

THE
**COMMUNIST
REVIEW**

Vol. VII

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Number 1

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These bourgeois minded workers, this Labour aristocracy, petty bourgeois in mode of life, income and ideology, is the main strength of the Second International and, at the present time, the most dependable social support of the bourgeoisie. These people are veritable agents of the bourgeoisie in the Labour movement, the servants of capitalism, the propagators of reformism and jingoism.—Lenin: "Imperialism."

THE COMMUNIST REVIEW

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Volume 7

MAY 1926

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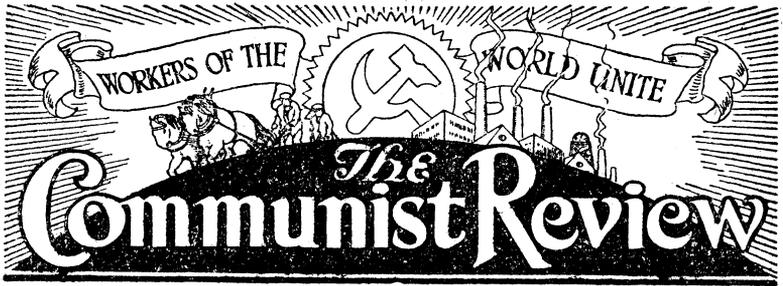
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DAWNWARDS.

And lo, the First of May. Behold
The banners sanguine in the air
Gleam, oriflammes, a hundredfold,
And forth the clarion trumpets blare:
*"March on, march on toward the light;
Our fear has perished in the night."*

The tramp of men, unmeasured, slow,
Quickens to stern, determined swing;
Men, women, children forth they go
Shoulder to shoulder unfaltering.
*March on, march on, the day has come;
Lift up your voices, no longer dumb.*

And lo, the foe, who turns to smile
On broken column, shambling throng,
Here finds us serried in rank and file,
Ten thousand thousand, tenfold strong.
*March on, march on toward the day;
Keep step, the faltering foe gives way.*



THE EDITORIAL VIEW

THE CLASS WAR FRONT.

BY the time this is in the hands of our readers the great fight may have begun. We say "may" have begun, because this issue is one which raises to the surface the supreme question—whether the capitalists of this country are to have for years to come power sufficient to carry out their aim—that of imposing their will and their ideas of what standard of living the workers shall have for at least another generation to come. And on the question of accepting responsibility for such a fight there is division of opinion among the "leaders" of Labour.

Any idea that the ruling class will have any division of opinion on the carrying out of a plan of conquest may be dismissed. Search the whole of the capitalist press, from the time of the presentation of the Coal Commission's Report and it will be found that only one note is struck—sacrifices must be made for the sake of industry generally. Not for the coal industry only. That is important, but not all-important. For the sake of *all* industry the wages of the miners must come down.

* * * * *

Here there is no illusion about "sympathetic" action. The whole capitalist class realises the significance of the fight, and one and all *know* that their interests will be vitally affected by the outcome of the struggle. On all sides come demands from the workers for better conditions and higher wages. With complete unanimity the employers and their press return the same answer—higher wages or shorter hours would ruin business.

WORKERS OF THE

WORLD UNITE



The Communist Review



Having in most instances watered their capital right up to the limit of its powers of absorption, it is possible in many cases to point dolefully to their balance sheets, and from their own figures show a decline in profits. Scarcely a basic industry in the country but has adopted this method of hiding the extent of the exploitation of the workers. In some cases, as for example Vickers, this subterfuge was carried too far, and capital had to be written down in order to attract more real capital. But generally the tactic has succeeded in its purpose—that of throwing dust into the eyes of the workers as to the real extent of the robbery that is going on.

* * * * *

But there comes a time when even the tamest of workers refuse to take into consideration the statements of the employers. The intricacies of book-keeping may be beyond their understanding. But the ever-increasing pressure of poverty they do feel, and the liars who figure fail to impress any longer wage slaves who hunger with an ever-growing fierceness for a lightening of their load. And we have come to such a time.

Even at the time of "Black Friday"—when in 1921 the miners were left to battle, not for themselves, but for the whole of the working class, the whole capitalist world was startled by the extent of the sympathy of the rank and file of the trade union movement for their brothers who were holding the battle front against the enemies of the working class. Very little, indeed, would have roused the workers in all industries to take their stand with the miners. The fact that the date on which the triple alliance broke down is burned into the minds of all workers as "Black" Friday is proof enough of that. They are bad psychologists if the ruling class do not understand the significance of this universally accepted name given by the workers to the date of their defeat.

* * * * *

Just as the ruling class have no illusions about "sympathetic" action, knowing perfectly well that this is not a fight between mine-owners and miners, but a struggle which will vitally affect every member of their class—so the workers of every industry must not imagine that the fight of the miners is essentially a miners' fight with which they are merely in sympathy. *The miners fought the battle of the whole of the working class in 1921, and went down gloriously fighting for all.* The fight was lost because the other battalions of Labour, misled by incompetent officers, shirked the fight. The workers *know* what effect the defeat has had on lives since then. This time there must be no hesitation. The forces

arrayed against Labour are strong, compact, and disciplined. Our success depends on our united strength. We are not "sympathising" with the miners. We must join with the miners as members of a class determined to be free.

* * * * *

LINE UP FOR MAY THE FIRST.

ALL honour to the engineers at Hoe's. Their action in standing out for their demands brought to the front, in a way the futile negotiations of the officials could never have done, the terrible conditions under which the engineering mechanics have to work. And their militancy is not yet exhausted. The break-away from meek acceptance of whatever the employers sought to impose has restored to them a spirit which has long been absent—a spirit that recognizes an insult as soon as received, a spirit which impels every man of them to return blow for blow.

For two years now the engineers have been more or less content to explore every constitutional method of getting their grievances rectified. Only now are the rank and file realising that constitutionalism is only a device of the employing class to avoid facing an issue at the time it is raised—for the simple reason that no general ever allows, if it can be avoided, his opponent the choice of time and place of battle.

Obviously when trade unionists formulate their demands there is behind the demands just the atmosphere that the employers dread most. Discontent is rampant, and battle is in the air. This is where "constitutional" methods come in. The Executive Committees take the matter in hand—after a long and tedious procedure of branch resolution going to District Committees, from District Committees to Executive Committees, from E.C.'s to National Conferences, from National Conferences back to the E.C., from the E.C. to the Employers' Federations, long drawn-out negotiations with the employers, refusal of the employers to concede demands, result reported back to National Conferences, reports back from National Conferences to districts, reports to branches from districts, resolutions again from branches—and so on until either the patience of the members is completely exhausted, or the particular issue has been entirely forgotten.

* * * * *

Fortunately in the case of the engineers the movement for improvement in their conditions passed during the two years of

deliberate sabotage from crest to crest of two waves of discontent. Again we say, all honour to Hoe's men for giving it militant expression.

But the engineers have been out-manceuvred in the time and place of battle. The officials of the unions concerned certainly have no stomach for fight. Even when they realise that a fight must inevitably take place, their ingrained habit of procrastination, and the natural timidity with which practically the whole breed of officials, too long in office, are cursed with, prevents them from studying the tactics of the employing class and making an attempt to anticipate their next move by immediately taking up the attack.

* * * * *

Ordinary common-sense, if allied to real devotion to the cause of their members, should have led the engineering officials to see to it that their unions could be thrown into the battle at the most favourable time—a time when such action would have the most telling effect on behalf of the engineers and the workers generally. A little intelligent anticipation would have made it possible for the engineers to make their preparations for May 1st, when the miners may be called upon to fight. Instead, we are told that the ballot on strike action will not be completed until the end of the month.

“Constitutional” procedure! If constitutional procedure had been an invention instead of a growth, carefully nursed because of its value to the capitalist class, monuments would have been raised to the memory of its inventor. This slavish adherence to standards set up by our rulers may now result in sections of the workers coming out on May 1st and being starved back to work before the engineers are ready for action. That way lies defeat. The occasion demands the utmost solidarity and unanimity of action. *That way brings victory.*

* * * * *

WATCH MACDONALD.

IN our March editorial we ventured a prophecy in connection with the manoeuvres of the statesmen representing capitalist interests to railroad Soviet Russia into the League of Nations as a cheap and effective means of destroying the Workers' Republic. These are the words we used:

“But we must be prepared for a campaign of lies and abuse directed against Soviet Russia in the event of her refusing to fall

into the trap laid by the League. *In this the League will have the support of the MacDonalds of every country—that is their function in the Labour movement and the extent to which their pacifism goes.* The workers cannot afford to forget the Labour Government's support of armaments and the use of force in colonial and mandated areas—and contrast its utterances with its deeds."

We had not long to wait for the fulfilment of the prophecy. MacDonald is never far behind when capitalism issues mobilization orders to its supporters. In the German Socialist organ "Vorwärts," an article has appeared in which Mr. MacDonald praises the League, and goes on to say that when Germany enters the League only two countries will remain outside—Russia and the U.S.A.

He goes on to say that there are, perhaps, perfectly good reasons for the U.S.A. remaining aloof, but the case of Russia is different. "Russia is quite openly determined to remain a danger to the peace of Europe. The imperialistic nationalism of this Bolshevick power places it side by side with its near relation the Fascist State of Italy. The *peaceful democracies* of the rest of Europe must reckon with the fact that they will be yet further threatened by these dictatorships, and they should direct their policy towards protecting themselves against them both."

When we remember the connection between the attack on the working class and the campaign against Soviet Russia, the bare-faced treachery of this man is revealed. But when we remember how, shoulder to shoulder with his fellow statesmen of the ruling class, MacDonald carried out successfully his share of the work of enslaving the workers of Europe through the operations of the Dawes Plan; when, in short, we take into account the complete record of his work on behalf of capitalism, we are not surprised or shocked in the slightest degree. What does surprise us is the fact that he still ranks as a chief among leaders of labour, when his life's history shows him to be one of the leaders of the bourgeoisie.

In the present stage of the development of the class struggle the workers must watch MacDonald, the agent of capitalism in our midst.

The Official Labour Movement in the U.S.A.

By WILLIAM F. DUNNE.

THE Labour movement of the United States, represented officially by the American Federation of Labour, has sunk to the lowest level in its existence, not barring even the war period when it began brazenly its career as the open champion of American imperialist policies.

In the present period, when the American capitalist class is drawing tribute from all other capitalist nations due to its premier financial position, when its fingers are found in every pudding mixed by the diplomats of the capitalist world, and when it is extending its lines and consolidating its forces for world conquest and at the same time organising to subjugate with a new completeness the American working class itself, certain elementary tasks present themselves to the trade union movement.

These tasks are:

- (1) The organisation of 25,000,000 wage workers who are outside the unions.
- (2) A militant nation-wide campaign against the systematic militarisation of the working class which is the domestic expression of financial penetration and conquest abroad.
- (3) The establishment of a Labour Party based on the trade unions.

By the extent to which the leadership of the American Federation of Labour recognises, undertakes and prosecutes these tasks can its working class or anti-working class character be determined.

Let us examine the attitude of the leadership of the A.F. of L. toward the above tasks in the order named.

First, it must be remembered that the American Federation of Labour includes through its affiliated national and international unions (the latter are called "international" because they exercise jurisdiction over Canadian branches and not because of any recognition of the international nature of the class struggle), less than 3,000,000 workers.

The census of 1920 (there has been a tremendous increase since that time in the groups listed due to the expansion of American industry) gives the following round figures for American labour :

Skilled workers—5,000,000.

Semi-skilled workers—6,500,000.

Labourers—11,000,000.

Clerks and kindred workers—5,500,000.

(These figures do not include 1,500,000 professionally-trained workers, 700,000 public service workers or 2,500,000 servants.)

Out of a total of 28,000,000 organisable workers the American Federation of Labour, therefore, has organised less than one-ninth. Nor is this one-ninth of the working class in the decisive industries.

In the steel industry there is only a union of 11,000 members. In the metal mining industry the union has but 10,000 members. In the huge marine transport industry of the U.S., two unions, the longshoremen and the seamen together include less than 50,000 members. In the textile industry there are less than 40,000 organised workers divided into sixteen different unions only one of which is affiliated to the A.F. of L. The lumber industry is entirely unorganised.

In the coal mining industry, the anthracite miners have been defeated completely and the union in the bituminous fields, due to the rapid increase of non-union mines and the failure of the Lewis bureaucracy to carry on a militant organising campaign, is being crushed.

In rail transport the shop craft unions (machinists, boiler-makers, blacksmiths, car repairers, electricians and maintenance of waymen, etc.—sixteen unions in all) have never recovered from their defeat in the strike of 1922.

The operating trades—locomotive engineers, conductors, firemen and trainmen, the real aristocracy of the Labour aristocracy—are not even affiliated with A.F. of L.

Who is Responsible?

Surely here is a situation that should stir an honest, even though not class-conscious trade union leadership to action. But instead of organising campaigns the A.F. of L. leadership actually expels and disrupts whole unions in following out its craft union and treacherously reactionary policy. At the Atlantic City convention of the A.F. of L. the Railway and Steamship Clerks' and

Freight Handlers' Union was expelled because it refused to surrender to the Teamsters' Union a number of express wagon drivers. In addition to this action a secessionist movement has been organised within this union with the support of the A.F. of L. bureaucracy.

More than this, unwilling to launch national organising campaigns in the various industries, afraid to antagonise the big capitalists from whom the bureaucracy derives its illicit fees for betrayal of the interests of the workers, the A.F. of L. officialdom has established a whole chain of capitalist enterprises such as "Labour" banking, "Labour" insurance companies whose only connection with and control by Labour is the name and the profits obtained by the combined union bureaucracies. In no sense of the word are they co-operative as the word is understood in England. They are simply schemes by which the savings of workers and the treasuries of the unions are invested in purely capitalist enterprises.

In addition to all the above there is the modified plan of "company unionism" which has now the official endorsement of two A.F. of L. conventions—the so-called "B. and O." plan (installed first on the Baltimore and Ohio Railway), which is nothing more nor less than a detailed scheme for speeding up the workers and increasing production entered into jointly by the union bureaucracies and the management of various capitalist enterprises.

As a result of these policies and tactics the total membership of the trade unions is declining while that of the "company union"—unions organised by and dominated by industrial capitalists and their agents—is on the increase.

Second, the officialdom of the American Federation of Labour not only does not struggle against the militarisation of the working class but actually encourages it. At the El Paso Convention it endorsed the imperialist policy of citizens military training camps and asked for representation on the controlling board.

It maintains a united front and exchanges delegates with the American Legion—the militarist organisation composed of ex-officers which is the nucleus of American fascism, which has broken up dozens of Labour meetings in America and which functions as an adjunct to the political machine of the American imperialists and as a strike-breaking and terrorist organisation.

The A.F. of L. bureaucracy campaigns against the Left-wing and the Communists with an enthusiasm entirely lacking in the struggles of the membership with the bosses, it uses the same phraseology and the same methods against the militant elements as does the capitalist press and the department of justice.

Third, the A.F. of L. machine has sabotaged consistently the formation of a Labour Party. Every Central Labour Council which has shown the slightest sympathy for or initiative in the Labour Party agitation has been threatened with expulsion and forced to discontinue its activities in this direction.

The A.F. of L. executive council and the heads of the various affiliated unions continue still to support the candidates of the Republican and Democrat parties. It ventured into the field of independent parliamentary action in support of LaFollette, but at the same time it supported Republican and Democrat senators and congressmen. It has now gone back to its vomit in the form of a repudiation of any form of independent parliamentary action.

The explanation for these consistent betrayals of the interests of the working class is, of course, to be found in the fact that the U.S. is still a rising capitalism and in the fabulous profits derived from the exploitation, with the aid of the most efficient industrial methods in the world, of the American working class, the robbery of the colonial peoples with the aid of the A.F. of L. bureaucracy, particularly in Latin-America, and the constant golden stream of interest on huge loans made to the European nations.

These sources of income give to American capitalism a huge surplus and it can well afford to part with a small portion of it, which is used to debauch the officialdom and the upper strata of the organised Labour movement.

Two Tendencies.

It is a black picture that has been painted here and if the details had been filled in instead of only the broadest outlines being given it would be blacker still. But to accept this as the picture of the working class movement of America as it must be because it is would be the gravest mistake imaginable. The official Labour movement is going to the Right, but there is plenty of evidence that against the current to the Right on top, there is below a fairly strong drift to the Left.

In the unions of railway shop craft workers there is now a definite demand for an organisation campaign and wage increases. So strong has this demand been that a number of the union bureaucracies have had to make some pretence of launching organisation drives.

In the coal miners' union the Lewis bureaucracy, as a result of the defeat brought about by its refusal to call out the maintenance men in the anthracite strike and order a general strike of the bituminous men, has lost its biggest stronghold in the union.

In the textile industry the strike of 10,000 to 15,000 workers in Passaic, New Jersey, followed by sympathetic strikes of workers in other textile centres, has tended to discredit the bureaucrats and bring about a mass demand for organisation from the unorganised workers.

In the needle trades the Left-wing has practically secured control of the Furriers' and International Ladies' Garment Workers', numbering over 100,000 workers.

Against the militarism of the ruling class a strong pacifist sentiment has shown itself among the churches and in the colleges. It involves in these instances the lower strata of the petty bourgeoisie but it is valuable as showing a definite trend in American life.

There is much Labour Party sentiment but it needs crystallisation.

The agricultural crisis which for the first time affects the hitherto rich corn-growing regions makes easier an alliance between the militant workers and expropriated farmers.

Summing up it can be said that while the trade union bureaucracy drives toward the Right and tries to drag the whole Labour movement with it, the Communist Party of America by raising such slogans as "organisation of the unorganised," "fight against militarisation of the masses," and a "Labour Party based on the trade unions," and by working out a correct approach to the Left elements in the trade unions through such a slogan as "job control and democracy in the union" can organise powerful resistance among the exploited masses to the bloody programme of American imperialism.

"To recognise a mistake openly, to find out its causes, to analyse the situation which occasioned it, to examine carefully the means of repairing it—this is the mark of a serious party; this is what, in the case of a party is called doing one's duty, educating the class and so the masses."—Lenin: "Left-wing Communism."

The Class Struggle in the Schools

By MARJORIE POLLITT.

EVERY revolutionary movement is charged periodically with neglecting this or that line of development, with ignoring certain weapons in the class struggle, with turning a deaf ear to some crying necessity; criticisms often unfounded, but occasionally well-merited. It is certainly a significant and disquieting fact that hitherto the British revolutionary movement has failed to draw into its ranks the school teachers, who in many other countries are to be found in the vanguard of the organised proletariat.

The time was never more opportune than at the moment for a real effort to be made in the direction of recruiting and organising a body of militant, class-conscious teachers, from whose ranks there is now rising in ever-increasing volume a murmur of discontent, disgust and rebellion—an entirely new situation in this hitherto docile and reactionary profession.

What is responsible for this sudden turning of the tide? For years teachers have been a notoriously backward and conservative body, both politically and industrially. Although often of working class origin, they have haughtily declined to identify themselves with the workers, or even to admit that they could be designated as workers, preferring to attach themselves to the salaried or professional classes. One logical outcome of this attitude has been that they have refused to organise in any trade union, but expended large sums of money, energy and time in setting up a multiplicity of small, sectional organisations, concerned mainly with the boosting of certain professional rights of one section over others, with carrying on the sex war (violently and ably pursued by the National Union of Women Teachers and the Schoolmasters' Association), with anything and everything but organising upon a united basis in common with the workers in other sections of industry.

Workers—When Wage Cuts are Being Enforced.

This frame of mind has been most satisfactory to our capitalist rulers, who, in the past, have carefully nurtured and encouraged it by pandering to the dignity of the profession and

An immediate storm of protest arose, not only from the Labour and Socialist movement, but from the teaching profession as a whole, a very real and growing disapproval being manifested by hundreds of men and women, who began for the first time to examine more thoroughly the policy and recommendations of the Labour Party. One result of this agitation was the withdrawal of the Circular, although the equally infamous Memorandum 44 which replaced it contains similarly dangerous proposals. Another was the spirit in which the Teachers' Labour League held its Annual Conference at the end of the following month, where as a result of the decisions reached, a comparatively small and obscure organisation came into the full glare of publicity, thanks to the hundreds of capitalist newspapers who reported the proceedings very fully, the "Morning Post" even devoting its leading articles to revealing this new and insidious menace.

All that had really happened was that the general "Left" trend of the rank and file of the Labour movement had been reflected in the Conference, which had made three important amendments to its Constitution:

- (1) It laid down as its aim "To enable teachers to identify themselves with other workers in the struggle to replace the capitalist State by a Socialist Commonwealth."
- (2) It added to the methods already advocated:
 - (a) The abolition of imperialistic teaching in the educational institutions of the country.
 - (b) Affiliation to the Educational Workers' International.

Attack from Within and Without.

This last decision aroused the most hysterical opposition, not only from the capitalist press, but from the Right-wing minority in the League itself. Having failed to perturb the Conference by dangling the usual Communist bogey before its eyes, these people have made open attempts to sabotage the Conference decision, mainly falling back upon the old lie that the Educational Workers' International is a "Communist organisation."

It seems almost incredible that any person of average intelligence could conceive that a Trade Union International, embracing teachers' organisations in numbers of countries, some affiliated to Amsterdam, some to Moscow, could be confused with any political sect, but these Right-wingers are apparently unable, or unwilling, to discriminate. The principal objection, apparently, is to contact with Russian teachers, in spite of the fact (of which possibly they are ignorant) that the great majority have no connection with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Parallel with the attack from within, the League is now subjected to an equally venomous attack from the forces of reaction without. The First Annual Report of the Conservative Teachers' Advisory Committee, set up in 1924 to counteract the move of teachers towards the Labour movement, urges special attention to be paid and opposition organised to the activities of the Teachers' Labour League. At the same time the Government is closely watching the T.L.L. and teachers generally. The President of the Board of Education was recently approached by a Member of Parliament with a request that no member of the League should be allowed employment in public elementary or secondary schools, and doubtless caused widespread disappointment by his reply that any teacher was at liberty to join any legal organisation that does not interfere with his professional duties.

But the struggle within the League is by far of the greater importance, and one which the Labour Movement in general and the Communist Party in particular will be exceedingly unwise to ignore. There is not the slightest doubt that when our revolution is made, whatever be the manner of its coming, the dispossessed bourgeoisie will make strong attempts to use the teachers to wreck the workers' movement. This was a very real danger in Russia, and constituted a problem which had to be tackled resolutely by our Russian comrades. If this was so in Russia, where working class education was practically non-existent, how much more important it is for the British revolutionary movement to consider and counteract such a possibility.

Aim of Capitalist Education.

The whole aim and object of capitalist education, since its inception in this country, has been to produce well-trained, obedient and servile wage-slaves, and the task that faces us is nothing less than the destruction of this tradition of centuries' standing, and the introduction of class-conscious Marxist teaching in our schools. It is with this ultimate end in view that the T.L.L. must formulate a fighting policy, in contradiction to the policy of the Right-wing minority, which is purely a negative one of drift and Liberalism, based on the opinions of those who are merely sympathetic to certain sections of the Labour Party's policy.

The League must recognise as its immediate task the formation of a skeleton outline of a militant Socialist teachers' organisation, ready to bring the mass of the teachers on to the side of the workers in time of crisis. This is a gigantic task of vital importance, and, in consideration of the great political influence which would be exerted by a body of class-conscious teachers, one which should not be left only to a group of militant workers in

the T.L.L., but taken up very seriously by the Left-wing Labour movement, which has neglected this development far too long.

It is true that the National Council of Labour Colleges is doing excellent work, but its progress is retarded because it has to deal with adults who are the product of the capitalist system of education, and spend much time in clearing the jungle of jingoism and anti-working class teaching with which their minds are littered, before the most elementary Marxian theory can be accepted.

While it is good to attempt the eradication of such capitalist teaching, it is surely better to tackle the educational system itself. One of the first tasks of a revolutionary government will be a drastic overhauling of the entire educational machinery, a task that will be impossible without the co-operation of the teachers, previously brought into the revolutionary movement, just as the existence of the militant policy put forward by the M.F.G.B. has only been made possible by the advance of the miners into the vanguard of the organised workers.

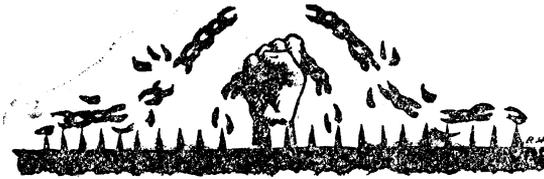
While struggling forward to this objective, we cannot afford to neglect the help offered us in the advice and counsel of the Russian teachers, who have overcome their difficulties, and are now actually putting into practice the theories which we hold.

Support the Left-wing Teachers.

Realising the precariousness of their position, and the weakening of their hold upon the workers, the capitalist class will leave no stone unturned to oppose a revolutionary teachers' movement and prevent them wherever possible from using any weapon that may assist them. At the Conference of the National Union of Teachers at Portsmouth, a proposal was on the agenda (and never reached) that a ballot of the membership be taken on the question of affiliation to the Trades Union Congress. Such a move, which would mean a considerable strengthening of the fighting power of the teachers' movement, would undoubtedly have met with strenuous opposition from the official element of the N.U.T., which is violently Tory in character. Rank and file opinion, however, is becoming a little sceptical of these props of the system which is so openly showing its opposition and enmity to education and educational workers. It should be the task of the Labour movement to encourage this healthy tendency, to revolutionise these unwieldy and apathetic professional organisations, and transform them into one powerful industrial union, linked up with other workers' organisations through the medium of the T.U.C.

Armed with this weapon, backed up by the entire organised working class, led by the T.L.L., the members of the teaching profession could make a firm stand against the oncoming attack on the education of the workers' children. In addition to such a purely defensive policy, they could co-operate with the revolutionary parties to prepare a sound scheme of class-conscious Marxist education, without which no revolutionary government could ultimately maintain itself.

Bearing in mind the vital importance of such a development it is not as an appeal to charity, but as a challenge to their short-sightedness, that we of the T.L.L. urge upon the forward Labour Movement the supreme importance of giving all the help and assistance possible to those who are working in this very important direction towards the emancipation of the workers and the workers' children and the overthrow of the capitalist system.



“Fewer pompous phrases and more every-day work . . . less political clatter and more attention to the simple, but more tangible facts of Communist construction . . .”—Lenin: “The Great Initiative.”

Democracy & the Populist Movement in China

By N. LENIN.

(Translated by Eric Verney.)

(Translator's Note.—The article below was written by Lenin in July, 1912, in the Petersburg Bolshevik paper "Nevskaya Zvezda." Lenin compares the Chinese Revolutionary Democratic movement with that of the Russian "Narodniki" (Populists). This article is still of immense value, if only for showing the difference between the ideas of Sun-Yat-Sen and Revolutionary Socialism. It remains a brilliant example of the Communist approach to the Chinese National-Emancipation Movement. The existence of a Chinese Communist Party is not only foretold, but the present Comintern policy of support to the revolutionary struggle of the Kuomintang is pre-determined. Lenin's estimation of Sun-Yat-Sen must, of course, be viewed in the light of present history and Sun-Yat-Sen's new orientations; his faith in the new Chinese proletariat and in the U.S.S.R. as an ally, his fight against Imperialism, his revolutionary work with the Communists during the last few years, etc. With the growth of the proletariat Sun-Yat-Sen began to interest himself in Marxism. He also studied Lenin's works. The appearance of this article for the first time in English is very timely on the anniversary of Sun-Yat-Sen's death, which occurred on the eve of mass revolutionary struggles. It is especially timely as the radical changes that have taken place in China during the last year—the strengthening of Sun-Yat-Sen's Party in the South and the appearance of the proletariat on the political arena for the first time—add weight to Lenin's conceptions.—ERIC VERNEY.)

THE article by the Acting-President of the Chinese Republic, Sun-Yat-Sen, which we take from the Brussels Socialist paper, "Le Peuple," is of exceptional interest for us Russians. An old adage says: "Things seem clearer from afar." Sun-Yat-Sen is an extremely interesting witness "from afar," for although a man with an European education, he is apparently totally unacquainted with Russia. Yet this European-trained representative of militant and victorious Chinese democracy, which has won itself a Republic, confronts us with purely Russian problems. These problems, moreover, are presented quite independently of Russia, of Russian experience, of Russian literature. This progressive Chinese democrat argues literally like a Russian. His resemblance to a Russian Populist is so great that it amounts to an absolute identity in basic conceptions and in a manner of separate expressions.

Things seem clearer from afar. The programme of great Chinese democracy, which is indeed represented in Sun-Yat-Sen's article, compels us and gives us a convenient opportunity to view

once more the problem of correlation between democracy and Populism in contemporary bourgeois revolutions in Asia, from the aspect of new world events. This is one of the most important problems which faced Russia in the revolutionary epoch commencing from 1905. And it has not only confronted Russia, but the whole of Asia, as may be seen from this programme of the Acting-President of the Chinese Republic, particularly if we view this platform in the light of the development of revolutionary events in Russia, Turkey, Persia and China. Russia in many and in very substantial respects undoubtedly represents an Asiatic State, and at that one of the most barbaric, mediæval and disgracefully backward of Asiatic States.

Russian bourgeois democracy bears the imprint of the Populist movement beginning with its far-off and solitary forerunner, Hertzen, and ending with its mass representatives, members of the Peasants' Union of 1905, and the "Trudovik" deputies of the first three Dumas, 1906-1912. We now see that the bourgeois democracy of China bears the identical imprint of the Populist movement. Let us see from the example of Sun-Yat-Sen what is the "social significance" of the ideas engendered by the profound revolutionary movement of hundreds of millions of people who are now definitely drawn into the current of universal capitalist civilisation.

Every line of Sun-Yat-Sen's programme is imbued with a militant, sincere, democratic spirit. There is full comprehension of the inadequacy of a "race" revolution. There is not one iota of anti-political reasoning, or even neglect for political liberty nor even the admission of the idea of compatibility of Chinese autocracy with Chinese "social reform," with Chinese constitutional transformations, etc. There are genuine democratic conceptions, with the demand for a republic. There is a direct presentation of the question of the position of the masses, the question of the mass struggle; there is warm sympathy for the toiling masses and the exploited, belief in the legitimacy of their cause and in their strength.

We see a really great ideology of a really great people, which is not only able to lament its centuries-old slavery, not only able to dream of freedom and equality, but also to **fight** against the perpetual oppressors of China.

One cannot but compare the Acting-President of the Republic in this barbaric, dead, Asiatic China with the various Presidents of Republics in Europe, in America, in the countries of advanced culture. **There** the Presidents of Republics are almost without exception business men, agents or puppets in the hands of the bourgeoisie, rotten through and through, stained from head to foot with filth and blood, not the blood of mandarins and Chin-

ese emperors, but the blood of workers, who in the name of progress and civilisation have been shot for striking. There the presidents are representatives of a bourgeoisie which long ago disowned the ideals of its youth, which has prostituted itself to the last degree, sold itself entirely to the millionaires and multimillionaires, to feudal landowners who have become bourgeois, etc.

Here we see the Asiatic Acting-President of the Republic—a revolutionary democrat, full of nobleness and of the heroism belonging to that class which does not go downhill but uphill, which does not fear the future but believes in it, and self-sacrificingly fights for it—a class which hates the past and is capable of casting off the deadening rot of this all-destroying past—a class that does not cling to the preservation and restoration of the past for the sake of guarding its own privileges.

Does not this mean, then, that the materialistic West has decayed and that light is only shining from the mystic religious East? No, it is just the contrary. This means that the East has definitely stepped on to the path of the West, that fresh hundreds of millions of people will henceforth participate in the struggle for ideals that the West has already achieved. It is the Western bourgeoisie that has decayed, and its gravedigger—the proletariat—is already standing by. But in Asia there is still a bourgeoisie capable of representing a sincere, militant, consistent democracy, a worthy comrade of the great teachers and great fighters of the end of the 18th century in France.

The chief representative or the most important social support of the Asiatic bourgeoisie—a bourgeoisie still capable of historically-progressive work—is the peasant. Side by side with the latter there is already a Liberal bourgeoisie whose representatives, such as Yuan-Shi-Kai are more capable of treachery than of anything else: yesterday they feared the Emperor and fawned before him; afterwards, when they saw the force and felt the victory of revolutionary democracy, they betrayed the Emperor, and tomorrow they will betray the democrats for the sake of a deal with some old or new “constitutional” Emperor.

Without a high and sincerely democratic enthusiasm which ignites the toiling masses and renders them capable of performing miracles, such as can be seen in every phrase of Sun-Yat-Sen’s programme, the real liberation of the Chinese people from age-long slavery would be impossible.

But with the Chinese Populists, this militant democratic ideology is combined firstly with Socialist dreams, with the hope of escaping the path of Chinese capitalism, of averting capitalism, and secondly with the planning and preaching of a radical agrarian reform. It is just these two ideological-political tendencies

which represent the element that goes to make up the Populist movement in the specific meaning of the term, i.e., as distinct from democracy and supplementary to democratic theory.

What is the origin and significance of these tendencies?

Chinese democracy could not overthrow the old order in China and win a republic without a tremendous spiritual and revolutionary élan of the masses. Such an élan presupposes and engenders the sincerest sympathy for the position of the toiling masses, and the most fervent hate for their oppressors and exploiters. And in Europe and America from which the advanced Chinese, in fact all Chinese who have experienced this élan, have culled their ideas of emancipation, the next thing on the programme is already liberation from the bourgeoisie, i.e., Socialism. Hence the inevitable sympathy of the Chinese democrats for Socialism, hence their **subjective** Socialism.

They are subjectively Socialists, because they are against the oppression and exploitation of the masses. But **the objective** conditions of China, of this backward, agrarian, semi-feudal country, urgently confront the 400 millions of the Chinese people with only one definite historically-peculiar form of this oppression and of this exploitation, namely Feudalism. Feudalism is based on the prevalence of agrarian life and of primitive economy; the origin of the feudal exploitation of the Chinese peasant was his **attachment** to the land in one form or another; the political expressions of this exploitation were the feudal landowners, all together and each one separately, with the Emperor as head of the system.

And the result is that from the subjectively-Socialistic ideas and programmes of a Chinese democrat, in reality we get a programme "of change of all bloody foundations" **only** of "real estate," a programme for the abolition **only** of feudal exploitation.

Therein lies **the substance** of Sun-Yat-Sen's Populist conceptions, of his progressive, militant, revolutionary programme of bourgeois-democratic agrarian transformations and of his supposed Socialist theory.

This theory, if we regard it from the doctrinaire point of view, is the theory of a petty bourgeois "Socialist," of a Socialist reactionary. This is so, because the chimera that China can "avert" capitalism, that in China the "social revolution" is easier because of her backwardness, etc., is quite reactionary. And Sun-Yat-Sen with inimitable, one might say maiden naiveté, himself smashes to atoms his reactionary Populist theory, recognising what life makes one recognise, namely: that "China is on the eve of a gigantic industrial (i.e., capitalist) development," that in

China "commerce" (i.e., capitalism) is expanding in tremendous dimensions, that "in 50 years' time we will have many Shanghai's" i.e., a huge number of centres of capitalist wealth and of proletarian need and poverty.

But the question naturally arises—does Sun-Yat-Sen defend, on the basis of his reactionary economic theory, a really reactionary agrarian programme? That indeed is the whole gist of the question, the most interesting point before which plumed and castrated Liberal quasi-Marxism often pulls up short.

That is just the point; he does not defend such an agrarian programme on this basis. That is just what comprises the dialectics of social relations in China—the fact that the Chinese democrats, sincerely sympathising with Socialism in Europe, have turned it into a reactionary theory and on the basis of this reactionary theory of "averting" capitalism, they conduct a **purely capitalist**, maximum-capitalist agrarian programme.

What does the "economic revolution," about which Sun-Yat-Sen speaks so fervently and confusedly at the commencement of the article, really amount to?

It amounts to the transfer of rents to the State, i.e., the nationalisation of land by means of a kind of single tax after the spirit of Henry George. There is absolutely nothing else **real** in the "economic revolution" proposed and preached by Sun-Yat-Sen.

The difference between the value of the land in an out-of-the-way peasant farm and in Shanghai is a difference in the dimensions of the rent. To make the "increase in value" of land become the "property of the people" means transferring rents, i.e., property on land to the State, or in other words, means nationalising the land.

Is such a reform possible within the framework of capitalism? It is not only possible, but it represents the purest, most highly consistent and ideologically perfected capitalism. Marx pointed this out in the "Poverty of Philosophy," proved it in detail in the third volume of "Capital" and particularly clearly developed it in the polemic with Rodbertus in "Theories of Surplus Value."

Nationalisation of the land provides the possibility of abolishing absolute rent, leaving only differential rent. According to the teachings of Marx, nationalisation means the most thorough removal of mediæval monopolies and mediæval relations from agriculture, the greatest freedom of commercial operations with the land, the greatest facility for adapting agriculture to the market. It is an irony of history that the Populist movement, in the name of a "struggle" against capital in agriculture, conducts an agrar-

ian programme, the complete realisation of which would mean the **most rapid** development of capitalism in agriculture.

What economic necessity, in one of the most backward peasant countries of Asia, has caused the diffusion of the most advanced bourgeois-democratic land programmes? It was the necessity for destroying feudalism in all its forms and manifestations.

The more China lagged behind Europe and Japan, so much the more was it threatened with dissection and national disintegration. China could only be "restored" by the heroism of the revolutionary masses of the people, capable of forming a Chinese Republic in the political sphere, and able to ensure in the agrarian sphere, the most rapid capitalistic progress by means of nationalising the land.

As to whether this will succeed and to what degree, is another question. Various countries have brought into force varying degrees of political and agrarian democracy during their bourgeois revolution, and, moreover, in the most variegated combinations. In China it is the international situation and the correlation of social forces that will decide matters. The Emperor will probably unite the feudal landowners, the bureaucracy, the Chinese clergy, and prepare a restoration. Yuan-Shi-Kai, representative of a bourgeoisie which has hardly had time to become Liberal-Republican instead of Liberal-Monarchistic (will this be for long?) will conduct a policy of manœuvring between the monarchy and the revolution. The revolutionary bourgeois democracy represented by Sun-Yat-Sen is correctly seeking a path to the "resuscitation" of China in developing the greatest independence, determination and boldness of the peasant masses, in the way of political and agrarian reforms.

Finally, in accordance with how the number of Shanghais grow in China, so also will the Chinese proletariat grow. It will probably form some kind of Chinese Social-Democratic Labour Party, which, while criticising the petty bourgeois utopias and the reactionary views of Sun-Yat-Sen, will be sure to select with care, to preserve and develop the revolutionary-democratic nucleus of his political and agrarian programme.



Resurrexit

In Memoriam James Connolly: Shot Easter, 1916.

Not for the rights inborn that make a nation,
To burst the chafing fetters of a thrall
Envised in gilded bond imperial,
Nor ease the grief of native tribulation
Through long-drawn centuries of blood and steel,
But for the greater human commonweal
Girt he the warrior's breastplate and the sword;
Nor to its sheath till Death had set his seal
Was the keen blade restored.

They did not know that, as he faced them dying,
Waiting the bullet Death scarce needed now,
Ere spring again had blossomed on the bough
The echoing shot across the ocean flying
Would bring the mighty empire of the Tsars
Sundered to dust and breaking prison bars,
Re-echoing back across the Western world
A weaponless people's triumph over Mars
In their pale faces hurled.

In vain the rebel heartsblood have they scattered,
In vain the seed they trampled in the dust,
Freedom takes root and grows because it must.
How have their empires, one by one, been shattered;
How are the people weaponless yet strong
The tyrant power to break as with a song!
Yet not without you could we dare and do
To bring an end to exploitation's wrong,
Ye heroic, deathless few.

L. A. MOTLER.

“ Quo Vadis? ”

The Independent Labour Party Conference.

By DR. ROBERT DUNSTAN.

WHERE goes the Independent Labour Party? There is no difficulty in answering this enquiry. It is patent from the recent history of the Party, and writ large over the proceedings of the last two Conferences, that the I.L.P. does not go at all. It maintains with difficulty the balance of a Centrist position, utterly unable to justify its brazen claim of Left-wing leadership, miserably tied to MacDonaldism and his policy of “continuity” in the capitalist administration of the Empire. Formulating and passing long resolutions, however militant in tone, for the re-organisation of society without the essential preliminary of the conquest of power gives no answer to MacDonald but plays directly into his hands and aids his policy of class collaboration. In truth the I.L.P. does not go. It stands emasculated and talks interminably in high falsetto tones.

MacDonald Stays at Home.

It should not be forgotten that the Gloucester Conference (1925) by 398 votes to 139 supported and congratulated the MacDonald Government in spite of the admittedly imperialist and militarist policy of that administration and the proceedings this Easter clearly demonstrate that this support has not been withdrawn. It is significant that Mr. MacDonald preferred to snub his followers by staying in Hampstead to answer correspondence rather than attend at Whitley Bay. Puss stayed away, the I.L.P. mice, however, did not play, but were as good as good could be, not even daring to discuss how best to bell their cat.

It is true that there was some criticism of the leadership of the Labour Party. Mr. Buchanan, M.P., going so far as to say that:

“We sit in the House hypocrites; most of us criticise the Tories, when we know in our hearts that if we changed them, the Government we would send would in the main be doing the things this Government is doing. . . .”

whilst Mr. Joseph Southall (Birmingham), with telling effect pointed out that:

“The present position in Parliament was that whenever Labour attacked the Government whether on Imperialism in

China, India, Egypt or Mesopotamia, the Tory Ministers always looked up the record of the late Labour Government and replied this was the policy of Mr. MacDonald and our policy is the same."

This "fiery Socialist artist" also predicted that:

"We shall presently find ourselves with a Prime Minister who will snap his fingers at the N.A.C., will put their programme straight into his waste paper basket and call the N.A.C. of the I.L.P. 'easy-oosie asses'—a charge they will find hard to rebut if they put him in office again."

However animated this discussion was, and however true and pointed the criticisms were, the "Times" had to report that: "The delegates showed they were either satisfied with their Parliamentary members, or soothed by the explanations given, by decisively rejecting the motion to refer back the report." Or, in other words, in spite of a protest here and there the I.L.P. stands where it did in relationship to the leadership of the Labour Party and confirmed its unstinted approval of 1925. This controversy was noteworthy for the vigorous defence of Mr. MacDonald's foreign policy and the Dawes Plan by Mr. Oswald Mosley.

The I.L.P. and the Communists.

Conveniently enough the resolution upon the affiliation of the Communist Party was talked out. But early in the Conference, and at a stage when no reply was possible, Mr. Fenner Brockway took pains to show that there could be no "**fraternising by branches with the Communist Party,**" for the "I.L.P. Constitution laid it down definitely that they believed in the method of democracy" whilst the "Third International . . . declared that the only method of achieving Socialism was the method of armed revolution." The "Times" rightly commented on his effort later in the day to reconcile this attitude with the approach of the N.A.C. to the Communist International. This glaring inconsistency forces the belief that this well-advertised move is one of pure opportunism and can be accounted for by the pressure of the proletarian elements of the I.L.P. and the need to satisfy their growing impatience. That this estimate is correct is further vouched for by the fact that the N.A.C. have rejected a common platform and front with the Communist Party to support the miners and to repel the general attack of the master class upon the workers.

A Revolutionary Proposal.

This cowardly attitude was emphasised by another part of the proceedings, for on the discussion of "War Resistance" the Lancashire Divisional Council proposed that the Labour move-

ment should prepare an organisation with the object of taking complete control in the event of another war. Their scheme provided for "the Parliamentary Labour Party constituting itself a **National Committee of Public Safety**, controlling the machinery of Government and the General Council of the Trades Union Congress organising transport and other services for preventing the movement of troops and munitions and controlling the transport of food supplies," Mr. Fenner Brockway said the proposals were of "**the kind to which the Party should give its mind, but it was a little early to give them acceptance.**" The shallowness of the I.L.P. contention that it cannot associate with the Communists is well shown here, for it is clear that if anything approaching such a scheme was accepted and put into operation by the Labour movement that "**heavy civil war**" would be the immediate consequence. The very terms of the proposal preclude the working of "**democracy**," which according to Mr. Brockway is the basis of the I.L.P. opposition to the Communist Party. Needless to say the resolution was withdrawn, but it stands on record and exposes the weak opportunism of the leadership of the official element.

Nationalisation and Compensation.

If further evidence of vacillation and timidity is required, turn to the discussion of the question of compensation. The Party and its leaders are hopelessly divided upon this fundamental question, but there is a tendency for the rank and file to support restoration without compensation whilst the Liberal aristocratic influx argues in favour of purchase and against what they term "confiscation". The official resolution was a feeble compromise, disclosing the usual lack of courage of the Centrist position. It recommended that "**the terms and conditions of the transference to public ownership of land, industries, banking and other forms of wealth, production and distribution should be determined by the circumstances which obtain at the time of transference.**"

This procrastination was readily accepted by the Conference. With bold leadership the rank and file would undoubtedly vote for restoration without compensation but then the Liberal elements would revolt and they are very powerful in the innermost councils of the Party, and the delegates here, as elsewhere, showed that they had no definite outlook or certainty of mind and so fell victims to the well worked official machine.

The Mining Crisis.

A rare breath of reality was introduced into the Conference by the addresses of two miners demanding the support of the I.L.P. in their coming struggle. Mr. G. J. Jones (South Wales)

declared that the miners wanted **“not lip service”** but action and that **“should this not happen, the crisis this time would end in revolution.”** In face of this grim utterance the delegates hastened to pass the resolution. It remains to be seen how far the miners can rely upon resolute action on the part of the leaders of the I.L.P. Here at least no central manoeuvring is possible without an immediate exposure, and it will be an acid test.

Transmutation of Wages into Income.

It is now necessary to deal with the chief performance of the Conference which was the passing of the first resolution on the Agenda for **“Socialism in Our Time”** (O Lord!). This happy consummation is to be gained by the securing of a **“national living income”*** by superhuman legislative activity in Parliament. Nobody knows better than the N.A.C. how disgusted the workers are with the sterile results of the MacDonald Government and how critical they are of the wide-flung promises of emancipation through the ballot box. Hence this suggestion for the immediate demand of a **“living income”** as a militant policy directed to rallying the discontented proletarians to the I.L.P. standard, to prevent them turning to the Communist Party and the rational call for the organisation of a United Front and the seizure of power by massed political and industrial action.

A mere recital of the main clauses of this amazing resolution takes one's breath away, but the I.L.P. delegates by long practice, are accustomed to having brilliant utopias thrown to them and they swallowed the tasty dope with **“loud and long applause.”**

How the Miracle is to be Worked.

The miracle of **“Socialism in Our Time”** is not to come by the waving of a magic wand, but by what is equally futile, strenuous legislative action. First, a Commission is to determine what is a **“living income.”** When in the course of time this **“standard wage or income”** is arrived at, an Act of Parliament is to be passed setting up an **“authority”** to **“survey industry”** and to mark out those industries in which there would be a loss if the standard income were paid. This protracted business being done and the results recorded in an industrial Doomsday Book, the low grade industries are to be **“one by one”** re-organised. Time passes, but it is needful to control prices and so a long series of Acts of Parliament are to be passed to Nationalise the Banks,

* This characteristic and charming comment of the “Daily Herald” deserves a special word. **“It is worth while noting the use of this word ‘income’ as distinct from ‘wage.’ It symbolises a deliberate moving away from the old conception of ‘wage slavery.’”** It is, indeed, worth noting that ‘wage slavery’ can be obscured, if not obliterated by this innocent device.

to regulate Currency and Credits, and to secure the State control of the importation of food and raw materials. Even this will not be enough **“to carry us rapidly towards the realisation of the Socialist State,”** and so provision is made for the Nationalisation of the Land, Mines, Railways and Electrical generation. During the somewhat lengthy period required to prepare and pass these Acts, children’s allowances are to be provided **“out of direct taxation,”** as something to go on with. On paper this colossal programme* may look imposing and it seems that the Conference welcomed with enthusiasm and applause the glittering and inspiring promises contained in Mr. Brailsford’s speech when moving the resolution. What a superb company promoter or racing tipster the editor of the “New Leader” would have made! “Here you are, gentlemen—the Old Firm—a sure winning security for **‘Socialism in our Generation.’**” But it will want a veritable Rip Van Winkle to live to see the end of the transaction.

Time an Essence of the Contract.

As the lawyers say “time is an essence of the contract” offered by the I.L.P. to the exploited and hard-pressed workers. How long, as Mr. Wheatley asked, would they have to wait for an interim dividend? The authors of this pretty scheme give no estimate of the length of time needed for the passing of the necessary Acts of Parliament, or the following legal proceedings, for the master class would undoubtedly take a thousand and one points to His Majesty’s Judges for interpretation. All this precious policy does is to formulate a legislative programme, which under the most favourable circumstances would eat up the lives of at least two or three generations, let alone one. Can any sane person believe that it is possible? Does anyone think that the House of Lords would have nothing to say, apart from the powerful obstruction of a minority in the Commons, or that the capitalists are not prepared to fetch the King out of “cold storage,” to exercise the prerogatives of the Crown against the people when the occasioned warrants? Mr. Jowett, M.P. seems to have had an inkling of the nature of the fight, for he spoke of the possible need of a general strike to enforce **“the demand for the right to live,”** but it is clear that industrial action once taken would lead to revolution and civil war, unless it was called off on the first

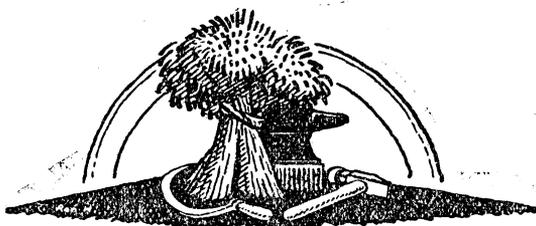
* It would be interesting to refer this to a mental specialist. Undoubtedly the exalted extravagance of the resolution would, if found in an individual, be taken as evidence of megalomania, an early symptom of a nervous disorder known as the general paralysis of the insane. It may well be that organisations are liable to a similar complaint and that the I.L.P. is now in the first stage of G.P.I. and exhibiting the extravagant delusions common in this disease before the general paralysis sets in. If this should be the case then an inevitable dissolution of the Party can be predicted with confidence.

show of force by the master class—the workers abjectly surrendering.

A Cruel Deception.

The cruel fact is that the whole scheme is, intentionally or unintentionally, a fraud and if it were possible to float a company upon it, no City underwriter would risk a brass farthing upon it, nor a single well-advised investor put a halfpenny into it. Why then, should the workers waste a moment of thought on this wild-cat project to bring emancipation by a series of complicated Acts of Parliament, which, even if possible, would alone exhaust working class effort for generations to come?

Gentlemen of the I.L.P.! Pray, cease talking and take to thinking. Workers! Unite and organise for the conquest of power, for the destruction of capitalism and the re-organisation of society.



Lenin has called imperialism "dying capitalism." Why? Because imperialism carries the contradictions of capitalism to their extreme limits, after which the revolution begins.—Stalin: "Theory and Practice of Leninism."

Our Tasks in the Trades Councils

By F. H. PEET.

[EDITORIAL NOTE.—*The importance of Trades Councils to the working class movement cannot be over-emphasised. We are pleased, therefore, that comrade Peet has come forward with an article which provides an opportunity for further discussion. Comrade T. Quelch has promised to contribute his point of view in the next issue. After that we would welcome letters from readers who feel they have something to contribute to the discussion. These will not necessarily be published—we hope to have too many for that—but it may be possible to deal with points raised in a third article.*]

THE Annual Conference of Trades Councils was held on the 26th of March last. This conference marked a distinct step forward in local industrial and political organisation. The conference considered resolutions put forward by the Trades Councils Joint Consultative Committee dealing with a scheme for the federation of Trades Councils in the areas, local organisation campaigns, model rules and constitution for the Trades Councils themselves. The last point is the most important and deserves the most careful consideration, as it should give a direction in which we could travel with advantage; it will clarify the present confusion, amply manifested by the discussion, of local organisation as regards Borough Labour Parties and Trades Councils, and brings right to the fore the question of the efficacy and status of the “pure” Trades Council consisting of trade unions **only** in any area.

Borough Party and Trades Councils.

The present mechanism of the so-called Trades Councils is very confusing. In some districts we have the ordinary Borough Labour Party—with or without its industrial section; in others the Trades Council and Labour Party combined—in this case usually a Labour Party mis-called a Trades Council; in one or two districts a Labour Party and a Trades Council functioning separately. Other variations can be found according to local circumstances. In the days before the war, the Trades Councils consisted of delegates from the trade unions and Socialist societies.

There were no Labour Parties as such. True, these bodies conducted the work of elections and sent their delegates to National Labour Party conferences, but their main work was the co-ordination of industrial matters of the district.

The power of these local bodies waned considerably after the T.U.C. decision to disaffiliate them from Congress. For some considerable time it had been evident that trade unions had been prone to ignore the Trades Councils, the reason being the old conservative instinct that any union dispute could be settled by the union itself and resented any interference from an "outside" body. This caused the Trades Councils to fall further into the background because of waning power. The new Labour Party constitution of 1917 saved them from becoming organisations attended more from habit than anything else. Divisional parties (individual membership) sprung into existence and Trades Councils became Borough Labour Parties consisting of delegates from all and sundry—trade unions, Co-ops, divisional parties, Socialist societies. The Trades Councils as hitherto known died a natural death. An entirely new outlook arose. The pocket editions of MacDonald and Co. turned their eyes towards the new glorious possibilities—to the building of an electoral machine. This is now admitted and industrial action is frowned upon—by the "old hand."

In some districts the name of "Trades Council" died hard, or the words "and Labour Party" were added. In effect and action they are Borough Labour Parties and function purely as electoral machines. Sometimes stalwarts arise to suggest the resuscitation of the "old Trades Council." What is the reply? That there is nothing which the Trades Council can do, which a Borough Labour Party cannot do. The later development was the new model constitution of the Labour Party. By this constitution the divisional Labour Parties ceased to be based on purely individual membership and developed into delegate bodies like the parent body or Borough Party. This process is going on at the present time. It further made distinct provision for every conceivable type of organisation.

The little set of books issued by the Labour Party at one penny each make it quite clear. Single member constituencies, divided boroughs, county constituencies, divisional parties are all catered for. What has it all produced? A Labour Party with strong local organisations—but purely electoral machines. It is openly stated by these "little politicians" that "we" are building a machine to win elections. But there is a clause in these constitutions which has until recently been more or less forgotten. This clause caters for the "industrial" section of the movement and provides for industrial sections to consist of delegates from trade unions **only**.

Purely industrial matters can be discussed by these sections but it is made clear that they have no separate constitution but are a sub-committee responsible to the Labour Party. In very few districts has this clause been taken advantage of. Where it has been attempted it has succeeded only in the teeth of opposition or apathy of the budding Borough Councillors and Guardians. In short, the Trades Councils as they were known before the war have been obliterated and bodies belonging wholly to the Labour Party and functioning under the Labour Party constitution have taken their place.

Towards Improvement.

For some years past there has been a growing feeling that much more is needed than mere electoral machines, and many of those who wanted a forward policy, despairing of the atmosphere, have put forward various schemes for the improvement of these central bodies. Some few months ago a controversy was started in the "Plebs" regarding the resuscitation of the Trades Council. This controversy provided evidence of the desire by many to get back to the old spirit of bread and butter struggle as against the new obsession of capturing Boards of Guardians and Councils as ends in themselves. Then various amateur model constitutions were put forward. The difficulty of carrying any ready-made constitution on to these Borough Parties can only be appreciated by those who have had experience of their work. It must be thoroughly understood that the Borough Parties have their constitution provided by the National Labour Party and any attempt to alter this would **never** succeed on a large scale although it may be successful in some places. For all practical purposes the whole outlook of these bodies is political. They recognise Liverpool as against Scarborough. T.U.C. decisions are seldom mentioned, let alone put into practice. This is proved by the reception of reports from delegates to Labour Party conferences and industrial conferences. It is obvious which is regarded as more important and more obvious which is **acted** upon.

The Industrial Section.

The industrial clause in the constitution which has been referred to reads that industrial objects shall be carried out by an Industrial Committee acting as the **Trades Council**. The Industrial Committee shall consist of delegates from affiliated trade union branches and shall meet monthly as required. Only trade union branches shall be entitled to representation on the Industrial Committee and all purely industrial and trade union matters shall be dealt with by this committee. It then goes on to say that where political action is necessary this must be referred to

the E.C. of the Borough or Divisional Party and delegates of the general committee. As stated, few districts have taken advantage of this clause. There are, however, continual evidences of attempts to start the "industrial section." And the decisions of the National Conference of Trades Councils show that the time is opportune to press and work for the carrying out of the clause. Here is no new constitution, no ploughing of the sands, but definite instructions for our little politicians to get down to. Experience has shown that with effort these Industrial Committees can be started and kept going successfully. The atmosphere engendered on these bodies is like a breath of fresh air after the stultifying atmosphere of the Borough Parties with their politicians, Co-ops., Socialist societies and all the odds and ends. Hosts of matters, which have never had a chance to be raised at the monthly meetings of the Labour Party, are discussed by the proletarian elements from the trade unions. A community of interest springs up between these delegates who go practically as an agreed body on to the Borough Party meetings. Here you will find the reflection of Scarborough as against Liverpool. The work grows and from a small beginning it is soon found necessary to create sub-committees for this and that matter and yet all the time the industrial section is only a sub-committee itself, responsible to the parent body and functioning under the Labour Party.

But observe. **On March 25th, by an almost unanimous vote, the National Conference of Trades Councils held under the auspices of the T.U.C. accepted proposals put forward by the T.U.C. recognising these industrial sections and providing them with an opportunity of accepting a constitution of their own.**

What We Should Do.

Some time last year the T.U.C. decided to pay attention to the so-called Trades Councils. A national conference of delegates was called. Then area conferences were called and now another national conference has been held. What has become of the decisions of these conferences? Very little. But in the decisions of the last conference there are golden opportunities for re-shaping the Trades Councils and infusing such life as will permit them to function as the real co-ordinating centres, which is so desired. The new "model constitution and rules for the guidance of Trades Councils" give them at last a new status. But let us be clear. **This constitution cannot be accepted by a Borough or Divisional Labour Party, but only by Trades Councils as such (trade union bodies only represented) and industrial sections of Labour Parties.** Here is no artificial brain wave of an enthusiast but a definite constitution approved by the General Council.

It is not our place to deal at length with the details of this constitution. It can be found in the January and February reports of the T.U.C. General Council and the report of the Conference. Its significance can be readily understood by those active in the Trades Councils. Properly carried out we approach nearer to uniformity of organisation in the areas. We shall have our Labour Parties consisting of delegates from trade unions plus the politicals and the others working directly under the National Labour Party constitution. **Supplementary to that** (not separated from), we shall have our industrial sections or Trades Councils consisting only of the trade union delegates influenced by the T.U.C. and reflecting that influence on to the Borough Parties. The effect will be to wean the Trades Councils from the blight which has come over them. The method of organisation thus provided, reduces to a minimum any question of a dual direction.

That the T.U.C. has provided these means is evidence of their paramount necessity. We should, therefore, see to it that industrial sections are created in the Labour Parties and as soon as is practicable get these sections to adopt the constitution approved by the General Council. This is most important work if we want the Trades Councils to become real bodies commanding respect in the districts. The wheel has turned full circle. The pure Trades Council, dying and without power, a relic of the past, giving way to the pure electoral body again comes into its own under the ægis of the General Council with a definite constitution. The trade union delegates meeting together, discussing their bread and butter problems, learn very quickly all the elements of the struggle for power. As a body they attend the Borough Parties (where they meet the politicals), bringing the fresh stimulus so needed. Our immediate tasks it would appear are to study carefully the constitution of these Labour Parties; to press for the carrying into effect of the clause for the creation of the Industrial Section; to popularise this section, to initiate discussion; to win the respect of the rank and file trade unionists; to co-ordinate the industrial activity; to arrange for visitations to trade union branches; to work in close association with the General Council. All this and at the same time to go on with our ordinary work in the Labour Parties. Finally to work for the acceptance of the constitution as approved by the General Council. This gives every evidence of being the quickest, surest and easiest (albeit constitutional) way to make the Trades Councils what they should be.

Historical Materialism

By T. A. JACKSON.

“Historical Materialism.” By N. Bukharin (Allen and Unwin 12s. 6d.)

FEW things have been more illuminating in modern political controversy than the unanimity with which all critics of Trotsky's “Where is Britain Going?” reacted to the scorn poured by him upon the customary “religiosity” of British Labour Leaders.

One and all they protested that “they weren't like that themselves”—it was the “other fellow”!—and that “religion” in Britain, particularly in the “Free churches,” meant something quite different from its connotation in the Greek Orthodox Church.

Even a critic of the attainments of H. N. Brailsford fell into the same pit and gave this comfortable theory its clearest and most precise expression :—

“His (Trotsky's) attitude to the religious beliefs of most of our readers is for me the test of his failure to understand us—and this I may say calmly, since I am myself an Agnostic. No Russian that I ever met, even when he had been long in England, ever grasped the fact that English religion, with its long tradition of open discussion, the democratic form of its “free” churches, its emphasis on conduct rather than ritual or belief, and its relative freedom from other-worldliness has literally nothing in common with the Eastern Church.”

We ought at any rate to be grateful for one thing: Nobody seems to have “remembered” that Trotsky was born a Jew, and is as such “utterly unable to comprehend” Christianity. Yet the fact that this omission is made is as revealing as the assertion that familiarity with the Orthodox Christianity of the Greek Church renders a man incapable of comprehending Protestant Christianity—especially in its English Nonconformist forms.

The episode forms a valuable means of testing and comparing the theoretical bases of Marxian-Communism and purely “British” Socialism, respectively. (And the publication of an

English translation of Bukharin's book comes most opportunely for our purpose.)

* * * * *

The outstanding peculiarity of the "really-truly-British" Socialism of the I.L.P. is its repudiation of all "Marxian dogmatism." This, in practice, means much more than that the leaders of the I.L.P. (headed by MacDonal) dislike the concept of class-struggle, and shrink from the logical conclusion of that concept—a policy of class warfare culminating in social revolution.

It means that under cover of a repudiation of Marxism they propagate—more or less clearly, consciously and consistently—a counter-conception: that of class-conciliation, class collaboration, and "inevitable gradualness."

That this theory is completely hostile to the implications of the names "Labour," and, still more, "*Independent Labour*," they have accepted as Party names does not trouble these leaders one whit. They can always take refuge in the admission that while the workers have special grievances exacerbated by the policy of capitalism, these can be removed or ameliorated by proper "statesmanship," and this done, society will be freed from the perils of disintegration an intensification of class-strife must entail.

Two things are revealed by this process of reasoning. Against the Marxian theory of social development the I.L.P. must, in fact or by implication, develop a theory of its own; and, secondly, any consistent alternative to Marxism must be a theory that repudiates all possibility of a revolutionary future for the proletariat.

He who can see in the class-conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat no other logical outcome but the dissolution of society is, from his very pessimism towards the proletariat, necessarily converted sooner or later into an active defender of the bourgeois order and its institutions. And despair of the proletariat begets inevitably that optimism towards capitalist society which finds expression in a belief in the possibility of a progressive eradication of all needs for class strife and revolution.

It is only necessary to re-state the essentials of the Marxian sociology to prove that all the "Labour" critics of Trotsky have, in fact, sought to uphold the cardinal illusions of the Bourgeois order against a Realism made possible by the consistent application of a Proletarian method of criticism.

Two questions only need to be asked : Is a science of society possible at all? And, granted that it is—is it possible to isolate “Religion,” its creeds, formularies, concepts, and institutions from the scope of such a science?

He who answers either question in the negative abandons all hope of lifting politics from the bourgeois plane of Parliamentary quackery to the level of an intelligible science of Government.

Communism, to-day, is the consistent and thoroughgoing application of Marxism. Its theoretical basis is the Materialist Conception of History—or, more simply, Historical Materialism. Living as he did during a period of immense intellectual activity, during which the physical sciences achieved triumph after triumph in bewildering succession, it was to be expected that Marx should endeavour to work out a complete conception of human society and its development, one that would render positive and comprehensible the Communist politics to which he found himself driven.

This he did (as is well-known) in collaboration with his life-long friend and fellow worker, Engels. It is true that he left no single volume in which he elaborated a complete system of sociology, and that students must in consequence arrive at a grasp of his concept by a study of the brief formulation of his doctrine given in the Introduction to his (unfinished) “Critique of Political Economy,” and of the various works in which he applied his concepts to the analysis of existing society and the events of his time.

Possibly because of this the fundamental thought of Marx is more easily understood than it might otherwise have been—since his own practical applications are illuminative. But, since his work was unfinished, there is still room to draw all the conclusions that logically follow from them.

Bukharin’s work is, therefore, trebly welcome as the first attempt available in English to present a complete picture of the Marxian sociology as a whole. (It is ten thousand pities that its price is prohibitive to the class to whom it would be most welcome).

* * * * *

Prior to Marx there had been many attempts at formulating a “law” that would do for the study of society, what the “laws” of Kepler and Newton had done for astronomy, what the Darwinian hypothesis was to do for biology, and the work of Dalton, Mendelieff and others had done and was doing for chemistry—

namely, provide a generalisation which would enable the complete unification of the whole field of phenomena under review.

Comte had coined the name "sociology" and sought to elaborate a system from the crude psychology then in vogue.

Hegel had attempted under the name of "Philosophy of History" to include society in the scope of his system—and his method of treating the universe as a self-contained whole, developing by means of internal polarisations, antagonisms, differentiations and re-combinations provided (for all its mystical-metaphysic) a starting point for a whole host of speculators.

Herbert Spencer in England was busy with his system of Synthetic Philosophy, which included Sociology as one of its main sub-divisions and treated it in terms of evolution with much use of the biological concept of the "survival of the fittest" (a term which in point of fact he was the first to use).

None of them had succeeded in explaining what was, after all, the root problem why periodically human societies and their institutions undergo a complete transformation (known to historians as a "Revolution") and why after an apparently chaotic upheaval the society concerned enters upon a new and enlarged process of development and expansion.

This was all the more noteworthy since such an upheaval—(that of the French Revolution of 1789 onwards)—had given the impetus to the whole study; and, what was even more important, the slogans of that Revolution were at the time becoming in the hands of an insurgent proletariat weapons of political warfare against even the States and institutions the Revolution had created.

Marx alone saw to the heart of the problem and made the fact of Social Revolution the pivot of his whole conception.

* * * * *

First he had to clear away the lumber of the past.

Not having to live and work (at any rate in his earlier years) in Britain he was not forced to deal exhaustively with the cruder theological concepts which treat human society as the direct product of Divine Inspiration modified periodically by the intervention of the Devil.

It is only in Britain—and there only in the literature offered for the edification of the "lower orders"—that such an historical

cataclysm as the French Revolution could be disposed of as a temporary triumph of the Devil (operating through the agency of Atheism) over the rule and governance of a Benevolent Creator who had "ordained" the "powers that be."

This notwithstanding fundamentally the same conception existed in more refined and sophisticated forms—many of which still do duty in the hands of the various anti-Marxist schools. And one of them is the "intellectualist" theory that lies at the back of most if not all of the I.L.P. reasoning to this day.

* * * * *

Working as he does from day to day with his own brain and will; determining as he must his conduct from occasion to occasion by the operation of his own apparent power of will and choice, it is easy for the plain "man in the street" to conclude that the Brain and Will of man were all that was necessary to account for the fact of human society and the phenomena of its history.

And as in real life he had with the best of intentions frequently produced the worst of results from pure ignorance, it was equally easy to account for the "irrationalities" of history in the same way.

Thus the sole problem of history is that of the spread of "enlightenment" and "education." Just as the Greeks divided the world into "Greeks and Barbarians," or the Mohammedans into "True Believers and Idolators" (a practice in which they were emulated and surpassed by their Christian rivals) so these intellectualists divided the world into "enlightened" and "ignorant"; and such revolutionary epochs as the Reformation or the French Revolution were explained as due to the success of "enlightenment" in overcoming the obstacles set in the path of Progress by Ignorance, inherited Superstition and interested Malice.

In the face of facts this comfortable theory has been modified in details but its essence is retained as the basis of the commonly accepted bourgeois orthodoxy to this day. The I.L.P., for instance, abounds with deluded souls who imagine that the human race might have escaped capitalism altogether if only Socialism had been "discovered" in time; and who fondly cherish the belief that the most hardened of capitalist sinners would repent and join the I.L.P. if only the matter could be explained to him properly.

Naturally to these any conception of the necessity of Revolution is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit of Enlightenment. To

them the transformations of the past have been all in the right line of progress. Feudalism was a bungling attempt which capitalism improved upon just as Feudalism itself had improved upon Classic Antiquity. The basic institutions of capitalism—"democracy," "parliament," "cabinet government" and so on—all embody "discoveries" of permanent value which need only to be co-ordinated and rationally developed to become free from reproach. Religion needs only to be purged of superstition to enable its Eternal Truth to become everywhere apparent. In short bourgeois society is right in principle and only wants progressive rectification in detail to bring it "up-to-date."

* * * * *

Faced with the fact that other States and peoples have, in fact, undergone revolutionary crises and have not, in fact, developed the same institutions, the answer of the Intellectualists is that the "character" of these nations is different—in short, they do differently because they are different ("for God hath made them so"!). This is only a roundabout way of saying that the poor "foreigner" cannot be expected to attain to the intellectual clarity and exaltation of one of "God's Englishmen."

* * * * *

One has only to take a glance at Bukharin's exposition of the Marxian sociology to see how worse than worthless all this is.

It is notorious for example (as against the Enlightenment theory) that every revolutionary advance in history has included among its opponents some of the most cultured men of its age—(a fact which the pioneer Christians erected into a positive virtue).

As for the "race" theory it should be the last possible weapon for a Briton to use. The most superficial acquaintance with history should be enough to remind these critics that the last possible people on earth to claim "purity" of race are just precisely those English-speaking inhabitants of the British islands who lay the loudest claims to their racial "superiority."

The Marxian sociology bases itself upon no such relative and provisional concepts as those of "race" "nationality" or "culture."

It recognises that human society is born out of the needs of man (as a concrete biological fact) to make a living by action upon external nature. Man's dependence upon Nature, his need

to struggle to subdue it to the satisfaction of his needs, constitutes the basic fact from which all historical development proceeds.

To conquer Nature he must deploy his greatest available forces and to achieve this end he early learns the need for the division, re-division and sub-division of the total work of natural conquest and subjugation. Only when a beginning is made by regarding social organisation as basically a sub-division of productive labour is the possibility created for an intelligible explanation of society and its history. Given this starting point it is easy to see that the development of man's productive power of command over the forces of Nature has made possible, and has determined the whole form and content of the intellectual, moral and ideological history of each succeeding epoch.

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But given the theory that the intellectual life of society both in direction and substance—in quantity and quality—is determined by the mode of material production prevailing and the social organisation following thencefrom—or, in few words, that man's ideas, beliefs and opinions depend upon his social relations with his fellow men and that these relations in turn depend upon the degree of their collective command over the forces of Nature and their relations in the scheme of social production prevailing—given this theory how does one account for epochs of social-revolution?

Progressively mankind embodies its experiences in the struggle against Nature in the manufacture and re-adaptation of tools, methods and processes. These in turn, when they grow sufficiently important, compel more or less fundamental re-adjustments in the whole organisation of society.

Broadly speaking, every revolution represents a re-organisation of society compelled by the accumulated development of productive forces and methods—but that it should take the form of a revolution requires the consideration of an indispensable connecting link.

Between the individual man and Nature as a whole interposes the whole organisation of society. A man is not, for instance, a farmer or a seaman, simply "by" or "because of" Nature. He farms with a social end to serve—the market in which he sells and buys, and his condition of well-being or otherwise depend more upon the state of the market than upon the state of the weather. So, too, the farrier does not practise a craft that grew spontaneously "like a tree." His craft presupposes human society

and its history—presupposes the domestication of animals and the cultivation of horses as beasts of burden; presupposes the invention of roads and their wear and tear upon horse's hoofs; presupposes the discovery of the art of working iron, its existence in commercial quantities and sufficient demand for the farrier's craft to make it feasible for a man to live by its practice. Still more the seaman depends upon the needs and demands, and upon the technological developments, of human society than upon the elements with which he grapples daily in the practice of his craft.

Moreover men's opinions and beliefs are in great measure determined by their available stocks of knowledge and these in turn depend upon the degree and quality of their contact, of their access to the available stocks of common information. There is little learning and no philosophy possible without language and language is obviously a social product. Hence the ideas, beliefs and opinions of an individual depend far more upon his social relations than upon any individual peculiarity of brain power, desire or whim.

Hence it is that while the economic development of society proceeds by the accumulation of an infinitude of minor detail, modifications of tools and technique, their effects only appear in the modifications they induce in the relations of interdependence between men.

Chief among these relations are the class divisions based upon the prime social institution of "private property." Given these divisions and economic development determines the degree and intensity of their antagonism or acquiescence—giving to one the victory and dominance to-day and determining its overthrow on the morrow.

Hence it is that while economic development proceeds by the accumulation of infinitesimal modifications (and may, therefore, as Marx says, "be properly called an evolution,") with regard to ideas, opinions and institutions, men fight out all questions of change "as class struggles conscious of their opposing interests."

* * * * *

It is fundamentally necessary to bourgeois society (and its chief institution the State) that all consciousness of a common class interest in antagonism to the bourgeoisie and its State apparatus should be prevented from developing among the proletariat. Hence its active hostility to Marxism in any shape or form, and hence its patronage or toleration for any idea or movement that will antagonise Marxism in the interest of a theory in which classes, and concepts of class struggle, have no place.

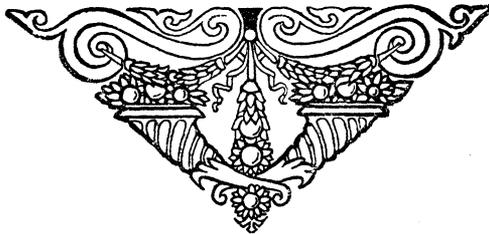
Mr. Brailsford (as an "Agnostic") may not like the Protestant "free" churches any more than he likes the Greek Orthodox Church, but as a good I.L.P'er he cannot help but be drawn to bodies which have this much in common with him that they preach "democratic" methods (in church only), "equality" (in the sight of God, just as we are all "equal" in the eyes of the law) and an insistence upon "conduct rather than ritual or belief." Similarly the Liberal and Tory Parties do not care much what you believe—even to the point of "Socialism"—so long as you do not believe in attacking the bourgeois order enough to organise a political party to lead a proletarian assault upon it.

In short, Mr. Brailsford can only attack Trotsky and his Marxism by throwing himself (agnosticism and all) head over heels into the arms of the defenders of capitalism.

The conclusion is obvious. Either ideas and opinions have an origin independent of social relations, and a development undetermined by earthly circumstances or the reverse is true.

If the former is true a scientific sociology is impossible and Socialism is an idle dream. If the latter is true, the transformation of religion can be explained by the transformations of human society and the persistence of the "religiosity" of British Labour leaders can be explained by the same circumstances which have also prevented them from divesting themselves of Liberalism and the rest of the petty bourgeois superstitions which mark the British Labour Party as the grotesque hybrid that it is.

Religion everywhere is camouflaged politics—and the history of no religion proves it so well as Christianity.





BOOK REVIEWS

John Frost and the Chartist Movement in Wales. Ness Edwards (Western Valleys Labour Classes, Abertillery, Mon. 1s. net.)

In this little book the author deplores the tendency in the modern Labour movement to forget, or, in the case of the "respectable Labourite" to conveniently ignore the essential characteristics of the Chartist movement. Comrade Ness has certainly done well in his contribution towards rectifying this tendency. In rugged, plain language, he takes us back to the atmosphere of these days—the urge from below, the courage and sincerity (in strong contrast to the present time) of many of the leaders, the conditions which led to the rise of Chartism and the reason for its decline.

The book is on right lines and deserves its place on bookshelf and in class room. D.R.

The Little Red Library. ("Daily Worker" Publishing Co., 1113, West Washington Boulevard, Chicago, Ill. Price 5 cents each.)

We congratulate our American comrades on their enterprise in producing this series. Each booklet (which is in handy pocket edition form with about 32 pages), deals with some phase of the American working class movement. The aim

of the publishers seems to be that of providing a complete picture of the situation in the U.S.A., discussing the problems which divide the workers into various camps and explaining the Communist position generally. The numbers now ready are:

1. Trade Unions in America.
 2. Class Struggle v. Class Collaboration.
 3. Principles of Communism (Engels).
 4. Workers' Correspondence.
 5. Poems for Workers.
 6. Revolution in America (Marx and Engels).
 7. The Damned Agitator and other Stories.
 8. 1871: The Paris Commune.
- Others are in preparation.

Fairy Tales for Workers' Children, by Herminia Zur Muhlen. Translated from the German by Ida Dailes. ("Daily Worker" Publishing Co., 3s. 6d. net.)

A beautifully printed and illustrated book for children. The stories have a working class message for the kiddies so well presented that they are bound to cry for more. The book is a large one (pages about 12 inches by 9, and 65 in number), and can be heartily commended as a birthday present.

giving a comparatively high rate of wages (paid monthly as a further sign of superiority). But with insolvency and collapse looming large in the distance, capitalism is no longer able to throw out these expensive sops, even to preserve such a desirable state of affairs, and the teaching profession is slowly waking up to the fact that when it comes to a question of "the wages of every section of the workers coming down," they are unhesitatingly classified as members of the working class, and in common with all other workers suffer drastic wage cuts.

Emulating the simple child-like faith of Samuel, teachers had already submitted to a voluntary reduction of 5 per cent. of their wages in the interests of the community, and now their sacrifice has been recognised and appreciated to the extent of further cuts. This unmistakable attack has been largely responsible for a steady influx of teachers into the Teachers' Labour League, a small recently-formed political organisation, embracing teachers of all shades of Labour and Socialist opinions. Simultaneously with this gradual awakening the various organs of the capitalist press, led by the "Daily Mail," that staunch defender of any faith that happens to be popular with its subsidisers at the moment, burst forth into a violent and malevolent attack upon education in general and elementary school-teachers in particular, leader-writers vying with one another in producing a crescendo of lies, abuse and misrepresentation.

How Education is Hampered.

Public opinion having been thus inflamed, and the taxpayer made to realise how he had been fleeced to provide luxurious accommodation and unnecessary educational benefits for the children of the undeserving poor, in November, 1925, Lord Eustace Percy, President of the Board of Education, launched his notorious Circular 1371. Briefly summarised, the proposals therein contained were:

- (1) No new schools to be built, or new equipment requisitioned for existing schools.
- (2) No reduction in the size of classes (the majority of which number from 50 to 60 children).
- (3) No extension of medical services.
- (4) No development of secondary education.

Thus do the Tory apostles of "peace in our time" prosecute the class war against the children of the workers, attempting to cut down an already niggardly and inadequate education estimate by £2,000,000. (Considerably less than the cost of one battleship out of the new Naval Programme.)

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