application of that in our day? "In France the communists ally themselves with"—? Switzerland? Poland? Germany? Britain? America? There is one item of the Manifesto translatable from then to now—"the proletariat has but a fantastic conception of its own position." But if the issue of the petty trader, the grand bourgeoisie, and hence of Imperialist Capital, must first develop and fruit, and clear away the restraints of the ancient old in preparation for the new order of socialism—if that is, in brief, the consecutive progress of Marxism, and the meaning of the Manifesto, then the proletariat do well to support the Governments of the Chinese consortium. For thereby the emancipation of China will be accomplished. That emancipation is now necessary (on this basis of view) before the Commercial "Absolutism" can be brought to book. The Labor Government in Britain did well to support the Dawes scheme; the Versailles Treaty; and negotiate trade agreements. For thereby the development of Capital must develop the unity of Labor. The suppression of slavery in Africa and the support of Bolsheviks in Russia are revolutionary movements, and worthy of our enthusiasm. Because, in conjunction with the revolutionary upsurge of "Home-Rule," they enable peoples "to settle with their own bourgeoisie" in the interests of proletarian revolution. And if it was right in '50 to appeal to England in the name of the revolution to oppose the ambition of an autocratic and feudal Russia, then the proletariat were right in 1914, at the call of the same "democracy," to flock in their millions against a no less imperious autocracy. And no less authority than Trotsky said that the triumph of Germany would mean a long delay for the proletarian revolution. And no less weight than Lenin supports the

Note: * Marx was strangely forgetful of American politics—unless on the premise of immediate revolt. Otherwise it is not even true.

statement that if we are to wait on the knowledge of the mass for Socialism it is distant by 500 years. Meaning that the application of force was the only way—a la Manifesto. How now, do the elections of Socrates become the substance of our new moon? (Incidentally, history has made pretty work of that letter of Marx: anent Russia, absolutism and democracy, etc.)

As a last remonstrance against "C's" negligent methods, may we point out that "picking up by the way" does not relate to the burghers of the middle ages, but directly to the terms of the straight issue. Also that the straight issue is not "a single plank of all or nothing," but the issue between socialism and labor politics. We said that what we picked up by the way depended on the way of our going; our going on the way of our seeing. Hence it comes that I can indicate when the burghers called the issue. For the burghers, who obtained the prestige of lord and council did so because they had a clear concept of their commercial interests, i.e., the realities of their life conditions. And they followed it unswervingly. They did not know its final result, nor the vicissitudes of the way. Nor is it necessary. But they stood on the rock foundations of fact, and were safe. Because of their perception of their interest, they modelled the policy of their conduct. And in modelling that policy they called the issue between town and country. The burghers could go by the way of reform and triumph by way of reform. Because, inherently, their system was but a reform of the political restrictions of the fief. Not an overthrow of all class-rule. To be sure, they were opposed to the aristocracy. That is, with commercial interference. But they could offer to the class rule of land a comely share in the new ethos of commerce. The taking of that offer in England, its rejection in France, were mirrored in the fiasco of the "Glorious revolution," and the red storm of '89. Their revolution was of political significance. Ours social. And social revolution cannot be accomplished by reform. Because reforms are but the whiggeries of slavery. Social revolution can be only when slaves see their slavery. Then they can only abolish it. And only they can abolish it.

Hence we again, emphasise the straight issue. That is, Socialism by the understanding of a social proletariat. Or Socialism by the adversities of opportunism. The tactics of the class struggle; of Capitalist right and its inevitable sequence. Or the tactics of labor politics; of dominance through improved conditions and institutional reforms. We hold by the former and we have shown cause for why.

Reforms by their nature are of class purpose; the necessities of dominion. Their benefits to the proletariat niggard, of no interest as a direct issue. True, we must struggle against capital in the commodity mart of labor, organise against encroachment. Still our action depends, dominantly, on the times of progress, very little on the "vision that is man." All reforms—even the 10-hour day, (and Marx is evidence for the same)—are derived from the flowing founts of change. Certainly the mass has been one of the factors in the process; but always it has been only the factor of mass. Driven by the imperative vicissitudes of the hour, feeling, seeing, suffering the immediate; sensing its degradation, and the ethical injustice of its similitude; it surges like a wave in the wake of progress, achieving amelioration in the exigencies of its conditioning. That amelioration, being in effect the limits of tolerability, appears as a pressure of insistence; and it wins, because in the courses of progress its achievement is at once a necessity and an eddy in the already flowing flood of a new progress. That is why 'tis said, "the millions can never be wrong." Rightly enough. For it expresses the terms of immediacy.

But the terms of immediacy seldom express social reality. They have often stained the pages of history. But they never made man free. And they cannot. For the terms of the moment are essentially the law of class. While the freedom of man is the freedom of truth. Hence we appeal to understanding; to social cognitions of social relations; to forward the issues of man and his freedom, against

(Continued on page 3)

The Death of Italian Liberty

The Fascists Exposed

By H. N. BRAILSFORD

MANKIND has a wonderful facility in growing accustomed to the monstrous. For two years now Fascism has tyrannised over Italy. Its rule has grown no milder because of the timidity of the opposition. The freedom of the Press is gone; the right of meeting does not exist; the workers have lost the weapon of the strike and Parliament is a shadow. To all of this, apparently, a great people could grow accustomed. But suddenly last June there happened the outrage which seemed for a moment to shake the Dictatorship. Many obscure victims had paid with their lives for their fidelity to their Trade Union, their Co-operative, or the Socialist Party, and unaccounted thousands had been beaten or wounded. But the killing of Matteotti stirred the nation's conscience. He was not an obscure victim; a man of steady courage, with cool judgment rare in Southern lands, and a record of disinterested service, rare in any land, this Socialist deputy was universally respected. He had been threatened openly, in print, with physical violence, by a Fascist newspaper, a few days before his end. No one could doubt that some of the heads of the party, if not the Dictator himself, had ordered the murder. The motive, moreover, was obvious; Matteotti was about to expose in the Chamber a series of Fascist financial scandals. The horror of this cold-blooded crime, the kidnapping at noonday in a Roman street, and the brutal manner of the killing left a scar on the mind of the Italian people. It looked for a moment as though the end of the tyranny might be near. Despotisms have sometimes ended in this way. Tarquin the Proud oppressed the masses of Rome for a generation with onerous wars and forced labor; but it was the outrage on Lucretia which moved them to expel the family of tyrants.

Ex-Soldiers in Revolt

The summer passed, however, and nothing decisive happened. Month followed month, and the trial of Matteotti's murder was always postponed. And now a new outrage has aroused the country. Rome was on holiday, and the Fascist Militia was celebrating the second anniversary of the coup d'etat by marching past the tomb of the Unknown Warrior. Suddenly, with revolvers and cudgels, a detachment of the Dictator's partisan army fell upon a body of the ex-Service Men's League (Combat-tenti) who were demonstrating at their side. The feud had been ranging for some weeks: these allies were too independent. The loss of life was not, it seems, very terrible, but the scandal of this open brawl among the armed partisans of Order, round the tomb of the Unknown Warrior, made another scar on the nation's mind. To obliterate it the Dictator took the usual steps of confiscating newspapers in large numbers, and forbidding all public meetings.

Will there this time be a sequel? The ex-Service men have many deputies in Mussolini's packed Parliament, and they are in revolt. So, too, in some degree are the tame "Liberals" who had rallied to the Dictatorship and shared the spoils of office. The Chamber is reassembling as I write. The difficulty is that the Opposition (Socialists, Republicans, Popolari and Radicals) had walked out after Matteotti's murder, and vowed never to return so long as the Fascist Militia continued in being, to terrorise Italy. Experience in many countries where it has been tried suggests that this method of passive absence is never an effective weapon against despotism. The semi-Fascist malcontents of the majority have made overtures to the Opposition to return—but apparently without result as yet. The idea was that the passing of a vote of "no confidence" might embolden the King to assert himself after two years' toleration of the usurper. The Constitution gives him the

uncontrolled right to dissolve the Chamber and to order new elections. That would be of little use, if the Militia continued to terrorise the electorate. But might not the King, if he had once made up his mind to act, call upon the regular Army to dissolve the Fascist Militia? The regular Army, it is said, is loyal to the King; the officers have lost their earlier enthusiasm for Mussolini, and they are jealous of the Militia. This rather simple plan may underestimate the Dictator's capacity for counter-action, and yet there is a possibility that one day it may be tried and possibly with success. It is, I daresay, a good plan on paper, but it is a significant index of the cowed helplessness of his people. No one dreams of a revolt.

A Cowed People

No one so much as talks of a general strike. No one proposes to make any effort whatever, to shake off the tyranny. The King, it seems, must act for the people and the army must back the King. It was otherwise in Garibaldi's day. He led, and dragged King and army after him.

By what slow process of decay did the Italian people drift into this position? Revolutions succeed as much by reason of the weakness of the Government which they overthrow as by reason of the strength and violence of the new forces. That is true of Russia, and it is no less true of Italy. The average comment on Mussolini's success went no farther back than the years of disorder which immediately preceded it. The Reds, under Muscovite inspiration, chattered of revolution, and in a sense began it, partly by the tumultuous seizure of land from oppressive rural magnates, partly by the "occupation" of a few factories and ships, and generally by using a good deal of mass terrorism, and by the abuse of the weapon of the general strike. For a real seizure of political power they were not ready, and they wholly neglected to prepare for it by arming. They bluffed; they boasted; they alarmed, but they never really meant revolution. The disturbance, however, to the normal life of Italy was so great that the average man was ready to welcome any deliverer.

Fascist "Stability"

Mussolini was slow to see his chance; he began by combating the "anti-patriotism" of the Left, but Fascism in its early days was anti-clerical, anti-monarchical, and even so far anti-capitalist that it approved of the occupation of the factories. It was the failure of that experiment which showed it the way to power. It took money from the capitalists, it accepted arms from Giolitti's Government; and when once it had begun to destroy the whole workers' movement (Trade Unions and Co-operatives as well as the political side) it soon went "the whole hog" by allying itself with the Church and the Monarchy.

The truth is that the Fascist attack on democracy succeeded only because democracy in Italy had sunk to a low grade. The moral is driven home with power and eloquence in Guglielmo Ferrero's study of recent events (Four Years of Fascism, Translated by E. W. Dickes. P. S. King and Son, 7s. 6.). The author's work on Roman history placed him in the front rank of his countrymen, and this book by its courage, its broad outlook and its literary skill is worthy of his fame. The book is much the ablest of the many which the strange phenomenon of Fascism has called forth. His central thesis is that Parliamentarism in Italy, which began its life on the English model, had been subtly and almost imperceptibly changed into a sort of "dictatorial Parliamentarism." A single man, leaning on the Court and supported by a strong personal following, corrupted the sovereign people by all the arts of artificial pandering and reduced Parliament to a mind-

less and apathetic confusion of parties. Giolitti was the worst and the most successful of these "bosses," managing elections, corrupting deputies, mixing groups, eliminating all principle from politics, and in effect, though usually by gentle methods, destroying any effective opposition. The weakness of this sham democratic State was revealed, firstly by its tolerance of d'Annunzio's coup at Fiume, and then, because it dare not govern direct, by the disastrous expedient of arming the Fascists to suppress the Communists.

Ferrero's book traces the origin of Fascism. The indispensable sequel is the book which the murdered Matteotti wrote in the last month of his life. The Labor Publishing Company has performed a great service by issuing an adequate translation by Mr. E. W. Dickes of the Fascisti Exposed at the low price of 2s. 6. It is a chronicle of the first year of the Dictatorship, told without a word of rhetoric and almost without comment—bare facts, honest records, official figures and almost nothing else. We summarised it at same length when it first appeared in Italian, in our issue of March 28. It disposes of the legend that the Fascist Dictatorship has created general prosperity.

Years of Destruction

Prices have risen, rents have been decontrolled and have risen 40 per cent: wages have fallen by 10 to 13 per cent. As a measure of the growing poverty of the workers it is significant that the monthly total of pawnshop transactions has almost trebled since the coup d'etat. On the other hand profits have risen, and so have Stock Exchange quotations. Direct taxation has been so manipulated as to spare the rich, and the Eight Hours Day has been whittled away by administrative exceptions till it survives only in name. Strikes are permitted only to the Fascist Trade Unions, and seem to be carried out solely as a means of extorting contributions from capitalists to the party funds. Perhaps the saddest result of these years of violence is that the superb constructive work of the Socialist Co-operatives, which in some parts of Italy had almost brought about the peaceful extinction of the middleman, the contractor, and the exploiting farmer, has been utterly destroyed. The same fate has befallen the Socialist municipalities, which have been suppressed by autocratic decree. The sanction for all this, as page on page on these records show, has been and still is, the cudgel, the revolver and the bomb. Fascism is Bolshevism upside down, in its violence and contempt of democracy, but, unlike Bolshevism, it has no constructive purpose, and it serves the few and not the mass. If by sympathy and understanding and honest publicity, our Labor movement can do anything to hasten the end of a dictatorship which degrades the Italian nation, it is our duty to help without stint or hesitation.

The New Leader (London)

THE TASK OF THE HOUR

(Continued from page 2)

property and its politics. Hence we fight reaction, either in the ranks of capital or labor; and add the reasons of the few, who may haply be, "invariably right" to the swiftly gathering crisis of reality. It is alone Capitalist property that holds the proletariat in its desert wilderness of misery and degradation. It is the colossal ignorance of the proletariat to social organisation that binds it to the idols of property. Thus the final issue is the breaking of that ignorance before social society can become a reality. And despite the bows of promise, in the cloud wreck of the 'Neo's' that task is the task of the hour.

THE END.

R.

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UNINTENDED ANGLES

WE reproduce elsewhere in this issue an article by Professor Gilbert Murray, first published in *The New Leader*, November 14, 1924. This article purports to be a review of Dr. Couchoud's book "The Enigma of Jesus," although we understand the latter has, since the publication of Prof. Murray's article, disavowed certain interpretations made by him. At any rate, erroneous judgments and interpretations of another's written point of view are easy to arrive at—as all Clarion readers well know—and lest it be held that we presume such sentiments as Prof. Murray sets forth to be widely characteristic of the British I.L.P. we hasten to state that they are not. The correspondence columns of "The New Leader" have been recently bespattered with acrimonious utterances denouncing this sort of "propaganda" as having ill effect on the body politic, which is doubtless so in counting noses. And otherwise than that, even with "The Decline and Fall," the orthodox reviewers, every time they encounter a new edition of Gibbon's classic are at great pains to cross themselves and cast their eyes upward over his cynicisms concerning certain gospel "truths."

However, one's pen runs off at an angle unintended, at times; for the moment our interest lay with some recently declared performances of Professor Murray of Oxford, philosopher, Fabian, Greek translator, professor of literature and what not. He is, in spite of his un-Christian skepticism, flirting with "psychical research" and has been at it some ten years. "The Nation" (N. Y.) recently outlined a performance in thought-transference at a meeting held by the Society of Psychical Research, and apparently Professor Murray has some ability in thought-divining. It is recorded that out of 236 trials 86 results have been satisfactory. During this recent session the individuals other than Professor Murray active in the tests were one Mr. Piddington and Lord Balfour, and some success was registered—if the records are reliable. Lord Balfour, after the session, declared that:

"There is a wholly unknown, unexplained, un conjectured method of traversing space between two self-conscious organisms in a manner on which no theory of sound or electricity or any theory of which we have the dimmest notion can at the moment throw any light. I think these results should never be left on one side by those who imagine or who are tempted to imagine that they have got the broad outline of the universe in which we live fairly clear, and that they understand all that the physicists and physiologists can at present tell us of the methods of inter-human communication."

We are allowed, presumably, to exercise "philosophic doubt" and to worry a little over the portent of such findings or near findings utilized by so astute a political educator as Lord Balfour. We may do him wrong, but we have judged him to be one from whom the truth came sparingly on any matters approaching the common cult of Christianity, or anything threatening its accepted security in the minds of the working masses of the country. However sane and sensible these "researches" may be it will be strange if the modern religionists do not connect them up with the upper or nether world of

spooks somehow—for the common good. Perhaps Brailsford had some such probable eventualities in mind when he set Professor Murray to review "The Enigma of Jesus," thus discounting another of those much advertized "conversions." It is one thing to observe a measure of polite tolerance over other people's religious prejudices; it would be quite another thing to evade or neglect a fact in so doing, the effect of which might register oneself erroneously as of the faithful and within the fold—for the common good.

Lord Balfour, by the way, for some reason in these recent years has surrendered all claim to common human origins in "a dirty riband or a tinsel star," as Marx has appraised the outward show in Court dignity, and that with less excuse than the new-found Earl of Oxford, who has Margot to report to. Artfully avoiding a similar fate, if we are to

believe Margot herself, A. J. Balfour in the early years had "preferred a career of his own."

It is a doubtful and uncertain age, surely, wherein our brother humans are widely recognised to be amenable to "an optical glass that transforms the physical universe." Yet in spite of much out-pouring of ink in many volumes over what the learned are pleased to call philosophy that optical glass fills ill an empty stomach, which is precisely what the human family is suffering from now. The fact matters not so much as the idea, say the philosophers, and we'd like to grant it just to be agreeable. Well, even so, big ideas may grow on empty stomachs and if they were of good effect our brother humans could better endure that optical glass. There is involved in that, however, some thought-transference, which is likewise what we are at-taking the easier road.

Value and Exchange Value

By F. J. McNEY

BEFORE commencing our investigation of value and exchange value I wish to say a few words about a commodity. It may be all right at times to speak of a commodity as a thing, or an article of commerce, but it certainly helps to confuse the issue when we refer to a thing or an article as a commodity. These terms are not at all times interchangeable. In the correct sense of the word a commodity is a class of things, or articles of commerce, or all that is for sale of any substance, at any time. On the other hand, a thing or an article is a unit, or a portion of a commodity. One single hat is a thing and an article of commerce, but it is merely a unit of the commodity hats. When we speak of exchanging commodities, we mean exchanging units of commodities in varying proportions. Now it is a well known fact that the same commodity may be produced in many different countries, under different conditions, and by different methods. This being the case, it is obvious that the amount of labor necessary for the production of a certain quantity of any given commodity will be different in different parts of the world. Consequently, the exchange value of the same quantity of a given commodity must be different, not only in different countries, but also in different parts of the same country, at the same time. True, the tendency of value, like water, is to find its level, but let us get at this problem of value, and exchange value.

It has been pointed out on several occasions in the Clarion, that Marx made a distinction between value and exchange value, and yet, neither Marx nor anybody else has made the distinction clear. I have shown that according to Marx labor is value and that is also the conception that Fred Engels had of value, as he has explained in clear and concise terms in his introduction to "Wage, Labor and Capital." I have also pointed out that the labor theory of value itself admits of no other conclusion. Let us, then, reasoning from this point of view, see if we can find out what the difference between value and exchange value is. Suppose we take two articles that are products of labor and therefore both possess value. In this respect, then, they resemble each other, although they may differ in every other respect. Of course, both articles must possess utility, that is, they must be things that people want and get a kick out of in one way or another. But utility may differ in every conceivable way, if there was only one kind of utility we would only need one commodity, and that would simplify matters considerably. Well, suppose we want to compare these two articles with the idea of exchanging one for the other. And suppose further, that one is a loaf of bread, and the other a Ford car. Now both these articles possess utility, but it is a different kind of utility altogether, so there is no comparison on that basis at all. The material of which they are made is different, so that does not help us any either. But they have one thing in common, they are both pro-

ducts of labor. In this respect, then, they are equal. All right, I own the loaf of bread, and you own the car, let us trade "even." No? Well why not? Don't they both possess value? Yes but it requires more labor to produce the car, than it does the loaf of bread, and therefore the car is more valuable. It is the difference in the quantity of labor crystallized in each of the two articles that makes the difference in their value. Exchange value, then, is based on the relative quantity of labor crystallized in the various articles, or units of commodities, that are exchanged. This is my explanation of the distinction between value and exchange value, if it is not satisfactory I hope somebody will give us a better one.

According to Marx, the exchange value of a commodity is determined by the amount of socially necessary labor time required for its production. This, of course, means a certain quantity of a given commodity in its relation to the various units of other commodities. Unless we understand it, in this sense the statement has very little meaning. And furthermore, the statement is merely a generalization, it can't be anything else, because as Marx himself points out it depends on the average conditions of production and on the average intensity and skill of the labor employed, in a given state of society, and so forth. But as a generalization it is correct, and it is only in a general way that we can deal with the question of exchange value at all. It is impossible to ascertain the exact amount of labor crystallized in any given article of commerce, but even if we could, and found that a certain article contained just one hour and forty-nine minutes and fifteen seconds of labor time, and that we could trade it "even" for some other article that contained two hours and four minutes and seven seconds and a quarter of labor time, that would not refute the labor theory of value. There are many reasons why units of different commodities, containing different quantities of labor, should exchange "even", and yet when we consider the question in a general way, all exchange of commodities must be based on labor for labor in approximately equal proportions. Unless somebody can prove that value may be extracted from the atmosphere we must assume that the sum total value of all commodities is equal to the sum total of labor required for their production and distribution. No doubt, a certain percentage of this labor is more or less unnecessary, and consequently must exchange at a discount, but that does not alter the fact that if some commodities exchange above their value, temporarily or permanently, they must do so at the expense of other commodities that exchange below their value, either temporarily or permanently, because the mere exchange of commodities cannot either increase or diminish the sum total of value.

With reference to Comrade McCallum's criticism of the use of the terms "social" and "socially" in connection with the process of production and

(Continued on page 8)

Boneheads

By F. W. Moore

W^h once heard a soap-box orator refer to that section of the working-class that took its inspiration from capitalistic tradition, as "Boneheads."

We ourselves, at that time, not knowing anything of the class struggle, instinctively decided that he included us in the definition, and straightway felt intensely proud. Had not our school-master often told us that our head was made of wood; and was not bone a superior substance to that?

Now in discussing boneheads we admit that the name must be applicable to ourselves in many ways; therefore as brother boneheads we claim the privilege of being allowed to expose some of the foibles of our own large family.

For instance, when we hear men say that unemployment is the workingman's own fault; that unemployed men, as a rule, don't want to work; and that hoboism is not an effect of capitalism, but mere cussedness on the part of thousands of tramps, we are driven inexorably to the conclusion that we are in the presence of unmistakable brother boneheads.

Our judgment on this point is confirmed by an extract from a report prepared from the annals of five years of social research—the report of the "Russell Sage Foundation." The excerpt is as follows, and is quoted from the "Social Service Bulletin" for October 15th, 1924: "In the United States 'the right to work' is being denied to from 1,000,000 to 6,000,000 persons for weeks and even months at a time. In fact a survey of the period covering good and bad years, shows that our capitalistic system keeps from 10 to 12% of all our workers out of employment ALL THE TIME."

And since the cause of these conditions is embodied in the capitalistic system grown decrepit, the effect must be felt, more or less, in every country where the development of industry has reached a high state of efficiency.

So much for the fallacies of the first class of boneheads.

Those of the second are not less absurd: indeed, if anything, they are more so.

Did we not often hear men, the contents of whose craniums were obviously ossified, talk as if it were possible metaphorically to endow the capitalistic Pullman car with a limitless span of life, and to run it along lines built on sleepers of moral reform, while its unmoral environment, born of anarchy in production, must necessarily persist? And in reference to the unmoral environment we would like to present the following statements by Messrs. Wells and Loria. The former has this to say on page 825 of his "Outline of History": "It is the keynote of private enterprise to mind one's own business, secure the utmost profit, and disregard any other consequence." The latter comments on such, and similar, conditions in these momentous words set down in his "Economic Foundations of Society" on page 22: "The necessity of reconciling the social conscience to the existence of economic forms which are essentially corrupt leads by a systematic falsification of logic, to the institution of a settled sophism."

In view, then, of the existence of these powerful agencies, born of habits incidental to the requirements of modern business methods, it is not hard to see that one might as well try to develop the habit of gill-breathing in circus mermaids by repeatedly dipping their heads in salt water, as to attempt to develop morality in a world, compelled by circumstances to breathe the vitiated atmosphere of a decrepit capitalism.

And now we come to fallacy number three which is really the most idiotic of all: "There are too many people on earth," says the Crown Prince of Boneheddington, "and what we want is a war-lord or two, or a plague, to wipe them out. Nature provides for the destruction of the surplus wild creatures, and why should not man benefit by her good intentions!"

To which atrocious bosh we would reply, that as far as sustenance is required the resources for the support of many extra millions are already at hand. Suppose we take no account of the millions of acres of unused land in America, Africa, and Australia, nor of the immense estates in Europe, at present uncultivated, there could still be set free by an international federation of the world... "such an increase of human energy," says H. G. Wells (ibid) 1095 "as to open a new phase in human history. The enormous waste caused by military preparation and still more enormous waste due to underproductiveness of the great masses of the people either because they are too wealthy for stimulus or too poor for efficiency, would cease. There would be a vast increase in the supply of human necessities, a rise in the standard of life and in what is considered a necessity without any change in human quality but merely its release from the present system of inordinate waste; history justifies this expectation."

Under proper conditions, therefore, the immediate danger of over-population would not exist unless indeed, we regarded the births of the progeny of so many boneheads as a menace. At the present moment the recorded membership of the family is quite voluminous—too much so to discuss them individually. We shall therefore bring this article to a close with a few remarks about each of three types of useless men whom distorted judgments relieve from the embarrassment of being ashamed of themselves. There is, for instance, a particular kind of plutocrat (the one referred to by Tennyson as fooling the crowd with glorious lies) who encourages the dissemination of pernicious propaganda, and in other ways, does everything in his power to retard human progress so that he may wallow in such pleasures as are compatible with the tastes of a bonehead. Such a man often loves his children dearly, but by broadcasting the seeds of discord and class hatred he is extending aid that is essential to enable our cousins, "The International Association of Boneheaded Militarists" (not necessarily soldiers) to prepare a shambles in which, amongst millions of victims, his sons will most likely be offered up in sacrifice to satiate the greed of the carnivorous God of Rapacity. Poor old fellow! No doubt the flint of his brain is so adamant that no idea could strike it sufficiently hard to conjure therefrom one little spark of reason. His further biography, therefore, could not be interesting.

Our next relative will be introduced by Mr. Wells, although we must confess his language shows little respect for our family. On page 1096 (ibid) he remarks: "We want to get rid of the militarist, not simply because he hurts and kills, but because he is an intolerable thick-voiced blockhead who stands, hectoring and blustering in our way of achievement."

How unkind of Mr. Wells to speak thus of our international kinsman!

We ourselves would have been content to refer to him as an unmitigated petrification of inexcusable stupidity: and even at that he is hardly such a duffer as our next, although he may be a more degraded example of moral turpitude. Indeed our next is the quintessence of boneheadedness. He is, par excellence, the natural-born genius of our family, the champion leatherhead of the world of today. His brain is so hopelessly akin to ivory that it is too weak to see any good in or appreciate in the slightest degree the beneficent activities of a labor union. He is unable or unwilling to reason, and is therefore incapable of realizing that the organization which he despises, is the embryonic form of the machine that will be instrumental in bringing about the consummation of human freedom—a machine whose scattered fragments in every country, will soon be assembled to form the massive political and industrial medium by which humanity will make good the respective prophecies of Tennyson

and Micah concerning the genesis of "The Parliament of Man; The Federation of the World" and of the time when "They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

By that time the craniums of our cosmopolitan family ought to have undergone a great modification. Let us hope that the bony part of them will be confined to the skull, and that the petrified insides, made plastic by the lapse of time or the exigency of experience, may once more assume the normal functions that characterize the mental operations of intelligent human beings.

Then, and not till then will a long-suffering world have been liberated from the pernicious influences of the ubiquitous bonehead.

ARE WE NEARING THE DESTRUCTION OF THE PRESENT CIVILIZATION?

Iⁿ the issue of the "Clarion" of 2nd January, in his article "where is the Straight Issue?" "C" says, referring to Marx's dialectical conception of history: "Excepting one element in Marx's conception, I myself subscribe to it. That element, the preconception of the inevitability of socialism, as a Darwinian evolutionist who must consider the possibilities of change in any direction, I reject." And a little further on in the article he says, "I might, for instance, have to consider, by certain evidence, the possibility of the defeat of civilization once more."

Surely Comrade "C" has made a mistake in imputing to Marx the inevitability of socialism for he (Marx) points out the same alternative, or something very like it, when he says somewhere in "The Communist Manifesto," (somebody has my 'Manifesto' borrowed, so I cannot give the exact quotation, but in effect it is as follows) "All history has been the history of class struggles, which either culminated in the complete dominations of one class or the destruction of both." (note the alternative J.W.D.)

So, are we nearing the initiation of socialism, or, the destructions of our present civilization?

In view of the mad rush going on at present in all the first class nations towards the development of existing, and the invention of new agencies of destruction in the mechanical and chemical fields, and worse still, very probably in the bacteriological field as well, it seems to me that the balance of probability at present stands in favor of the latter alternative, especially when we consider the backwardness of our class in the knowledge of our own interests as opposed to those of the other class; therefore it behooves us comrades to push the enlightenment of our class, by any and every means to the end that, when the test comes, we will know enough to utterly refuse to re-enter hell for our masters' benefit, but will wrest from them the power to wreck civilization and apply it to the development of socialist conditions of life, and, in spite of themselves, save them from their own insanity; for verily, as the ancients used to say, "Whom the Gods wish to destroy they first make mad."

J. W. D.

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Fact and Idea

THE ENIGMA OF JESUS

By Professor Gilbert Murray

GIBBON in a celebrated passage comments on the "supine inattention of the Pagan and philosophic world to the numerous and surprising miracles which were presented by the hand of Omnipotence, not to their reason, but to their senses." For example: "Under the reign of Tiberius the whole earth, or at least a celebrated province of the Roman empire, was involved in a preternatural darkness of three hours." But the miraculous event passed entirely without notice. "It happened during the lifetime of Seneca and the Elder Pliny, who must have experienced the immediate effects or received the earliest intelligence of the prodigy. Each of these philosophers, in a laborious work, has recorded all the great phenomena of Nature, earthquakes, meteors, comets, and eclipses, which his indefatigable curiosity could collect. Both the one and the other have omitted to mention" this, the most extraordinary of all.

What Gibbon pointed out with regard to the miracles is hardly less true of the whole story of the New Testament. There is practically no knowledge of it outside the four esoteric books of the Christians themselves. Josephus, a learned and prolix Jew, writing the history of Judæa during the very years in which the New Testament story is placed, says not a word about it. The Christians later on were troubled at this and interpolated his text.

According to Dr. Burkitt, Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, the only information about the life and career of Jesus of Nazareth that has come down to us independently of Christian tradition is one contemptuous sentence in Tacitus (Annals XV., 44): " . . . those who, hated for their infamy, were vulgarly called Christiani. The originator of the name, one Chrestus, had been executed in the reign of Tiberius by order of the administrator Pontius Pilate." One might possibly add a phrase from Suetonius's Life of Claudius: "As the Jews, at the instigation of Chrestus, were continually raising riots, he drove them out of Rome." "Chrestus," "good," was a common name, especially for slaves; it seems to have been confused with "Christus," "Anointed," which was the Greek translation of "Messiah."

And how much definite historical information is there in the Gospels themselves? Very little indeed. Dr. Burkitt in his book on the Earliest Sources for the Life of Christ explains how the early Christians were indifferent to history, and took no pains to keep records of the past. Their minds were all set at rest on the immediate future which was to bring the end of the world. The Gospels contain many miracles, many beautiful sayings, a number of alleged fulfillments of prophecies in the Old Testament, a great symbolic story, beyond that what?

Let Leisy answer: "There is no actual consistency in the Gospel story save the crucifixion of Jesus, condemned by Pontius Pilate as a Messianic agitator." He can accept literally "not a single incident save that Jesus had been crucified under Pontius Pilate." And even as to this: "The Gospels do not relate the death of Jesus. They relate the myth of salvation realised by his death. . . . The Christian myth is without doubt related to other salvation myths. It is by no chance that the resurrection on the third day coincides with the ritual of Adonis." The magnificent imaginative structure reared by St. Paul in his epistles is built on the crucified and re-risen Christ, not on Jesus as he was in the flesh; it rests on the Salvation Myth, not on any historical record. It sets forth to use the expression of a Greek philosopher defining the word Myth, "that which happened never but always is."

It is the old problem of the kernel and the husk; but so much of what was once believed to be ker-

nel has now proved to be husk, that it is difficult to say what kernel is left. The old salvation myth required that the Son of God, the Anointed One, should be shamefully slain by men, thereby to atone for the sin of the world and to raise mankind with him into glory. The myth, as we see it in certain Hellenistic writers before St. Paul, or independent of him, is already there, ready to burst into a great flame in men's hearts and meet the needs of a bewildered and suffering population; it needs only a match to set it alight. It so happened that a Jewish agitator called Chrestus was crucified, and his name taken as being "Christus," "The Anointed One," crucified by Pontius Pilate; what more was wanted to give the myth reality and to set all aflame?

Dr. Couchoud narrates his conversation with a Buddhist priest in a monastery at Kyoto, comparing the two splendid religions that have converted so many millions of men, produced their lines of saints, and sages and brought comfort to unnumbered mourners. "What is Buddha?" A title, a myth, an idea, and savants discuss whether or no that historical prince who according to the legend became Buddha ever really existed. "What is Christ?" It is the Messiah, the Anointed One, the Saviour, another title or myth or idea; and Dr. Couchoud wonders whether there was any historical person at all who gave rise to the myth; or whether the myth, as we find it for instance in the pre-Christian Gnostics, in early Babylonian hymns, and to some extent in the Hebrew prophets, grew and spread by its own vitality; or whether again it was suddenly given a semblance of flesh and blood by some accidental coincidence. Every myth, after all, is grounded in experience and constantly confirmed by experience, or else it dies.

I doubt if the historical question is soluble. It is a case of Not Proven. But the thing that matters is not an historical fact, it is an idea. The Christian faith, the Christian life, the spirit that finds the secret of the world to be best explained by saying that the Son of God gave himself to suffer and die for man's sins and thereby brings man's salvation is an idea far older than the Christian era, and will last quite independently of any result which historical research may establish about the man Jesus of Nazareth. Throughout a vast region of human life it is not the thing which happened but the thing which is believed that matters; and not even the mere fact or fiction that is believed, but the psychological quality of the belief itself.

Belief is a great force in the world. And this particular belief has shown itself to be a living faith, a passion, an inspiration that makes saints and heroes and persecutors and maniacs, an optical glass that transforms the physical universe. And it matters not at all, except as a point of interest to historical students, whether the faith accords with history or no. In some regions of life a belief comes up against facts and is confirmed or disproved by those facts; "things are what they are, and their results will be what they will be."

But in the field of religion beliefs can seldom be put to any effective test, and beliefs about very remote past history never can. The belief lives or dies by its own power of survival or attraction, and by the credulous or incredulous, barbarous or rational, temper of the society in which its seed is sown. It is never killed by meeting a fact; for there are no facts. The belief that it rained in London on Good Friday, 1924, can be proved or disproved; but the belief that on the first Good Friday there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour and the veil of the temple was rent in twain, can never be proved or disproved. It will live or cease to live for quite other reasons.

Dr. Couchoud's little book touches only the fringe of the subject, but it is written with understanding and sympathy, and deserves to be widely read.

* The Enigma of Jesus. By Dr. P. L. Couchoud, with Introduction by Sir J. G. Frazer. Translated by Mrs. George Whale. (Watts and Co. 3s. 6d.).

Damning the Labor Leaders

THERE is nothing so common amongst certain comrades as that popular amusement of denunciation. It is so darned easy to pick out an outstanding figure in a union and slam him good and plenty if he is of a reactionary trend.

But is it not a case of not seeing the forest, on account of the trees?

To take an instance: no-one thinks of saying that England or the States are benighted places because they have rulers like Coolidge, Dawes, Baldwin or Churchill. Anyone knows that their policies are approved of by the masses of the people. That the people wish for and vote for what they get, no matter how that particular and peculiar state of mind is brought about.

But, try and apply the same reasoning to the situation in the unions, and how many are there who will look squarely at facts and see that the same situation exists there as in national affairs? The personality and policy of a Gompers or Green may be cursed from New York to Frisco, but what earthly use is it? The policies of labor leaders are a reflection of the economic situation of the crafts that elect them. When Socialists look into the reasons for the election, it is easy to see that the mass of voters are self satisfied and quite indifferent as to the need of social changes of a revolutionary nature, even though they may vote a labor party ticket! So, all that can be done on that field is continue educational efforts amongst the mass. There is nought else to do.

Humans feel their way through life, they do not think it out. They are animals, anarenistic too, absorbed in their individual pleasures or, when in need, their necessities. Their viewpoint is decidedly limited. When they are hungry and out of work what do they want to hear about from speakers who come lecturing, advising, sympathizing, etc.?

How to attain Socialism?

Not so you'd notice it!

The reasons for unemployment? Nix.—They want to know where to get the eats or jobs!

So it can be seen that logic is not the factor in bringing about a revolution, unless it be the logic of events; dire necessity will be the compelling factor in social changes. Well, apply the same reasoning to the union question!

What unions are most successful? The ones with special skill, able to command more wages than the average workers. Those are the unions that are strongest and the bulwark of the union movement. A craft union is really an attempt at monopoly. It sells to the capitalists its commodities of labor power for various special occupations at the highest rate obtainable, which is greater than an individual packet of labor power could acquire. Their business agents are their salesmen, seeking orders under good conditions for their union brand. The Federation of Labor, is analogous to the M. and M. Association or Chamber of Commerce. A combine for joint consideration of their mutual interests.

It is true enough that labor produces far more than it receives as its price for the use of its power, but how many members of a union know that, or care, as long as their standard of living is comfortable? Their leaders reflect their views. They are in business, living in a whirl of competition, muddle

(Continued on page 8)

ECONOMIC CAUSES OF WAR

By PETER T. LEOKIE

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Use and Capacity in Criticism

ONE function of a socialist is to act as critic of working class organizations in the matter of their acts, methods, measures and policies of serving the interests of the working class because criticism is an indispensable educational force—when it is of the right kind. The criticism even of the enemies of the working class may on occasion be of that kind despite the malignant intent, but it has value by accident as it were. For criticism that has the good intent of the progress of the working class, the class must in the main depend on itself, it must be self-critical. But how to do it, that is the question? Particular occasions for criticism need to be studied on their own merits, of course, but we may take it as a guiding principle in all cases that criticism has value in the ratio as it is informed. It also goes without saying that it must be honest. Since the term working-class is a mechanical classification of a social group that is something more than a mere aggregation of individuals, being in fact a group containing within itself individuals having varying affiliations of one sort or another with many other groups, occupational, party, union, religious, sport, fraternal, etc., have varying dispositions, interests, traditions, aptitudes, etc.—since that is so, there are many points of view. Also, since the emotions are engaged, there are emotional basis to give partizan attitudes. The possession of an informed mind, an acquired habit of self-criticism and intellectual honesty, will go far to discipline emotional bias, however, and the point of view may be of value as throwing a light from a particular angle on the many faced truth of any subject, of which it is given to no man to know the whole. We need then informed criticism and void of dishonest practices. It is said that one way of knowing a thing, is by way of knowing what it is not. If, then, we take Comrade McDonald's article in last issue criticising the British Labor Party, it seems to me that we might learn something about how working class self-criticism should be carried on, by examining his criticism as an example of how it should not be done.

Comrade McDonald has his own point of view on all and any labor reform parties which leads him to the conclusion that, in the interests of the working class, labor parties ought to be destroyed. However, in this article I am not concerning myself with his point of view, for my present purpose granting that informed and much honest reasoning may be advanced on its behalf. I do think, however, that the criticism of his in question is not characterized by those attributes of sound educative criticism. And I think the paragraph near the end of his article which sums up his criticism of the British Labor Party displays that itself. I here quote it. Says Comrade McDonald:

"As we have seen, the appellation—labor—does not signify that the party is carrying on propaganda on behalf of the working class in opposition to those who own and rule. It is merely a fascinating title made use of by political adventurers to secure the continued enslavement of the workers and consequently maintain intact the present mode of exploitation."

So says Comrade McDonald, and Comrade McDonald has been a leader among teaching Socialists since some years before the war; that is how he accounts for the British Labor Party. Think of the conditions under which the Labor Party fought the last elections, of the extremely adverse circumstances of a world-wide mood of reaction, of the solid opposition of the bourgeois press, of the extension of the franchise to an inexperienced section of the electorate, of the springing of the Russian letter and, for the first time in British party politics, the co-operation by arrangement of the liberal and conservative parties to defeat a labor party in an election.

Take a look at that paragraph again, you students of the historical method, you scientific socialists trained in the way of looking at history of His-

torical Materialism, as a way of accounting for political movements and parties, and think of your attitude towards other opposing theories of history! I ask, does Comrade McDonald give a satisfactory accounting? Did you ever read or hear of a crasser application of the "great man" theory? Would even a working class "scissor-bill" consider it satisfactory, or a paid advocate of the philistine press or-pulpit dare to advance it for fear of ridicule? Comrade McDonald has been a leader in the scientific socialist movement on this coast for some fifteen years, education is his general formula for working class emancipation, a knowledge of history and the ways of history his special specific. Vancouver socialists says he, have wasted too much time on economics. Are we asked to believe then, that he thinks his accounting for the Labor Party is a satisfactory one?

Even a bushman of the hinterland of South Africa would know better. Edward Clodd opens up his "Pioneers of Evolution" with this remark of a Basuto chief, addressed to a traveller two or three generations ago: "Yesterday was the father of today and we must never forget the parentage." Considering the Basuto's circumstances of life, his thought might be called an intellectual tour de force. By way of contrast, consider our superior advantages for reasoning on a problem. Our social environment pulsates with change, every school child is inducted into written histories recording thousands of years of change, the evolutionary idea is a commonplace with us and has a history reaching back to the thinkers of remote antiquity, material cause and effect as a working hypothesis of science is with us, one of those self-evident truths. It is a commonplace procedure to treat a thing, event or institution as an effect, to make it a problem, to enquire, what is it? What are its antecedents? What its life-history? what the general conditions out of which it emerged? what the relevant factors which determined its emergence, growth and development?

Students of history know that the members of social groups tend to develop, in common, mental attitudes on life and social ideals; that the British wage-working class is a long established class dating from the opening up of the era of handicraft in the middle ages; that the class has a long history of independent struggle with its ruling and exploiting classes, containing many attempts to permanently establish a representative political party of its own; that its trade union movement has been and is a powerful cultural influence on working class sentiment, and that the movement has been a means of giving the class a standing in the country; that for several generations there has been a labor movement in Britain with political aspirations, capable of influencing the policies of governments and parties, distinguishable even within the folds of the bourgeois parties as one or the other bargained for its support; that there have been social ideals, challenging the conditions of capitalism or the system itself, acting as a ferment in the country ever since capitalism came into being; that the people of Britain are distinguished by comparison for political mindedness; that they have the traditions of some hundreds of years of representative political institutions as a cultural factor in the formation of the political habit of mind; that our great aggregations of peoples long ago, by necessity of their great numbers, have acquired the habits of delegating authority and electing representative men in their interest or their conceived interest; that the majorities, midway between the Left and Right minorities have within their own ranks of moderate opinion, abundance of men like them in temperament, with as great a knowledge of the world, as great in idealism, as great in honesty, as great in capacity for leadership, and perhaps greater, as any that the Left or Right could produce; that they do not depend, for fighters and leaders in their cause, on political adventurers, in the bad meaning of the

term; that by and large their representative men are truly representative of the majorities who elect them. Some may be more advanced in ideas than their constituents and better informed, but by virtue of likeness of temperament have an instinctive sympathetic understanding of their constituents' capacity for change. Such men are not necessarily untrue to themselves, for they may have a philosophy reconciling the conflict of ideals and the practice of life, similar to wise old Aristotle's whose exhortation was to "teach the extreme and practice the mean," i.e., the possible.

I make the above observations to suggest there is a different background to the British Labor party than the one offered us by Comrade McDonald. Political adventurers! Thanks for the term! I see five and a half million people in Britain breaking the bonds of old customs, loyalties, habits of thought, old humilities, old fears, old illusions—political adventurers all. Here's luck to them.

Let me give an instance of out of what kind of reasoning Comrade McDonald develops his conclusion. Says he:

"No sooner, however, had (Premier) MacDonald and his cohorts kissed the hand of the king and settled down to the position of administering social affairs than the applause of the multitude resounded throughout the earth. In the opinion of many the millenium had arrived for British workers. The poverty stricken outcasts, who were formerly submerged socially and economically, were now to be placed on a basis of equality with the social elite."

Comrade McDonald offers that as fact to Clarion readers! Who, I ask, were the many who thought the millenium had arrived when the British Labor Party took office, and that the submerged would be placed on an equality with the elite? Surely they belong to the realm of fiction and not of fact. But if there were many who so believed, what in the Labor Party's political theory, its ideas on the modes of social change, or its program and declared policies would lead them so to believe? Nothing. Its whole philosophy stands in direct contradiction to that of millenium change. Always during its existence it has been at pains to declare itself a reform party, a step at a time party, a constitutional party, as a party of bargaining and compromise in the interests of peaceful and progressive change. It has earned the animosity of Comrade McDonald and such as are of his opinion, just because it is such a party.

He falls foul of Philip Snowden because he declared it his duty to maintain the national credits unimpaired. But what was Snowden to do when four-fifths of the food supply of a crowded population of forty-five millions come from abroad? Are we to suppose that a revolutionary government can, independent of international credits conjure sustenance for its people out of the air? He quotes Sidney Webb as saying that men of wealth had joined the Labor Party, and asks derisively, "Where could room be found for a class struggle in the midst of this motley crew?" He forgets what a motley crew of middle class minds have been the theoreticians and supporters of the socialist movement. He forgets what that movement owes to Marx and Engels, to name no further, one a doctor of philosophy and the other a wealthy manufacturer. The working class cause would be, in fact, lost, if its appeal did not spread abroad to individuals of all functions. He points the note of scorn at the conflict between the Labor Party's anti-militarist ideals and the Labor government's order for the building of cruisers. But he forgets the everlasting fate of ideals before the practice of life faced by implacable circumstances; that our doing, whether as private individuals or as a collectivity, is never what we ought to do, but what we can do, what we have the strength to do. "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone," is a saying containing a humbling truth of a pretty wide application. We have to broadcast our ideals so that we may recruit strength

(Continued on page 8)

to our cause and create a more favoring environment for practice that will approach the ideal. Like many more in all party camps opposed to the Labor Party, Comrade McDonald, consciously or not, mistakes action for motive—the objective facts of labor policy imposed by circumstances for the underlying purposes of labor which have been forced to find expression in facts which belie their real nature.

I think a fair criticism, an honest criticism, that is to say, an informing and educative criticism of the British Labor Party and the acts of its government in office would be guided by some such considerations and methods as I have advanced in this article. As to Comrade McDonald's so-called criticism of the Labor Party, it is not a criticism, it is a piece of deliberate misrepresentation. Words with him, are not symbols of real things, but clubs.

VALUE AND EXCHANGE VALUE

(Continued from page 4)

distribution, I don't think Marx had any intention of throwing bouquets at the class that does not labor when he used these terms. When he used the term "socially necessary labor," he was referring to the social, or co-operative labor, of that part of society that does labor. He had to use some term that would generalize the proposition, because it was evident that the actual amount of labor expended on the production of each individual article of commerce did not determine its exchange value. And this ability of Marx to generalize the process of production and distribution and find the law of value proves his superiority as an economist, not only over his predecessors, but also over most of his successors as well.

However, it is true that the terms "social" and "socially," understood in their correct sense, imply society as a whole, and although it is not hard to explain their meaning in this connection it might be well to avoid such terms as much as possible when dealing with wealth production

DAMNING THE LABOR LEADERS

(Continued from page 6)

and scramble and looking after the immediate interest under their nose, according to their lights. The brotherhood of man is not their aim, but, Business as Usual. An industrial union, if feasible as a proposition, has plenty of material to work on, yet so far, efforts to corner the common variety of labor power have been failures. Naturally so, seeing that the average laborer, unskilled and compelled by hunger to wolf it alone or die is too much engrossed by the effort to find or keep a job to spare interest for idealistic attempts to organize his kind. And it cannot be ignored that it is almost impossible to maintain a corner in a commodity where the supply outweighs demands, as is the case with labor power.

It would seem, in the light of this Marxian viewpoint, that whether there had been an A. F. of L. or not the trend of events would not have varied so much. If conditions are favorable for a monopoly to arise, then arise it will. One might venture to say even unions priding themselves on being Socialist would be no whit different to our present craft unions, so long as they had comfortable livings. Aye; even a nation of Socialist voters would be in no hurry to change things, if jobs were plentiful.

Unions are in politics now, mainly, to consolidate their favorable position under this system if they have one. But, the preceding argument is intended as a protest against this wrong-headed railing at craft union leaders, a la S. L. P., or at Socialist leaders as the freakish variety of Communists do.

Denunciation of leaders does not educate the followers who after all, make the leaders.

Revolutions do not spring from the heads of leaders, even of Lenins!

The masses must want a revolution, and, given right conditions and an enlightened proletariat, it will be successful.

Meanwhile, we await the collapse of capitalism, and try to clarify the thinking faculties of the members of our class.

C.

SECRETARIAL NOTES

Local (Vancouver) No. 1, S. P. or C. announces that the annual celebration of the Paris Commune of 1871 will be observed at Belvedere Court, 10th Avenue, near Main street, Vancouver, on Thursday March 19th. The usual dancing program will be followed, for which tickets are now on sale: Gents 60 cents, Ladies 50 cents.

The members of the committee in charge of arrangements are expecting to see gathered together a throng of friends and sympathisers of the movement old and new, and they ask that all interested will help to advertise the event. This is essential to assure a financial and social success. Come, then, and bring others with you.

Local No. 1 asks that all who have books belonging to the Local's Lending Library and who have had them for a time longer than the allotted period return them as soon as possible.

HERE AND NOW

Lest anybody's pulse should quicken at sight of these convalescent appearing figures we hasten to set down the unfortunate fact that they represent our financial findings covering the period of two issues. The prevailing pessimism seems to have reached its enthusiastic stage and we appear to follow the fashion. Some day, they say, the fashion will change. If and when it does, then, our figures will surely look healthier than these:

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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.

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