

The Far Eastern Republic of Siberia.

Workers' Dreadnought

FOR MUTUAL SERVICE.

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WEEKLY.



This beautiful cut by Ludovico Rodo, printed in two colours, will form the cover design of the first issue of *Germinal*, the new magazine of fiction and poetry, which the "Dreadnought" Publishers will issue next month



GERMINAL



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OUT
NEXT
MONTH.

THE UTOPIA OF MR. AND MRS. WEBB.

A Consultation for the Socialist Commonwealth of Great Britain. By Sydney and Beatrice Webb. (Longmans Green and Co., 12/6.)

Socialists who study the Webbs' proposals will be amazed to find their "Socialist" Constitution leading off with the statement that it "does not involve the abolition of the ancient institution of an hereditary Monarch." Most naively, the authors observe that "such a titular or ceremonial headship is almost indispensable," "especially for the British Commonwealth of Nations." "No one," they add, has been able to suggest any practical way in which the congeries of races, religions, and civilisations that we call the British Empire, could either do without a titular head, or obtain one by popular election among 400 millions of people.

The Lords.

The House of Lords Mr. and Mrs. Webb would abolish, but:

"Whether the little group of 'Law Lords' who are now made peers in order that they may form the Supreme Court of Appeal, should or should not continue, for this purely judicial purpose, to sit under the title, and with the archaic dignity of the House of Lords, does not seem material. One learns as one reads that things would be surprisingly little changed in this Utopia of the Webbs.

Two Parliaments.

The Webbs have not disdained to copy from the Guild Socialists the proposal to make two Parliaments, but they divide the functions somewhat differently in this curious Constitution of theirs. One of their Parliaments is called a political Parliament; its function is to deal with national defence, international relations and the administration of justice, its "sphere" being guilelessly described as the "Police Power." The other nations will hardly appreciate the title, which seems to suggest a divine right of the British Empire to act as the policeman of the world. The business of the second, or "Social Parliament," is described as housekeeping.

Imperialism.

After a word or two about the Army and Navy, the authors observe that "the guardianship of non-adult communities, and the gradual working out of self-government for them," must long remain part of the functions of the Political Democracy of Great Britain.

The remark does not surprise us, for both in the Boer War and the last war, the Webbs have thrown in their lot with Jingo Imperialism; but we protest that this view is altogether out of keeping with Socialist ideology. The maintenance of order and the Courts of Justice at home are stressed as important, and we are told that the Political Parliament will require a Premier, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and one or more Ministers for the Dominions, India, the Crown Colonies and Dependencies, one or more Ministers of National Defence, and a Minister of Justice.

The League of Nations, say the authors, may cause the armies and navies to survive merely as police forces—against whom they do not indicate; and the British Empire may evolve into an Alliance of Free Nations, but these things they insist will take a long time; in any case, the Foreign Office, the Colonial Office, and the India Office will grow busier. Do not fear, O King; the Webbs will not abolish you! Do not fear, O ruling families of England; there will always be posts for your sons in the Government offices of the Webbs' Utopia! Moreover:

More Work for the Lawyers.

"The Political Democracy has plainly a great and even a growing sphere in the Ministry of Justice." The suppression of riots may fill a smaller space. . . . There may be a diminution of crimes, of malice, or violence . . . but the relations of one

citizen to another, and of all citizens to the various organs of the community, will need regulating, and their mutual differences will need to be authoritatively adjusted, not less in the future than in the past; but, on the contrary, with the growing interdependence of the population, very much more than in a simple community. The growth of the work of the Courts of Justice in the domain of civil proceedings, will, we imagine, more than keep pace with the decline in their criminal work.

Obviously the Webbs have taken pains to disarm the hostility of the legal profession towards their Utopian schemes; but in promising plenty of work for the lawyers they have forgotten the millions of people who will dislike the prospect of being the victims of the legal profession. Indeed, these two cautious people who are so anxious that nothing should be said that might alarm those who fear to contemplate a change from the present system, have produced a constitution which would leave things much as they are could it come into operation.

The Object of Socialisation.

The Webbs explicitly state that they do not think private property, private capitalist enterprise, and the inheritance of property will ever completely disappear. In so far as they propose expropriation of the Capitalist, they observe:

"Each owner should receive in compensation the fair market value of that of which he is compulsorily dispossessed, as between a willing seller and a willing buyer."

The community will, of course, be saddled with the interest and sinking fund, or the annuity; and will thus on the face of it be no wealthier than before; just as the expropriated person will be no poorer, and the aggregate tribute on production levied by owners up no less than before. The object of "socialisation" is "socialisation"—that is to say, the transformation of profit-making enterprise into public service, not the enrichment of the community by confiscation.

That seems to us a most erroneous statement. To us it seems that the objects of socialisation are to free production from the tribute levied by non-producers, and, precisely, to enrich the community. Mr. and Mrs. Webb, from their home on the Thames Embankment, need not go far to find the poverty of the community and its extreme need of enrichment: neglected houses urgently requiring the expenditure of labour and material upon them are within a stone's throw of their dwelling; overcrowding, lack of food, clothing, furniture, and all the necessities of life, are to be seen in acute form amongst people living but a very short distance from their door.

The Webbs observe, as a corrective, that the Socialist Commonwealth will tax the citizens in proportion to their ability to pay, and therefore the compensation to expropriated Capitalists will be paid by taxes raised from the Capitalists.

It is clear, however, that the Capitalist, in the long run, swiftly passes the cost of taxation on to be borne by others. The example of the super-tax should have taught that to whoever had failed to realise it before.

The Webbs' Utopia would by no means remove the burden of non-productive labour; it would greatly increase it. As they insist there will be more work for the lawyers. They also insist on a superabundance of Government officials and elected persons. Wages, and all the existing ramifications of the money system, are to continue. A national minimum wage for each occupation will be fixed by elected persons, which will provide approximate economic equality; but added to this "functional expenses" will be allowed, according to the character of the occupation. These will provide, no doubt, for the privileges of those who are crafty and avaricious enough to expect more than they are willing shall be permitted to others. It is interesting to observe one scorn expressed towards the present payment

of Members of Parliament, when, according to the Webbs, is barely sufficient to pay a member's postage stamps. One can easily visualise the style of living that some elected persons will declare to be necessary to their function.

The Webbs declare that the workshop cannot be allowed autonomy; it must be under perpetual direction and control of superior authority. The workers may elect their managers. These must be appointed by superior authority and selected by persons with judgments trained to that end. The expert—nay, the person whose sole function is to select the expert—is to control everyone.

The people who actually carry out a task are in no case to be trusted to do so. Even when the element of profit-making is eliminated, the Webbs seem to be convinced that bad work will be given unless some inspector is liable to appear to enforce punishment in case of default. The people who do the work are assumed to be incapable of maintaining a high standard except by outside pressure.

Moreover, these Utopians are obsessed by the idea of injustices, disputes, and wrong doing. The social Parliament, they anticipate, will be always desiring to make punitive regulations, but to safeguard the liberty the citizens these must be sanctioned by the Political Parliament. The Political Parliament, on the other hand, will be always desiring to spend money on its punitive forces: its army, navy, and police force; but to limit such expenditure it must be sanctioned by the Social Parliament. If a strike broke out the workers would be striking against the social Parliament or the National Board of the industry concerned. The Webbs naively assert that the strikers would be assured of being dealt with impartially, because it would be the Political Parliament which would send the police to keep them in order.

The Webbs oppose occupational voting or any sort of Soviet administration. They object that there are more miners than doctors and, therefore, an occupational franchise would not provide proportional representation. Moreover, they say that the members of an assembly elected on vocational lines could have no direct interest in common. "To have interests in common . . . appears to be indispensable for any effective assembly," they say.

The last objection seems to us extremely inconsistent, for surely an assembly of economically equal producers in a Socialist Commonwealth must have infinitely more in common than the Parliament of to-day, composed as it is of competitive Capitalists, lawyers, and professional politicians forging their careers, as well as representatives of wage workers!

The entire fabric of the Webbs' Utopia, and the standpoint from which they approach it, however, seems to us fundamentally anti-Socialist. They visualise an assembly of warring interests, and competing claims, and no doubt under the constitution they propose, they would get such an assembly.

They do not seem to contemplate that miners would meet as miners to discuss the efficiency of mining, without any attempt to outvote doctors, who, if they should meet in assembly with miners, would come to voice the medical requirements for safeguarding the health of miners without any thought or capacity of curtailing the economic position of miners. The idea of tutoring, inspecting, regulating and punishing the people "runs," as they say in another connection, "like a red thread" through all the Webbs' proposals.

They do not visualise a society of intelligent people of good will, working with zest and of their own volition for the love of work, the pleasure of seeing its results, and for the common service. The Webbs cannot imagine a society in which all are freely supplied with the common products, ever ready in abundance for all comers.

The Utopia of the Webbs is that of the policeman and the inspector. It is a Utopia of class distinctions and economic differences. It will not do.

THE SEVEN THAT WERE HANGED.

(By Leonid Andreyev, a Famous Russian Author.)

THE WALLS CRUMBLE.

The unknown, surnamed Werner, was a man fatigued by struggle. He had loved life, the theatre, society, art, literature, passionately. Endowed with an excellent memory, he spoke several languages perfectly. He was fond of dress, and had excellent manners. Of the whole group of terrorists, he was the only one who was able to appear in society without risk of recognition.

For a long time already, and without his comrades having noticed it, he had entertained a profound contempt for men. More of a mathematician than a poet, ecstasy and inspiration had remained so far things unknown to him; at times he would look upon himself as a madman seeking to square the circle in the seas of human blood. The enemy against which he daily struggled could not inspire him with respect; it was nothing but a compact network of stupidities, treasons, falsehoods, base deceptions.

The thing that had finally destroyed in him for ever it seemed to him, the desire to life was his execution of a police spy in obedience to the order of his party. He had killed him tranquilly, but at sight of this human countenance, inanimate, calm, but still false, pitiable in spite of everything, he suddenly lost his esteem for himself and his work. He considered himself as the most indifferent, the least interesting, of beings. Being a man of will, he did not love his party; apparently he remained the same; but from that time there was something cold and terrifying in his eyes. He said nothing to anyone.

He possessed also a very rare quality: he knew not fear. He pitied those of his comrades who had this feeling, especially Vasily Kashirin. But his pity was cold, almost official.

Werner understood that the execution was not simply death, but also something more. In any case, he was determined to meet it calmly, to live until the end as if nothing had happened or would happen. Only in this way could he express the profoundest contempt for the execution and preserve his liberty of mind. In the court-room—his comrades, although knowing well his cold and haughty intrepidity, perhaps would not have believed it themselves—he thought not of life or of death: he played in his mind a difficult game of chess, giving it his deepest and quietest attention. An excellent player, he had begun this game on the very day of his imprisonment, and he kept it up continually. And the verdict that condemned him did not displace a single piece on the invisible board.

The idea that he probably would not finish the game did not stop Werner. On the morning of the last day he began by correcting a plan that had failed the night before. With hands pressed between his knees, he sat a long time motionless; then he arose, and began to walk, reflecting. He had a gait of his own; the upper part of his body inclined a little forward, and he brought down his heels forcibly; even when the ground was dry, he left clear footprints behind him. He whistled softly a rather simple Italian melody, which helped him to reflect.

But now he was shrugging his shoulders and feeling his pulse. His heart beat fast, but tranquilly and regularly, with a sonorous force. Like a novice thrown into prison for the first time, he examined attentively the cell, the bolts, the chair screwed to the wall, and said to himself:

"Why have I such a sensation of joy, of liberty? Yes, of liberty; I think of to-morrow's execution, and it seems to me that it does not exist. I look at the walls, and they seem to me not to exist either. And I feel as free as if, instead of being in prison, I had just come out of another cell in which I had been confined all my life."

Werner's hands began to tremble, a thing unknown to him. His thought became more and more vibrant. It seemed to him that tongues of fire were moving in his head, trying to escape from his brain to lighten the still obscure distance. Finally the flame darted forth, and the horizon was brilliantly illuminated.

The vague lassitude that had tortured Werner during the last two years had disappeared at sight of death; his beautiful youth came back as he played. It was even something more than beautiful youth. With the astonishing clearness of mind that sometimes lifts man to the supreme heights of meditation, Werner saw suddenly both life and death; and the majesty of this new spectacle struck him. He seemed to be following a path as narrow as the edge of a blade, on the crest of the loftiest mountain. On one side he saw life, and on the other he saw death; and they were like two deep seas, sparkling and beautiful, melting into each other at the horizon in a single infinite extension.

"What is this, then? What a divine spectacle!" said he slowly.

He arose involuntarily and straightened up, as if in presence of the Supreme Being. And, annihilating the walls, annihilating space and time, by the force of his all-penetrating look, he cast his eyes into the depths of the life that he had quitted.

And life took a new aspect. He no longer tried, as of old, to translate into words what he was; moreover, in the whole range of human language, still so poor and miserly, he found no words adequate. The paltry, dirty, and evil things that suggested to him contempt and sometimes even disgust at the sight of men had completely disappeared, just as, to people rising in a balloon, the mud and filth of the narrow streets become invisible and ugliness changes into beauty.

With an unconscious movement, Werner walked toward the table and leaned upon it with his right arm. Haughty and authoritarian by nature, he had never been seen in a prodder, freer, and more imperious attitude; never had his face worn such a look, never had he so lifted up his head, for at no previous time had he been as free and powerful as now, in this prison, on the eve of execution, at the threshold of death.

In his illuminated eyes men wore a new aspect, an unknown beauty and charm. He hovered above time, and never had this humanity, which only the night before was howling like a wild beast in the forests, appeared to him so young. What had heretofore seemed to him terrible, unpardonable, and base, became suddenly touching and naive, just as he cherished in the child the awkwardness of its behaviour, the incoherent stammerings in which its unconscious genius glimmers, its laughable errors and blunders, its cruel bruises.

"My dear friends!" Werner smiled suddenly, and his attitude lost its haughty and imposing force. Again he became the prisoner suffering in his narrow cell, weary of seeing a curious eye steadily fixed upon him through the door. He sat down, but not in his usual stiff position, and looked at the walls and the gratings with a weak and gentle smile such as his face had never worn. And something happened which had never happened to him before: he wept.

"My dear comrades!" he whispered, shedding bitter tears. "My dear comrades!"

What mysterious path had he followed to pass from a feeling of unlimited and haughty liberty to this passionate and moving pity? He did not know. Did he really pity his comrades, or did his tears hide something more passionate, something really greater? His heart, which had suddenly revived and reblossomed, could not tell him. Werner wept, and whispered:

"My dear comrades! My dear comrades! And in this man who wept, and who smiled through his tears, no one—not the judges, or his comrades, or himself—would have recognised the cold and haughty Werner, sceptical and insolent.

PLOUGHING A LONELY FURROW.

He was an inhabitant of the New Forest, and when I first met him his figure attracted my attention immediately. Obviously he was not a Forest native, though he strode along with confidence and an air of stolid independence. He was over six feet in height, and strode with long measured steps, hands in pockets. He was probably just over 30, but seemed older by the beard he wore. His eyes especially betrayed his foreign origin. He was a Czecho-Slovakian.

To most of his neighbours he was taciturn, but I possessed a key to his heart—sympathy and understanding—and to me he talked freely.

In his native country his father had been a well-to-do manufacturer who fell on evil days. The son came to England and worked in the textile factories of the West Riding. Here he learned the English language and the characteristics of Yorkshire people. Here, also he understood the slavery of the operatives to their machines and mills and mill-owners.

He longed for freedom, and for the open air. He wanted release from the thralldom of industrialism. He resented being exploited and believed in co-operation as an alternative to exploitation. He looked lovingly towards the land, and the opportunity of joining a group of similarly minded people presented itself. There proved to be an incompatibility of temperament, and he left them. But he had learnt much. His knowledge of human nature had grown, and his technical knowledge had been considerably enhanced. The desire for freedom and the open air was as strong as ever. In the New Forest he sought his opportunity. He rented three acres of land and a thatched cottage. His capital was of the smallest. It was months before he could borrow sufficient money to buy a donkey.

Until then he was his own donkey, and worked early and late. He borrowed a horse and plough when able, and cultivated much of his land by digging. He faced overwhelming odds. The land was smothered with couch grass. He had to erect his own pigsties and goat sheds. His rent he complained was unreasonable. Oftentimes he had no more than a shilling or two in hand, and was in debt. He was his own house-keeper as well as his own farm hand. Returning to his cottage he had to light his own fire and prepare his own meal. He did his own washing and his own mending. His clothes were well, but always neatly patched. Sometimes he would leave his land work to do carpentry for ready cash.

In his kitchen hung his violin, but rarely did it give forth music, and when it did it was usually of a mournful kind. He yearned to express himself on canvas, but could not find the time.

Because he lived the open-air life, because he desired neither to exploit nor be exploited, he persevered in the ploughing of his lonely furrow. He was proud of his perseverance, but he paid the price. He paid in the innumerable things he was compelled to sacrifice, which in turn brought at times irritability of temper.

He regretted nothing. He considered his work a discipline. He realised salvation could only come through combined effort, and his ideal of co-operation was his inspiration.

For the cause of freedom he enslaved himself more fully than the factories enslaved him. To those who knew him his example inspires and prompts a deeper faith in the ultimate realisation of the co-operative commonwealth.

E. B.

More bombing by the British in Iraq. Shiekh Mahmud is suspected of intriguing with the Turks, so the British Government are giving a demonstration of the blessings of British rule.

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Our View.

AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS have gone back to work for a wage of 25/- for 50 hours' work, 6d. an hour being paid for the first four hours' overtime, and 7½d. per hour thereafter.

The settlement was arranged by Mr Ramsay MacDonald, Leader of the Labour Party, in his room at the House of Commons. The Bishop of Norwich has given thanks to God for this hunger pact, and has invited the representatives of the Farmers' and Agricultural Labourers' Union to celebrate the pact by a luncheon in his Palace.

The farmers locked out the men because they refused to accept a reduction of wages to 5½d. an hour for 50 hours. The labourers then plucked up courage to demand 30/- a week. They have been negotiated into acceptance of the 25/- they had before the lock-out.

The Bishop said:

"The good will all round has never failed, and I want to celebrate this splendid fact in a fellowship of intercourse round my table with my friends."

O ye pharisees and hypocrites!

THE LABOURERS wage remains at 25/- for 50 hours, but the farmers have secured concessions from the Government which will better their financial position. Taxation of agricultural land is to be reduced, and an excise duty is to be placed on imported barley. The labourers are given no share of these benefits: their position is as it was before the lock-out—lower than before the war.

REVOLT seems to be waking at last amongst the much-oppressed workers of the Ruhr. We await direct news of what happened at Mulheim; but we reject as altogether impossible and extremely ill-judged the story which Mr Price, writing from Berlin to the "Daily Herald," gives from "an eye-witness at Mulheim."

It is there suggested that the affair was engineered by the French, who had offered the strikers 1,000,000,000 marks each if they would arrest and deliver to the French the German police official, Weinolt. The French have made many arrests; they could easily arrest another German police official, should they desire. Mr. Philips Price concludes that Communists have had nothing to do with the affair. Mr. Philips Price is referring, of course, to the Parliamentary Third International Communists, with whose Berlin headquarters he is in close touch. He is doubtless well informed as to the activities of the Third Internationalists, but it is really regrettable that he should attempt to depreciate the struggle of the Ruhr workers as he does in the following passages from his "Herald" message, published on April 23rd:

"On Wednesday morning 300 unemployed engaged by the municipality on relief works struck and came to the Town Hall demanding an increase in their pay. At present these workers are getting only

slightly less than the metal workers in the Ruhr, and therefore they are not suffering any more than other classes of labour under the huge rise in prices. It is difficult therefore to account for the separate action of these men in any other way than by assuming that some third party had induced them to take hasty steps. . . .

This is a very remarkable statement, coming from a member of the Third International Party, which is never tired of declaring it is revolutionary. Mr. Price says that the unemployed on relief work were getting "only a little less" than the metal workers, and therefore were "not suffering any more" than other workers. Does it occur to him that that little may have been the proverbial last straw which made the burden of hardship unbearable? Moreover, are not all classes of workers suffering intolerable hardship in the Ruhr? It is strange that Mr. Price should find it difficult to account for revolt under such conditions. To us the marvel is only that revolt has been delayed so long. The pity is that some people calling themselves Communists, Socialists, and Labourists, renounce their sympathy to the uprising of the oppressed unless it has been engineered by their own party.

At the time of writing, the Mulheim episode, during which the rebels were in control of the town for two days, and in which nine people were shot and seventy wounded, is reported to be over. There have also been revolts by the unemployed at Ruhrort, Essen, and other towns. The leader of the Mulheim insurgents is said to have been Kurtin, a leader in the sailors' rebellion at Kiel in 1918. He has been dangerously wounded.

Reports conflict, but one report in the "Manchester Guardian" states that the uprising was spontaneous, and due to the cruelty of the German green police, who use bayonets and fire on unarmed crowds. The fifty workers arrested at Mulheim have been treated with great brutality, according to a "Daily Telegraph" report, which states that the prisoners were stripped to the waist and made to stand on their toes in a crouching attitude. When they showed signs of exhaustion they were forced to resume their painful attitude by blows on the shins with whips.

On Saturday, April 21st, at Dusseldorf, a demonstration of the unemployed was joined by men employed on some building work. A patrol of German police refused to allow the procession to proceed. The people refused to disperse; the police fired, wounding six persons.

Are we going to see at last a serious effort of the German workers to throw off the dual exploitation of German and foreign Capitalism? The proletarian political parties from the Third International rightward are apparently unready to begin such an effort; only from the Left movements and the spontaneous uprising of the masses may action be looked for.

MR. HAMILTON FYFFE, editor of the "Daily Herald," in one of those comfortable little extravaganzas, leaders of his, protests against the "orgies of spending," of which the latest Royal Wedding is being made the occasion. At this time of widespread hardship Mr. FYffe declares such lavish pouring out of money to be "both a shame and a peril," adding that he believes his view is shared by the King and Queen, whom he asserts "have simple tastes." Such an assertion is really surprising to us. The extravagance of Court functions is growing from year to year; the costliness of the Royal Family is continually on the increase.

Republican sentiment was strong in the early days of Queen Victoria, and on most occasions she clothed herself quietly like a simple bourgeois. If the gowns of the present royalties ever come to be placed side by side with Victoria's in the London Museum, the contrast will be apparent to all beholders. The Press advertises the royalties so much in these days that they are supposed to be

immensely popular. Mr. Hamilton FYffe, who is so careful to insist that not the King and Queen, but other naughty people, are responsible for the extravagance of royal weddings, is apparently glib enough to accept on its face value the elaborate make-believe of royal popularity. "The Royal Family cannot be blamed," he says, but this is what he adds about other people:

"People who junket and fling their money about while members of their families, through undeserved misfortune, go hungry and wear broken boots, are called cads. That term seems to us to be fairly applicable to any who indulge themselves extravagantly while so many of the nation suffer painful and humiliating privations." Those words remind us that in a movement mainly composed of poor people, it is unfitting for some editors to accept salaries of £1,000 a year or more, whilst those who provide those salaries dwell in the poverty which Mr. FYffe describes.

EGYPT is now supposed to be a free and independent nation; nevertheless, the British military occupation continues as before. Egypt's new constitution is a very retrograde one, giving the King every power to nominate and dismiss Ministers, to dissolve the Chamber of Deputies, to return laws to Parliament for renewed examination, and to declare war and make peace. If a war is called an offensive war, it will require the consent of Parliament; but wars are never called offensive wars now.

There is a Senate, two-fifths of the members being nominated. The Senators' age-limit is 40, and their mandate lasts ten years. The Egyptian Parliament will have no right to interfere with budgetary provisions relating to international engagements. The constitution in no way affects Egypt's obligations towards foreign countries, or what are called the "rights of foreigners in Egypt."

LORD CURZON AND LORD GREY, the principal spokesmen on foreign affairs of the Tories and the Liberals, showed by their statements to the House of Lords on the Ruhr occupation that their policies are identical.

Both make a prominent point of maintaining the Entente with France, both deprecate the Ruhr occupation, but refuse to hinder it; both urge the German Government to submit to the superior force of France and to pay as much as the Allies decide can be rung out of the German people; both say that the British Government must remain in readiness to co-operate with France in solving the Ruhr deadlock, which means, of course, that the British Government must be ready to intervene in support of British Capitalist interests when advisable. In all essentials the policies of Lords Grey and Curzon are alike: the rest is merely camouflage.

THE FLOOD in the Dandy Pit at Pensnett, and the fact that the cage jammed during the rescue work, recalls the Government's refusal to offer prizes for the invention of safety appliances as it is doing for improvements to war aircraft. Remember that the miners trapped in the flooded mine have had their wages reduced to starvation-point.

THE BLACK Country Mine Disaster.

Lord Leverhulme has bought the island of Stornoway and become Lord of the Western Isles. His company is prosecuting homeless people who are camping out in huts on unused land in Stornoway. Four hundred young men and a score of young women left Stornoway for Canada on April 21st because they cannot get a living at home. Lord Leverhulme sent them some flowers. Did they bear the motto "R.I.P."?

Nine hundred young people have left the Hebrides within seven days—ousted by the property owners who have taken all.

FROM THE PUBLISHERS.

The Far Eastern Republic of Siberia.

By Henry Kittredge Norton. (George Allen and Unwin, 12/6.)

Mr. Norton is an American. His book belongs to the class of patriotic histories, but it is patriotic from the standpoint of the United States, not from that of Siberia. Mr. Norton tells how the idea of Bolshevism rose in Siberia after news came of the March revolution in Moscow and Petrograd. Krasnoschekoff, who later became President of the Far Eastern Republic, found his efforts towards Communism opposed by fellow-Communists, who said:

"The Russian Far East is an economic desert, and it needs the waters of Capitalism to make it blossom before it will be a fitting home for Communism."

In October 1917 came the Bolshevik seizure of power in Petrograd. A Communist convention was sitting in Vladivostok when the news came. The convention was split. Krasnoschekoff went to Nikolsk Ossuriski, and called a conference there, which decided to call a conference of Far Eastern Soviets at Habarovsk on December 11th. The zemstvo or county government conference, was also meeting at Habarovsk on December 10th. The zemstvo representatives wished to retain the existing form of government. Negotiations were going forward between the two parties, when an intercepted telegram was brought in, revealing that the commander of the Russian troops was negotiating with the Japanese for a counter-revolutionary intervention. The Soviet representative demanded that the zemstvos arrest the commander and form a coalition with the Soviets against aggression. The zemstvos agreed to the arrest, but rejected the coalition. Thereupon the Soviets dissolved the zemstvo conference.

On December 30th a Japanese warship arrived in the harbour, and shortly afterwards another Japanese cruiser and British and American warships. Then strange incidents took place. Men wearing Czarist military overcoats entered an hotel and robbed the guests. Several foreigners were assaulted in the streets. The Soviet was demanding workers' control, and sending its commissars to the banks and business houses. The representatives of foreign Powers complained, and induced their weaker brother, China, to close the Manchurian border to traffic, which seriously interfered with the food supplies of Vladivostok. Even the zemstvo protested at this, and the Chinese Consul agreed to let food come through for the civilian population only, provided the representatives of foreign Powers should control its distribution. On the zemstvo refusing to assent, the border was re-opened; but the threat was made to close it again unless the "Red Guards" and other features of the new system were discontinued and the old authorities restored.

Meanwhile the Soviet Government was consolidating its position. When it took power in Blagoveschensk, Japanese and Chinese troops came in, and under their protection the counter-revolutionaries formed a City Guard of 5,000 men. On March 1st fighting began between the Red Guards and Whites, consisting of foreign troops and reactionaries. The Whites surrounded the Soviet House. Krasnoschekoff, the President of the new republic, was within. He agreed to attend a conference with the hostile commanders, but when he did so was arrested. Fifteen thousand peasants now rallied to the defence of the Soviets, and Soviet reinforcements arrived from Habarovsk. Krasnoschekoff was freed, and the Whites put to flight.

The bankers had also fled, taking 45,000,000 gold roubles from the banks. As the Capitalist system was still functioning, although the Soviets were nominally in power, this caused a good deal of trouble. In April the zemstvo and municipal council of Vladivostok were dissolved, and the Soviets nominally formed the only government. Economic affairs were delegated to an economic and

financial council, with a man named Leonov at the head.

The Soviets ordered Leonov to nationalise the industries. Leonov refused. A conference was called, and decided against nationalisation.

Thus the coming of the Soviets had made little change; but trouble presently developed, for which Mr. Norton, anxious to show his loyalty to the United States Government, declares that only the Soviet Government in Moscow and the Japanese were really in fault. In the attempt to whitewash President Wilson's administration, Mr. Norton repeats many of the old exploded misrepresentations of the affair of the Czechoslovak prisoners who, though ostensibly turning to get away from Russia to fight on the Western front against Austria nevertheless departed from their course to assist the Russian counter-revolutionaries and carry on a prolonged warfare in Russia.

The Soviet Government had agreed to provide trains for the Czechoslovaks to cross Asiatic Russia to the Pacific, whence they were to take ship. Mr. Norton would have us believe, however, that Lenin and Trotsky were so anxious to convert the Czechoslovaks, who, he amazingly declares, were most of them Socialists, and all educated men, that they delayed them continually, and even went so far as to pull in their trains between carloads of "Red" soldiers under German leaders, who put a little brotherly ginger into the conversion by opening fire on the Czechoslovaks. Mr. Norton tells us that 400 of the Czechoslovaks, with one rifle for every ten men—that is to say, possessing forty rifles—were surrounded by "several thousand" Red soldiers, but in half an hour the Czechoslovaks had sprung from their cars, routed the Red troops, armed themselves, driven out the Soviet authorities, and become masters of the situation. Thus we are asked to believe that it was with the arms they took from the Red Guards that 50,000 Czechoslovaks equipped themselves and captured a territory "as large as the United States."

Mr. Norton cannot quite understand why the Czechoslovaks now made war on the Russian and Siberian Soviets, seizing Vladivostok, and advancing the attack far westward, instead of eastward to the coast. He says, however, that the Siberians believe the Czechoslovaks were prevailed upon by the Allied Powers to attack the Russians, as a condition of Allied recognition of the Czechoslovak Republic. He adds that the Czechs "probably did not intend to interfere with the local political situation, but the disarming of the Red forces at once placed the reactionaries in control of the situation, and they were not slow to make the most of the unexpected assistance."

Nevertheless, as our readers will remember, the cry that the Czechoslovaks must be "rescued" was proclaimed throughout the Allied countries.

Mr. Norton now goes on to tell how the Allies intervened in Siberia, as they said, to rescue the Czechoslovaks and "to give the Russians an opportunity to overthrow the yoke which the Austro-German combination wanted to impose on Russia for all time."

The United States had been reluctant to agree to this step, Mr. Norton says, but he adds:

"At last the pressure upon America from the various Allies became irresistible, and from the sole opponent of intervention, America was persuaded to become its proponent. The Wilson administration, once convinced that intervention could be undertaken without suspicion of exploitation of the Russian people, and that the general sympathy for the Czechoslovaks could be used as a basis for clearing Siberia of Teutonic influence, succumbed to the pressure of the Allies, and issued an invitation to Japan to join the United States in an expedition to Siberia."

Mr. Norton admits that the only basis for the pretence that there were Teutonic influences in Siberia was the story that in that

vast territory there were 20,000 German war prisoners—a very unlikely story indeed!

As Mr. Norton says the Soviet Government replied to the American and Japanese Government declarations announcing the intervention by asking that those Governments would formulate their wishes in the matter. No reply was received. Mr. Norton insists, however:

"That the real motives of America were as stated in the declaration issued at the time, there can be no doubt. . . . There was no room to suspect its sincerity."

What an imposition upon a credulous public are the histories of patriotic historians! Can anyone be so credulous, however, as to accept such a statement? As further proof of the disinterestedness of America, Mr. Norton quotes the plan to send to Siberia a commission of merchants, agricultural experts, labour advisers, Red Cross representatives, and agents of the Y.M.C.A. Japan also sent an economic commission, but Mr. Norton does not think Japan was sincere!

The British came first, on August 3rd, then the French, then the Japanese, finally the Americans on August 15th. The Allies now began to quarrel amongst themselves. They had agreed to bring 7,000 men each; but Japan, being nearest at hand, brought more, and the others could never discover how many. Whilst the other Allies went conquering far more territory elsewhere. The worst of it was that Japan had troops enough on the ground to crush all her gallant allies if she chose. War between Japan and America was very near, according to Mr. Norton; but the crisis passed.

Then the Great War ended with the defeat of Germany. The new situation was "puzzling to the Allies," Mr. Norton observes, since:

"They were in arms against a Government which was accepted by the great majority of Russians. They must necessarily accept the Bolsheviks as enemies without any of the formalities required by the conventions of civilised warfare."

Mr. Norton goes on to detail the rivalries amongst the Allies and the rise of the counter-revolutionary Russian Generals, Kolchak, Semenov, and the others, who were equipped and supported by the Allies; and who initiated such a hideous reign of terror, as Mr. Norton explains, that the peasants rose against them in overwhelming numbers. It is a sordid story. Mr. Norton blames only Japan and the Russian Generals; but few people, reading his pages, will be able to agree with him, even have they made no previous study of the subject. Mr. Norton shows that the intervention turned out to be without profit for America, because the Allies could control neither Japan nor the Russian Generals.

The book contains some interesting documents relating to the constitution of the Far Eastern Republic, and a map, which should be studied in reading of the ostensibly altruistic operations of the United States and the other Allies.

THE SIGNALMAN.

The death of signalman W. T. J. Harrison, at St. Paul's Road Station, Camden Town, after forty years' service on the railway, is a reminder that in the class that makes the wheels go round, men and women daily, and as a matter of course, face danger in the course of duty. The starting signal having broken down, Harrison left his box and thrice crossed the metals to give the signal verbally to the drivers of on-coming trains. The fourth time he was run down and killed by a light engine.

Shareholders draw their dividends from the railways without risk.

The results of science should be devoted to alleviating the lot of the worker.—Sir Richard Glazebrook, late director of the National Physical Laboratory.

ESPERANTO.

Lesson 15.

IEL, KIEL, Etc.

Iel, in some manner, somehow. Indefinite. Kiel, in what manner, how, as. K asks a KWestion.

Tiel, in that manner, so. T, like a sign-post, points out.

Neniel, in no manner, nohow. Negative. Ciel, in every manner (or way).

Comparison of Adjectives.

Bona, good; pli bona, better (literally, "more good"); alta, high; pli alta, higher; bela, beautiful; pli bela, more beautiful.

When we compare the qualities of two things, we say that one thing is **better, higher, more beautiful**, etc., than the other. Note that, in English, we usually make this comparison by adding -er to the adjective in short words or, in long words, by prefixing **more**. In Esperanto we have one way only, i.e., we use **pli** (more) before the adjective.

Bona domo, a good house; pli bona domo, a better house.

Alta domo, a high house; pli alta domo, a higher house.

Bela domo, a beautiful house; pli bela domo, a more beautiful house.

Plej, most (pronounce like "play"). When we compare three or more things, in English we say **best, highest, most beautiful**, etc. The usual way, with short words, is to add **-est** to the adjective; with long words we use **most**. Again, in Esperanto, we have but one way, that is, to put **plej** (most) before the adjective—e.g., la plej bona domo, the best house; la plej alta domo, the highest house; la plej bela domo, the most beautiful house.

(The form with **pli** is called by grammarians the **Comparative of Superiority**; that with **plej** is called the **Superlative of Superiority**. Two long terms for simple things. The best thing to do is to forget the terms and remember the words **pli** and **plej**.)

If the two things compared are equal in quality, we use in English the words **as** . . . as, e.g., as good as, as beautiful as. In Esperanto we use **tiel** (so) . . . kiel (as, in what manner). For example, Tiu domo estas tiel bona kiel mia domo, that house is as good as my house. (Use the same sentence with **tiel alta kiel**, as high as, and **tiel bela kiel**, as beautiful as.)

(Grammarians call this form the **Comparative of Equality**, but it is preferable to learn the words **tiel** . . . kiel, as . . . as, rather than to worry about the particular term used to describe this form in the grammarians' catalogue.)

Suffix -aj.

The suffix **-aj** means **something made of, or possessing the quality of**. Sukero, sugar; sukeraĵo, something made of sugar; mola, soft; molaĵo, a soft thing; laboro, work; laboraĵo, something made by work.

Vocabulary.

forta	strong
ol	than
socio	society
socia	social
ankaŭ	also
ordo	order
produkta	productive
produktos	will produce
konstruos	will build
domo	house
homoj	people, men
forgesis	forgot
nomo	name
vorto	word
povas	can, is able
memori	to remember

Translate.—Kapitalismo ne estas tiel bona por la homoj kiel Komunismo. Komunismo estas pli alta socia ordo. Ĝi ankaŭ estas pli produktiva ol Kapitalismo. Sub Komunismo la laboristo produktos nur la plej bonan laboraĵon. Ni konstruos pli bonajn kaj pli belajn domojn . . . kaj pli bonajn homojn! Li iel forgesis la nomon. Kiel oni povas memori vortojn? Oni memoras per atento. (One remembers by means of attention.) Mi nenial povas memori vortojn.

LESSONS FOR PROLETARIAN SCHOOLS.

EARLY CIVILISATION IN MESOPOTAMIA.

(Continued from last week.)

Two fragments of a Sumerian code of laws in Sumerian have been found, which are supposed to date from the Dynasty of Ur (2405-2347 B.C.).

The fragments of this code of laws deal with the proper care of the soil, which was important to the whole community, and in order that neglect might not injure a neighbour; the protection of property; regulation of property rights of members of the family; prevention of destitution by the obligation of parents to support children, children to support parents, and by the obligation of the community to aid its members in case of misfortune. Only fragments of this old code remain.

Some clauses deal with the planting of trees, a matter of great importance to the people of early civilisations, not only because the date-palm was valuable as a food and in other ways, but because of the moderating influence which trees have upon extremes of climate of heat and cold, and their efficacy against drought, tornado, and so on.

The owner of land would, in those days, sometimes turn over the planting of his land to another, the profits being shared by the landlord and the planter. The code provided that if a part of the land had been left unplanted, the planter must bear the loss, that part of the land being counted in that iron which his own share of profits must be drawn.

The code further provides that if a man took over the garden of another and neglected it, and failed to pollenate it, he should pay a fine of ten shekels of silver; also, if a man neglected his own land and his neighbour's land suffered thereby, the former should indemnify the latter for what he had lost through the neglect.

If the owner of a house left it and failed to pay the taxes, and another man occupied the house and paid the taxes, and the owner did not eject the occupier within three years, the house belonged to the occupier, and the owner had no right to protest. This provision was partly made in the interests of Government revenue, but it was a recognition that a man had no right to monopolise a house—and with a house went land—which he did not use.

To-day society absolves a man from payment of rates if he leaves his property empty. If homeless people enter an abandoned house they are prosecuted, as in the case of 40 South Grove, Peckham, where homeless unemployed ex-Servicemen were prosecuted for "unlawful seizure of lands and tenements" under Acts of Henry VI. and Richard II.—Acts which were never designed for such cases.

The preference now shown by the law towards property, and its neglect of human need, is due to the elimination of the customs and habits of early Communism and the development of the private-property ideology amongst the peoples.

Private property, being an established institution, when the Sumerian code was compiled, we are not surprised to find a provision that a man who cuts wood on his neighbour's land shall pay half a mina of silver. It is also provided that if a man who was sent upon a commission allowed a ship to be lost in crossing a river, he should pay to its owner, until he had raised the ship, her rent and the decrease in her value. It is also provided that:

If an ox-herd allows a lion to devour (an ox), a substitute of equal value to the owner shall be present.

If an ox-herd allow an ox to be lost, ox for ox to its owner shall be restored.

Evidently the herdsman was not a hired servant or a slave, for if he were, he would not have been in a position to restore an ox. The oxen of many owners were probably taken

to the common pastures by one who had undertaken that responsibility.

The influence of the old Communist sharing from a common store is to be found in the following provisions. The phraseology is quaint, but it obviously means that one stricken with misfortune may claim aid of the king or any citizen, and that the unfortunate may not be left destitute:

If there be a malady, there shall be a gift of the king. Nor shall he be left destitute.

If there be a malady, and of his own free will he come to a freeman, that freeman shall not reject him, but to the place of his desire he shall cause him to go.

As to slavery, it was laid down that if a slave escaped and went to the house of a freeman and stayed there a month, the freeman to whom the slave had gone should give another slave in return; or, if he had no other slave, he should pay twenty-five shekels of silver.

If a slave had twice complained against his master concerning his servitude, and his servitude had been confirmed a second time, a mark should be incised upon the forehead of the slave. Evidently, therefore, there was some opportunity for slaves to complain against being unjustly held in servitude, and it might be that they were not always branded, but only by way of punishment, at that period.

There was punishment for cruelty to slaves. A tablet, thought to have been used for teaching the Sumerian language, contains seven precepts, long known as the "Sumerian Family Laws," which were evidently taken from an ancient code. The last of these is:

If a man hire a slave, and he dies, or is rendered useless, or is caused to run away, or is caused to rebel, or is made ill, then for every day his hand shall measure out half a "qa" of corn.

Slaves were usually prisoners taken in battle; but these precepts indicate other ways in which men might fall into slavery:

If a son says to his father "Thou art not my father," they shall brand him, and fetter him, and sell him as a slave for silver.

If a son disowned his mother, he would also be branded, but instead of being sold as a slave he was banished. A father or mother who disowned a son must forfeit house and goods. A child who disowned parents who had adopted him was disinherited and sold into slavery. Those who disowned their child by adoption were banished and deprived of their property.

A wife who disowned her husband was condemned to be thrown in the river; but a husband who disowned his wife need only weigh out to her half a mina of silver. The sexes were therefore not equal, but a wife had some rights at that period.

The Sumerian code of laws first mentioned gives further details which do not appear in the seven precepts as to the property rights of wives and children. The son of a second wife inherited his mother's dowry and shared the property of the father equally with the son of the first wife. If a man had a son by his handmaid (apparently a slave) during the life of his wife, the son of the handmaid might not share the inheritance, even if the father have made the handmaid and her son free. If a man had a son by the handmaid after his wife's death, the son of the handmaid shared equally with the son of the first wife. If a man had no son by his wife, and a hired woman in the highway bore him a son, that son must be acknowledged as his son, and the man had to give the hired woman sustenance, in grain, wool and oil, but he might not bring her into the house with his wife.

One wife was the general rule, but if a man's wife were ill or childless, or for any reason he took another, he might not turn out the first wife, and the second wife must wait on her.

(To be continued.)

April 28, 1923.

THE WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT.

7

Parliament As We See It.

THE LABOUR PARTY AND THE BUDGET.

Mr. Walton Newbold (C.P.) observed, in the course of the Budget debate, that no spokesman of the Labour Party had protested against the omission from the Budget of a single provision for social reform. This budget would be remembered, he thought, for that particular omission.

SNOWDEN'S CRITICISM OF MOND.

Mr. Snowden, who seems to be regarded by the Labour Party as its principal spokesman on financial affairs, has entirely the capitalist psychology on finance.

He twitted Sir Alfred Mond with the fact that Mond had on the paper a motion calling for the vigorous prosecution of social reforms. Mr. Snowden asked Sir Alfred Mond how that motion squared with his views on economy and tax reduction.

It is decidedly queer that Sir Alfred Mond should be moving a social reform resolution, whilst the Labour Party should merely content itself with a motion to institute a capital levy, which will make little more than a book-keeping difference to the situation, and will not alter the distribution of wealth.

SNOWDEN SPEAKS OF 2/6 INCOME TAX REDUCTION.

Mr. Snowden said he agreed that the income tax was a burden on industry, but a reduction to have any appreciable effect in helping industry must be 2/6 or more, not a paltry 6d. Mr. Snowden approved of the corporation profits tax, as that money would go, he said, into company reserve funds and be available for capital expenditure.

At times it seems as though Mr. Snowden were under-studying Sir Frederick Banbury in order that he may take his place as the bankers' representative for the City of London seat when the old reactionary resigns.

Mr. Snowden was much concerned at the beer price reduction, declaring himself amazed that commercial men tolerate the terrific drain on economic resources represented by beer. His greatest wrath, however, was poured out upon the Chancellor's expression of sympathy with the tax on betting. He had heard it "with dismay, almost amounting to horror." He protested against legalising betting, which, he said, "is perhaps the second greatest curse of this country."

That is a remarkable statement for one who calls himself a Socialist. What, then, in Mr. Snowden's view, is the greatest curse? Can it be alcohol? His speech lends itself to that view. Mr. Snowden would make a fitting lieutenant of the Salvation Army. May we point out to him that, with the disappearance of private property, buying and selling, production for profit, and the money system, betting will disappear.

We must observe, however, that betting is strictly legal at the present time, provided it is done, not through the bookmaker at the street corner, but through the turf commission agent. Members of the House of Commons, and others who know the ropes, simply send a cheque to the commission agent "for investment." Then they can telephone their bets to the agent, who will carry out their instructions until the money placed with him has been exhausted. On the other hand, some of the turf commission agents are obliging enough to allow credit up to a certain daily sum, in order that respectable gamblers may place their bets without paying out any money until after the race.

Mr. Snowden declared that there will be an outbreak or moral indignation if Government or Parliamentary sanction be given to a tax on betting.

Will Mr. Snowden lead a crusade against betting through the turf commission agent? Will the Labour Party remove betting ups from the "Daily Herald"? If not, then Mr. Snowden and the Labour Party are incon-

sistent in their outcry against a tax on betting.

It is amusing that members of the Labour Party who declare themselves highly honoured to be the guests of the King, should denounce betting on racehorses as a curse, since two generations of British sovereigns and their families have extended the largest share of their patronage to the racecourse.

It is interesting to observe that Mr. Snowden did not vote for Mr. Scrymgeour's prohibition resolution, which received only 14 votes.

Mr. Snowden justly observed that of the £24,000,000 which the 6d. reduction in income tax would refund to the income tax-payers, one quarter of the income tax payers would get £21,000,000, and the other three-quarters would get only £3,000,000 of the refunded tax. The members of the fortunate quarter would get an average of £300 a year each. That is a fairly substantial gain to come from a Chancellor's stroke of the pen. Last year they got an average of £600 from the 1/- reduction of income tax. In two years the 25,000 privileged members of the community have gained an average of £900 a year each. Moreover, all their investments are worth more because the purchasing power of the £ has increased.

The working class during the last three years has suffered reductions in wages amounting to £700,000,000. This is excused on the ground of the increase in the purchasing power of the £!

C.P. PROPOSALS.

Mr. Walton Newbold (C.P.) naively observed that at first he had thought the Labour Party intended to use the Capital Levy to transfer the means of production to the State, but he had discovered that the Labour Party was not going towards Socialism, but was merely intending to use the Capital Levy to pay war debt.

Mr. Newbold urged that there should be no income tax under £500 a year, and that there should be a tax of 20/- in the £ on all incomes over £2,000, including those of the Cabinet and the King. If the King could not manage on that, let there be a voluntary subscription for him on the Stock Exchange. The only Budget that would satisfy him, said Mr. Newbold, would provide £200,000,000 for social reform, including free education up to the University.

It is very amusing to find such proposals at the House of Commons, of course, and some Members of Parliament were duly shocked by Mr. Newbold's references to the King, and called: "Order, order!" We must protest, however, that though the Press called Mr. Newbold's suggestions a "Communist Budget," they are not Communism. Communism means the abolition of the private property system and the disappearance of taxation. Mr. Newbold is, of course, aware that the suggestions he made will never be carried out within the framework of the Capitalist system. If his intention is really to address the people outside the House, he should make that clear.

MR. BALDWIN'S COMPLAINT.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer complained that, whereas Messrs. Jack Jones and Will Thorne, those voluble East London Labour Party representatives, had expressed themselves ardently in favour of a reduction in the beer duty ("not for their own sake, but for the good of the country!"), yet the Labour Party had expressed no pleasure when he had followed out the suggestion.

PROHIBITION AND MYTHOLOGY.

The debate on Prohibition was marked by the curious circumstance that many speakers quoted the Old and New Testaments as authority for their views on this question. Mr. Scrymgeour even went so far as to claim that "God himself took possession" of him during his election campaign, and that he had been brought to the House of Commons by

the "clearly expressed call of God himself." Sir A. Horder (C.) quoted the story of Christ turning water into wine at the marriage at Cana, and a psalm of David referring to "wine which gladdens the heart of man" and water with which asses quench their thirst. Mr. C. Roberts (Ind. L.) complained that under the Bill clergymen who bought wine for religious services would be liable to a penalty, and the sacramental vessels to confiscation.

Future generations will marvel that in an age in which so much progress has been made in scientific and historical knowledge, such a debate could take place in a Parliament of persons of supposedly superior education.

STILL PAYING FOR WATERLOO.

Mr. Lees Smith (Lab.) observed that the National Debt after the Napoleonic Wars was £85,000,000. A sinking fund was established, but in 1914 £50,000,000 of the Napoleonic War debt was still unpaid.

HOW THE TAXES ARE SPENT.

Mr. Wheatley (Lab.) said that of every £1 collected in taxes, 7/6 went in paying interest to Capitalists, and 2/10 was spent in preparing for another war.

INDIAN TRADE UNIONS.

The following letter, appearing in the semi-Nationalist Indian paper, "Independent," for January 29th, shows how the class standpoint is developing in India, where Communism is not even heard of, except by a few "privileged" persons. The news paper giving place to the letter is a reactionary nationalist one.

The writer, Mukund Lal Sercar, says:

"It is an undeniable fact that no one can improve his condition and best protect his interests without being organised and closely identified with the class to which he belongs. If we look at the commercial and industrial classes, we find how compactly they have organised themselves, even in India. They are organised, not only to develop industry and commerce, out are also equally well organised for the exploitation of labour. They are further organising their forces to smash, by sundry devices, the Trade Unions, which are still in their infancy in this country, India. Even in England, where the Trade Union movement is in its full growth after over half a century, the aim of the wealthy classes has been to try and subjugate the toiling masses as it still is down to the present time. It is therefore not only necessary for the workers to be directed to the determined attack which the master class is making upon them; of even greater importance is it for them to know the veiled conspiracy of some so-called Labour leaders, who are causing more harm to the labourers and their Unions which are yet under formation in India, than all the combined onslaught of the Capitalist class. The real conspiracy against the Unions lies in the subtle treachery of some of the cloaked Labour leaders who hail from classes other than those of workers themselves, and are more engrossed in thoughts of self-interest than the interests of the labourers, and who it is being found have been systematically and successfully undermining every instinctive attempt of the rank and file to put up a fighting resistance against the undue exploitation of labour by the employing class. The Union movement is consequently not so successful in India as it would have been. No solidarity amongst the working class, and wage earners is yet perceptible. Why? Because no rank and file worker and toiler feels safe in an army led by office-hunters and traitors, to whom the Labour movement is only a stile to recognition and higher career in life. The compactness in workers is bound to be shaken so long as they do not select leaders and workers of the right type from their own rank."

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What does May Day mean to us?

It means the struggle of the oppressed for emancipation. It means our hope to achieve the golden age.

It means relief from the weariness of mothers, striving to make their pennies suffice for shillings, patching and darning, meagrely rationing their children in a land of plenty.

It means security; that our sustenance shall be assured without servility, without usury, free from the gains of oppression, free from the bitterness of the oppressed.

It means that we may serve each other without fee; that we may meet each other free of mercenary ulterior thoughts.

It means escape from long hours of distasteful toil under harsh conditions; the dull routine of accountancy; the unnecessary dangers and discomforts of the industrial worker.

It will throw wide the gates of knowledge and skill; the practice of arts and sciences shall be open to all who seek them.

It will carry pale city dwellers to fields and wild flowers. After the dust and noise learning sheen of the sea and the little waves of the city streets their eyes will rest on the green that roll up to break on the sunny shore. In the solitudes of the forest, the deep quiet of the trees shall calm their jaded nerves.

To the circumscribed it will bring freedom; they may travel to far-off lands, over the vastness of oceans and the wide sweeps of prairies. From the confining sordidness of mean streets, they shall go to visit the scenes of bygone empires, and the latest efforts of men in many lands. All the means of transport shall be free to them; our brothers who work them shall extend a welcome to every traveller.

It means to the exile, return; and the realisation of hope deferred to all who are doubting material ways and means, for society can produce in abundance; an abundance in which its members need find no lack.

It means knowledge turning its light upon the dark places of superstition and myth; the relics which mercenary interest seeks to pretend are holy, and the false old tales that live and are handed down to enchain the ignorant and weak.

It means the breaking of shackles, of class and of creed, and the deriding bond of wavery.

It means cascades of joy; fountains of gladness; abundance, freely shared, wrought from the breast of earth by the fertile human brain and the cunning human hand; it means security without stint, friendship without alloy.

COMMUNIST WORKERS' MOVEMENT. INDOOR MEETINGS.

Friday, April 27th.—South Place Institute (opposite Moorgate Street tram terminus). Debate on Third and Fourth Internationals, Sylvia Pankhurst v. Henry Sara, 7.15 p.m. Doors open 6.45. Admission 6d.

Sunday, April 29th.—South London Socialist Club, 131 Newington Causeway, S.E., 7.30 p.m., Sylvia Pankhurst.

Sunday, May 6th.—Workers' Friend Hall Whitechapel, E.C., 7.30 p.m. Social Jazz Band. Songs. Recitations. **Speakers** J. Welsh, Sylvia Pankhurst, and others.

OUTDOOR MEETINGS.

Sunday, April 29th.—Prince of Wales, Harrow Road, 7 p.m., A. Jarvis, L. Goldstein, J. Grove.

Friday, May 3rd.—Broad Street and Berwick Street (off Oxford Street, W.), 7.30 p.m., L. Goldstein, J. Grove.

DANCES.

Circle Gaulois, 12 Archer Street, Shaftesbury Avenue. Select Jazz Band. Single tickets, 1/6. Double, 2/6. Refreshments at popular prices.

Saturday, April 28th, 7.30-11 p.m.

Friday, May 3rd, 7.30-11 p.m.

Saturday, May 13th, 7.30-11 p.m.

GRAND CARNIVAL.

Circle Gaulois, 12 Archer Street, Shaftesbury Avenue. Jazz Band. Streamers! Hats! Balloons! M.C.s: Dave Goldberg, G. Fletcher. 7.30-11 p.m. Tickets 2/- Book in advance from 152 Fleet Street, E.C.4.

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