

WESTERN CLARION

A Journal of
CURRENT
EVENTS

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HISTORY
ECONOMICS
PHILOSOPHY

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FIVE CENTS

"A Corporation With a Soul!"

THE press throughout the country a week ago carried big headlines featuring the action of the U. S. Steel Corporation in voluntarily raising the wages of its employees, affecting many thousands of men directly in the employ of the Steel Corporation and lesser independent concerns, and affecting indirectly wage rates in interlocking industries. The press throughout the country forgot for the moment to hail this advance as an evidence of capitalist kindness and, in its inability to understand the nature of the underlying forces operating throughout industrial life was surprised into a confession that "this wage advance was a shock to industry."

It is worth noting that "the commodity nature of labor-power," constantly harped upon by Socialists, is accepted as the basis of wage labor and recognized as such, and the record of it may as well be set down here for the attention of the reader, to shew that we are not merely theorizing but dealing with facts as the employing capitalist concerns see and recognize them:

"Widely varied motives were assigned for the move as despatches from widely separated localities showed. But the main reason for the advance probably is that the steel mills needed labor, and went into the market for it just as they would for any other commodity."

—"Province" (Vancouver) 23 Aug. '22

While the capitalist press has manifested some interest on the probable general effect of the wage advance made by the U. S. Steel Corporation, the labor press has expressed some surprise. It is apparently unable to understand the matter and does not attempt to explain it, but considers "it is safe to assume that there is a nigger in the woodpile some where," (B. C. Federationist, 25th Aug. 1922). It is, of course, "safe to assume" that, but it is of little use in unfolding the "mystery."

Public attention has been rivetted on the United States Steel Corporation during the past several years: in the—for the steel-mill owners—prosperous war years, and in the period of trade depression following that boom period. Any decision made by so powerful a concern must necessarily make itself felt throughout industrial life, particularly in related industries. The U. S. Steel Corporation owns 145 steel works, over three quarters of a million acres of coke and coal lands, 993 miles of railway, 1470 locomotive engines and 112 steamships. In addition to these holdings and its listed assets of approximately two and a quarter billion dollars, its directors are directors also of express companies, telegraph companies, steamship lines and other industrial companies, and of banks and trust companies, with a total capitalization of approximately 40 billion dollars. (See "Atlantic Monthly," May, 1922).

Much advertisement has been made of the fact that some few thousands of the Corporation's employees are "stockowners" but, needless to say, their holdings affect the policies of the Corporation not at all, and yield to their owners little beyond a steady job and an enthusiasm for work. The total number of stockholders of the Corporation amounts to over 100,000, but the majority stock is held by less than two per cent. Since 1st April, 1901 (when the U. S. Steel Corporation was formed) the Corporation has gained an average net income of 118 million

dollars per year (after making allowances for all operating expenses, repairs, depreciation, and sinking funds), which means 13½ per cent. per annum on the original capitalization of 868 million dollars, over half of which in the first place represented nothing more tangible than "good-will" "merger value" and such like considerations.

What is it then that induces so powerful an operating concern, employing hundreds of thousands of men, to voluntarily raise wages? It has persistently refused to recognize trade unions and has always maintained a virulent anti-union policy. It has always actively promoted the arts of union suppression practised by lesser concerns: discharging union members; the black-list, maintaining the espionage system, spies, hiring of detectives and so forth; active use of organized strike breakers; suppressing public assembly; controlling the press and maintaining the pulpit; calling in State troops, and generally doing well what lesser concerns would like to do in controlling the productive energies of thousands of men in its employ. Even its most shameless agents would blush to call it friendly toward labor.

The steel industry of the United States employs normally "probably 150,000 12-hour workers In blast-furnace plants and often in open hearth departments these men work seven days a week. Once in two weeks they have eighteen-hour or twenty-four hour turns." ("The Nation," N.Y., January 26, 1921). The U. S. Steel Corporation in 1921 employed nearly 70,000 men who worked the twelve-hour shift. In that year, prevailing unemployment and the trend toward lower prices enabled the Corporation to reduce the wages of unskilled workers, by three successive wage cuts, to 30 cents per hour, a total reduction of over 40 per cent., allowing no extra pay for overtime. The recent agitation for the three-shift system gained ground through prevailing unemployment conditions, and, placed in operation by about "twenty independent steel plants. . . . representing about 40 per cent. of the industry" (see "The Nation," already cited) the results of this agitation, reported by Mr. Drury of the U. S. Shipping Board, showed that another "shock to industry" had been well received:

"The managers of those steel plants which have made the change are all glad it has been done. They are convinced that it was "good business." Increased alertness of the men, with improved quality of product, less waste, and less wear and tear of equipment have been reported; also less absenteeism and less carelessness; and a better spirit has prevailed among the men. In some cases the output has been increased and the costs lowered." (The Nation, N. Y., Jan. 26, '21)

This accounts for the changed attitude of Judge Gary, Chairman of the U. S. Steel Corporation, always a consistent opponent of the three-shift system. He remains unmoved by the recommendations of the Taylor Society, the Am. Soc. of Mech. Engineers and the Am. Inst. of Elec. Engineers. The actual operative experience of rival concerns he can afford to wait for, and to Mr. Kirby Page.

"Judge Gary expressed the opinion that there would be a heavy increase in labor-costs under the three-shift system. He pointed out that a number of steel plants have changed back to the two-shift system after experimenting with three shifts." (Atlantic Monthly, May, 1922).

As a result of the experiments, the matter of the

possible adoption of the three-shift system, to be thought of only in so far as it may not "interfere with the natural and legitimate progress of business," as President Harding likes to put it, has reached the point where it is under serious consideration as of possible adoption throughout the entire steel industry, bearing in mind always Judge Gary's objective for invested capital of a minimum return of 15 per cent. annually.

"Abolition of the twelve-hour day in the steel industry was favored by forty-one steel company executives from all parts of the country who were guests at the White House on May 18, and who were asked by President Harding to consider the matter. By formal resolution, the steel men authorized Judge Elbert H. Gary to appoint a committee of five to make a careful investigation of the matter and report its conclusions to the industry."

—(Current History, July, 1922)

The steel industry in the United States, employing thousands of men under intolerable conditions of labor at the subsistence level of wages has, necessarily, depended for many years upon a steady influx of uneducated immigrants into the country for its supply of labor. Strong men used to long unregulated hours of hard labor have experienced the meaning of "the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" in the U. S. steel mills. The lesser the degree of education the better they were received, for the easier were they exploited. Ignorant and willing workers! So long as they came in sufficient number the steel mills were sure of the labor supply they needed.

But while capital likes to have on hand at all times a plentiful supply of labor, it becomes uneasy when the supply becomes over-plentiful and growls hungrily on the doorstep of government offices and municipal buildings. Thus, in face of a workless army of millions of men, Congress proceeded to regulate immigration and there went into effect on May 19, 1921, the "Three per cent Restrictive Immigration Act," by which "the annual immigration from any country is limited to a fixed number, based on the immigration from that country for a considerable period of years."

The records of the U. S. Immigration Department show that whereas in the years 1910 to 1914 (inclusive) immigration averaged over a million per year, the years 1915 to 1921 (inclusive) showed an average per annum of less than 344,000. (See "The World Almanack," 1922). The total number allowed for by the quota given for 1922 is, according to "The Province" (Vancouver) 28th Aug., 357,803. The Act referred to, intended to be operative until 30th June, 1922, has been extended in effectiveness until 30th June, 1924.

This, coupled with the returns of the U. S. Labor Department showing a decrease in unemployment, irrespective of unemployment through strikes and lock-outs, explains how the U. S. Steel Corporation went into the market for the commodity labor-power and was forced to shock industry by setting such a bad example as to raise wages. Besides this, according to persistent evidences, there is a considerable stir in the iron trades and the coal and railway strikes are, for the moment at anyrate, interfering with what the manufacturers are interested in, productive and profit making enterprise. Witness Henry Ford's ultimatum that his plant will close on

(Continued on page 3)

The Origin of the World

By R. McMillan.

THE STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE.

CHAPTER XV.

DID you ever hear that there are more living things born into the world today that can possibly live? When a little boy was taken by his father to see the three new babies which had recently been born into the family, he looked long and anxiously at them, and then said: "Pa, which one are you going to keep?" He thought the babies would be treated in the same way as kittens and puppies. If we allowed all the kittens to live, or all the puppies, the world would soon be overrun by them. We have to keep some forms of life down for the sake of the human race; and nature has to keep some down; and she does so too, but not intelligently. Nature is hideously cruel and wasteful, and has no thought of suffering, no heed for sorrow, no plan, no purpose, no ideal; but—there you are!

In Australia we have a plague of rabbits, and you wonder why! The reason is very simple. When the first ones got loose in the bush, they found life very much to their liking, and very easy. Grass was plentiful for food, and the soil was loose and friable, and easily burrowed in; so they reproduced their kind in obedience to that law which commands all living things to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth.

But suppose they reproduce to such an extent that there is not enough food for them? What will happen? Will the law be held responsible for having ordered them to reproduce? Oh, no! They simply die off, as the flies die on a cold day. Nature does not care. The law has no sentiment, no emotions, no care.

Take the flies, for instance. They are marvellous insects; and if you get a microscope and examine a fly's wings, or a fly's eyes, or a fly's feet, you will be lost in admiration. A "common" house-fly will produce twenty-five million flies in a season. I have another calculation made by an American professor as to how many flies would be produced by a single pair in one season, and the number is so huge that I am utterly unable to explain it or to understand it, so I take Edward Clodd's moderate estimate of twenty-five million. And yet a fly is a miracle of organization. I have seen a section of a dragon-fly's eye, and it was too wonderful to understand. Instead of two eyes, as we have, it has twelve thousand eyes, each with its own cone, its own lens, its own rod. And yet a dragon-fly lives for only a few days as a dragon fly. Before it becomes a fly it lives for several years as a pirate in a water-hole; but that is a different story. The eye of a fly is too wonderful for words; yet one fly will bring forth twenty-five million flies with this marvel in a single season.

What law settles which of the million billion flies shall live, or which of them shall die? They have got to struggle to live, just as men and wolves have; and any slight improvement in any of the billions and billions of flies which enables them to get a living more easily is transmitted to their children, and an improved fly results. Then the improved one becomes the fashion, and it multiplies until it exists everywhere.

It is just the same with fish. I believe the cod is the most prolific of all the fishes in the sea. It is said that the roe of a cod-fish contains eight or nine million eggs. If all that number lived, and each one produced a like number, there would soon be no room in the sea for all the cod-fish that were born.

What happens to keep them down? Nature, "kindly Nature," provides other fishes which live on the young of the cod-fish, and so a balance is maintained, and the oceans are not overflowing with cod-fish. If we allowed the rabbit to increase to its full capacity, Nature would send an enemy to the rabbit in the shape of disease or devouring animals.

But we trap rabbits, and export them to England for food; and we poison them and keep them down, so that Nature has no need to interfere.

I have not quoted much from anybody, have I? It seems to me that I ought to quote from Charles Darwin's Origin of Species in regard to the way that Nature works in adapting her children to the struggle for existence. He says:—

"A man can produce, and certainly has produced, a great result by his methodical and unconscious means of selection. What may not natural selection effect? Man can act only on external and visible characters. Nature, if I may be allowed to personify the natural preservation or survival of the fittest, cares nothing for appearances, except in so far as they are useful to any being. She can act on every internal organ, on every shade of constitutional difference, on the whole machinery of life. Man selects only for his own good; Nature only for that of the being which she tends. Every selected character is fully exercised by her, as is implied by the fact of their selection. Man keeps the natives of many climates in the same country; he seldom exercises each selected character in some peculiar and fitting manner. He feeds a long and a short-beaked pigeon on the same food; he does not exercise a long-backed or long-legged quadruped in any peculiar manner; he exposes sheep with long and short wool to the same climate. He does not allow the most vigorous males to struggle for the females. He does not rigidly destroy all inferior animals, but protects during each varying season, as far as lies in his power, all his productions. He often begins his selection by some half-monstrous form, or at least by some modification prominent enough to catch the eye or to be plainly useful to him. Under Nature the slightest differences of structure or constitution may well turn the nicely-balanced scale in the struggle for life, and so be preserved. How fleeting are the wishes and efforts of man! How short his time! And, consequently, how poor will be his results, compared with those accumulated by Nature during whole geological periods! Can we wonder, then, that Nature's productions should be far 'truer' in character than man's productions; that they should be infinitely better adapted to the most complex conditions of life, and should plainly bear the stamp of far higher workmanship?"

I must leave you that quotation to think about, and you are certain to see how important it is, and how true it is—if not now, at least later on. There are millions, billions, and trillions of things born every year that cannot possibly find room in the world. If you cannot find room in the world to live, you die; but very few people see that truth. Nature has given nobody, no living thing, any "right" to live. If a beast has longer legs or stronger teeth than its neighbours, it has a better "chance" to live, but it has no better "right." And this is the merciless law of life in all lands and times. The law never alters, never falters, and it applies unfailingly to all.

You will find people who think that man is exempt from Nature's laws; but he is not. We are all part of the world; we were all in the gaseous cloud from which the world was developed; and when our globe has spun round the sun for its "little day" (which is millions and millions of years!) and the heat of the central sun has decreased, then our old earth will tumble back into the sun and revert to its original gaseous form. We are one people, all of us, with one destiny.

Now I want to tell you one fact which will surprise you, I am sure. We know how big this world is, and we know how much it weighs. We know how many motions it has, and we fairly understand their direction and their velocity. We know also that the population of the earth is about one thousand four hundred and eighty millions (1,480,000,000). I think we are safe in assuming that it has been as thickly populated as that for many thou-

sands of years, for the density of population has varied in different areas in all times. We know that the average of human life is about thirty years, so that three generations die in less than a hundred years. That is to say, more than three thousand million people die every century. Can you conceive of such a vast multitude of human being dying every century? When you look around you, with your friends and relations, and the townspeople not very far away, you think of them all as being very important. But when you look further, and ask about the origin of the world, you have to think in vast times and great numbers; and thus you come to think of the death of 3,000,000,000 people every century, and you realize that our village, our town, even our country—yea, our great world itself—signify but little. Then you recall the words of Shakespeare, and his vision of the world, which,—

Like the baseless fabric of this vision,

The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself—
Yea, all which it inherit—shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a wreck behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life is
rounded with a sleep.

Next Lesson: **THE CARBONIFEROUS.**

HERE AND NOW

Talking about circulation and how to get it, Comrade Sanderson says we might encourage the guessing habit, to help maintain interest in life if nothing else. He says: "I suggest that you start a competition in the 'Family Journal.' Say that you put up a \$10,000-prize, to be won by the man who guesses nearest to the date upon which the revolution takes place; all guesses to be in prior to the revolution; no payment to be made until after the revolution. You could make the conditions that a man be entitled to one guess with each sub. sent in, and don't forget to forewarn them NOT to mark their ballots 'Home and Away.'"

We're on! Make it a million (or two). Might as well be in the swim. What with forecasting the weather, reading horoscopes, following the pennant and the cup, there's no doubt the working-class is taking an interest in something. First thing we know we'll be guessing on what certain editorial opinion will be next week or the week after.

Anyway, here's seventy-odd dollars that there's no guessing about excepting as to how to make it meet a bigger sized bill. The hardest man we've met at the guessing business is the hungry printer. Here follows our financial story from last issue.

Following, \$1 each—J. F. Tiderington, J. McKinley, J. M. Brown, J. M. Jenkins, C. R. Williams, G. Gerard, A. H. Russell, B. Peake, J. T. Reed, J. Fisher, J. E. Anderson, M. Carpendale, H. Wilmer, A. R. Sinclair, G. Butt, Lealess, C. Pakerman, W. H. Camfield, R. Watt, M. Goudie, C. Steen, A. Toppane, B. W. Sparks, A. Tree, A. Beaton, J. J. Zender, Donald Smith, E. H. Cove, C. B. Robertson, W. A. Pritchard, Sid Earp, T. E. Broadland, F. E. Moore, B. Shannon, E. Simpson, W. Moore, C. F. Orchard.

Following \$2 each—J. J. MacDonald, L. Garner, R. Power, V. Benoit, G. Ewald, G. Lamont, J. C. Blair, H. W. Speed, J. McDiarmid.
G. Bowden, 50c.; J. F. Kirk (New Zealand), \$3.94; Wm. Braes, \$5; Dave Watt, \$3; Sam Clements 10c.; T. Smith, 65 cents; L. Audell, \$3.

Above, Clarion subscriptions received from 10th to 29th August, inclusive—total, \$71.19.

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Ourselves and Parliament

BY J. D. HARRINGTON.

ARISTOTLE, the greatest of the ancients, has defined man as the political animal, though we might with greater accuracy call him the voting animal. It is possible to find other forms of life which might be understood, in a broad sense, to be organized politically, but no other form has ever manifested the slightest evidence of submitting the regulation of its conduct to a vote.

Within certain limits, and excepting certain periodic lapses, mankind does submit its life, and much of its activity to the uncertain hazard of a collective poll. The result may be of the gravest consequence, but the seal of a voting majority having been announced, all and sundry shape their course accordingly. This is so, whether it involves dispensing with booze, or endorsing a war.

The reasons are obvious and need not be labored, the foremost being—that society could not be maintained, even on the lowest conceivable plain, where every difference had to be decided by cutting throats of bruising bones. There is, however, another factor which is often entirely overlooked, i.e., a proneness to follow where the race has trod, an extreme conservatism which prompts man to endure great evils rather than, by a greater or less increase of discomfort, finally abolish them. He will vote against them in a feeble attempt to diminish or remove them, but if his other conditions are such that he can live and hope to prolong life, he will not readily "take up arms against a sea of troubles, and by opposing end them." So that even after having by a large majority set the seal of his approval upon a certain course of action, he is likely to do little more than curse if his august commands are set at naught by those who are pleased to call themselves his servants. Thus tyrannies have been imposed upon free democracies time and time again with singular ease. Indeed, the blood and suffering accompanying all efforts to overthrow tyrannies is in amazing contrast to the facility and perfectly peaceful manner with which they are imposed. I think a very limited range of historical reading would furnish many examples of this social anomaly.

The great voting jag however is when we are called upon to select a government. This is a periodic affair in all well regulated democracies, and notwithstanding the tinsel and the trumpets, the corn broom torches and the band wagon, or the dawning of the morning after, our fellows in misery pursue the even tenor of their way, ploughing and reaping, spinning and weaving, leaving to their elected representatives the task of governing them. The fact that these representatives rarely concern themselves about the voters' worries, or their own election promises, has engendered an abiding contempt for parliament and all its works. However, whether Galileo said so or not the world does move, and so do the people of it. Then comes a burst of energy, a contempt for death, and unquenchable demand for change, and—

"The moving finger writes, and having writ
Moves on. Nor all your piety, or wit,
Can lure it back to cancel half a line:
Nor all your tears wipe out a word of it."

Naturally we conclude that revolution is the stuff. What's the use of voting when we can get what we want by fighting? Of course, but softly: who did the voting and who the fighting? We are still in the same world, and are still moved by the same senses, affections, passions; but in a different fashion, I fancy. What changed these hurt-fearing death dreading humble conservatives into revolutionists, welcoming suffering and glorifying death? Whatever the cause, we may be sure their ideas had "suffered a sea change into something rich and rare."

The Irishman of 1913, for instance, might have

had a wish to enjoy all that a 1921 Irishman desires, but with this difference; in 1913 it was a wish, not worth the loss of a meal except to a comparative few, while in 1921 it becomes a consuming and imperative necessity, cheap if purchased with the last pang of physical endurance, animating all except a comparative few. The compunction to fight arose from the fact that a power existed which could set their vote aside. But no power existed in Ireland itself, which would have embarked upon so desperate an adventure. Parliament as we knew it a decade ago has changed. Today it appears as a formal body giving legality to the will of a select committee known as the Cabinet. Members of parliament have repeatedly deplored the subordinate, if not obsequious nature of their office. But even so, we cannot view the financial and social standing of these mighty ministers of the Cabinet without remarking that they too are subordinate, and very obsequious to some other power. We see a French President lodged in an asylum, an American President next door to it, and we read of Lloyd George tottering to a fall, of Orlando and Clemenceau banished to the limbo of political lost souls. Evidently there is a power to which the mighty must render an account.

There is no mystery about this to anyone who has had some acquaintance with the Marxian school of thought. We know that governments are dominated by the powerful commercial and industrial interests, and we know that parliaments are and must be the tools of those interests. In spite of this we constantly hear that parliament has ceased to function. This is correct if we view the institution as functioning in the interests of all. But to those who adhere to the class nature of society it is merely confusion worse confounded. True, as we have remarked, parliament no longer decides, or even debates to any appreciable degree the issues of national, or international policy, but they do stamp this policy with the print, image, and superscription of the nation and if it is not entirely opposed to the immediate and perceptible welfare of the nation no question is made of it.

So that all matters of public policy are subjected to an extensive and intensive measure of propaganda. Whatever the needs of the dominating powers might be, they are always very careful to color those needs in idealistic and patriotic garb, to the end that the dear people might, in their folly, find solace in misery. This is done by methods that have long proven their efficacy. Catch phrases such as free trade serve to delude the voters. If we realize this, we can also estimate the folly of those who denounce participation in parliamentary elections.

The Socialist Party of Canada has entered all such contests with the prime motive of giving the workers an understanding of the world in which they live; they have always subordinated the chances of electing a candidate to that of making Socialists. Whatever the conduct of our elected members has been in Parliament, or will be, we have always held it as of little importance. It is what they did outside the House which gave us reason to applaud or condemn. And we have had reasons to do both.

We are under no delusions as to ever being able to revolutionize society by an Act of Parliament alone; not that parliament is in itself not so constituted as to effect such a desirable consummation, but because a master class, entrenched for centuries in all that makes for wealth and privilege, would not submit, if there was any chance of procuring workers foolish enough to fight their battles.

It might interest those who decry the contesting of parliamentary seats, to recall that history records not one successful revolution which did not first manifest itself as a victory or near victory at the

polls. And so far as that goes few unsuccessful ones, where the revolutionists had an opportunity to so express themselves. And this is true of today more than at any other period in the world's history; owing to the intricacy of the death dealing machinery, not to mention the intense specialization of national production. The master class always ignited the revolutionary spark, even when they did not actually start and feed the conflagration. So too we have never been deluded enough to suppose that a people too mentally confused to vote for something would ever fight for it, while in that state of mind. And if they should develop the temper requisite to a great enterprise, I think, in time of peace at least they would register that temper in ways that those who run might read, and those who read might run, in case they were not like minded.

Parliaments, and cabinet ministers are the tools of a certain dominant social class, who by virtue of this domination control all the public forces of a nation. If we, the workers, could control these forces we would be masters, if we cannot we will remain slaves. This control is supposed to be vested in parliament, and for all practical purposes is, but only when parliament conforms to the historic economic needs and moral standards of the nation. The national flag, passing through the nation's slums will be received with transports of delight. The national anthem is bawled with vigor by hungry slaves. Thousands of weary toilers rush through thronged streets and stand for hours to catch sight of a prince. Anyone who expects revolution from a people so minded has broken with the real world, has fashioned an ideal world of his own, and is in the same mental latitude as the school girl who hopes one day to displace Mary Pickford, or the school boy who has decided to lick Jack Dempsey.

To those who still see the world as it is, there appears a task of giant proportions, a task almost beyond their strength, and that is the removal of all sentiment and ideology of master class character from the minds of the workers, and the introduction of working class needs, and knowledge. To that end alone is our aim devoted, and to that end do we contest political elections. If we should elect a member, we see a member of our class endowed with leisure and funds to instruct himself, and others. And if he does this, let the votes fall where they may.

*—Reprinted from Western Clarion No. 847 (July 16, 1921). See Secretarial Notes in the present issue.

"A CORPORATION WITH A SOUL."

(Continued from page 1)

September 16th unless coal supplies are available; which means that if labor can't be reduced to terms in the time exhausted since April 30th, then, since labor is immediately required in basic industries, the battering down process will have to be immediately successful or will have to suspend operation until the need for labor is less urgent.

So "the steel mills needed labor, and went into the market for it just as they would for any other commodity," and the "mystery" is explained. The apparent kindness is wrapped up in profit percentage, the guiding principle of all capitalist enterprise.

But how did we come to locate "A Corporation With a Soul?" Well, the story is told of twenty-four men once caught in the flow of molten steel caused through a break in an improperly packed tap-hole. "The company, with a sense of the proprieties, waited until the families of the men moved before putting the scrap, which contained them, back into the furnace for re-melting."

The very limit in kindly consideration! "A Corporation With a Soul!"

E. M.

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VANCOUVER, B.C., SEPTEMBER 1, 1922

HIS MASTER'S VOICE

A proposal to recommend to the Canadian Government that a credit of 15 million dollars be extended to Soviet Russia, made to the Canadian Trades Congress last week in Montreal, has brought forth from Mr. Tom Moore, re-elected president, the statement that he might consider the matter when the Soviet Government removes its bayonets from the breasts of the workers of Russia. Yet, though the Canadian Trades Congress is affiliated with the A. F. of L., and though members of the A. F. of L. in the U. S. A., in the mining industry, steel industry, textile industry and so on have become fully familiar with U. S. army bayonets during the past few years, not a word was heard as to these little matters. Recent Canadian labor history is not short of evidence as to the prompt attention Canadian labor receives from Canadian army bayonets during strike times. Indeed, Mr. Moore might have betrayed a little anxiety over the presence of armed soldiers sent to Nova Scotia on the announcement of the miners' strike and present there when he was worrying about Soviet Russia.

However, Mr. Moore has lost no reputation whatever, for the reason, mainly, that he has none to lose in this connection. Nobody is surprised anyway. He is chief trumpeter in this country for Mr. Gompers, and little matters like these "at home" are in the hands of "good government." No doubt if the government "at home" would consent to plaster a union label on army ammunition the country's good name would be beyond evil!

SECRETARIAL NOTES

THE two articles, "Ourselves and Parliament," by J. Harrington, and "The Will of the People," by "R," appeared in the "Western Clarion," the former in No. 847 (16th July, 1921), and the latter as an article pertinent to the Federal election of 6th December last, in No. 853 (15th Oct. 1921).

Last January we received a criticism of these two articles from Comrade John A. McDonald, written in December when he was in New Zealand. We had in mind then the interest that might be taken and the attention that might be given to a discussion on the matter of parliaments, and left the matter over until a sufficient time had elapsed to reprint the articles, which is now done. Comrade McDonald's article, entitled "Parliament or Cabinet—Which?" will appear in our next issue, in criticism of the two articles referred to, together with replies from Comrades Harrington and "R." Comrade McDonald is now in California and will, consequently, be near enough to enter further criticism if he desires, in which event Comrades Harrington and "R" will be entitled to further reply, or to close the discussion to whatever length it may go.

Through the reprinting of the articles aforesaid we have on hand this issue a little more copy than usually falls to us as our just reward, and an article by "R," entitled "The Genius," is held over and will appear in our next.

A new feature is introduced this issue under the

pen of Comrade Earp: "The Clarion Mail Bag." The idea is to get Locals and individuals throughout the country to maintain a correspondence relative to activities wherever they may be situated. This is a beginning, and Comrade Earp will look for a weighty mail bag full of interest to record each issue in future. Give us the news of the movement, so that we can spread it around.

Street corner meetings every night corner Carrall and Cordova Street, Vancouver, at 8 p.m. Literature sellers need help in the work to be done. Get in and lend a hand.

That "Clarion" sub. that you have in mind, your own or your neighbor's, bring it along. It's a queer circumstance, but we've never been overburdened with subs, at any time.

Sherlocko on Wages

BY F. W. THOMPSON

HE stepped out of the book he was buried in, looked discreetly between pages 234 and 236, tore off a piece of the cover for further examination, said: "Aha! The paper is made of pulp, and the tree was cut two feet three and one-quarter inches from the ground." Then noticing me he exclaimed: "Ohm! Conan Doyle is busy with his false photographs of fairies, and Watson is left behind. So I concluded that you are the only one I can talk to."

I nodded agreement.

"Well," he said, "I came across a very complex case the other day; but, thanks to my inductive methods, I have it almost solved."

"Why—is there a conspiracy afoot to destroy our military virtues by flattening all the bean-blowers before Halloween?"

"No, that's not it," he said, "for all something like that was done in Washington last winter. You remember the second-hand book store where you picked me up, that is, picked up the book I popped out of?"

I remembered it.

"And you remember how I was so advantageously placed in the window. At half past seven every morning a man walked by, each time carrying the same tin box. His countenance was so bestial that I became suspicious, and the morning before yesterday I jumped into his tin box. There was a horrible odor of garlic. It contained slightly poisoned foodstuffs. I was convinced of some nefarious plan, so I followed him. He passed by several places that would have been agreeable to stop at, and at last turned into a very untidy place still in the process of construction. There were other men similar to himself. They all laid down their boxes of poisoned food with their coats (which latter had germs of all sorts and in some cases the notorious pediculus vestimenti) and then started to mix concrete. They worked at a tremendous speed, the sweat dropping from them. Some more men asked if they could help but were sternly forbidden. That's additional evidence. So I set out to assume a disguise like one of themselves."

"How did you accomplish that?" I asked.

"First I took a bath where the sewers empty, to get rid of this pleasant fragrance of ancient yellow-leaved volumes, then picked up some clothing from the dumps, begged a quarter and ate a meal in a cheap restaurant to give me the proper air. By the time I returned it was noon, and the man I had followed was actually eating the food from his tin box as he sat on some lumber on the sidewalk. I was astounded and so, for all it may have seemed an indiscretion, I asked him straight out! 'What do you work here for?'"

He answered: "For four a day."

"Four what?" I asked.

"Why, four dollars," he said. "Four dollars is

the wages on this job, and I'll be damned if you can find better."

"Oh! you work for wages?" I asked him.

"What else do you think I work for—exercise?" he exclaimed, and looked at me with such astonishment that I dwindled down the street and crept into my trusty book cover. It was a mystery for sure, but I already had the solution at hand.

"Why, where's the mystery, Sherlocko, and what's the solution?" I asked him.

"Their peculiar conduct and the nefarious plot they were participating in! But if you'll follow me, I'll explain it all by my inductive method."

"I'll follow," I said.

"Well, in back of me on the self were some dusty old tomes on economics. I asked them what wages were. One fat one with a priestly air said: "Wages are the reward of labor." And another that always lay tilted toward the sky said: "The natural wages of labor is its full product." But I pressed them hard and got it out of them that wages mean the price men get for selling their ability to work. So you see I had the mystery solved."

I confessed to Sherlocko that as yet I saw neither mystery, nefarious plan nor solution.

"Well" he said, "Its all contained in the implications of wages. You see, if the man could give no better reason for his working there than that he worked for wages, it implies a whole wages' system; otherwise he would have had some special reason for working for wages, such as to master the craft of wheeling a barrow or the art of handling a shovel. And again, as all the books on economics agreed that it is impossible to sell anything unless someone else has a use for it, it implies that others could use these men's ability to work. That, in its course, implies that these other persons had that upon which the men's ability to work could be used. Now, again, all the books on economics agreed that a certain reward called, not wages, but profits, accrues to those who own that by which or upon which the labor of others is expended. Since the men worked for wages it is beyond a doubt they would have liked the profits too. That is, it would have been to their advantage to have owned the things by which and upon which their labor was expended. Since they work for wages, it therefore follows that they cannot own these things. Thus a wages system implies a certain technical development where the means for production are too great to be owned by the man working with them. So wages imply that profits, in proportion to the greatness of the means of production owned, accrue to those who own them. You can follow it out for yourself," said Sherlocko, "and you will see that when that fellow told me he worked for wages, he explained all about the germs in his clothes and the poison in his food, why he worked so hard and why the men outside weren't permitted to work; and further, all about the nefarious plan that he participated in."

"You're right Sherlocko," I said. "Wages imply all that. But where does this nefarious plan come in?"

"Why, working for wages they were party to a plan for robbing millions of everything worth while, of starving others, of spreading disease, of breeding wars for profit, of making the world miserable in general. Isn't that a nefarious plan enough?"

"It is," I said. "It's all clear to me now."

"Not all clear yet," said Sherlocko. "You see, when that fellow told me he worked for wages, for all it implied all this, I'm sure he didn't know what all he said. If he knew as much as he told me, the men who work for wages would take the means of production for their own collective use, and then get the profits too and live decently. But they don't, and that's the thing not solved yet."

As I pondered over this Sherlocko disappeared into the book. But I thought if I were to record this conversation for some slave to read, he might delve into Marx's Capital (which Sherlocko's language showed he was not familiar with) or some other good books on economics and there learn the truth that will make him and me and our fellow slaves free.

Concerning Value

BY "GEORDIE"

"When therefore I say that a commodity has a definite value, I say:—

1. That it is a socially useful product.
2. That it is produced by a private individual on his own private account.

3. That though it is the product of private labor it is, nevertheless, at the same time and similarly, without his knowledge or consent, the product likewise of social labor, and what is more of a fixed and determinate quantity of such social labor, which is arrived at in a social way by means of exchange.

4. I express this quantity not in labor itself, in so many hours of labor, but in another commodity.

If, therefore, I say that this watch is worth as much as this bale of cloth and both of them are worth fifty shillings, I say that in the watch, the cloth and the money an equal amount of social labor is embodied. I state, consequently, that the social labor represented in them has been socially measured and found to be equal. But not directly, absolutely, as people measure labor-time in days or hours of labor, etc., but indirectly and relatively by means of exchange. I cannot, therefore, express this determinate quantity of labor-time in hours of labor, for their number remains quite unknown to me, but only in a roundabout way, and, as I say, relatively in another commodity which represents the expenditure of an equal amount of social labor-time."

Engels.

"Exchange-Value and Price merely obtain as a relation between commodities, whereas true Economic Value exists in the commodity per se, as the ground principle of its exchangeability."

E. Belfort Bax: *Outspoken Essays*, p. 156.

"In the Hegelian scheme of things the only substantial reality is the unfolding life of the spirit. In the neo-Hegelian scheme, as embodied in the materialistic conception, this reality is translated into terms of the unfolding (material) life of man in society. In so far as the goods (commodities) are products of industry, they are the output of this unfolding life of man, a material residue embodying a given fraction of this forceful life-process.

In this life-process lies all substantial reality, and all finally valid relations of quantivalence between the products of this life-process must run in its terms.

This balance between goods in respect of their magnitude as output of human labor holds good indefeasibly, in point of the metaphysical reality of the life-process, whatever superficial (phenomenal) variations from this norm may occur in men's dealings with the goods under the stress of the strategy of self-interest. Such is the value of the goods in reality; they are equivalents of one another in the proportion in which they partake of this substantial quality, although their true ratio of equivalence may never come to an adequate expression in the transactions involved in the distribution of the goods. This real or true value of the goods is a fact of production, and holds true under all systems and methods of production, whereas the exchange value (the 'phenomenal form' of the real value) is a fact of distribution, and expresses the real value more or less adequately according as the scheme of distribution in force at the time conforms more or less closely to the equities given by production.

Under the capitalistic system the determination of exchange value is a matter of competitive profit-making, and exchange values therefore depart erratically and incontinently from the proportions that would legitimately be given them by the real values whose only expression they are."

Veblen: *The Place of Science*, etc., p. 420.

THERE are, no doubt, many who will dissent from the view here set out. We shall be told, by Mr. Louis B. Boudin, for instance, that "Marx knows of only two kinds of value: use-value and exchange-value, and whenever he says simply 'value' he means exchange-value." (*Theoretical System of Karl Marx*, p. 91)

Now, it is my impression that Marx was very careful in matters of this kind, nevertheless it is true that he sometimes does use the one term in place of the other, but only in cases where the term occurs before the distinction has been developed or where it is not necessary for the purposes of the argument. He, himself, points this out. For example:—

"When, at the beginning of this chapter, we said, in common parlance, that a commodity is both a use-value and an exchange value, we were, accurately speaking, wrong. A commodity is a use-value or object of utility,

and a value. It manifests itself as this two-fold thing, that it is, as soon as its value assumes an independent form—viz., the form exchange value. It never assumes this form when isolated, but only when placed in a value or exchange relation with another commodity of a different kind. When once we know this, such a mode of expression does no harm; it simply serves as an abbreviation."

Capital, Vol. 1, p. 70.

See also the foot-note on page 62 concerning another important distinction.

It will be just as well to see what Marx actually does say on the subject:—

"In the labor-process, therefore, man's activity, with the help of the instruments of labor, effects an alteration, designed from the commencement, in the material worked upon. The process disappears in the product; the latter is a use-value, nature's material adapted by a change of form to the wants of man. Labor has incorporated itself with its subject: the former is materialized, the latter transformed. That which in the laborer appeared as movement, now appears in the product as a fixed quality without motion. The blacksmith forges and the product is a forging."

Capital, Vol. 1, p. 201.

That is to say the strength, skill and dexterity of the blacksmith, constituting the use-value of his labor-power, being employed in a special way upon appropriate material results in the production of a specific use-value, a forging of some kind, say, a horse-shoe. Labor, considered in this aspect, is called by Marx "useful-labor" to indicate that it is homologous with use-value in commodities. It is qualitative in its nature and effects a qualitative change in the material on which it is exerted. All this, it will be seen, is matter-of-fact. The whole process can be observed from bar iron to completed horse-shoe and the duration of this labor can be accurately noted.

Now, if our blacksmith could possibly be thought of as an isolated individual apart from society, there would here be an end of the matter. But we have to consider him as a unit in a society based upon division of labor and exchange of commodities. In such a society and under such conditions

"the labor of the individual producer acquires socially a two-fold character. On the one hand, it must, as a definite useful kind of labor, satisfy a definite social want, and thus hold its place as part and parcel of the collective labor of all, as a branch of a social division of labor that has sprung up spontaneously. On the other hand, it can satisfy the manifold wants of the individual producer himself, only in so far as the mutual exchangeability of all kinds of useful private labor is an established social fact, and therefore the private useful labor of each producer ranks on an equality with that of all others. The equalization of the most different kinds of labor can be the result only of an abstraction from their inequalities, or of reducing them to their common denominator, viz., expenditure of human labor-power or human labor in the abstract. The two-fold social character of the labor of the individual appears to him, when reflected in his brain, only under those forms which are impressed upon that labor in everyday practice by the exchange of products. In this way, the character that his own labor possesses of being socially useful takes the form of the condition, that the product must be not only useful, but useful for others, and the social character that his particular labor has of being the equal of all other particular kinds of labor, takes the form that all the physically different articles that are the products of labor, have one common quality, viz., that of having value."

Capital, Vol. 1, p. 84.

Labor, regarded from this point of view wears an entirely different aspect. It is social, "abstract, universal and homogeneous." (*Critique* p. 33). It is social because, though expended by individuals such as our blacksmith it is expended by him in his capacity as a social unit contributing to a social want and receiving in return similar social services. It is universal and homogeneous because it is the use of the ordinary human energy put forth by the average human being when he engages in productive activity. It is abstract because it is considered without any regard to the special manner in which it is employ-

ed. In a word, it is simple, undifferentiated human labor regarded in its purely social aspect.

We may therefore consider the blacksmith, the weaver and the tailor, the butcher, the baker and the candlestick maker as individual producers each expending a special kind of useful labor or we may regard them as social units each contributing his share to the aggregate social production.

"On the one hand all labor is, speaking physiologically, an expenditure of human labor-power, and in its character of identical abstract human labor, it creates and forms the value of commodities. On the other hand, all labor is the expenditure of human labor-power in a special form and with a definite aim, and in this, its character of concrete useful labor, it produces use-values."

Capital, Vol. 1, p. 54.

It is this labor that forms the "substance of value." Commodities, considered as values, are "crystals of this social substance," "congelations of homogeneous human labor, of labor-power expended without regard to the mode of its expenditure." (p. 45)

Value is therefore to be thought of as a substance. Not, of course, a material substance but, nevertheless, an independent entity which "although invisible . . . has actual existence." (p. 107) in commodities.

Now, this "unsubstantial reality" (p. 45) is the substance, the "thing-in-itself," of which exchange-value is the phenomenal form, the visible manifestation. "The progress of our investigation," says Marx, "will show that exchange-value is the only form in which the value of commodities can manifest itself or be expressed." (p. 45)

But exchange value is not a thing, it is a ratio; a matter of proportion between quantities or magnitudes. The value creating substance must therefore be present in the commodities concerned in exchange and will, of course, be present in definite quantities.

Social labor is, as we have seen, undifferentiated in respect of its nature, consequently the only difference which can exist is a matter of the quantity of it incorporated in the commodity.

Social labor, then, counts quantitatively as distinguished from useful labor which counts qualitatively.

"The substance of value is nothing but expended labor-force" and "the production of value is nothing but the process of this expenditure."

Now, the expenditure of any force (intensity been given, as it is in this case, and being, in addition, a constant factor) can only be measured by the amount of time during which such expenditure lasts.

From these considerations we conclude that the amount of value incorporated in any given commodity will vary with the quantity of labor-time consumed in its production. It further follows that, if for any reason, such as the use of machinery, the productiveness of labor is increased, the amount of labor-time embodied in the given commodity will be less per unit.

It must not be supposed from the use of the phrase "measured by time" that the amount of social labor-time incorporated in any commodity can be actually known. This, of course, we cannot know, seeing that value can only find expression as exchange-value, that is, in the social relation between commodities.

But the production of a commodity is a social act looking to the satisfaction of a social want. Value is, therefore, a social fact. For this reason the only labor that can make itself effective, that can count towards the value of commodities, will only be that amount which is socially necessary for their production.

"The labor-time socially necessary is that required to produce an article under the normal conditions of production, and with the average degree of skill and intensity prevalent at the time." (*Capital* vol. I, p. 46.)

(Continued on page 8)

Economics for Workers

BY PETER T. LECKIE.

PRICES, FROM 1914 ONWARD

ALTHOUGH we had a great outcry concerning increased prices previous to 1914, it was very feeble compared with the outburst during the war period itself, when prices rose very rapidly. If we compare the commodity prices of different countries during this period we find a close relationship existing between currency inflation and increased prices. Mr. McKenna, ex-Chancellor of the British Exchequer, who is very high up in the banking and financial world, said on one occasion that the British currency had increased 125 per cent., and prices also had increased 125 per cent. He was addressing the shareholders of the London Joint City and Midland Bank.

Let us study the figures of the principal countries during the war, bearing in mind always that gold is a commodity.

The following table shows the 1914 currency in \$ millions; also that of 1919.

Countries	1914.			1919.		
	Gold.	Notes.	Per cent.	Gold.	Notes.	Per cent.
Austria	254	464	54.8	52	10,099	—5
Canada	94	162	58.2	123	300	40.9
France	806	1301	62.0	710	7,286	9.6
Germany	298	692	43.2	266	7,561	3.5
Great Britain	195	140	134.6	594	2,132	22.9
Italy	236	337	70.0	157	2,085	7.5
New Zealand	30	10	300.	39	36	112.0
United States	1023	1056	99.6	2107	4,015	52.3

The Allies had 17.1 per cent gold backing while the Central Powers had only 1.7 per cent gold to their notes.

In the thirty principal countries of the world, currency in face value increased from \$7,250,000,000 in 1914 to 50,000,000,000 in 1919. This was a 600 per cent increase, while the production of gold had only increased 40%.

We heard some labor men say that because of a labor government in New Zealand, prices did not increase to the same extent there. If we study the above currency table we will find that New Zealand's currency was on a gold basis and gold was at a premium on the world's market, therefore her currency was representing some tangible value, gold, the value of which lies in the labor embodied in its production.

The following illustrates some of the peak prices I have been able to trace.

Peak prices (from the 100 of 1914).
 Germany 700. Gold per cent to currency fallen from 43% 1914, to 3.5% 1919.
 Italy 675. Gold per cent to currency fallen from 70% 1914, to 7.5% 1919.
 France 575. Gold per cent to currency fallen from 62.0% 1914, to 9.6% in 1919.
 Britain 320. Gold per cent to currency fallen from 140% 1914, to 22.9% 1919.
 Canada 260. Gold per cent to currency fallen from 58% 1919, to 40.9% 1919.
 U. S. A. 275. Gold per cent to currency fallen from 99.6% 1914, to 52.3% 1919.

Here are two tables to make on large charts for analysis before the class. The first shows prices rising highest in those countries where inflation of the currency has been greatest.

The second goes a long way to explain the various differences of the exchange rates between the countries, when we keep in view gold as a commodity which is used as a basis to balance international debts.

The British pound was worth double the number in French francs and could realize still more Italian currency than previous to the war. The same pound had fallen when realized in American or Canadian dollars. The Canadian dollar had fallen alongside the American. This variation has quite a close relationship to the percentage of gold behind the currency which the above table shows.

Therefore the great increase in prices during the war was mainly a result of the inflation of the various currencies, making a demand on commodities which, although being increased with greater efficiency could not keep pace with inflation. This inflation caused larger savings expressed in dollars, increased the money of account in the banks, an increased purchasing power by the bank cheques all adding to the power of inflation to increase prices.

Henry Drayton, in his budget speech in the Canadian House of Parliament, pointed out that the Canadian Currency had increased 108 per cent, while Britain had increased hers 207 per cent, and the U. S. A. 70 per cent from 30th June 1914 to 30th June 1919. The increase in deposits in Canada was 87 per cent. Britain's 115 per cent. U. S. A. 80 per cent. With the end of the war, business collapsed

with the elimination of the war market. Factories shut down and there being no demand, prices fell.

With falling prices, incendiary fires followed, to obtain insurance on the goods stocked before prices fell too far. We had also an increase in business failures.

W. Sandford Evans' Statistical Service gave the following report, up to Nov. 11th 1921

"The farmers delivered this year, 1921, 132,022,412 bushels for 127,000,000 dollars, while they received in 1920 \$234,657,775 dollars for only 109,000,000 bushels."

Almost 24,000,000 bushels more sold for \$107,659,775 dollars less than the previous year.

Farmers were burning grain for fuel because it was cheaper than buying coal. Then we saw another contradiction of capitalism. The more money wages can buy, the worse the worker is, because of his being unemployed as a result of stagnation in business caused by falling prices. The falling prices have helped along the deflation of the currency; the further deflation continues the harder will it be for countries to meet their debts, because debts contracted when commodities sold at high prices, and paid back during fallen prices, means a greater return payment. This can only be obtained by a greater exploitation of labor, so the prospects of labor are anything but rosy if they keep on haggling over wages alone.

Our politicians being ignorant of the economic laws at work in society, are in a terrible plight to bring things back to what they call "normal." No matter which way they turn they find obstruction.

Some have advocated immediate currency deflation, but, if they forced matters, prices would fall so fast that business conditions would be rendered chaotic. Some said "make Germany pay," but the more Germany pays the more unemployment appears in the allied countries, as witness the effect of reparations in ships and coal on Great Britain's industries; the contradictions in capitalism are so sharply drawn that the apparent settlement of one problem for our masters simply means the appearance promptly of another.

I think I have given enough food for thought on the subject of Prices to arouse discussion in any economic class.

Next Lesson: PROFIT.

The Clarion Mail Bag

BY SID EARP

A glance through the letters received during the past month shows that a steady interest is being maintained in the work of the Party and its official journal.

Writing from St. John, N. B., Comrade Goudie sends a word of cheer and a sub, with a hint of more to be expected. From Ottawa comes a similar message and two subs. A comrade in Port Arthur sends a pithy note: "Enclosed find one dollar for the Clarion; it's all right." Just what we thought.

From Brandon, Man. come two renewals, also an enquiry from St. James. Com. Robertson of Three Hills, Alta., sends a dollar sub and comments on the poor prospects for the farmer.

Writing from Edmonton, Com. Smith asks for some pamphlets and Clarion renewal to the end of the year. From Edmonton and Glenbrea, Sask., also come renewals of subs.

G. Lamont sends a few lines asking for sample copies and enclosing two subs. Walter Ridout from Prince Rupert affects facetious wonderment at things in general and sends eight dollars in cash on Local account.

From 59 Mile House, Clinton, B. C., Com. Robson writes, "Find enclosed two bones; 1 for Clarion and the other for Maintenance Fund." Bones is good. J. M. Brown, Bonanza Y. T. does the same thing in more classical language. To make three of a kind comes a similar request from Ben Dworkin, Hanna, Alta.

Com. Redfern, Moose Jaw, asks for "Causes of Belief in God" "Pritchard's Address to the Jury." and renews his sub to the Clarion.

John A. Mitchell writes from Pakan, Alta., enclosing one dollar sub.

Com. R. Brown is in Sicamous, he sends for "Economic Determinism," and wants his sub to the Clarion renewed. Asks to be remembered to W. A. Pritchard.

Sydney Rose, Winnipeg writes a cheery note and encloses four dollars for the Clarion. John A. Beckman sends kind regards to Vancouver comrades and encloses two dollars for the Clarion. He is in Meeting Creek, Alta. B. E. Polinkos writes from Whitley, Alta., asking for a copy of "Capitalist Production," and renewal of his Clarion sub. Thos. Hanwell

writes from Brandon, Man. asking for renewal.

Com. Clarkson, Sandon, B. C. gives new address and sends one dollar to Maintenance Fund. A. E. Cotton, Topaz Harbor sends for renewal. F. Varney, Victoria does likewise. E. Simpson, Victoria, sends greetings and \$3 for sub. renewals, J. Brown, Cumberland, B. C., writes for copies of "Evolution of the Idea of God," and "Evolution Social and Organic." Roy Reid changes his address to Rimbey, Alta. William Braes writes cheerfully from Cumberland and encloses \$5 for subs. An article for the Clarion from him would be welcome. A renewal of his sub comes from H. Edwards, Oromocto, N. B.

From San Francisco come letters from Wm. Camfield, F. Cassidy, J. Knight and Chas. Pakerman, containing greetings to Vancouver comrades and subs to the Clarion.

Letters also come from Los Angeles and Venice, California, the latter from Com. J. J. MacDonald. Sam Clements sends change of address and best wishes from Susanville, California.

E. Staples writes a long letter from Sydney, Australia, full of interest, and expressing regret that the Clarion is not more widely read in Australia as the need for a sound exposition of Marxian economics is everywhere apparent. He will be returning to Auckland, New Zealand, in the near future. An enquiry for the Clarion also comes from Will

(Continued on page 8)

The Will of the People

SHORTLY, we shall be called upon to decide the political policies to be adopted in these trying times by "our" country*. The issues and slogans are now being prepared, and, we have no doubt, many wonderful things will be promised, many agreeable changes predicted, with the advent of a new government, "safely and sanely" elected by the democratic will of constitutional usage. Of course! We are a free and a great people, having things done in this, "our" country, just as we, "the enlightened people," desire them. Not at all like those unfortunate "Bolsheviks," under the dictation of a fanatic clique of extremists, drunk with power, who have twice ruined Russia—being the occasion of a blockade which denied the means of production to those sweet people; and the direct cause of this present famine. O, "Bolshies," how shall we give you an accounting?

Some of us proud British born possess the prerogative of suffrage. But the possession of a privilege carries with it the advantages of its powers and benefits. If we use the former at all, the profit of the latter must surely accrue to us. In these circumstances therefore, the present social condition of society must be the "will" of society. Is that so? If so, why is society restless and discontented, riotous and unruly? Why does it manifest such aversion to its own "order?" Why this continual need for the appearance of change? Why so many laws enacted contrary to majority interests? If the "people" are responsible, why are they ignorant of their own enactments? And their fateful consequences to themselves? It will not do to say it is "original sin." That is the antithesis of the premise—the intelligent majority. And it does not explain how the derivable advantage is **invariably** on the upper side. Nor is the "will of God" any better. That is but another "Bolshevik" usurpation of the "people's" authority. For, it surely cannot be contended that since we are an enlightened and democratic people we cannot control our own social organization. Especially when human control is everywhere evident.

Yet, nevertheless, the "will" of God is the cause—albeit it is neither the "God of Bethel," nor any other human abstraction, but the omnipotent "god of the machine." We cast a ballot, it is true, and change the name of the government. Which signifies nothing. Because we were not informed enough to elect and vote for our own nominees.

One or other section of the capitalist class always nominates the members-elect. They are selected either directly from the ruling class itself, or from its pendant following of capitalist ideation. Individually they have, therefore, the same class viewpoint—and interest—private property. The "class" provides its nominees with a "platform" and a "watchword," with propaganda and campaign necessities. The former is the transient economic interest, and the key and motive of its monetary "philanthropies" and hurrying activities; the latter is the veil and orange blossom with which that interest is bedecked and jewelled, so that we may be enticed into matrimony with the painted conscript. For by that union is the privilege of property guaranteed. The ruling class, through personal initiative, private influence, and publicity wailing, puts forth every effort to get its representative elected. For this suddenly important individual is, in reality, their class representative—the political expression of their economic interest, the embodiment of their sovereignty of power.

The ruling class—as a whole—possess all the means of education, all avenues of information and knowledge, all channels of publicity and research and to the fullest of its ability—which, in this direction is of a high order—it uses those means to distort the fact, to suppress the truth, to veil the issues of reality, in order to preserve intact its sacred right

of property. To be sure, between the capitalist factions there is considerable "muckraking" continually going on (which becomes very marked during elections, for the savor of plunder is in their nostrils) but they contrive that nothing inimical to their common capitalist property ever sees the light of day. Not if any means can obliterate it. They see, of course, that their greedy quarreling over the spoil draws unwelcome attention to their methods, and its fruits, but it is the fatal necessity of capital to educate its support, both theoretically and practically, and for it (capital) education becomes the "snare of the fowler."

On the other hand, through the blindness and apathy of the slave class itself—a product, of course, of capitalist evolution—through the general condition of adversity and the constant necessities of livelihood, the labor press is so circumscribed and narrow orbited, its influence (because of its poverty) so negligible, and local and working class ideation and effort so awry and disjointed, that no efficient organization can be put against its opposing propagandist to clothe and dignify the new ethic of the rising social power with visible authority. Or, to put it better, to gather the disjointed efforts and vague aspirations of social production into the coordinated invincibility of Socialist society. For, the power of the capitalist class lies in its control of the forces of the state, i.e., its authority is the state itself. A fact which proclaims the futility of all reform within the sphere of capitalist activity, and which, in due time, under the increasing pressure of economic circumstances must compel us for our emancipation, to the assumption of State authority. Our changeable times are hastening on that necessity to the ripest maturity, and the forward pressing social forces cannot be much longer restrained in the seething abyss of effete capitalism.

Hence it comes that our minds take on the hue of our capitalist environment. So we are confused with the shifty, kaleidoscope of capitalist property right. So we eagerly run after the fleeting rush-lights of transient self-interest. So the social traditions of a vanished past, bind us to the individualist present. So the partial equality of a rising era veils our social evolution, and sacrifices us on the developed antagonisms of class law and to the harried slaves of today presents, as a Utopian dream-world, the kindling aspirations, the fore-glimpsed grandeur, the achieved fraternity that "trails a cloud of glory" on the certainty of the Socialist humanity of tomorrow.

The working class of today has no identity of interest with any other section of society. It possesses neither "right" nor "equality," and on its economic inequality its political subservience hinges, and its social disadvantages automatically follow. The wage slave is allowed to vote. Yes. But he cannot vote in his own interest. Because he does not possess the data necessary to form a true judgment. Because the knowledge necessary to sift the issue—the one issue—at stake is suppressed. Because the trained powers to detect and expose the subtlety of treachery around him is denied to him. And (because of those things in turn) he lacks the principle of public interest wherewith to determine public freedom. That is why all of us burn "strange fire" on the altars of ancient gods.

For those reasons the "popular" will is an illusion. In political democracy, the representation of all interests is an impossibility, because constitutional government signifies the law of the ruling class, symbolizes the dominance of the modern capitalist class and its exploitation of wage-labor. The government is the council board of that class, and it is almost entirely composed of class members with class philosophy, whose business—and interest—it is to protect class privilege. No other will be nominated and elected to that position. And whatever stray members from the slave class succeed to that "honor" are either revisionists (or worse), or are

so hopelessly outnumbered as to be negligible.

Like everything else, parliament is the result of a long, evolutionary process. It has its roots deep in unfamiliar and forgotten ages. It was the council of tribal communities—a council of equals. It became the "moot" of the communal middle ages, and developed into the representation of the third estate—the commoners, i.e., the rising merchant and trading classes of the early capitalist period. And now, with the completed development of capitalist society, it is no more than a name. It lives on the prestige of its ancient traditions. It is stripped of all real authority: it has been shorn of its privileges; its functions have passed into the higher control of the modern cabinet, and its powers are but the mockery of "sanctioning" what the cabinet decrees. Because, just as the tribal commune was more and more invaded, and dominated by the flourishing process of exchange, and grew gradually into chattel slavery, so the council of equals lost its original character of equality and became obsolete. Just as the accumulating merchant of the middle ages broke up the natural economy of the feudal fiefs, so the communal village moot lost its pristine nature and significance. And just as the nation of manufacturers and traders has progressed into the all-absorbing commercial empire, so the young parliament of the commoners has disappeared in the overshadowing might of the Imperial Cabinet. That is why the "will of the people" is but an empty name, the shadow of a substance, distant by thousands of years.

Political "representation" is economic interest. Nothing more. And so long as it remains in existence, so must slavery endure. For it is but the expression of that slavery. Slavery is exploitation, and today, exploitation is accomplished through wages. Therefore, the one interest of the slave class is the abolition of the wages system, that is to say, of capitalist society. And that abolition must be entirely effected by ourselves, the new developed medium of social progress. Master class and slave class interests are diametrically opposite, and no wise scheme or glamoring reform can ever abrogate their opposition. There can be only common interest when there is a common class, i.e., when there is Socialist society. Then with economic freedom, we shall be equals, with the privileges of equals—with the guarantee of everything that this highest of human societies can encompass and achieve. There is no other issue. R.

IF?

Elizabeth Wordsworth once wrote a rhyme containing the following lines:

"If all good people were clever,
And all clever people were good,
The world would be nicer than ever
We thought it possibly could."

Which is very true. Our wise forefathers, ere they were gathered to the worms, invented a saying to the effect, "If the sky would only fall we could catch larks." Very vulgar people have been heard to assert that if our aunts had had whiskers they would have been our uncles. There is something strikingly similar in the attributes of God Almighty and those who preface their remarks with that funny little word "if." With both "all things are possible," and with both unemployment and ineffectuality seem to be chronic diseases. Take a fond lingering look at this from last week's "Socialist":

"If every munition worker, every metal worker, every wood worker, every transport worker, etc., organized for the purpose of one Industrial Union on a programme to expropriate the small coterie of magnates and bankers who hold the means of production and distribution, in a disciplined manner, it could be done quite peaceably. You could keep the capitalist class from getting guns, aeroplanes, also the transport workers could keep their police and soldiers from shifting. There would be no fear then of shooting peaceful, sleeping miners or their babes and wives. You could put an end to hooligans and general anarchy by your organized industrial power. That is the meaning of 'revolution.'"

That damned "if." —"Glasgow Worker."

* Reprinted from Western Clarion No. 853 (October 15, 1921). See Secretarial Notes in the present issue.

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-increasing 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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CONCERNING VALUE.

(Continued from page 5.)

"... labor is represented by the value of its product and labor-time by the magnitude of that value." (Capital, vol. I. p. 92)

"We see then that that which determines the magnitude of the value of any article is the amount of labor socially-necessary, or the labor-time socially necessary for its production." (Capital vol. I. p. 46.)

"The value of a commodity, therefore, varies directly as the quantity, and inversely as the productiveness, of the labor incorporated in it." (Capital vol. I. p. 47.)

"Every commodity can realize its value only in the process of circulation, and whether it realises its value, and to what extent it does so, depends on the prevailing market conditions." (Capital vol. III. p. 749)

"... exchange value is the only form in which the value of commodities can manifest itself or be expressed." (Capital vol. I. p. 45.)

From all of which it would appear that exchange-value is simply another name for price. If it cannot be identified with market-price it is certainly the same as what is sometimes known as "normal" price. Normal price we may roughly define as being the average of market prices taken over a long period. In this case exchange value would tend to coincide with the price of production. In any case exchange-value and price are practically identical and I have already given half-a-dozen reasons for a divergence between value and price. In addition, there are several more which, however, may be more appropriately discussed under the heading of "Price."

It will, perhaps, be well to add a few words concerning the phrase "socially necessary labor."

This phrase is somewhat ambiguous and may be used in a sense much more comprehensive than that in which it is used in connection with the theory of value.

(1) It may mean the average labor time socially necessary for producing a certain commodity at any given time.

(2) It may mean the social labor-time necessary to produce the commodity if it were produced according to the general average of social efficiency in production.

(3) It may mean "that quantity of labor-time which is necessary for the production of the socially required total quantity of commodities of any kind on the market under the existing average conditions of social production." (Capital, vol. III. p. 751)

In the first case the "socially necessary labor-time" corresponds to the value of the commodity; in the second case to the price of production and in the third case to the price.

It is, however, clear that the amount of labor socially necessary to produce a certain article under given conditions is a very different matter from the amount of labor socially necessary to produce the total amount of any given commodity represented by the entire solvent demand for it in the market.

Readers (I suppose there are people who read this stuff) may look up this matter in Capital vol. I. p. 120 and in vol. III pages 221 to 226 and also on p. 745.

THE CLARION MAIL BAG.

(Continued from page 6)

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