Prostitution in Soviet Russia.

Workers' Dreadnought

FOR INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM.

Founded and Edited by SYLVIA PANKHURST

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UNREST IN ENGLAND.

The unemployed demonstrators, arrested in connection with the Sheffield unemployed demonstration on August 12th, were again brought up in Sheffield Police Court on August 19th.

Frank Mauser, a working man who had nothing to do with the demonstration, was struck by a police baton, and had to be treated in hospital. He was bound over to keep the peace for twelve months. The Chairman of the Bench said he had been "very foolish in going near the place at all."

William Littlewood, aged 25, Fred Cartledge, aged 23, and J. W. Booth, aged 22, were charged with assaulting a policeman with a pick shaft. They denied the charge, but were found guilty, and Littlewood was sentenced to three months' imprisonment, the others to two months' each.

The Right to Live.

Booth was unemployed and received 3/- a day unemployment pay; he said he was demonstrating to help the single men whose benefit had stopped. He was told he had no grievance. He said he went for his rights.

"What rights?" he was asked. He replied: "The right to live!"

Sam Booth, a married man with four children, had been unemployed for fourteen weeks; he got 35/- a week out-of-work pay and beside, 1/4 in money and 1/4 in kind. His total income was £2 4s. 6d.; he was demonstrating for a living wage: his family could not live on what he got.

R. Sanderson and A. Handcock, two lads of 21, were sentenced, the first to 14 days' imprisonment, the second to pay a fine of 40/-. They denied the charge, but who can tell who throws things in a riot?

Made to Pay for a False Charge.

Alfred Kelly, aged 36, a labourer, was charged with throwing part of a wood sett from the road at a policeman. He denied the charge and got four months' hard labour.

W. Biggin, aged 22, was charged with assaulting a policeman. He said he was going into the Grand Theatre, when a policeman seized him and flung him in the roadway. Biggin had two independent witnesses that he had done nothing, so he was merely bound over in £5 to keep the peace for twelve months, and made to pay the cost of prosecuting him.

B. Whittaker a labourer aged 39, a married man with four children, and in very poor health, was fined £5. The policeman's story was that, so valiantly, he had just seized the pole of the banner the unemployed were carrying, to snatch it from them, when someone struck him on the back of the head. He "immediately turned and knocked the man down," a man, the man he thought had struck him. The unarmed man attempted to get up to strike him "again" (was it *again*?), so the brave constable drew his truncheon and struck him a blow that knocked him down again. Whittaker said that after he had been twice knocked down: "I lost control of myself and hit back."

Frederick Fletcher was sentenced to four months' imprisonment. It was alleged he threw a missile at a policeman which knocked his helmet off.

George Arthur Gibson was charged with causing disaffection amongst the members of the police force.

From the crowd in Fitzalan Square, it was said he called on the police: "Throw down your batons, you policemen; you fought with us in France; why help the capitalists?" and pointed to the war-ribbons on the policemen's tunics.

L. TROTSKY.
—From the Liberator.

So dangerous a man was arrested by the mounted police who, as the prosecution declared in Court, pressed their horses through the crowd to do this important duty. A few feet were trampled on, a few legs were kicked by the horses' hoofs, no doubt, but that stream of unauthorised words was checked, the delicate mechanism of the policeman's brain was protected from disturbing currents.

Although Gibson is a member of the Communist Party, his defending counsel stood forward as an upholder of "Law and Order." He was horrified at the notion of undermining the loyalty of the police, declaring that he "gave place to no one in admiration of the Sheffield Police Force, of its leadership, of its efficiency, of its loyalty," [loyalty to what, O comrades?]; to suggest that to tell the police to throw down their batons was likely to cause disaffection was "a grave reflection on their loyalty" and "preposterous."

We urge, Comrades, that the propaganda value of the fighting and suffering of the workers, class-conscious or non-class-conscious, should not be undermined by such absurd speeches by lawyers hired to defend.

The Bench was pleased by Gibson's solicitor's eulogy of the police force, but said that Gibson must take his trial at the Assizes.

C. J. Core, a man of 60 who could not read (Oh, merrie England!) was arrested for throwing stones: he had a pocket full of them in case the police should attack, he said.

£5 for Falling Down.

Chris Smedley was so negligent as to fall down, and, in falling, he obstructed the police. The magistrates concluded "there was an obstruction, voluntary or involuntary"; so they fined Smedey £5.

Leonard Thompson was pushed back by the police; he was hurrying to see his father, dangerously ill at Attercliffe. When stopped, he said: "Damn the police," and was imprisoned for 24 hours.

THE SHEFFIELD RIOTS

Jesse Martin, seeing the crowd charged by mounted police, cried: "Be human"; a horse swerved against him; he caught the rein. He was arrested and fined £5.

A young David, a lad of fifteen was fined £5 for throwing a broom head at a mounted policeman.

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SPICE.

The *Daily Herald* considers it an evidence of Mrs. Besant's "wisdom" that an under-secretary of the capitalist government has paid a tribute to her ideas on government.

From the Communist standpoint such evidence tends in the opposite direction.

* * *

Robert Williams, in Vienna, said he had been decorated in Moscow for services to the Russian Revolution: then he warned the workers of Western Europe against copying Bolshevik tactics.

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FRANK PENMAN IN LONDON.

I.

Frank Penman, a young fellow from the North, came up to London with many ambitions; one of which was to enter the Revolutionary movement.

Dick Barbour, who had gone to London a few years earlier, had already made Frank a member of the International Socialist Club; that is to say, he had proposed him as a member and got him seconded by a friend, and Penman had sent along his half-crown and received a membership card. So, on his first Saturday evening in London, he prepared, with a good deal of suppressed excitement, to visit the International Socialist Club and to take the plunge into the Red vortex.

His landlady, Mrs. Rose, after an acquaintance of three days, had apparently conceived a high opinion of his character and family connections, which made him feel, with sincere humility, that she was a very good woman and that he was in honour bound to take particular care not to forfeit a particle of her regard.

Timidly and gravely he told her, when she brought up his tea, that he was going to visit friends on the other side of London, and that he would be obliged to return late.

It was a pity Dick Barbour had gone home for his holidays the very day Penman arrived in London; at least, Penman had told himself that, but really he was not sorry: he was, indeed, rather glad to be going to the International Socialist Club, for the first time, alone. Dick had got rather indolent of late; he talked seldom about the movement, and when he did, it was always in a half-mocking strain. He did not seem to care for anything but cards and beer now, and last time he came home, Penman had felt rather as though he did not want to have anything to do with him. Barbour seemed to know all the people in the movement; people who were only great names to Penman, he spoke of them all familiarly and with a sort of contempt, and that was one of the reasons why Frank kept away from him: he did not want to hear the sort of things Dick Barbour said; they made the movement seem feeble and worthless.

So Penman was glad to be going alone. He knew the way; he had made Dick explain it to him. So there was no need to ask anyone. He walked up East Road rather quickly, impatient to reach his goal. He saw the glare of the picture palace and the more subdued light issuing from the nearer red-brick doorway next to it. Yes! that was it; just as Dick had explained when he had asked him if there was any sign up that he could not fail to miss if he went there in the dark—for he had always meant to go: it was ever so long since he had made up his mind to go to London.

There was the literature shop, with the papers and pamphlets in the window. He would have a good look round sometime, but not to-night; to-night he would spend all his time in the Club, with the Reds, going through the important process of becoming one of them.

As he stepped over the threshold his spirits somehow fell. He did not know that he had imagined what the interior would be like; he would have said he had not, if anybody had asked him; nevertheless, his mind had been keyed up to a blaze of scarlet, with big, striking posters and masses of literature and announcements. Instead, the walls of the entrance passage were quite bare; only one faded bill hung up: a *Daily Herald* Rooster and May Day Programme—May Day, and this was August! Beside the *Daily Herald* was a Right Wing Labour paper, not really a Socialist paper at all, he thought; he could not understand it. But there was not time yet for this to make more than a quite superficial impression on his mind; he was pressing forward, pushing what was unpleasant from him, as, with pulses beating a little fast, he went on into the Club within.

Now, indeed, his spirits fell down to zero and stayed there, for this was by no means what he had come to see. Penman was an artist: his ideals rose to his mind in pictures, and he shrank from sordid and ugly things. What he saw was a large, rather low room, its walls covered with a dirty and very dark crimson wall paper and a few old and bad portrait prints grown yellow with age, their glass dusty and fly-blown. A few pamphlets in a cupboard with glass doors hardly attracted attention on the left-hand side, but on the right was a large bar, at which a crowd of men stood drinking beer. In front were a number of tables at which men and women sat drinking and playing cards. The place was dingy and soiled and poorly lighted.

Penman was repelled, and had the stunned, painful feeling in his mind that came to him in the slums of Ancoats and Angel Meadow, up there in the North. He choked down his disappointment: this was a proletarian movement; too poor to pay for beautiful things: a revolutionary movement, too intent on destroying the system, to beautify the life of to-day; things must be unbearable before the masses would muster force to change it; it would be reformist to demand attention to appearances in the midst of the revolutionary struggle.

But it was not the dingy walls that were distressing Penman; it was the dull, pot-house atmosphere, and the heavy look of inertia in the people, the glassy, half drunken look in some of their eyes. He wandered round, trying not to think.

Past the bar, to the right, were glass-panelled doors; he opened them and looked into a rather large hall with polished floor and chairs crowded together as though pushed away after a meeting. A dozen lads and girls were larking about there, "not doing anything special," he heard them tell an inquirer, and a man with very little knowledge of the instrument was strumming on the piano. Upstairs he found a billiard room with four tables, where some young men were playing in a leisurely, dawdling sort of way, and others looking on. He listened a while to their conversation, but it was all about the game.

Then he went down to the big club-room and sat at one of the tables: a young girl with a powdered face and eyes blackened, sat by him and brushed his cheek with the feathers that hung like a screen from the brim of her hat, and through which she peered with smiling, half-shut eyes with puckered corners. Penman got up and moved to another table.

He listened to the snatches of conversation that drifted across the room to him from every direction, but he heard nothing about the movement, nothing that interested him. Presently he saw coming in, an elderly woman dressed in black, with a pale, dark face, drawn and tired. There was something soothing and motherly about her that made his eyes like to rest on her, and she had an expression of sorrow overcome, that lifted him a little from the dreary pessimism into which he had sunk. Her companion was a younger woman in blue; at first he hardly noticed her: then she seemed to grow upon him. At first he thought she was quite young, like himself, then he was not quite sure. As she came nearer, he saw she was older, but he could not make up his mind about her age. The two women went to the bar and bought bread and butter and coffee. He noticed that the elder woman was specially kind and helpful to the younger, and insisted upon paying, for both though it was the younger who decided what they would have. A dark girl in her early twenties joined the two women, and she seemed particularly attentive to the woman in blue, and wanted to take from her everything she was carrying. The three went together to a table and two other young women came there to sit with them.

They formed an animated group and all asked the woman in blue, with solicitude, how she was; she just laughed and said she was hungry, and went on eating her bread and butter, but she made a wry face over the coffee. The elder woman said the coffee was nasty, and pushed it away.

They were talking continuously about the movement and whether the movement was worth while. The girl who was the youngest member of the party said the members of the Club would not work; they only cared to play cards; they would not go to the meetings to sell papers and pamphlets. Literature selling, she thought, was the most important work for the movement, but they would not do it; they were no good; they were "a rotten lot." She had almost given up trying herself; one got so little encouragement.

The woman in blue began, smilingly, to chide her for her back-sliding, and in a coaxing way urged her to begin again.

A young woman in pink broke into the conversation:

"I think one is very keen when one is quite young, and then one gets tired; perhaps one comes back to it and is keener still, after a few years, when experience makes you—when life brings you up against things."

"Yes, you feel it more deeply then," said the woman in blue; "but when is your second period going to begin?"

"Oh, I'm just as keen as ever I was; only it's so hard; they're a rotten lot to work with, they are, really!"

A small, spare man joined them: "I didn't know you could get beer in here, or I wouldn't have gone outside," he said.

"Well, go on, have another," said the girl in pink.

"Is that all right?" asked the man.

"Yes, if a member pays for you," said the woman in blue. "I'll get it for you."

"No, don't let her get it. I don't want you to get it," said the elderly woman. "You get it for him, please," she turned to the stout girl.

The girl fetched the beer, and the man paid her what she had paid for it.

"I don't see why they should charge more in a Socialist Club than they would outside," he said. "It's generally cheaper in a workingman's club than in the pub, but here it's dearer and it's not half so good as they've got down the road."

"Oh, that's like everything here," the girl in pink chimed in simultaneously.

Another young woman came up and shook hands with the group:

"Isn't this an awful place?" she said. "Nothing but cards and beer. You can't get anything work out of them."

"And you?" asked the woman in blue, in her teasing, coaxing way: "Couldn't you come into the office and help us sometimes in the afternoons?"

"I never get a chance now; he comes in to his dinner and tea; it doesn't leave me any time for anything. Men expect their meals, you know; it's always: 'Is my tea ready?'"

"And no children to tie you. It doesn't sound like fighting the Revolution, does it?" asked the woman in blue, half sad, half smiling. "Why don't you ask him to meet you at the office?"

"Oh, we're not courting any longer! Well, I shall have to see what I can do."

The group began talking about the Left Wing. Penman could only catch part of what they said, for they were talking very fast and sometimes all together. A French girl was telling them that she had just come back from Paris, and that she had attended great meetings, held there by a new non-Parliamentary Left Wing Communist Party.

Someone said: "Oh, they are bitterly opposed to us, especially in London; they can't stand the Left Wing."

"They tried to stop me selling the *Dreadnought* at their meetings in Whitechapel."

"We worked up that Osborne Street pitch for years. It was our pitch."

"Yes, but they tried to stop me selling the paper. It was the Stepney branch of the Party."

"He's from Stepney? What are you, one of those Right Wingers?"

"No, I'm a Left Winger in a Right Wing branch: I'm coerced against my principles by the majority."

"A strange position for a Revolutionary."

A fair-haired young man with an earnest face broke in hotly:

"The Left Wing is unpractical; it does not understand that we must attract the masses."

"Does the Right Wing attract the masses?"

"I admit we don't; but how are we to do it, except by going into the Labour Party and taking part in the elections. You must agree we are

Continued on page 6.

THE GRIEF AND GLORY OF RUSSIA.

By HENRY SARA

At Tashkent I met Jacob Peters, the man whom the capitalist press love to describe as "Peter the Painter," the Anarchist. He looked his 34 years, but despite his keenness, like most Commissaries, he bore traces of the strain of the worry and the work involved in steering a people through a revolutionary period. I was indebted to him for a very interesting report, some of which I may quote here:

The population was a mixed one of 8,000,000, of which 600,000 were Russians. At one period, the Communist Party had something like 50,000 members in this part of Asia, but at the time of our visit, the membership was 25,000. When the call was made for volunteers for the Polish front, 30 per cent. left the Party. In September last, they held their Fourth Congress; although they were cut off in 1918 from Orenburg, etc., they had managed to withstand trials. Three papers were being published. Schools had been established for peasants and natives, and were very successful during the last six months. As the Executive Committee of the Soviets, there are more natives than Russians. The irrigation is very bad. About one million acres are not cultivated. Where formerly 10,000,000 poods of cotton were raised, there are now only 1,500,000. There are something like 2,500,000 handicraft workers. The factories mostly wanted were: cement, textile, and leather.

There were good rivers for electrical production in the future.

The Introduction of Factory Life to a Primitive People.

The factory system created a good impression among the natives and tended to the better treatment of women.

They drink Tea while Women work.

Men do not work like women under old, primitive conditions. The men sit and drink "tchay," whilst the women do heavy labour.

Communists try to equalise the task.

The Communists are equalising the daily task, always to the liking of the male native.

Women Dis-veil.

Kirgiz women do not wear a veil; but Surd women are compelled by their husbands to cover the'r faces with a large piece of material similar to crepe. As the Surd women gradually come to comprehend Communism, so they dis-veil—very often much to the disgust of the husband. But before long there is no doubt that the veil will be thrown into the pile of the other relics of oppression.

The Revolt of Semrekayar.

The brief story of Semrekeyar is that in 1916 the Tsar tried to conscript the natives, but they revolted; 1,000,000 were killed and a number escaped to China. The Russians took the land the Kirgiz left. During, and after, the Revolution, the Kirgiz tried to get back the land; but as the Russian colonists were well armed, it was found impossible to do so except by force; so the Soviet had to deal with this problem, consequently it was not liked by these colonists, and they revolted. The revolt was suppressed and the disaffected Russians were sent back to Russia; the Soviet then called a Conference of Kirgiz, who formed a Union and became favourable to the Soviets.

The Fergana Bandits.

In Fergana the great trouble was, the "Bashmarshee," or bandits, formed small troops, to deal with which effectively, much strategy was needed. Originally a national movement of large proportions against the Czar until 1918, it has dwindled down until only a few act as bandits, looting the farms and villages of the peasants. Troops of Russians were sent to cope with the bandits, but owing to their skill in taking to the mountains, and the assistance of the counter-revolutionaries (some of the old police went over to the "Bashmarshee"), a native force was raised, and a number of propagandists were trained to deal effectively with the problem.

A Women's Meeting in Tashkent.

The Coleseum Theatre in Tashkent was packed several times whilst I was there, and one of the meetings was for women only. Five thousand of them gathered under the large dome, with the stage draped with beautiful revolutionary banners. A portrait of Karl Marx, resting on an easel, surrounded by laurel wreaths, gave a setting such as would make a B.E.U. speaker on "Nationalisation of Women in Russia" wish that he had never been born. Surd women, without their veils, sat with the woman comrade in the Chair. Their presence told, better than words, of the work done by the Communists on behalf of women's emancipation.

A Red Army Meeting.

In this theatre also, I saw 5,000 of the Red Army gathered, and I saw mixed audiences on other occasions. At all these great gatherings, the enthusiasm was overpowering, and the one thing that mattered—the International.

Altering the Calendar.

The native calendar was to be altered we were told, and the New Year was to begin on the day the Third International was founded.

A large block of buildings was open as an Exhibition of Industry, and all kinds of products, tools, etc., were grouped, cased, or fixed for inspection; it was called the House of the Soviets. One of the exhibits was particularly interesting, being partitioned off from the main affair. Above the entrance was depicted a fearful-looking creature representing the Money God; and inside, the walls were covered with cartoons and illustrations telling the horrors that Money involves. A large case contained, from all countries, something towards an international assortment, for instruction in the science of numismatics. Large books were accessible, which contained in facsimile, notes and paper money of all possible sorts. It was a most wonderful exhibition in itself, besides being a most telling piece of propaganda against Money.

In a large Hall connected with the House of the Soviets was erected a fair-sized stage, and a delightful stringed orchestra performed at intervals. In this Hall, a trial took place during our stay, and I sat through a very large part of it with deep interest. The case was a charge against seventeen persons who were responsible for the care of men of the Red Army who had been wounded and sent into hospital. Witnesses were called who testified to the ill-treatment of these helpless men. On the stage sat the three tribunal officers; on each side a stand was erected; and mid-way sat the prisoners, who were laughing and chatting together, or else reading newspapers, and most of them were smoking cigarettes. The prisoners had their advocates—two very smug-looking gentlemen who occupied one of the stands—and on behalf of the Red Army, Jacob Peters occupied the other. The hall was packed with soldiers and civilians, and the proceedings were followed with deep concern. The decision arrived at met with approval, and it was obvious that the Red Army soldiers, after they have been battered and shattered in the defence of the Soviet Republic are not going to be treated like so much cattle and left to the mercy of anti-Communists.

In Tashkent is the Lenin Military School, which, although given over to the Red Army, is an educational institution in reality. It has a fine library, its walls are adorned with revolutionary mottoes, and, instead of pictures of Generals and war-mongers, pictures of the soul-stirring men, the mind-builders of the Russian workers, are given chief prominence. Paintings of great authors, such as Pouskin, Tourgenieff, and even Leo Tolstoy, were displayed. A picture of Tolstoy in a Military School, struck me as incongruous, but the youthful Commander explained that militarism was forced upon them; they needed, and desired, Peace, and the ideals of Tolstoy were acceptable to them; but they wanted to realise those ideals, and were even prepared to wage war against the evil of Capitalism. They battled for Workers' Power, instead of Exploitation.

Who shall say the End does not justify the Means?

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

By J. GROVES

Our Labour Leaders' German Cousins.

A representative assembly of agricultural workers, July 26th, at Bredenbeck, decided to send the district leaders an ultimatum demanding a statement within 24 hours as to whether they were willing to take up the fight with the Junkers. If they refused the agricultural workers would take the fight independently.

These workers throughout Germany are finding that their "accredited leaders" are turned out of exactly the same mould as our own trade union leaders.

Trying to keep Rank and File Quiet.

The district leader Hansen said to a local leader, "you must see to it that the agricultural workers remain quiet till October." Till the harvest is over, that is, and the edge taken from the strike weapon; the same tactics of delay used time and again by our own T.U. leaders with their touching consideration for the enemy lest the workers should hit him in a really tender spot.

The Sliding Scale: "Fodder Basis."

A sliding wage scale, the bright invention of the Soc. Soc. Democrats, is put forward in the demands of the yellow land union (Land Bund) in Pomerania; it was by the leaders of the German Landworkers' Union (D.L.V.) in Saxony. Wages should rise or fall with the price of corn, thus the Junkers and landworkers would both be interested in the highest possible rise in the price of grain and wheat, to the detriment of land and town workers brought into opposition.

Agricultural strikes are in process or threatened throughout Germany. Miserable wages, scandalous working conditions, rising prices, force the landworkers to fight their exploiters or be plunged into the depths of destitution.

Their bureaucratic leaders of the D.L.V., however, do not wish to fight and plume themselves on the fact that they have done everything possible to avoid conflict. With prolonged negotiations leading nowhere, and again negotiations, they defer action. When the fulfilment of tardy decisions to pay higher wages was evaded by the Junkers making retrospective payment dependent on judicial decisions, and a strike broke out in Rugen and elsewhere, although the leaders dared not at first openly go against the unanimous decision of the Rizen Conference in favour of a strike, after a few days they were writing letters to the Press that they did not consent to the strike, and declared it "wild," *i.e.*, unauthorised, a decision acclaimed with triumph by the Junker's papers.

Instead of seeing the strike as the natural outcome of the circumstances, "Vorwarts" joins with the Junker Press in ascribing it to the machinations of the Communists. Long before the end of the strike both declared in loving unanimity "the strike has completely broken down."

The attitude, and of course action, of the leaders is the same in the agricultural disputes in Saxony; they go behind the backs of the workers to make agreements with the masters in direct opposition to the unanimous decisions of the landworkers.

The *Leipziger Allegemenie Zeitung* of July 28th, says, "the workers' leader Jablonsky showed himself during negotiations thoroughly in agreement with the opinion put forward on the side of the Government that the individual desires of the agricultural workers should at least for the time being be postponed in the interests of the community."

(I seem to have heard a similar harmonious refrain rendered more than once in England by the Labour Capitalist Concert Party.)

It is to be hoped, the paper goes on to say, that he will succeed in bringing his members to a rapid resumption of work, otherwise, in view of the necessity of a rapid harvesting of the crops, other general measures must be found, and eventually the official strike breakers resorted to.

The Saxon government which proposes by such means to force the landworkers into submission in the interest of the profiteering Junkers is a socialist one. To such a treasure of a government may we also hope to attain if we only turn a deaf ear to the hotheads, and stick to constitutional methods as advised by our "level-headed leaders." But if so I fear may have to apply in an ironical sense to our own case. Robert Louis Stevenson's words: "To travel hopefully *is a better thing than to arrive.*"

To Heel, Dogs!

In connection with the strike in the building industries in the region of the Saar, the Employers' Union has sent a circular to its members containing amongst other items this information: that by arrangement with the chief of police of the region no more passports to France will be given to strikers after July 21st. The Employers' Union begs all its members to send in names and birth places of all workers of whom it is known for certain that they had emigrated to France on the outbreak of the strike, or shortly beforehand, and they will endeavour to procure that they shall be sent back.

South African Communist Party.

C. F. Glass (Cape Town, South Africa) writes:—"The first Congress of the Communist Party of South Africa was opened in Cape Town on July 30th. It consisted of delegates from the United Communist Party, Cape Town; the Social Democratic Federation, Cape Town; the Jewish Socialist Society, Cape Town; the Jewish Socialist Society (Poale Zion), Johannesburg; the International Socialist League, Johannesburg; and the Marxian Club, Durban, called together for the purpose of unifying all Left-Wing organisations in South Africa.

"The 21 points of the Third International were unanimously accepted by the Congress as the basis of Unity, and the following resolution was passed (the delegates standing and singing 'The Internationale'):—

"'That this Congress of delegates hereby constitutes the Communist Party of South Africa (South African Section of the Communist International), and resolves to apply forthwith to the Communist International for recognition.'"

Peasant Rising in Bessarabia.

There is a rising of peasants in Northern Bessarabia. The capitalist press to disguise this fact declares that it is not a rising of the native peasants but a Bolshevik invasion.

Sovrussia and India.

Peters, in Ivestia, writes:—"The English papers in alarming Afghanistan and Persia about interference of the Soviet government in their domestic affairs forget that the East has learnt not to pay any attention to words, and these people actually know the colossal difference between the policy of Soviet Russia and that of England. As to Bokhara there is not a single Russian in its government, but only native Musselmen. Moreover, this republic is completely independent."

The peasant population of the Volga district in fear of the future are eating their seed instead of preparing to sow it in the autumn.

The Central Executive calls upon all the working peasants of these provinces to begin immediately with the preparations for fall sowing, to use their scanty seed for this purpose. It declares that the government of the workers and peasants will take all steps for satisfying the needs of the provinces which are suffering from a bad harvest. In the interest of successfully combating a decrease in the acreage under cultivation the Central Executive makes several decisions.

It is reported from Simbirsk that the peasants in the province are not sowing their fields as a result of the shortage of seed, are selling out their stock and leaving the farms.

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THE WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT.

COMRADES,—

The struggle to maintain the *Workers' Dreadnought* is a very difficult one in these hard times.

We cannot do it without further assistance from you.

We must increase circulation.

We must secure payment of the debts which those who sell the paper owe to it. Some of these are substantial.

We must secure the payment of the individual subscriptions which are owing to the paper. If your *Dreadnought* comes with a blue mark, that means your subscription has run out. Then please pay at once.

Further, we need a substantial sum in donations every week, and, above all, now.

We ask those who value the paper and the stand it has made, to consider seriously what is the utmost they can do to aid it in this difficult time, and to send a donation by return of post.

Only by your help can we continue to publish.

A NEW INTERNATIONAL.

Left Wing Communism—Anti-Parliamentarians Consolidate.

We learn that a Left Wing anti-Parliamentary Communist International is about to be formed, its mainspring coming from Germany and Holland, where its leading theorists are Herman Gorter and Anton Pannekoek, who were founders of the Dutch Communist Party, which was formed before the Russian Revolution.

The anti-Parliamentary International will bring out an International newspaper, published in several languages, including English.

A Communist anti-Parliamentary Party is being formed in Holland. Our readers are aware that there have, for some time, been two Communist Parties in Germany: the Communist Party (K.P.D.), and the Communist Labour Party (K.A.P.D.); the latter is anti-Parliamentary. The same division is growing and strengthening in every country.

Our readers should watch these developments with attention.

The change of system will not come till the old forms of government and social administration are discredited, and the workers break away from them.

THE FAMINE AND THE INTERNATIONAL REVOLUTION.

In Soviet Russia at the present time there appears to be a steady drift Rightward, a progressive tendency to make concessions to private property, to establish a truce with Capitalism. The famine accentuates this tendency. Soviet Russia is entering into negotiations for famine relief with all sorts of "White" elements: Czarist Russians, capitalistic Russians, bourgeois-Reformist, Labour-Reformists; Russians who are absolutely opposed to Communism, and work always to reduce it and negate it: Soviet Russia is entering into negotiations also with all influences of all these kinds in every other country. The vast peasant population, in its primitive state, is with its desire for petty trading, moreover, always surging up against the Communism which the workers in the towns have tried to establish.

The peasants in the famine areas are now fighting for life, each for his individual existence, and *Rosta* telegrams tell us of the struggle to induce them not to produce a famine next year also, by eating their seed instead of keeping it for sowing, and trusting to the maternal care of the Russian Workers' Republic to keep them alive now in their hour of desperate need, by bringing to them the produce of other districts.

Desperate want brings out the individualist in the human being; yet, at the same time, desperate want teaches us our dependence on each other, and so it is, that in periods of extreme shortage, new systems are forged.

To-day the Soviet Government works in the interests of the whole of Russia, working to bring to the famine areas food from the areas where the harvest allows of something being spared.

Under the Czardom, during famines, the export of grain to foreign countries from the areas where harvests were good continued, because it paid to do so, and it did not pay to send the surplus to the starving peasants of the famine areas.

For the peasants in the famine areas the existence of the Soviet Government, in this dreadful drought, is the greatest possible blessing.

The peasants in the areas where crops are good are, in a sense, the rulers of Russia at this time: they are the economic masters of the country, and to them it is necessary to plead and to make concessions

A section of the Russian Communist Party considers that the concessions made to the peasants are too great, and that the peasants are strangling the Revolution.

So much for Russia.

The peasants and land workers of Middle Europe have hitherto been largely a non-revolutionary force. When the German industrialists were fighting, they could not look for strong support to the agricultural population.

The news that comes from Germany to-day seems to indicate an advancement in the German agricultural worker, which may have important revolutionary consequences.

CLEVER!

The Story of a Boy who was.

"Our Evan is so clefver," Mrs. Jones confided, "they say he will be like Lloyd George some day. He speaks like him now. 'Ess, indeed!"

"Then we shall have 'Hevvan,' indeed, Mrs. Morgan replied.

"But why does he go to these Communists folks' meetings? John Roberts told me he saw him very near to the platform the other night, as if he were one of them—when 'hat fellow from Llanelly was speaking. He will get no good there. He will lose his religion. The men at the chapel are against these folk, and they will never pass him for the Ministry if he goes with them. They say they want to take away their shops and hand them over to the Government."

"Oh, Evan, he is wise; he only goes to learn; to find things to put in his sermons. He listens to what they have to say, and then in his next sermon he tells the people all about it, and shows up the lies. John Jones, the Masgwyn, says he is the cleverest at that."

"Oh 'ess. Very clefver; very clefver! But he should go to the Labour Party. Robert Roberts says they are the real Liberal Party now. Henson, the leader, is a Methodist, like us."

"Oh, 'ess; he goes to the Labour Party with Henry Rees, the chapel steward, you know. He says they are the people to join, as they will be the next in power; and if ever he leaves Wales, he will go to join the Labour Party and be a leader."

"Oh, 'ess. Look at Gwillym Base, he has got a big job in London. Forty pounds a week they say, and he goes to see the King and Queen when they have a garden party! And he was only a poor boy, just like your Evan."

Mrs. Jones was angry:

"It is not my fault he is only a poor boy. You remember, Mrs. Morgan, that I have to bring up two boys on no wages from any man. Just with my own hands. Could you have made him rich? Could you have done any better for him?"

Mrs. Morgan rose to go; she saw that she had unintentionally annoyed Mrs. Jones.

The subject of this conversation at this moment appeared.

He was a bright lad; slim, fair, with an upstanding mass of sandy hair. He had the sharp, jerky movements of the men of his race, the rather thin lips which seemed to be always inclined to smile. His mother greeted him with a big hug. He was the light of her eyes, her pet, her darling. He was a preacher; he was following in the footsteps of her father. He was a good boy, a religious boy, he was so "clefver" that people flocked to hear him in the pulpit and when he started singing in the middle of his sermons, everybody said it was like Heaven. She, for a Welsh woman, had reason to be proud. The common ambition of her kind was being realised.

There was some abruptness in his manner. He disengaged himself speedily. He looked around the hovel—clean and spotless though it was—with a somewhat disdainful glare.

"*What* is the matter?" his mother murmured; "Mrs. Morgan was just here, and she says that Morgan Lloyd says that the sermon you gave them at Bethsaida was just splendid."

"Oh, yes, we know! And nicely they've treated me about it. They'll get no more sermons out of me. They pay me ten shillings, and Johnny Rees tells me they gave his father fifteen-and-six for preaching for them the Sunday before. I'm not going again. I'm giving it all up. I'm going to London to join the Labour Party."

OMONES.

SARA'S REPLY TO KEELL.

Dear Editor,—Mr. Thomas H. Keell, the Editor of "Freedom," is apparently of the opinion that I was having a sly dig at his journal when I covered a few points regarding the Anarchist movement in Moscow in the course of the series of articles being contributed to the "Dreadnought." Let me assure Mr. Keell that his presumption was without foundation; I was not referring to anything to be found in his paper, for the simple reason that I do not read his paper.

When I wrote, "several capitalist papers," I was in mind *The Times*, *Morning Post* and *Evening Standard*. All three of these papers have had paragraphs about Emma Goldman, and each have told of her desire to return to America. *The Times* published a sort of manifesto on one occasion, and it was this I had in mind at the time of writing. I have before me a cutting from the *North China Daily News*, Monday, November 8th, 1920, on "Capitalists and Profiteers in Moscow," and this is how the article concludes:—

"Emma Goldman, Birkman, Balabanova, and all the other exiles are most anxious to get out of Russia again. Three weeks in Russia sufficed to cool her enthusiasm, and though she had lost her American nationality she still claimed to be treated as a foreigner, and neglected to throw in her lot with the Bolsheviks. Three weeks before I left Russia she was suddenly seized by the Extraordinary Commission, and was in solitary confinement when I left Moscow."

That is a fair sample of the Anarchist sympathy that capitalist papers, even in North China, are prepared to show in their efforts to break down the Soviet Republic.

When I wrote that, sometimes the documents alleged to be sent out by the Anarchists, were in facsimile. I had in mind such a reproduction as that to be found in "The One Big Union Monthly," December, 1920, page 9, inserted in the article, "Wrangel and the Bolsheviki." A copy of this issue was taken by George Hardy, General Secretary of the I.W.W., when he was in Moscow, to Shapiro, and Shapiro denied the authenticity of the document, and declared the alleged reproduction of his signature a forgery. The "One Big Union Monthly" has been discontinued, its Editor, John Lundgren, has been removed from any position where he can do further harm to the workers of Russia. In place of the "O.B.U. Monthly" the I.W.W. now circulates the "Industrial Pioneer," and in its columns will be found George Hardy's statement bearing out what has been written above. Regarding Mr. Keell's use of the phrase *persona grata*, it is necessary to point out to Mr. Keell that such a phrase means "a person who is acceptable to those to whom he is sent." As I was *not* sent to Russia; his remark, like the rest of his letter, is a misfire.

Yours, etc.,

HENRY SARA.

Will Japanese comrades in England communicate with the Editor of the "Workers' Dreadnought."

DREADNOUGHT DEVELOPMENT FUND

Per J. Vitulli, South Africa: M. Cherman £1, A. B. Dunbar £1, W. Hendry 5s., J. Joffe £1, Rusch 10s., H. Telford 5s., J. Vitulli £1, Communist Party (Dumferline) 10s., Mrs. Hart (per Mrs. Brimley) 3s. Total, £5 13s. 0d.

THE FIGHT AGAINST PROSTITUTION.

By ALEXANDRA KOLLONTAY

An address to the Third Congress of the Women's Sections of the Russian Communist Party. The speech was printed in an edition of 40,000 copies. The author, long the head of the Russian women's movement, has written a large and important volume on the "Protection of Motherhood."

The Question neglected hitherto.

The question of prostitution is a delicate and difficult one, to which but insufficient attention has been paid in the past by the workers of Soviet Russia. This dark heritage of the bourgeois capitalist past continues to vitiate the atmosphere of the Workers' Republic, and to influence for the worse the physical and moral health of the working population of Soviet Russia. It is true that under the influence of the changing economic and social conditions during these three years of revolution, prostitution has somewhat altered its earlier form and character. But we are still far from having outlived this evil. It continues to weigh down upon us, inflicting the greatest harm to that solidarity and comradeship between the members of the Workers' Republic—the toiling women and men—who constitute the basis of the new Communist society we are working to build. It is time to devote attention to this question, to study its causes, and to find ways and means for a complete eradication of this evil, which should find no place in a Workers' Republic.

In our Workers' Republic there has hitherto been a lack, not only of laws aimed at an eradication of this evil, but also of a clear expression of our attitude toward prostitution, as an evil harmful to the general good. We know that prostitution is an evil; we even understand that now, in this extremely difficult transition period, prostitution is assuming large and intolerably extensive proportions, but we simply wave it aside, we are silent on this phenomenon, partly through a remnant of hypocrisy that is still with us, as the heritage of the bourgeois view of life; partly through inability properly to grasp and become conscious of the damage which a widely developed prostitution is inflicting upon the working society. To this is to be ascribed the neglect of the question of prostitution, and of the ways of combating it, which has been manifest hitherto in our legislation.

Up to the present time the collection of our laws has been lacking in any kind of legislation touching upon prostitution as a dangerous social phenomenon. When the old Tsarist laws were annulled by the Council of People's Commissars, all the legislation on prostitution was abolished together with them. But there were not introduced, as a substitute for the abolished measures, any new laws in the interest of the workers' society. This is because of the naturally motley nature of our measures, of the contradiction that characterises the policy of the Soviet power in various places, on the subject of prostitution and the prostitutes themselves.

In certain places there have been carried out regular hunts for prostitutes, conducted "in the old style," with the aid of militia. In other places, the disorderly houses exist openly (in the Inter-Departmental Commission for Combating Prostitution actual data on this subject are available). In other places still, the prostitutes were declared to have the same status as criminals, and were interned in hard labour camps. All this shows that the absence of a clearly formulated legislation creates an extremely confused relation between the local powers and this complicated social phenomenon, producing a number of varied and harmful deviations from our own principles of legislation and morality.

It isn ecessary therefore not only to approach the question of prostitution directly, but also to seek a solution of it that would be in accordance with the fundamental principles and postulates of the social and national-economic program of the Communist Party.

Definition of Prostitution.

It is first of all necessary precisely to define *what is prostitution*.—Prostitution is a phenomenon closely bound up with an income not earned by labour, and it therefore flourished in the epoch of the rule of capitalism and private property. Prostitutes from our standpoint are all women who sell their caresses, their bodies, for temporary or extended periods, for the advantage of men, in return for material compensation, for fine food, clothes, trinkets or adornment, and for the right, obtained by selling themselves to men, not to undertake any labourer, not to subject themselves to work of any kind.

Prostitution in our Soviet Republic of Workers is a direct inheritance of the bourgeois capitalist past, in which only an insignificant number of women were occupied with productive labour in the national economy, while an enormous number, more than half the entire female population, lived from the labour of their husbands or their fathers, their "meal tickets."

Prostitution in Ancient Times.

Prostitution arose in remote times under the earliest forms of government, as an inevitable shadow cast by a fixed formulated marriage upon the right of private property, and securing the passing down of possessions along the line of legal heirs. By this means it was possible to save the accumulated or frankly stolen riches from the division that would inevitably result from too great a number of heirs in succeeding generations. But between prostitution as it was in the times of the Greek dikterions and the Roman lupanars, and the prostitution of our day, there is a great difference. The prostitution of ancient times was, in the first place, numerically very insignificant. In the second place, there was no such tinge of hypocrisy connected with the prostitution of pagan antiquity as would enable the people at that time to adorn themselves with the morals of the bourgeois capitalist world and induce bourgeois society respectfully to remove its hat in the presence of the "legal" wife of the capitalist magnate, who sold herself openly to an unloved husband, and to turn away in disgust from the girl thrown into the streets by the force of poverty, of lack of care, of unemployment, and of other social causes arising from the nature of capitalism and private property. Prostitution in ancient times was regarded as a "legal" accompaniment of regular established family relations. Aspasia received more respect from her contemporaries than did their colourless wives at home, their breeding apparatus.

In the Middle Ages.

In the middle ages, under the petty guild system, prostitution was recognised as a legal natural phenomenon of life; the prostitutes had a guild of their own, which participated on the same footing as the other guilds in holiday parades and municipal celebrations. Prostitution guaranteed the "chaste" daughters of respectable citizens and secured the fidelity of legally obtained wives, since the bachelors always had an opportunity, in return for a corresponding fee, to indulge in the pleasures of the flesh with the professional guild prostitute. Consequently prostitution was useful to the honourable citizen proprietors, and the latter openly acknowledged this fact.

With the rise of capitalism the picture begins to change. For the first time in history, prostitution began to assume in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the character of a danger to society owing both to its proportions and to its nature; the sale of the labour power of women, which was increasing without interruption, is closely and indissolubly bound up with the sale of the female body, and results in the fact that there enter the ranks of the prostitutes not only the "lost" outcast girl, but even the respectable wife of the worker, the mother, for the sake of the children; the young girl (Sonia Marmeladov), for the sake of the family. It is a picture of horror and hypocrisy, arising from the exploitation of labour by capital.

Wherever wages are insufficient to feed the woman, there appears a tempting underground trade—the sale of force. The hypocritical morality of bourgeois society, on the one hand, breeds prostitution with all the force of its destructive exploiting economy, while, on the other hand, it mercilessly brands with contempt the girl or the woman who has been forced by need on to this much trodden path.

Prostitution follows as a black shadow in the wake of legal marriage in bourgeois society. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries prostitution assumed enormous proportions, unequalled in history. In Berlin there is one prostitute to every twenty so-called respectable women. In Paris there is one to every eighteen, but in London there is one to every nine.* One form of prostitution is that which is open, regulated, legal; another form is that which is secret, underground, "occasional." But all forms appear as a poisonous, unhealthy growth in the rank swamp of the bourgeois system of society.

Inevitably Associated with Capitalist Society.

And even children, the tender buds of the future, are not spared by the bourgeois class world, which casts little girls of nine or ten years of age into the filthy embraces of rich old men satiated with vice. So-called disorderly houses with minor and infant inmates are a phenomenon that has been in existence for a long time in bourgeois states. At the present moment, after the war, unemployment, which weighs most heavily on women, has caused a tremendous growth in Europe of an army of "street women." Hungry crowds of wealthy purchasers of white slaves cruise nightly through the streets of Berlin, Paris, and the other cultural centers of the respectable capitalist states. Openly, in view of everyone, the market in female flesh is carried on. But why not? The bourgeois world is built up altogether on purchase and sale, and even legal marriage itself includes unquestionable elements of material or at least economic calculation. Prostitution, as an underground trade, is an outlet for the woman who has not succeeded in obtaining a male supporter for herself. Prostitution under capitalism is a means for men to attain conjugal relations with women without burdening themselves with the obligation to support them for a long period, until death do them part.

But if prostitution is so wide-spread, if it is maintaining itself even in Soviet Russia, how shall we fight against it? To answer this question it is necessary first to recall to mind what are the causes of prostitution, what is the source from which it flows.

Bourgeois learning and its representatives have felt it proper to point out to the world that prostitution is a "pathological" phenomenon that is itself called forth by the abnormal qualities of certain women. Just as there are said to be criminal types that are congenital in their origin, so it is declared there exist born prostitutes. Wherever you may put them, no matter what conditions they may be placed in, these women will end in vice, and in the way of all flesh. Of course, these misrepresentations of the bourgeois scholars go to pieces when faced with the facts of life.

Marx and the more honest of the bourgeois scholars, physicians and statisticians, clearly point out that the innate inclinations of the woman play no part. Prostitution is first of all a *social phenomenon*, closely associated with the undefended position of woman and her economic dependence on man, both in the family and in marriage.

Pseudo-Science and "Morality."

The roots of prostitution reach far down into the economic system. The economic exposure of women, on the one hand, and the habit, ingrown in women, through many centuries of education, to seek material support from a man by legal or extra-marital relations, on the other hand, that is the root, that is the cause of prostitution. As a matter of fact, if the bourgeois scholars of the school of Lombroso and Tarnovsky, who claim that prostitutes are born with indications of perverseness and sexual abnormality, are right in making this claim, how do they explain the very well-known fact that in times of crisis and unemployment the number of prostitutes suddenly increases? How do they explain the fact that the purchasers of "living flesh," of white slaves, who came to Tsarist Russia from other countries, always found a rich harvest in the starving provinces, suffering from poor crops, and came off empty-handed in the provinces that were well fed, with a very small yield of white slaves? Why did there suddenly appear so many perverted types of women, branded for ruin by nature, in years of famine, or unemployment?

And, furthermore, is it not typical that in capitalistic countries, prostitution recruited its numbers to the most part among the *indigent layers of the population?* The greatest percentage of prostitutes are always found in the more poorly paid trades followed by working women, among the more neglected and lonely young women, forced by bitter need and by the necessity of immediately feeding their little brothers and sisters, who have fallen as a easy prey the unprotected, young and penniless girl. If the theory of the bourgeois scholars on the innate criminality and perverseness of certain women were correct, as a reason for prostitution, all classes of the population, including the rich and protected classes, would give as high a percentage of criminal and perverse women as the needy classes. But as a matter of fact this is not the case. The professional prostitutes, living by the sale of their bodies, are recruited with rare exceptions from the propertyless class. They are driven to prostitution by poverty, hunger, neglect, or by the crying phenomena of social inequality, those foundations of the bourgeois system.

Let us take another example. The increase in professional prostitution, as is shown by statistics, comes in all capitalist countries from girls between the ages of thirteen and twenty-three, in other words, the age of childhood and youth. And among these girls the majority are those that have been neglected or lonely. It is characteristic that the daughters of comparatively protected families, of whom their well-to-do parents took proper care, enter the ranks of prostitution only in very exceptional cases. In most cases these girls are victims of a number of tragic circumstances, among which a very important part is played by the traditional lying and hypocritical bourgeois "double standard of morality." The girl who has "sinned" is cast out by her bourgeois family, and, finding herself alone, unaided, branded by the contempt of "society," is placed in a situation that has only one outlet, namely, prostitution.

Economic Causes of Prostitution.

Badly paid labour, the striking inequalities of capitalist society, the unhealthy habit of women to depend economically on men, to seek support not in their own labour power, but in pay for love, at the hands of the "feeding" man,—this is what breeds prostitution, it is there that we must seek the roots of this long existing, unhealthy phenomenon.

The workers' revolution in Russia, which shook the foundation of capitalism, also dealt a blow to the former dependence of woman on man. All citizens are equal before the workers' society, only they are obliged to work for the common good, and, in case of need, they are entitled to the assistance of the collective system. The woman is protected no longer by marriage, but by her participation in the creation of the national wealth, in other words, by her own productive labour. The mutual relations between the sexes are being transferred to a new basis. But the old views and conceptions are still weighing down upon us. And besides, our economic system is still far from having been fully established along the new line. We are still, far from the Communist system of life. Naturally, in this transition period, prostitution still has powerful supports. For, many of the reasons that brought it forth have not by any means been removed, although the fundamental causes that bred it—private property and the petrified forms of the bourgeois family—have been eliminated. But there still remain a number of causes, the neglect and lack of protection of childhood, the poor living conditions of the working class, the loneliness of youth, the low pay of female labour, the imperfections of our provisioning apparatus, the general disorganisation of the national economy, and a number of other economic and social phenomena which still give rise to the sale of female flesh, and thus support prostitution.

*This statement is not held out by any known statistics.

Should the Soviet Government fight Prostitution

The struggle against prostitution means first of all a struggle against all the above-mentioned phenomena, in other words, to support the general policy of the Soviet power in the matter of strengthening the beginnings of Communism and perfecting production. This is our chief, our fundamental task. But some will ask: is it necessary in this case to wage a special war on prostitution? This painful phenomenon will outlive itself when we have strengthened the power of the toilers and brought about, in fact, the beginnings of Communism. To reason thus is equivalent to ignoring the disintegrating and baneful influence which prostitution exerts on the very structure of the new Communist society. Already at the first All-Russian Congress of Working and Peasant Women, the correct program was proclaimed: "The free and equal citizen women of the Soviet Workers' Republic cannot and must not be an object of purchase and sale." That was what was said, but as a matter of fact the conditions remain what they have been.

Prostitution injures the Russia of the toilers, principally from the standpoint of the interests of the national economy and the free development of our productive forces. We know that a victory over disorganisation, an impetus imparted to the evolution of our industry, is only accessible to us by a supreme exertion of all the working class energies of the Republic, a complete and planful application of all the individual working power, both of men and of women.

Down with the unproductive labour in domestic life, with the exploitation of children in the home! Make way for organised labour, productive labour, labour that shall serve the workers. Organisation! That is the problem of the moment.

We must fight deserters from Work.

Meanwhile, what is the professional prostitute? The professional prostitute is a person whose working energy is not given for the advantage of the collective whole, a person who lives at the expense of others, and who receives a share from the rations of others. Is such a condition of affairs permissible in a workers' republic? By no means, because it decreases the supply of labour power, the number of hands at work at the creation of the national wealth, of social good. How are we to consider the professional prostitute from the standpoint of the interests of national economy? Only as a *deserter from work*. In this sense we may mercilessly condemn prostitution. We must immediately, in the interests of a sensible economic plan, enter into a conflict with this evil, bring about a decrease in the number of prostitutes, and stamp out its manifestations, whatever may be the form in which they appear.

It is time that we understand that the existence of prostitution contradicts the fundamental principles of a workers' republic, in which all forms of earnings are not obtained by labour are subject to prostitution. Our understanding of this matter has much changed during the three years of the revolution. We are beginning to form a morality of our own, based on principles unlike those of the former morality. For instance, three years ago we looked upon a merchant as a completely respectable man. If his books were in order, if he did not engage in fraudulent bankruptcy, if he did not openly and outrageously overcharge and underweigh his customers, the merchant was not only not put in jail, but, on the other hand, was rewarded with honourable designations: "merchant of the first guild," "of an old merchant family," "a respectable citizen," etc.

The Merchant no longer Respectable.

Now, in the time of the revolution, our relation to commerce and to merchants has been radically changed. We now call the "honourable merchant" a speculator. We not only do not confer flattering epithets upon him, but we hale him before the Extraordinary Commission and intern him in a camp for forced labour. And why this? Simply because we know that he shall be able to create a new Communist economy only by inducing all grown up citizens to undertake *productive labour*. Whoever does not work, whoever is living at the expense of others, on the earnings of others, that is, whoever performs no productive labour, he is a danger to the collective society, to the public. That is why we prosecute the speculators, the traders, the profiteers,—in sort, all who live on income not obtained by labour, and that is why we must fight against prostitution as one of the forms of desertion from labour.

But when we consider the prostitutes and fight them as a non-productive element of society, we are not placing them in a special category. For us, for the Republic of the Workers, it is absolutely a matter of indifference whether a woman sells herself to one man or to many, whether she is a professional prostitute living by some other source than her own useful labour, or by the sale of her caresses to a legal husband or to an occasional purchaser of female flesh, whose identity may vary from day to day. All women who desert from labour, who take no part in the obligatory work, and who are not performing any work for small children at home, are placed on an equal footing with the prostitute—they must be forced to work. And we cannot make any distinction here between the prostitute and the most lawful wife who lives on her husband's sustenance, whenever her husband may be, even though he be a "commissar."

In other words, we are going to introduce equal treatment for all deserters from labour. From the standpoint of the workers' collective, a woman is to be condemned, not for selling her body, but for the fact that, just like a legally married idle woman, she does no useful work for the collective. This new, absolutely new, procedure with prostitution is dictated by the interest of the workers' collective.

Venereal Diseases.

The second reason why we must now immediately wage a conscientious and organised campaign against prostitution is in order to defend the public health. Soviet Russia is interested in preventing the disorganisation and lowering of the working powers of the population, as well as their capacity for work, by sickness and indispositions. Now, prostituton happens to be *one* of the sources of venereal diseases, but, of course, not the only source. These diseases may also be communicated in the *regular course* of daily life, by reason of poor domestic conditions, the absence of hygienic appliances, an insufficiency of dishes, which are therefore used in common by a number of persons, common towels, which are often causes of infection. Besides, in our extremely agitated transition period, as far as moral views are concerned, owing to the constant gathering and uninterrupted transfer of the army from one place to another, venereal diseases are spread to a remarkable extent, quite independently of the agency of commercial prostitution. For instance, in the southern fruitful provinces civil war has been in progress. The male Cossack population has been scattered, driven out, has gone off with the Whites, or been scattered to the winds. In the settlements there remain only the women. They had enough of everything, but there were no men. Red Armies advance and take the town, they are billetted out, and remain in the city for weeks at a time. As a result there are mutual attractions, free alliances, having no similarity whatever with prostitution; since the women in this case voluntarily associate with the men, as a result of inclination and without any calculation of material gain on their side; it is not the Red Army man who feeds the woman, but the reverse, it is she who takes care of him, mends his clothes, shelters him as long as the army is quartered in the settlement. But the army departs, and as a consequence the settlement has become infected with venereal diseases. The same thing has been repeated with cities and villages which are taken by the Whites.

A general contamination is constantly going on. The diseases are spread, increased, and threaten to wipe out the entire unborn generation. In the joint session of the Motherhood Protection Society and the Provincial Women's Sections, Professor Koltsov spoke on hygiene, the science of healing and perfecting mankind. Closely related with this task is the question of the struggle against prostitution, which is one of the most active causes of infection from person to person.

Steps to fight Venereal Diseases.

In the theses of the Interdepartmental Commission for Combating Prostitution, in the Commissariat of Social Welfare it is declared to be the immediate task of the Commissariat of Public Health to work out special measures for the struggle against venereal infections. Of course, these measures include all the sources of infection and must not be limited to the prosecution of prostitution, as was the practice of hypocritical bourgeois society. But, at any rate, even if we recognise the fact that the communication of infection is also accomplished to a very great extent in the regular course of daily life, it is very important to furnish the population with a clear understanding of what is the role of prostitution in the spread of venereal diseases. It is extremely important to conduct a proper sexual education of the young, to equip the young with precise information, to enable them to enter life "with their eyes open," to refrain from keeping silent on questions concerning sexual life as was done by the lying, hypocritical, sanctimonious bourgeois morality. The third reason why prostitution is inadmissible in a Soviet Workers' Republic is that it prevents the development and solidification of the fundamental class qualities of the proletariat, of its new morality. What is the fundamental property of the working class, the most powerful moral weapon in its struggle? The feeling of comradeship, of solidarity. Solidarity is the foundation of Communism. Without this strongly established feeling, among the mankind of the workers, it is inconceivable that we shall erect a new truly Communist society. Of course, it is self-evident that conscious Communists must with all their powers aid in the development of this feeling, and conversely, must with all their might struggle with those forces that would hinder this development and prevent the solidification of such qualities and characteristics of the working class of the toiling population. What is it that follows in the wake of prostitution? A debasement of the feeling of equality, of solidarity and comradeship between the sexes, in other wards, between the two halves of the working class. The man who purchases the caresses of women begins at once to look upon women as a commodity. He regards women as dependent upon himself, in other words, as creatures of a lower order, not entitled to equal rights, not of equal value to the workers' government. His contemptuous attitude to the prostitute whose attentions he has purchased for her material gain he transfers to all women. Instead of a growth of the feeling of comradeship, equality and solidarity, we shall have, if prostitution should further develop, a strengthening of the conditions of inequality between the sexes, of the feeling of the superiority of man, the dependence of the woman on him, in other words, a decrease in the solidarity of the whole working class.

From the standpoint of the new Communist morality which is in process of formation, of crystallisation, prostitution is intolerable and dangerous. Therefore the task of our party as a whole and of the Women's Section in particular, must be to wage the most merciless, open and resolute campaign against this heritage of the past. In bourgeois capitalist society all the modes of struggle against prostitution turned out to be a useless waste of energy, since the two fundamental causes of prostitution—the existence of private property and the direct economic dependence of the greater number of women on a man (father, husband, lover)—were powerfully and firmly established.

In the Workers' Republic these causes have been eliminated. Private property has been abolished. All the citizens of the Workers' Republic are obliged to work. Marriage ceases to be for women the means of finding a "meal ticket," and thus to escape the inevitability of working, of nourishing themselves by their own work. The objective fundamental causes of prostitution in Soviet Russia are being outgrown. There remain a number of secondary economic and social causes, which are much easier to deal with. The Women's Sections should apply their energies decisively in this direction, for there they will find a wide field of activity opening before them. It is only necessary to bear definitely in mind that the struggle against prostitution may be waged only on the basis of a struggle with the *sources from which it originates*, and consequently the study of these sources, a careful seeking after them, is the first task of the Women's Sections.

FRANK PENMAN IN LONDON.—*Continued from p. 2* doing splendid work at Caerphilly, putting the Communist position against the Reformists and the capitalists."

"If you had been affiliated to the Labour Party, as you wanted, you could not have had your own candidate at Caerphilly. You would have been obliged to support the Labour Party candidate: either that, or leave the Party—you could not remain in a Party and oppose its candidates."

"We should not have done so; we should have supported the candidates of the majority and have worked gradually to get Communist candidates accepted by the majority; we should strive to win the Labour Party, and, in time, to gain control of its machinery. That is the policy of the Third International.'

"Yes, it has voted so, with regard to English affairs; but it seems to me it would have been the same thing for the German Communists to remain with the Scheidemann Party, in the hope of converting the majority some day."

"That wasn't the policy then: the Third International has modified its policy; it has learnt by experience."

"Oh! It doesn't admit that! So you really think it was a mistake for the German Communists to leave the Scheidemann Social Democrats?"

"Well, the question of the Labour Party isn't so very important. I admit we should have to leave it eventually, in any case. The Parliamentary question is much more important."

"You'll have to give up the elections too, eventually. There won't be any revolutionary progress here till the workers turn away from Parliamentary action in favour of something better."

"Oh, I admit we'll all be where you are, someday."

"And yet you try to stop us selling the *Dreadnought*."

It was the dark girl again.

"If the Left Wing has not freedom of propaganda inside the Communist Party, it will have to come out again and form a new Party."

There was a chorus of "Good night": the woman in blue and her companions, the elderly woman and the small, spare man, rose. Several people spoke to the woman in blue as she passed out.

"Have you ever seen her here before?" someone asked.

"Only when there's a Conference or something like that. She never comes to the Club."

When they were gone the talk declined again, cards and beer dominated the atmosphere, and soon Frank Penman left, musing soberly and rather sadly. No one had exchanged a word with him. He was as far as ever from being one of the Red movement, and the fire of his enthusiasm had sunk so low, that he wondered whether he really wanted to join the Reds at all.

Yet again and again he found himself thinking about the people in the Left Wing.

PARLIAMENT AS WE SEE IT.

Parcels to Russia.

Asked why the Post Office refuses to accept parcels for Russia, Mr. Pease, for the Government, said there were no ships going to Petrograd, and the harbour was full of mines.

Kenworthy (Lib.) said sixteen ships went last month to Petrograd, and the Channel is quite clear of mines.

Mr. Pease: I will inquire into that.

The Commissioner of Police says that after an early date he will not allow passengers to stand up in the buses and trams for lack of a seat. Members wrangled about it, but the Commissioner's will is law. Nobody said: "Put on more 'buses."

Questions £1 a Time.

Questions put by Members of Parliament to Ministers cost, it is said, on the average £1 each to answer. Members asking three questions a day four days a week cost £12.

The Agricultural Bill of last December provided that where a landlord refused a tenant the right to do certain improvements if the Agricultural Committee to an arbitrator decided that it was an improvement that ought to have been made, the tenant could get compensation at the end of the tenancy.

The House of Lords being a house of landlords whittled the provision down. In the present Corn Production Act the Lords actually introduced an amendment repealing this provision in the December Act. Members of Parliament protested that the Lord's action was out of order, as any ordinary person would suppose, but the Speaker said it was out of order to decide that anything the Lords do is out of order.

The Government moved to agree with the Lords' Amendment on the ground that it was "not worth fighting about."

One of the Labour Members, Mr. Halls, aptly observed: "If the other place is a House of landlords, this House largely consists of landlords, and those in sympathy with them."

Only 37 members voted against accepting the Lords' amendment.

The House passed, as it does at the end of each Sessions, a Bill to continue a host of measures, some of these are war emergency measures. One dealt with the restrictions upon aliens, the Government's excuse for including this measure with the rest is that if it came to an end, other legislation to regulate the aliens would be necessary—or rather the Government would think it necessary. The old "free" England of our radical forebears is no more. The measure which makes it illegal to sell ice cream in the shops or ice cream and chocolate after eight o'clock was also continued, and then on the Government's own suggestion a Bill to extend the hours within which sweets and ice cream was introduced: this Bill will go through a Second Reading debate, committee stage, Third Reading debate, up to the House of Lords for the various stages there, back to the Commons for report, and so on. That is the way government is carried on by the Mother of Parliaments. But if it were some measure to safeguard capitalism against a militant working class, an Order in Council under D.O.R.A. or the E.P.A. would whisk it through in a twinkling.

At Crowborough a piece of land was 25 years ago sold in small lots to 300 purchasers, all of whom have abandoned it. Some gipsies have now encamped there. Mr. Cantley asked to have them cleared away, and the Government agrees to do so.

CHANGE YOUR LEADERS!

By RED INTERNATIONAL

III.

The Yorkshire Miners' Association.

The Governing Council of this Union consists of a President, Vice-President, General Secretary, Agent, Treasurer and Junior General Secretary, and in addition one experienced member elected as delegate from each branch. The Council ordinarily meets once in four weeks. Each branch has one delegate who has one vote for every fifty members of the branch. Delegates shall serve as long as the branch determines, but not less than three months.

National and International Conferences.

The union decides by a branch vote of the members whether the union shall send delegates to the annual conferences of:—

M.F.G.B.
Labour Party.
Trade Union Congress.
International Miners' Conference.

The members further decide in the same way:—

(a) Whether the association be represented at all.
(b) How many permanent officials shall attend.
(c) Who they shall be.
(d) How many ordinary members shall attend.

In the case of other conferences, this includes special conferences called by the above bodies, strike negotiations, etc.; in short, the most important conferences of all, the delegates of the union are two permanent officials selected by the permanent officials themselves, as well as any permanent officials entitled to attend *ex officio*. Also 6 other members to be elected by the various branches in rotation, one by each branch.

Why Special Conferences are more Reactionary.

It has frequently been observed that the annual conference of such bodies as the Labour Party and Trade Union Congress will pass a strong resolution on some subject dictating that a special conference be called to deal further with the matter. The special conference, when summoned, proves much less advanced than the annual conference.

Why?

Partly because it is brought nearer to action than was the annual conference, but also largely because the proportion of permanent officials is greater at the special conference. To the special conference, because time is short and to save expense, the branch delegates are often not sent.

How to Elect Delegates.

The above rules should be changed as follows:

All delegates to all conferences should be elected by their delegates at Council meetings on the instructions of the branches they represent, permanent officials should only go as delegates if elected like ordinary members; delegates may be recalled by the Council at any time.

Branches Power to Initiate.

Rule 11 is important: it lays down that on such questions as the adoption or prolongation of a strike, alteration of rules, voting away large sums of money, or dismissal of permanent officials, if one-fourth of the branches demand in writing that a vote of the entire organisation, this shall be done. This vote is to be taken by ballot in the branch rooms, recorded in their books, and a copy forwarded to the Central Office. The votes will then be counted by the Executive Committee, or whoever it appoints to do so.

The Opportunity to Act.

Branches can therefore get busy on alterations of rules and the dismissal of permanent officials, without waiting for conferences to come round; they can act without delay.

Election of Permanent Officials.

Permanent officials are elected by ballot of the members taken by the branches.

Rule 12 that prescribes this should be changed: the nominations should be by branches, and election by instructed delegates of branches.

Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee is composed of the permanent officials and not less than seventeen members elected from the branches and re-elected or confirmed by the Council; they serve a year, and half their number retire each half-year. The Executive meets ordinarily only once in four weeks, from which it inevitably follows that the business is not done by the Executive, but by the permanent officials. The Executive is elected on the panel system. The Executive, in these days of great membership and swift-moving events, should sit continuously. There should be no permanent officials; the Secretary, Treasurer, etc. should be elected like the rest of the Committee. The Executive and officials should be nominated by the branches, and elected by the delegates at Council meetings on the instructions of the branches. Executive and officials should be subject to recall by the Council at any time.

The recall by the members of the branch should also be applied to branch officials and committee by amendment of Rules 31, 32, 33 and 38.

Strikes.

Strikes cannot take place except on a ballot, in which three-fourths of the members vote, and two-thirds of those voting declare for the strike. That provision will have to be scrapped before any effective class fighting can be done. A resolution to this effect meets the case:—

"When the association has declared its policy through its Council meeting on any question, the Executive may at the same time be empowered by the Council to take whatever strike or other emergency action may be necessary in the interests of that policy. The Executive will be answerable for its acts to the Council meeting."

A great reason why new unions and workers' committees outside the unions have largely failed in Britain is that the old organisations have had huge funds from which they have paid out to their members strike pay, sick pay, funeral benefits, etc. We are on the edge of a period of trade depression and unemployment, and of truculent iron reclism by the Government and employers which may lead to the depletion of the funds of the Great Unions. This may usher in the day when the workers will break easily away from the conservative out-of-date old machinery and form new revolutionary combinations. In the meantime a perpetual stir and fight should be kept up by the Reds within the old unions and the work of building up rebel organisations must be pushed forward.

MAX HAVELAAR.

A Tale of the Dutch East Indies.

By MULTATULI

(Continued from last issue.)

"Verbrugge, I tell you why I do this. The Regent has not a farthing in the house—his writer told me so—he himself needs this money, and the tax-gatherer will advance it to him. I would rather transgress on my own responsibility than leave a man of his rank and years in perplexity. Moreover, Verbrugge, people at Lebak abuse power in a fearful way; you *ought* to know it." Verbrugge was silent.

"*I* know it," Havelaar continued. "Mr. Slotering, my predecessor, died in November. *The day after his death*, the Regent forced the population to labour in his rice-fields without payment. You *ought* to have known it—you *did* know it?"

Verbrugge did *not* know it

"You *ought* to have known it," continued Havelaar. "Here are the monthly reports of the chiefs, stating what number of labourers have worked for them. Are those statements correct?"

"I have not seen them."

"Neither have I. Were last month's statements correct?"

Verbrugge was silent.

"I will tell you: they were false. Three times the number of labourers had to work for the Regent that the orders regulating such matters permit, and they are not put this in the reports. The reports I received to-day are likewise false. The Regent is poor. The Regents of Bandong and Tjanjor are members of the family of which he is head. He is an Adhipatti; the Regent of Tjanjor is only a Tommongong. Because Lebak is not fit for coffee culture, and therefore gives him no emolument, his revenues do not allow him to vie in magnificence and pomp with simple Demang of the Preangang Regencies, whose duty it would be to hold his nephew's horses. Is that true?"

"Yes, it is."

"He has nothing but his salary, and from that a deduction is made to pay off an advance the Government gave him when he desired to build a new mosque. Many members of his family, who do not properly belong to Lebak, range themselves as a troop of plunderers around him, and extort money from him. When his purse is empty, which is often the case, they take what they like from the people, in his name. Is that so?"

"Yes, it is."

"The Regent, who is old, has for some years been ruled by a desire to become meritorious, through gifts to the priests. He spends much money for the travelling expenses of pilgrims to Mecca. Because of all this he is poor. I knew he had no money in the house. It is my intention to do my duty. I will not suffer injustice, but will do my duty with leniency. What happens *henceforth* is on *my* responsibility. Do you know, Verbrugge, that I ought to have heard from *you* all that I have just told you?"

"Mr. Havelaar, I have never served under anyone like you. You communicate to others, conceptions and ideas never heard before."

"No! they have fallen asleep in that despicable official stillness, whose style is: '*I have the honour to be*,' and its feeling, '*the perfect satisfaction of the Government*.'"

"All this has always been so in these countries."

"Whose handwriting is this?"

"Mr. Slotering's."

"My predecessor's: two rough copies, evidently containing subjects on which he wished to speak to the Resident. Look here: 1. 'On Rice Culture.' 2. 'On the Houses of the Village Chiefs.' 3. 'On the Gathering of the Land Taxes.'!! After the last are two marks of exclamation. What did Mr. Slotering mean by that?"

"I cannot tell."

"That means, more taxes are paid than flow into the Exchequer of the country. Look here: 12. 'On the Abuses practised on the Population by the Regents and Inferior Chiefs.' Listen: 15. 'That many persons of the families, and servants of the inland chiefs appear on the payment lists, who take no part in the culture. They also get possession of rice-fields which are only due to those who have a share in the culture.'

"Look here, too: 'The emigration of the population can only be ascribed to the excess of the abuses by which the people are victimised'

"What do you say to that?"

"It is true. Mr. Slotering often spoke of the Resident about all this."

"What was the result?"

"The Regent was summoned and had an interview with the Resident."

"What more?"

"The Regent generally denied all. Then witnesses were called for—no one dared bear witness against the Regent—Mr. Havelaar, these things are very difficult. Mr. Slotering was much offended. He wrote sharp letters to the chiefs——"

"I read them last night. Is it to be supposed that the Resident of Bantam approves of injustice and arbitrary power?"

"Approve—no; but one does not like to accuse a Regent."

"I accuse no one: to-morrow I shall go to the Regent and appeal to him to give up this illegal exploitation. I shall do everything I can to make it easy for him to do his duty.'

(Continued in our next issue.)

CAERPHILLY.

The Communist candidate at Caerphilly is holding great meetings and arousing the enthusiasm of thousands, as happens at election times. If it were possible for Stuart to be elected, the wave of enthusiasm would rise to a tremendous pitch.

Then it would fall—for Stuart in Parliament could do nothing.

Elections are times of shouting and cheering, but when they are over, the solid work of creating a new consciousness in the workers, and a new machinery whereby they may express that consciousness will remain to be done, at Caerphilly, as elsewhere.

For the overthrow of this old capitalist system, it is necessary that the people should break away in sufficient numbers from support of the old capitalist machinery, and set up another system; that they should create and maintain the Soviets as the instrument of establishing Communism.

To do this, the workers must be mentally prepared and must also possess the machinery which will enable them to act.

In our view, the running of candidates, however revolutionary the speeches of the candidates may be, is not the best method of preparing the workers to discard their faith in bourgeois democracy and Parliamentary reformism.

As to the machinery that the workers will require for action when they have abandoned Reformism, that they do not at present possess. Their trade and industrial unions are manned by reactionary officials clogged by cumbrous rules that prevent speedy action, and imbued with Reformist tradition.

The situation of to-day calls for:—

1.—Communist Revolutionary propaganda, to prepare the minds of the workers;

2.—The creation of unofficial Revolutionary Committees in all industries, building up an organisation that can act whenever the possibility of action arises;

3.—Steady undermining within the old Unions, of the influence of the old leaders upon the rank and file, and steady alteration of the old Trade Union rules, in order that the ensuing discussion and struggle may educate the rank and file as to their present helplessness within the old Unions.

When they have learnt that, and are alive with the desire to overthrow the present system, the rank and file will either break away from the old Unions, or re-create them.

The working class must will a new system and organise itself as a class to achieve the new system. It must break down its craft barriers and its industrial barriers and fight as one big union of workers to abolish Capitalism.

The old Trade Union and Labour leaders stand for preserving the present system from destruction. Their hands are outstretched as eagerly as those of the capitalist, to preserve industrial peace, to re-establish the world as it was before the war. Many of them fancy they want to see Capitalism change to Socialism, but they are busy patching up the cracks in the old system.

Meanwhile business was never so bad as it is to-day in this Empire, and the immediate prospect before us all is dark.

But the dreadful situation of ever-growing masses of people unemployed, is the best propaganda for change: if Capitalism were satisfactory, the human race would never replace it by another system.

Go to the men who fight for a job in the docks, go to the unemployed thronging about the Labour Exchanges, go to the miners victimised in the late strike and tell them it is not in Parliament that their salvation lies, but in their own hands and those of their fellow-workers, organised as a class to substitute Communism for this capitalist system of exploitation.

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