Special Conferences Precede Wars

ONE PENNY

Workers' Dreadnought

NOT AUTHORITY ; BUT CO-OPERATION.

Vol. X. No. 29. October 6, 1923. WEEKLY.

The Big Stick in Poplar

Who Called in Police to beat Unemployed ?

Upwards of forty people badly hurt, hundreds of slightly wounded cases

Much has been said and written of love and hate and violence in Poplar. One thing stands out clearly : it is that the result of working-class representatives taking part in the administration of capitalist machinery, is that working-class representatives become responsible for maintaining capitalist law and order and for enforcing the regulations of the capitalist system itself.

The Labour Guardians, who hold all the seats on the Board save two, have deducted the 1s. 6d. a week coal allowance, and are contemplating a reduction in the scale of relief, though the winter is approaching and the cost of living rising rather than falling.

The Deputation.

On Wednesday, September 26th, a deputation of the Unemployed Workers' Organisation waited upon the Guardians to ask for the restoration of the coal allowance and an increase in the scale of relief to single men and women.

Relief to be Reduced.

The Guardians refused both requests, and Mr. Edgar Lansbury, Chairman of the Board, told the deputation that a reduction in the scale of relief is being considered in order to reduce the call on the ratepayers by £85,000.

Guardians Locked In.

Thereupon the Unemployed locked the main doors of the building and told the Guardians that they must remain for the night unless they would reverse their decision.

This is not the first time the Unemployed have taken such action. Guardians have been locked in many times before in Poplar and in other Boroughs. The Unemployed officials declare that Mr. George Lansbury and other members of the Board have in the past expressed approval of such tactics ; but if that is so it was no doubt in the shape of platform perorations not intended to be taken too literally. Certainly the Board resented the locking in on this occasion, and, though some of them are members of Parliament, accustomed to all-night sittings at Westminster, and others hope to be, they were not willing to make this sacrifice of comfort to oblige the Unemployed.

Some two hundred Unemployed were in the building, and about twenty were inside the Board-room with the Guardians. A few were in the public gallery. The rest of the two hundred were downstairs in the entrance hall of the Guardians' offices.

A crowd of men, women, and children were outside.

At this time it seems that the Board meeting came to an end and that it was decided there should be no further business done by the Board that night. The Labour members, who form the great majority of the Board, remained wrangling with the Unemployed.

Police Refuse to Enter.

The Unemployed assert that Mr. George Lansbury went downstairs and broke a fanlight, saying that that would be the signal for the police to break in. The police did not come in. The "Daily Herald" and the rest of the press assert that the police refused to enter without a written order from the Guardians.

The Ambulance.

Comrades Bellamy, Johns and Gape spoke to the crowd outside from the Board-room window. Presently a London County Council Ambulance drove up. The summoning of the Ambulance was a gruesome act, whoever was responsible for it. It proves that the local authorities expected—and also intended—that people should be wounded. This is a borough "where Labour rules!" Noske and his tactics are undoubtedly to have their counterpart also in this country. It is strange that the lesson should first be given in Poplar. Seeing the ambulance, Comrade Bellamy said, "We don't want that yet"; but the police began to beat the crowd of men, women and children with their truncheons.

Who Sent for the Police!

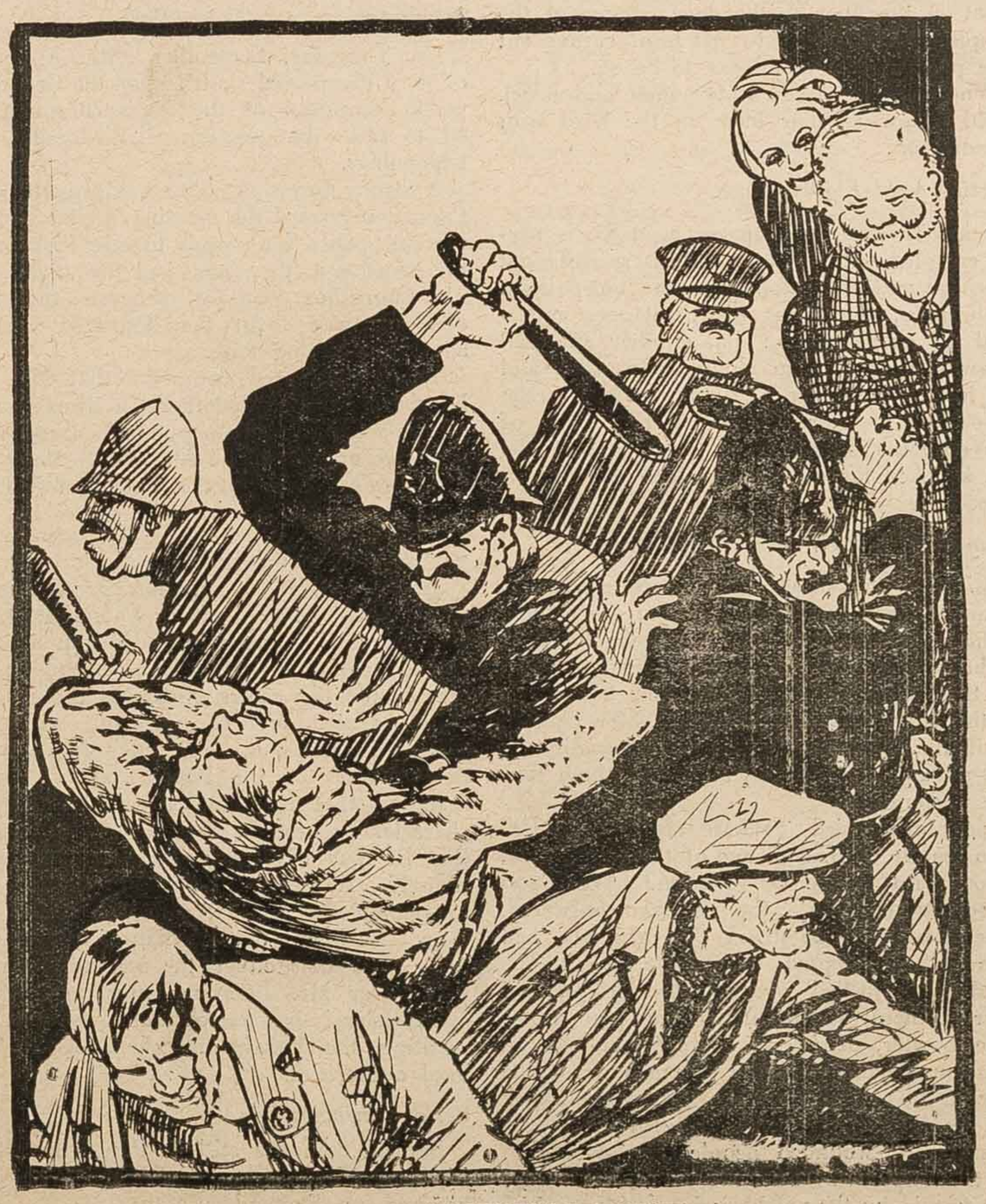
Meanwhile certain Labour Guardians were clamouring for the police to be sent for to break into the building, release the Guardians, and clear out the Unemployed.

As to what happened then there are different versions. The "Daily Herald" says :

> "When the police arrived, in response to a telephone call, they declined to force an entry to the building, without written authority, and some time elapsed before the Guardians decided to give this."

The "Daily Telegraph" report agrees with that of several other papers. It states that Alderman John Scurr, Mayor of Poplar, a magistrate, and a Guardian, took the chair, "and it was decided to give the police requisite authority."

The members of the Unemployed organisation say, as the "Telegraph" does, that Mr. Edgar Lansbury was willing that the police should break in the doors, but not that they should enter the building. The Board meeting, they say, came to an end, and Mr. Lansbury left the chair. Then the Labour member of the Board



BROTHERLY LOVE.

held a meeting. Mr. Scurr, Mayor of Poplar (I.L.P., Theosophist, etc.), took the chair. Mr. A. A. Watts (Communist Party of Great Britain) moved, and Mrs. Scurr seconded, that authority be given to the police to come in. The Unemployed say that this motion was carried. They add that Mr. Scurr then wrote a note to the police, which was thrown through the window by one of a group of Guardians: Mr. Watts, Mr. Partridge and Mrs. Scurr, who were standing at the window. The police inspector was seen to read the note.

Mr. Edgar Lansbury, questioned at a Bow Baths meeting the following Sunday, did not give a clear account of the facts. He did not know whether a vote was taken on the motion of Mr. Watts; he was speaking against it, he said, when the police came in. He would not deny that the police had had authority given to them by the Board, by Mr. Scurr, or someone else to enter the building, nor would he admit it.

Police Break In.

All other reports agree that the police were summoned by the Guardians. The police then broke the window and climbed into the waiting-room below the Board-room.

Mr. George Lansbury had told Comrade Bellamy to go downstairs to the Unemployed and ask them whether they would open the doors and go quietly, or be batoned down by the police. He said that they would be given a quarter of an hour to make their decision. Mr. Lansbury said: "Someone has telephoned to the police." This was before the note was sent.

Comrade Bellamy went down to deliver the message to the Unemployed, who were all unarmed, and had come to the Board meeting, expecting no violence would result. He had scarcely left the Board-room, when the police appeared.

A Terrible Scene.

A terrible scene ensued. The police fell upon the unarmed people in the building, beating them cruelly with their truncheons. Not only members of the Unemployed organisation were ill-treated, but also individuals who had come independently on their own special cases. Numbers of men were felled to the ground and lay bleeding.

"George, Can't You Stop It!"

Men rushed to Mr. George Lansbury, crying: "George, can't you stop it?"

Mr. Lansbury spurned them: "They have asked for it, and now they will get it. It will be a lesson to them," he answered.

Mrs. Scurr shrieked at Comrade W. Gape, who is only about twenty years of age, and has lived in the borough about two years: "You go back to Hendon, Gape!"

Mr. Lansbury also called to Gape to go away.

Comrade Bellamy stood arguing with the Guardians: "You have 'phoned for the police, now 'phone for the ambulance," he said to Mr. George Lansbury.

Mr. Lansbury answered, as though inciting the police to seize him: "You are one of the unemployed: go with them."

"I know," replied Bellamy, "what I shall get when I go outside. I am ready to face it."

Comrades Bellamy, Gape and Robinson, secretary of the Poplar Branch of the Unemployed Workers' Organisation, and crippled by the war, went out together. The police fell upon them. Comrade Robinson now lies in hospital in a dangerous condition with injuries to head and back. Comrade Gape is also in hospital with injuries to head and legs. Yet it was Gape who had taken off his cap and respectfully begged Mr. Lansbury to intervene to stop the scene of brutality taking place downstairs.

"Sit Quietly."

While the police were breaking in Mr. George Lansbury told the men in the Board-room that they should sit down quietly, and no harm would be done to them. The Unemployed relied on this assurance and, considering themselves overwhelmingly out-matched, they offered no opposition to the entry of the police. Had they foreseen what was to happen, they declare they would have used their position of vantage to prevent police climbing in.

The Terrible Queue.

Mr. Edgar Lansbury said at Bow Baths that he asked the police inspector to take the Unemployed who were in the Board-room out with him and see that they were not hurt. The Unemployed in the Board-room were told to go out after the inspector, and Mr. Edgar Lansbury accused those men of hiding behind the inspector, but whatever may have been intended by Mr. Edgar Lansbury, the men who followed the inspector were not spared the violence which befell their fellows. Freeman, who went out in the queue behind the inspector was seriously assaulted about the head, and is thought to have lost the sight of one eye.

Some Guardians have accused the Unemployed of hiding behind the chair or amongst the Guardians. We do not think they did; but we do not know why an unarmed man should be blamed for trying to avoid a beating with a truncheon—let the Guardians try a taste of it!

The police continued beating the people as they went down to the door, and some of them would hold up the stairway till a man had been beaten enough.

Only one-half of the double doors into the street was open; the other half the police kept closed. It was not fastened, but, as it opens inward, it did not give before the Unemployed, who were being driven out.

Beaten at the Back of the Head.

As the Unemployed moved towards the door, they were beaten in the back again and again. Heads were bleeding from the blows of the truncheons, and now and then someone was felled to the ground. A. Burles, of 4, Cording Street, Poplar, saw in front of him in the press a man, the back of whose head was streaming with blood, and who was attempting to staunch the flow by pressing his hands to it. As that man reached the door-step the police, who were striking every man as he passed, struck him again on the back of his head. He fell on his face down the steps, and Burles fell upon him. By falling, Burles missed the blows which were being dealt out to every man as he crossed the threshhold.

An old man with a wounded head had fallen and sat on the floor by the door. Some of the Unemployed men tried to lift him, crying out to the police to let them stay to do so.

"Where is he?" asked a policeman, and struck the old fellow another blow on the head with his truncheon.

A Victim Aged Eighty-Three.

Thomas Clasper, a ratepayer aged 83, is partially crippled with rupture. He is recently out of hospital and still attending as an out-patient. A policeman, respecting his great age, endeavoured to protect him; but another snatched him away, dragged him along the passage, and threw him to the ground. His arm was injured; he is obliged to wear a sling. A. E. Radley, of 57, Wellington Road, Bow, declares that the police knocked his cap off and then hit him on the head.

Beating the Wounded and their Bearers.

Outside in the street the violence continued. Men and women were attempting to carry those who had been struck down to Poplar hospital, but the police were driving the people away from the hospital, beating with their truncheons both the bearers and the wounded. Two members of the Unemployed Workers' Organisation raised up a man unknown to them, whom they found unconscious.

A policeman cried "Where are you going?"

"To see Dr. O'Brien," one of them answered.

"You want to see Dr. O'Brien? Well, you shall see Dr. O'Brien!" the policeman answered. At the same time he struck the man who had spoken, who collapsed under the blow. His comrade was jostled away by the police, and neither of them saw the unconscious man again.

Rose Bowler, of 44, Bargrove Street, saw an unconscious man lying on the ground. She attempted to raise him, but a policeman struck her in the face with his hand and drove her away.

Numbers of wounded people were unable to reach the hospital, or afraid to attempt it. Many were taken in by the neighbouring residents, who bathed and bandaged their wounds. They got home as best they could. Some of them, including the Secretary of the Poplar branch of the Unemployed Workers' Organisation, who was seriously injured in the head, were obliged to go to hospital later.

One Shilling for X-Ray Treatment.

One of the wounded was ordered an ex-ray examination at the hospital, and told that he must pay 1s. for it. Not having the money he went to Mr. Scurr, the Mayor, who had acted as Chairman of the Board of Guardians, and asked what the Guardians would do for him. Mr. Scurr gave the man a shilling and told him that as a peaceful citizen he had no business to have gone to the Guardians' offices.

Hundreds of witnesses are forthcoming, eager to testify to the action of the police and the Guardians on this amazing occasion. We have quoted only those sayings in the Board-room which a number of witnesses have corroborated without being present when the same statements were made to us by others. We have recorded only a few of the acts of violence on the part of the police reported to us. We have only given names where these were specially offered, as we know that some of the Unemployed are afraid of having their relief cut down.

The Unemployed who were present declare that many of the policemen were drunk. We are not surprised if it be found necessary to fortify men with strong drink, in order to prepare them to attack defenceless, unresisting people whose physique has been reduced by poor living.

We are making no charge against the police; our complaint is not against them, but against those who called them in to punish the people for having locked the Guardians in: our charge is against the Guardians.

Confidence Betrayed.

The Unemployed declare that they were led into a trap by their confidence that they would not be subjected to violence with the sanction of one whom they now bitterly call "Jesus Christ Lansbury," who preaches of love and forbearance.

Deputation to the Councillors.

On Thursday, September 27th, a deputation of the Unemployed waited upon the General Purposes Committee of the Poplar Borough Council to raise the question of Wednesday night's happenings.

A strong force of police was present, and the Council informed the members of the deputation that the police were ready to give them more of the treatment they had had the night before. The Councillors who are, of course, the same individuals who form the Board of Guardians, adopted a railing tone.

The Unemployed complain that Mr. George Lansbury belittled Soderberg, a Swedish seaman, who is active in the Unemployed organisation, on the score of his being a foreigner. Many of Mr. Lansbury's old fellow Socialists protested against that.

Hiding Behind the Chair?

Mr. F. J. Isley, of 26, Lion Street, Poplar, an unemployed member of the Labour Party, complains that Mr. Lansbury called him a "coward and a sneak," and accused him of hiding behind one of the big chairs whilst his comrades were being batoned, and of going out with the inspector in the end. Mr. Isley has written to the secretary of the Poplar Labour Party demanding that Mr. Lansbury's attack upon his character be brought before the Party, in order that he may have an opportunity of defending himself. He declares that Mr. Lansbury refused to remain for him to give his answer at the time. He insists that no man is better than another, and that either the accusations must be proved, or Mr. Lansbury must apologise.

Mr. Isley is but one of many who are bitterly assailing the Labour members of the Poplar local authorities.

Serious Injuries.

Several men are still in Poplar hospital and in the Sick Asylum suffering from injuries received on September 26th.

The Moral of it.

This is where participation in the administration of the capitalist system has brought the Labourists, Socialists, and even some who call themselves Communists, in Poplar.

"But what could the Guardians have done?" someone asks.

The answer is manifold: the Guardians have put themselves upon an inclined plane which has led them to their present disastrous pass; many and worse incidents than those of September 26th are certain to follow.

What Could the Guardians Have Done?

We will take the points in succession, beginning with the end of the series. How might the Poplar Board of Guardians have avoided the ignominy of having beaten their unarmed neighbours; their poor, unemployed working-class neighbours, whose cause they are supposed to champion? Do not forget that it was the will of the Guardians, though the arms of the police, which thus cruelly assaulted the people.

How might the Guardians have avoided the outrage?

As they avoided it when the Unemployed locked them in a year ago, by making a virtue of necessity; by preserving an appearance, at least, of good nature; waiting quietly till the Unemployed themselves were tired of the siege.

Why did the Guardians submit on the last occasion, and call the police this time? Was it because on the previous occasion the Unemployed were more numerous and more militant in temper, and had made preparations for resisting attack from outside? Or did considerations of party or policy play their part? Suppose the well fed Guardians had spent a night on the not uncomfortable chairs of their Board-room, would that have been too large a price to pay to preserve the respect of their fellow workers in the proletarian movement of Poplar, to preserve some appearance of solidarity in spirit with the Unemployed?

Was it your dignity and your vanity, that were assailed, O Labour members of the Poplar Board of Guardians? Shall your dignity count when others are in need? Shall your dignity count when the class struggle is being fought?

What would you say of the Liberals and the Tories had they thus preserved their dignity with the baton?

So to our first question and last point in our series we say the Guardians could and should have avoided the batoning by waiting quietly till the Unemployed were tired of the siege. On this occasion, at least, it would not have been long—as the Guardians knew—for the police were outside and the Unemployed had no provisions—nothing more than an all-night sitting was contemplated by the Unemployed.

Relief versus Wages.

Now as to the second question: Can the Guardians restore the coal allowance and raise the relief to single people; can they refrain from further reducing the scale as they intend?

Mr. Edgar Lansbury answered this question at the Bow Baths meeting. He said the Guardians must reduce the scale of relief to the Unemployed because some who are working are getting lower wages than the relief scale. He said that men with large families who are in employment are coming to the Guardians asking that their low wages shall be made up to the relief level. Mr. Keyes, who spoke at the same meeting, said that to subsidise wages by Poor Law relief, would bring down wages in the long run.

What does that mean in its last essence? It means that if men can get low wages made up by the Poor Law Guardians, they will not fight the employer for higher wages.

Mr. Keyes and Mr. Lansbury surely must realise that to lower the scale of Unemployment relief will not tend to raise, but to lower the scale of wages. It is difficult to get men to work for lower wages than the relief scale; lower the relief scale and you bring pressure upon men and women to accept wages only a little higher. Mr. Keyes claimed credit for the Labour Party in Poplar on the score that they have assisted the workers to refuse work at sweated wages precisely by paying a high scale of relief. Mr. Edgar Lansbury said that to maintain the present relief might mean 3d. a week on someone's rent. Shall principles be sacrificed for 3d. per week, or is it a question of the Guardians being surcharged by the Government?

When the miners were fighting the lock-out to reduce their wages, which was the test struggle of the British working class at the beginning of the present wages slump, the Poplar Board of Guardians reduced the wages of its employees, and so lined up with the capitalist employers. The present reduction of relief in accord with falling wages merely assists in preparing the way for another fall in wages. What did the Poplar Labour leaders do to help the striking dockers to resist the last reduction in their wages?

The Fighting Ranks.

But again, it is argued, the Guardians are reducing the relief because the Government insists upon it. Those of them who are Councillors have been to prison once for refusing to levy a rate, and they don't mean to go to prison again.

If that were the view of the Poplar Guardians and Councillors, their place would be out of the fighting ranks. Those who are not prepared to stand by their principles at any cost should retire from the struggle. The Unemployed protest that the action which led the Councillors to prison did not benefit them, but the ratepayers, especially the big ship-builders and manufacturers.

All the Guardians agree, we think, that the scale is already too low. They should refuse to make themselves responsible for reducing it. They should demonstrate with the Unemployed, not against them.

Reformist Expedients.

Most of the Poplar Guardians are reformists: they are fond of preaching social regeneration by taxation. They have not explored what they might do by a great raising of rates in Poplar in order to mulct the big industrial concerns and a compensating Poor Law relief grant, or rebate on rates, to all the poorer part of the population. Such manipulations might be declared illegal, but if the Poplar Labourists went to prison again in support of their ideas they would do excellent propaganda for their views.

We do not believe in the milennium via graduated rates and taxes, but those who do should seek every means of giving their views a trial.

Government versus Workers.

We have always declared that working-class representatives who become councillors and guardians assist in the maintenance of the capitalist system, and, sooner or later, must inevitably find themselves in conflict with the workers.

When the great slump in employment loomed into view at the close of the war was emphatically the moment when all those who desire a change of system should have said: We refuse to accept responsibility for adjusting the difficulties which have been created by the system. We know that these difficulties cannot be solved, and we do not wish to assist in maintaining the system.

It was obvious that any attempt at adequate maintenance of the great unemployed army must challenge comparison with the poor wages of a large proportion of the employed workers, and with the small income of the struggling little shopkeepers.

Illogical Position of Communist Guardians.

Two of the members of Poplar Board of Guardians, Messrs. A. A. Watts and Edgar Lansbury, are members of the Communist Party of Great Britain (Third International). Their party preaches—or used to preach—that its members shall stand for publicly elected bodies, purely to use them as sounding-boards for propaganda against the present system and to disrupt their administration from within. Can it be that the Third International has now changed its policy, and that it now expects from its members the careful administration of the existing Government machinery, with every regard for finance, in order that Capitalism may continue as long as possible?

The Labour Party of Germany has again and again made itself the tool by which the shaken capitalist system has maintained itself in Germany. The Labour Party of Britain is following the same disastrous road. Its first lesson in the art of crushing the revolting masses was taken in Poplar on September 26th.

Let not party prejudices, personal antipathies, or disputes on points of detail, blind any one of us to that fact.

E. SYLVIA PANKHURST.

Dr. K. S. Bhat, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., has examined a few of the slightly wounded cases, and reports:—

October 1, 1923.

I have examined to-day the following persons and found on their persons the injuries mentioned in each particular case. All the injuries are recent ones.

1. Mr. William Bell, aged 59 years, of 353, Grosvenor Buildings, Poplar, boilermaker, out of work since 1919, has (i) a bruise on the back of his head on the left side, about the left superior occipital line; (ii) a bruise on the back of one hand, with a hard mass in it, which feels like fresh callus over a fracture of the middle metacarpal bone; (iii) a bruise over the left buttock; (iv) an abrasion over the lower part of the right thigh; (v) a bruise over the middle and lower portion of the inner surface of the left tibia; (vi) a bruise and abrasion over the back of the left elbow; and (vii) an abrasion on the top edge of the right ear.

2. Mr. John Bigden, aged 54 years, of 94, Suffolk Street, Poplar, labourer, out of work since 1921, has (i) a bruise over the whole length of the left arm from the armpit down, and over the top of the forearm; (ii) the lower end of the left humerus is bruised, with callus forming from the clot.

3. Mr. William Keen, aged 51 years, of 6, White Post Lane, Victoria Park, varnish maker, out of work 2 years and 9 months, has (i) a wound on the back of the head, and (ii) stiffness of the left deltoid muscle, giving pain with and limitation of movement at the left shoulder.

4. Mr. Arthur Thomas Peacock, aged 54 yrs., of 345, West Ferry Road, Millwall, plate puncher and shearer, out of work for a year, has a bruise on his head over the right parietal bone.

5. Mr. John Payne, aged 50 years, of 23, British Street, Millwall, general labourer, out of work for over one year, has an ecchymosis of the left orbit, with a wound on the outer edge.

6. Mr. James Murphy, aged 43 years, of 58, Augusta Street, Poplar, out of work since Dec. 1922, complains of acute pain over the spine of the scapula near the beginning of the acromion process, due probably to a slight local injury to the bone.

7. Mr. Charles Long, aged 50 years, of 28, Manchester Road, Cubitt Town, labourer, out of work for 16 months, has a bruise about the left elbow.

K. S. BHAT.

Next week we shall give as complete a list of the injured as possible. Those who have been injured, or who desire to testify to the ill-treatment received by others, or to give any evidence respecting the incidents of September 27th, are requested to communicate with the "Workers' Dreadnought."

IMPORTANT!

We urgently suggest that comrades should endeavour to secure new subscribers to the "Workers' Dreadnought" and that they should collect at meetings and from their friends whatever is possible. However small the sum you can collect, it will be welcomed. Send it in stamps or postal orders. The "Dreadnought" is not self-supporting: the editing and managing is unpaid.

In response to this appeal Mr. Henry Marchant sends us six new readers this week, and usefully notifies their occupations, in order that we may know for what sort of service to appeal to them.

Spanish reaction proceeds apace. The Town Councils are abolished, trial by jury is abolished and replaced by military tribunals, and the prisons are filled to overflowing.

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Our View.

THE BATONING of the Unemployed in Poplar is the first instance of the Labour Party being brought into forcible conflict with the labouring population in defence of the capitalist system. In the second dock strike the Labour leaders merely backed up the capitalists, but in the Poplar batoning of September 26th, the Labour leaders were the active protagonists against the workers. As the capitalist system nears its end, the reformists who desire to prevent the catastrophic breakdown of the system will inevitably find themselves in a position of acute antagonism to the people who are striving to destroy the system which oppresses them. Germany has hitherto furnished the most striking examples of this phenomenon; but the equivalents of Scheidemann, Noske, and their German Social-Democratic colleagues, are beginning to appear in this country also.

Capitalism and Labour Party versus the Workers

* * *

THE BISHOP OF NORWICH at the Church Congress said: "It is far more common that those who have gone wrong in the country eventually come forward to be married—though what a ghastly thing it is to think that our lovely marriage service is again and again read over to those who have already disgraced it."

Morality and Humanity

A large source of unnecessary sorrow and cruelty will be removed when the point of view thus expressed has been altogether eliminated. Neither legal nor religious forms can make the mating of men and women either right or wrong. The sexual functions must be regarded as natural functions and freed from the conventions by which the private property system and religious officialdom have surrounded them.

* * *

THE INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY is organising a campaign for what it describes as Socialism. This, as explained in its circulars, constitutes a number of piecemeal reforms, which are supposed to be leading to the socialisation of industry at some time.

The Goal

We cannot too often explain that our own goal is a free Communism, in which there shall be no money and wages; neither shall there be barter or any form of buying and selling. The land, the means of production, distribution and transport shall be held in common. All shall share the productive work without direct reward for services rendered. The common product shall be freely used, as and when desired by each and all, without payment.

There shall be no State Government, or Parliament. The organisation of production, distribution and transport shall be by those who do the work, organised on a voluntary autonomous workshop basis.

* * *

THE ALLIANCE between the South African Labour Party and the Nationalists is on both sides purely an expedient for gaining power, because neither party is powerful enough to overcome the South African Party on its own account. The coalition is not one of principle: the Labour Party is imperialist: the Nationalist Party has no proletarian sympathies. The first result of the coalition will be to make the South African Labour Party still less apt to serve the interests of the workers than it was before.

Labour-Nationalist Pact in S. Africa

* * *

THE BREAK-UP of the German Reich, and the break-up of the present political economic system in Germany seem only prevented because many different parties are fighting for different sorts of separation from the Reich, and different sorts of political and economic change. There are the Bavarian Monarchists who desire Bavaria to remain in the Reich, there are the Bavarian Monarchists who desire an independent Bavaria. There are the Bavarian Republicans who desire a bourgeois republic, and the Bavarian Communist Republicans.

German Chaos

The Parliamentary Communists of the Third International are supporting the Government in its efforts to prevent the German Reich from being broken up; its various components becoming independent entities. At the same time they do not support the Government in having abandoned passive resistance to the French, and have endeavoured to organise strikes to maintain passive resistance.

The Left Wing Communists, workshop movement, Syndicalists and Anarchists, on the other hand, welcome the breaking up of the Reich into independent republics. They observe the assistance which the French are giving to the Separatist movement. They know that the French are doing this for their own political ends, but they are not concerned by that; they are working for the break-down of the capitalist State, and they welcome the embarrassments of the German Government and the growing weakness of the Reich, because they are hoping for such a break-down of the forces of capitalist government as will assist the workers to overthrow the capitalist Government.

The Propertied versus the Propertyless

The people with property interests to protect are fighting in their various ways to safeguard those interests. Those who think their special interests will thus best be served are endeavouring to get their property into an independent State under French protection. Others are endeavouring to make arrangements with French or British Capitalism for the carrying on of their businesses. Others are fighting for monarchy, others for the preservation of the Reich. The patriotism of the various factions is largely formed by their interests. Some are patriots for United Germany; some are patriots for some German State; and some are wearing masks and pulling strings behind the scenes.

* * *

THE REPORTS in the press and otherwise coming over from Germany seem to indicate, on a superficial view, that the people who have property interests in the existing system are more prepared to fight, than those to whom the present system is growing continually less tolerable, and whose interest it is that the present system should disappear.

It must be remembered, however, that the propertyless have not had the opportunities to arm themselves that have been open to those who have a stake in the existing property system.

So long as it is a question or organising unauthorised armies, the proletarian forces are heavily handicapped, both by their lack of money and by the sharp vigilance which the Government, the army, and all the capitalist forces preserve against them. The capitalist interests which have set up their various armies have all their friendly factions in the official army and police and in the various departments of civil service and political government.

Yet in spite of all this, the people who have no stake in the existing system possess a power immensely greater than that of the various interests which exist through the system; for it is the propertyless who man the armies, navies and police force, and, what is more, who carry on production, distribution and transport. Whilst they fight the armies must be provisioned and munitioned, and when they turn exhausted from unprofitable fighting they must still be fed and clothed.

When the working masses seriously revolt against the private property system it must immediately end.

The progress to the realisation by the propertyless workers that they should arise to destroy the system seems long, interminably long. Yet in the great theatre of evolution events are moving with much relative rapidity in these days. It is a gigantic fundamental change in human society we are awaiting; vast striving, vast effort, and the birth of a new consciousness within ourselves, are necessary for the accomplishment of the stupendous transformation which is preparing.

We had thought, perhaps, that the great struggles, catastrophes, and sufferings of Germany would have brought the end of Capitalism long ago, and some are heard to express impatient disappointment with the German people. Events are teaching us, however, the great magnitude of the cleavage there is between Capitalist and Communist society, and the immense efforts required to pass from the one to the other.

A monarchist revolution may come in Germany, a Fascist reaction may cover Europe, before the triumph of Communism is won. If these things are inevitable, they must be striven through without despair—our goal lies on before, and we struggling humans will reach it when, in the mass, we are ready for it.

* * *

A GRADUAL CHANGE in social standards is taking place in Germany, long the most orderly, disciplined and State-ridden of nations. Stealing is rife. Arrests for stealing are relatively few, and the thieves are no longer crestfallen when they come into court; they laugh at their crime, for everyone recognises that innumerable people would die if they did not steal. When the sentence is pronounced the thieves are sent home till there is room for them in prison. If they present themselves at the gaol, as some do, they are told: "Go back to your home; there is no room for you here."

The Break-up of the State

For the political offender room is always found in the prison, but the thieves are too numerous and too little condemned by the social consciousness for stern measures to be taken against them.

So the authority of the State declines. The same tendency is apparent also in regard to marriage: free unions are more and more replacing the legal marriage: in education and many other directions a growing independence is apparent.

* * *

IS IT POSSIBLE that a people, which has advanced so far towards freedom as the Germans, that has suffered and struggled so much, and seen the artificiality of money exposed and the power of the hereditary monarch destroyed in a single day, will allow itself to be yoked to a harsher, more blighting authoritarian reaction than that which existed in Germany before the war. We do not believe that the reaction can secure anything more than a temporary triumph.

A Reactionary Revolution

* * *

ONE OF THE PURPOSES of summoning the Imperial Conference at this time is to revive British trade, by stimulating the development of Imperial resources and confining the resources and markets of the Empire more closely within the Empire itself. Measures of protection and tariff reform will inevitably result from this conference, whatever the Free Traders may say about Mr. Baldwin's election pledges. The Free Traders will submit very thankfully to anything, if it will but stimulate British trade.

The Imperial Conference

Another purpose, perhaps the principal purpose of summoning the conference, is to secure the co-operation of the Dominions in Empire defence, and to inform them that Empire defence, which in practice means Empire aggression is becoming a pressing problem. Imperial Conferences are ominous things: they mean the assembling of the forces of Big Capitalism. They mean the overriding of parliamentary government, and the negation of democracy under the cloak of democratic procedure. To offer the Dominions a share in determining Imperial policy is, of course, represented as a step forward in democratic government. As a matter of fact it means detracting from the independence of the Dominions, and from the power of their national Parliaments, just as it means detracting from the already much reduced power of decision in the hands of the British Parliament. "It has been decided by the Imperial Conference" will now be the bogy held up before those who desire to leave the House of Commons free, either to decide, or to protest, on any large question of policy. We are ruled by a Cabinet controlled by powerful vested interests. The Imperial Conference is a buttress to the Cabinet system. Our boasted democracy is, in fact, a Big Business autocracy.

Preparations for the next war will play an important part in the present Imperial Conference, as was indicated, clearly enough, by Mr. Baldwin's guarded references to France, to European militarism, and to the air force.

* * *

IT SHOULD BE NOTICED that whilst the military forces of Bulgaria have been limited by the Allies under the Peace Treaty, the Bulgarian Government, during its recent contest with the Communists, applied to the Allies to be allowed to enlarge its army. Needless to say, the request was granted, although, be it remembered, the Bulgarian Government is a reactionary dictatorship which secured power by a military coup and the murder of the late Bulgarian Prime Minister, Stambulisky.

Allied Governments and Bulgarian Revolution

Herr Stinnes and the Ruhr Adventure

(Specially written for the "Workers' Dreadnought" by our German Correspondent.)

Germany is very rich in coal, but very poor in iron-ore.

France, on the contrary, **is very rich in iron-ore**, but very poor in coal.

Both these facts make plain to every one of common sense the cause of the quarrel between France and Germany.

Before the war, Germany imported 14,000,000 tons of iron-ore each year. Before 1913, France stood third in furnishing this mineral to Germany. That year France passed Spain and stood second, exporting to Germany 3,811,000 tons from the Briey basin, only 400,000 tons less than the amount which Germany imported from Sweden that year.

Sweden stood (and stands) first on the list of exporters of iron-ore for Germany.

The most important iron-ore mines Germany possessed before the Treaty of Versailles are situated in Lorraine and in the Saar district. Lorraine Germany has lost; the Saar district is under French control. The proprietors of the mines in those important districts have remained international capitalists, as they were before the war and before the Treaty of Versailles was signed. To die for one's country is only for the poor; for the workers. The capitalists have no country to die for: they have only countries to live for. The only country they know is good business and money.

Political frontiers separating men from men are not made for the great capitalists. The capitalists know no frontiers. If the frontiers are in their way, they cut them and make others which will suit them better and secure their profits.

Germany is rich in coal. But to turn the coal into money iron-ore is needed. In order to get control over all iron goods, price dumping is necessary until all the sources of iron and coal are in the possession of a few magnates.

After working with great efforts for years and years, keeping the wages as low as possible, building up by the best and most modern forms of organisation, there was at last but one way of dumping the production on the world-market—to cheapen the iron-ore. This could be done only by uniting the proprietorship of the coal mine and iron mines. If political frontiers should prevent this needed union of capitalists, the frontiers must be re-drawn to the order of the magnates. As soon as the magnates find any disadvantage in passports, registration, emigration laws, etc., they will all be annulled at once.

Besides cheapening the iron-ore, there is another way to raise prices in the world market. If the production is very short, the value of the product must rise.

Why should the industrial kings produce 225,000,000 tons of hardware if they can get the same money for 125,000,000 tons? Why should the united German-French industrial magnates buy expensive iron-ore from Sweden and Spain—expensive because of higher costs for freight—if the magnates are able to produce the 125,000,000 tons of hardware from raw material from German and French mines?

To settle this business the amalgamation of the German and French magnates is necessary. Since about the year 1900 the above-mentioned magnates have been working to this end.

The great war—which both these parties did their best to make—has cleared up the situation and opened the way. For this purpose it did not matter whether the Germans or the French won the war. In either case the result would have been the same in every respect.

Remember the result of one of the first attacks of the German army after war broke out was the occupation by Germany of the rich iron mines of Longwy and Briey, situated near the Franco-German boundary and geographically belonging to Lorraine! When Lorraine was captured by the Prussians in the year 1871 Bismarck took no notice of the basins of Longwy and Briey, because at that time nobody knew the real value of these basins, a value discovered very much later when new inventions were made to treat this iron-ore by use of the Thomas process.

From these basins, through the war, the Germans took all the iron-ore they needed for producing their ammunition, when the import from Spain was stopped by the British blockade. Without these basins Germany would have been compelled to finish the war within six months for lack of iron.

Why was it that France and England throughout the war made no effort to take these two important iron mines from the Germans? If unable to take them, why did they make no attempt to destroy them? Was there any contract between the German capitalists and the French capitalists?

Yes there was!

What was that contract? At first nothing, but the longer the war the better the business. The business of all the internationalist capitalists, in particular the German and French capitalists.

Do not forget the best buyers of iron and the best payers for iron are the armies in war. In no time is iron more wanted than in wartime or when war is in view.

Even when Germany seemed on the verge of winning no effort was made to take this basin by the Entente. No effort was made to destroy these mines by bombing them.

On the other hand there were the coal mines in the Basin of Bruay, in the department of Pas-de-Calais, belonging to France, the most important coal mines of France. If Germany had taken these mines, France, and also the Entente, would have lost the war. No effort was made by the Germans to disturb or to bomb these coal mines.

And why not?

Because of the existence of this contract mentioned above between German and French capitalists. Poor men had to pay for this contract and this business with their lives and their blood.

Who are the proprietors of the iron and coal mines? On the German side: Herr Stinnes, Herr Thyssen, and the firm of Krupp and Herr Wolff. On the French side: the family of De Wendel, and the ammunition plant of Schneider and Cie. The banker of this Committee is the international banking family, Rothschild. One member of the De Wendel family was a member of the French Parliament. His brother was a member of the German Parliament. So much for the patriotism of the capitalists! Who were the officers who commanded the armies attacking the iron mines of Briey and the coal mines of Bruay? On both sides these officers were officials of the coal and iron industry. Hearing these things, you will understand the true cause of modern war. You will also understand the cause of the occupation of the Ruhr territory. You will answer for yourself the question, why Europe cannot be at peace. There can be no peace whilst individual capitalists possess all the sources of iron and coal. Take the mines from the capitalists and their power will be broken. Make the mines belong to mankind and not to a few capitalists, make all the goods and gifts of nature one commonwealth, and no League of Nations will be needed to stop war for ever.

Do you know how strong in the League of Nations the power of the proprietors of iron and coal mines is? They have a majority—75 out of 100. Perhaps more; certainly not less. Thus you will understand why the League of Nations is unable to prevent a war. The League of Nations is only an instrument for concealing the real cause of the next war. The real cause of the next war will be just the same that has been the cause of all the wars of the last fifty years—the business and profit of the individual proprietors of coal and iron. To serve the interests of these capitalists there is one sure method: "Is there no war? Then we must make a war. Meanwhile, since there is no war we must stir up all the world to think a war-danger is threatening. We must not allow men to think of an eternal world-peace. We are here to arrange trouble, and trouble, and trouble again! When trouble is asleep, our profits are also asleep."

So long as we have capitalists and a capitalist system, the world will never have world peace.

(To be continued.)

FROM THE PUBLISHERS

TOM MANN'S MEMOIRS. Labour Publishing Company. 12s. 6d.

IF LABOUR RULES. By Philip Snowden, M.P. Reprint of "Morning Post" articles. Labour Publishing Co. 1s. We cannot recommend it.

FASCISM. By Oden Por. Labour Publishing Co. 7s. 6d. We cannot recommend it.

LABOUR AND CAPITAL ON THE RAILWAYS. Labour Research Department. 1s.

THE FEDERATION OF BRITISH INDUSTRIES and LABOUR AND CAPITAL IN SHIPPING. Labour Research Department. 1s. each.

FROM PIT TO PARLIAMENT. Life of Keir Hardie. By David Lowe. 3s. 6d.

SHORT COURSE OF ECONOMIC SCIENCE. By A. Bogdanoff. Labour Publishing Co. 5s.

THE RUHR. By Ben Tillet, A. Creech Jones and Samuel Warren. Labour Publishing Co. 9d. Views cannot be recommended.

THE BULGARIAN REVOLUTION.

The "Klassenkampf," a German Communist newspaper, of September 27th, reported that the whole of Bulgaria was in the hands of the peasants and workers with the exception of Sofia, which was besieged by them. The revolutionary troops, according to the latest information, numbered 500,000, and they had taken much artillery and a very large number of prisoners, who were allowed to go free after they had been disarmed. A portion of the Government army went over to the revolutionaries. The bankers on the Vienna exchange no longer notified the Bulgarian rate of exchange.

A Social Outcast

By TOM ANDERSON.
(Proletarian Schools.)

She was a lowly proletarian, a woman about fifty years of age. Her face was weather-beaten and her clothes bore undoubted testimony to her social status. She was going through one of the ash-bins which are attached to every working-class tenement in Glasgow. They are known as the "midgy."

As I passed through the back court, she said to me, "I am looking for jewels."

"I am afraid," I said, "that the jewels are all locked up in the homes of the rich."

"Well, well," she replied, "that may be so, but then it is God's will."

This reply gave me some food for thought, and so I said, if that is so, then He has made a very bad job of it.

She eyed me as if to read my thoughts, and then she replied, "If it's not God's will, then it's our ignorance."

"That may be so," I said.

With that she picked up her bag, saying: "No jewels to-day."

I caught the words that she hummed, "No Saviours from on high deliver," as she passed out of the court.

Here was a "social outcast" hitting back in a way that no one could make a mistake about, and I raised my hat to her as one of the few "outcasts" I had met. To me she was a woman.

After she had gone, my brain kept working. This woman, I said, is a social "outcast." She was once a little child whom a fond mother loved, and nursed. She grew up as other children do, betwixt mirth and play. I pictured to myself her laughter, what it would be forty or more years ago. Then she went to school as we all do, and her little playmates and she had many splendid days: days of rain and sunshine. She becomes a young woman, and I could see her walking out with her lover, and she is all smiles, her arm is in his, and her eyes are speaking, and each of them are laughing. I see her at the dance, and she is all life, ever so strong and brave. A beautiful world; she has no knowledge of the ash-bin yet, nothing but love and life. Then I see her again and she has a child in her arms; her dream has been realized, she is a mother, and the smile is still on her face, and her step is that of one who loves to live. Again I see her: she is more careworn, her figure is slightly bent, the furrows now are well marked all over the once-bright face. Her children are grown up, her husband is dead, and finally all her children have left the home nest. She is now the rag-picker I met at the ash-bin, and no one cares. Your respectable worker passes her by, he never thinks she is anything but what she really is at present—a "midden raker." Everyone above her socially looks down on her. And this is the world we live in!

In Glasgow to-day we have three grades of social outcast. First, the Unemployed; second, the Casuals; and third, the Paupers. To the first two grades they have the charity to give the privilege of having "a vote"; the third grade, the paupers, have no vote; they have nothing; they are in the institution merely awaiting the day of death.

Might I mention the super-social outcasts, that is, the great mass of the working class who happen to be working? They too are outcasts, but, being working at present, they are blind to the fact. If you would but look at the homes of the working working-class, and at their lives, the tragedy of it all would be thrust upon you. They are even worse outcasts than our woman of the ash-bin, because they are unable to "hit back," for fear of losing what little they have got; but the woman of the ash-bin could hum the "International." There are not two workmen in England to the hundred know anything about it; they think it is "God's will." And the rich laugh, and the priest prays, and our Labour Party joins in the chorus. It is a beautiful world—when you are on the same side as the oppressor. You are getting a share of the crumbs that fall from his table, and so you are ethical, you are cultured, you are political—everything that is sane. But you could not do what the outcast at the ash-bin did: hum the "International."

Between Two Worlds

TO FRIEDRICH ADLER.

(Translated from the Dutch of Henriette Roland Holst, by Th. W. DE Witte.)

Once more I come to wrestle for
Your soul, Friedrich Adler, to pray you that
You may return to those whom you betrayed.

Behold—I'm not like many of my comrades:
Cast of one gulp of red-hot metal;
My being does not plunge to one side only
Steep like a chasm down. I know my soul
To be a land so full of cracks,—
My spirit flows, by its own nature,
Like water to all sides, my heart
Is apt to take all forms like wax.

In one thing only I am strong and steady:
I've heard the call of Life renewed,
Which, snorting, rushes in with shocking hoof.
I jumped on it and firmly cling
On to its flying mane, and only this
Is always in myself of everlasting steadiness.
And through whatever terrors it may carry me,
I shall hold fast, I'll never turn away.

My brother—you and I were born
Rather to love than to hate,
Rather to dream than to do. Hate
And to be hated makes our souls feel sick.
We only thrive if we can love
And bask in love as fruits do in the sun;
So you and I we cannot march in front
In these wild days that stride on now
Over the world. Their brazen mouths
Call for the forceful Doers, the great
Haters, to stimulate them, not for us.
I know that and submit in resignation
To what is unavoidable, although my days
Are often heavy with an inward struggle.
And sometimes, in nocturnal visions,
The hankering of old wells up in me.

This poem is the poetical expression, not only of an individual, but also of a political attitude. The above lines were written, in Dutch, by Henriette Roland Holst, Holland's greatest poetess, who is a member of the Communist Party of Holland, affiliated to the Third International.

It is curious to note that she belongs to what is called the opposition in the Communist Party. True, it is a "loyal opposition," striving for democratic centralisation, firmly believing in Moscow and adhering to the old-established policy of boring from within, speeches in Parliament, etc., but at the same time it does not wish to exaggerate this and pretends to have an eye upon the dangers of such a policy if carried through in all its consequences. The members of this opposition, like the parties of the Third International, are hanging between two worlds, unable to get rid of the old hankering after "influence," in consequence of the instructions from "Moscow," which is likewise in a similar position.

I am not going to blame the Russian leaders for the ambiguous position of their country in the present constellation of world Capitalism, because this is not due to their personal and political behaviour, but to the development of —international conditions. However, it would be wrong, like H.R.H., to call the foremost representatives of the Third International the forceful Doers and great Haters, in the sense of their being revolutionary politicians. If we look at the leading personalities in the Dutch C.P., namely Wynkoop and van Ravesteyn, we are bound to say that those gentlemen have never been more than social democrats. It was only personal ambition which brought them into opposition to the S.D.L.P., and again it is personal ambition only if the younger leaders of the opposition are now discussing the possibility of driving Wynkoop and van Ravesteyn away and also their supporters, in order to pave the way for their own election in the Executive of the C.P. of Holland. Such being the case, the struggle between the old leaders and the leaders of the opposition is no struggle between two worlds, because the latter show nothing of the spirit with which a fighting Communist should be inspired. It is merely a quarrel between leaders of the old type.

The policy of the Third International finds its best expression in the political attitude of the German C.P., especially where it shows its sympathy for the "revolutionary middle class." As a matter of fact this counter-revolutionary appeal to the German petty bourgeois, with a view to backing up the State and national unity, is a flagrant violation of the A.B.C. of Marxism. For the middle class is the most obstinate element in capitalist society, always ready to fight Communism and to protect the modern slave state. In fact, Stinnes' centralisation of international and gigantic concerns far across the national frontiers is revolutionising the capitalist world more than the politics of the Third International, whose principal aim is to keep up the trade unions and their backward mentality.

No, the forceful doers and great haters are still on the background of the political stage. Nevertheless, they are working hard, and their voice will be heard soon all over the world in the final combat between Labour and Capitalism.

TH. W. DE WITTE.

Mexico Slill Hopeful

By Prince Hopkins

Not only Mexico, but the industrial revolution, "is a long way off" for those, especially, who scorn to travel except by an undeviating route. But so long as a steamship line runs to New York and another thence to Vera Cruz, a sensible Englishman will avail himself of them, rather than try to swim the Atlantic in the absence of a direct-sailing liner. And as long as there exists in Mexico, or in any other country, a regime embued with revolutionary ideals which it is visibly putting into practice, I for one will rather give my allegiance to that regime, and try to make it at once successful and liberal, rather than refuse to co-operate with any man who isn't a hundred per cent. of my ideal.

To return my friend Mr. Owen's compliments, I hold him in the highest esteem, as one who has sacrificed all which most men value in life to his conception of what is right, and I bow to his intimate knowledge of conditions as they were in Mexico a few years ago; but, as an artist in revolution, I find him unwilling to understand the material with which he must work—existing, mis-educated beings. To his accusation that I believe in compromises, I assent. The question is not the academic one of whether we compromise, but of whether we compromise in such a way as to lose or win the essential values. I am sure Mr. Owen himself made a compromise, every broiling hot day in Mexico that he put on "respectable" clothes, instead of sallying forth in just a happy smile. The man who will make no adaptation to the popular mind and other realities is as useless, as the man who adapts too much is pernicious, and is rightly called insane and sent to the foolish-house.

In his entire article occupying nearly the whole front-page of the September 29th "Dreadnought," Mr. Owen made only one specific charge against Obregon—namely, the persecution of Enrique Magon. Bad, undeniably bad—unless, perhaps there was some other justification than what Mr. Owen mentions (for martyrs of the revolution are sometimes men with an inherent craving for trouble)—some other than "charges varying from insulting the public authorities to treason." But surely Mr. Owen will be the last to forget the regimes in Mexico which preceded that of Obregon. He will hardly claim that any of them would even have given the public funeral to Ricardo Magon. Had there been no Obregon, will Mr. Owen tell us who would be triumphant to-day in Mexico? Magon? Or the arch-cut-throat and ultra-capitalist, Francisco Villa?

And has Mr. Owen no choice between Mexico under Obregon, and Mexico as it was under Diaz and his successors, or would be under Villa? Does he believe that by weakening the Obregon-Galles faction in the face of the only opponent who has any strength, the reactionary De La Huerta, he is aiding the emancipation of the people? The Mexican workers disagree with him. The proof is in Mr. Owen's own words—words damning to his argument—when he admits to "one great change effected—a change of inestimable value—is that the Mexicans are now more hopeful, and have become a frankly revolutionary people."

Unemployed Workers Organisation.

The action of the U.W.O. during this last week has brought sharply to the surface this great problem which is confronting society to-day, namely the unemployed question. In Poplar, at a public meeting some little time ago, the Great George Lansbury expressed indignation and disgust with the unemployed—why? Because they had locked the Guardians in, or raided the Council Chambers? Oh, no; but because the unemployed, he alleged, had gone to sleep.

"Wake up; come around and worry us; you unemployed can have 1s. 6d. coal money if you come and ask for it. Do something, wake up, and show that Poplar spirit!" So said George one night.

The unemployed woke up and sent a deputation to the Board of Guardians last Wednesday night. The result of this action we all know. It is strange, but true, to relate that the men who suggested this action should be the very men to call in the police and get the unemployed batoned.

Lansbury tried to defend himself in his article in the "Herald" on Saturday by copying the capitalist stock phrases, saying that the men were led away by leaders. If he was thinking of himself as the leader he is perhaps right; but at the same time a great man like George should be able to make an excuse of his own, instead of using the same dope as our opponents. Whatever he says may go down outside Poplar, but in Poplar are people who saw the raid and know the full facts, and these, with many more, he will not be able to mislead by whitewash.

George Lansbury is not the worst; J. Scurr, A. A. Watts (the Communist), A. Partridge, Mrs. Scurr, are all as bad, and I may say were very noticeable in the agitation to have the police called in. Already we have held a number of protest meetings throughout the borough, and the people have unanimously declared their disgust with the cowardly action of some of the Guardians on Wednesday night.

The policy of the U.W.O. does not suit these Red revolutionaries, and we proved beyond doubt the uselessness and futility of Boards of Guardians to abolish poverty. The result of this brutal attack has not damped the spirit of the unemployed. On the contrary, hundreds of Labour Party members have torn up their cards and the U.W.O. has made so many new members in three days that we have run out of cards. The organisation is progressing in spite of the fact that we are being persecuted, and I must add that the more determined they are to crush us, the more determinedly we mean to carry on.

J. T. BELLAMY,
Area Organiser,
Poplar Town Hall.

BOOKS JUST PUBLISHED IN POPLAR.

"Christianity in Practice." By George Lansbury and Rev. Langdon.

"A Short Cut to Communism." By Edgar Lansbury and A. A. Watts.

"Towards the Graveyard." By a Lone Person. With a chapter on how to save the rates by the starving and freezing process.

"How to Display your Ignorance from the Bench with Safety." By Mr. Cairns (Thames Police Court).

. . . . . .

New pronunciation of "Guardians"—Gore-dians.

How to produce a "Red" borough.—Have enough blood shed to produce the necessary shade.

G.R.

SALARIES RISE, RELIEF FALLS.

Poplar Board of Guardians, while raising salaries, is cutting down relief. The cases of able-bodied persons who have been receiving relief for six months are to be reviewed.

The Workhouse Master has been pensioned off at £282 5s. 2d. a year and the Matron at £170 15s. 5d. A new Master is appointed at £235, rising to £275, per annum, and a new Matron at £190, rising to £250. Board, furnished apartments and washing are provided in both cases. A substitute Roman Catholic priest doing duty for four weeks got £21. A substitute doctor sixteen guineas for the same period.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The following letter exposes some of the evils and failures common in the Trade Unions to-day. The remedy in our view is not the creation of new unions, but the creation of shop committees linked in an all workers' union of workshop committees.

Dear Editor,

Another attempt is being made to organise the Hotel and Restaurant Workers. I have been thirty years in the catering trade and a member of every union for that trade that has come into existence during the period. I was a member of the French Cooks' Union about 1911—14, and went all through the forty "lightning strikes." I joined the Workers' Union (catering section) after the war, and left in disgust. I joined the Catering Trade Union and became vice-president.

According to the "Daily Herald" five different unions, among them the Workers' Union, are now to organise the workers in the catering trade.

I should like, with your permission, to review the record of the Workers' Union as it affects the catering trade workers. The British and Allied Catering Trade Union, the secretary of which is T. Cann, called a strike of catering workers in the city. At that time I was a member of the Workers' Union and very closely but quietly watching its actions. In order to be more "in the know," I got a friend of mine to take the job of office-cleaner in Old Compton Street. The British and Allied Catering Union appealed to the Workers' Union for support. That support never came. The Catering Union asked the Workers' Union to stop its members from delivering food, etc., at the strike establishments. No satisfaction was given, and cases of blacklegging were denied by the Workers' Union officials, although proof was given by the strikers. Ultimately the strike failed. Please notice particularly these events.

Then the Workers' Union commenced in earnest to organise the catering trade employees, mainly in the West End. The British and Allied Catering Workers, at a meeting of members, had adopted my resolution changing the name to the Catering Trade Union, with offices in Newport Street, W.

The workers in the catering trade section of the Workers' Union were becoming very impatient at the inaction of the Workers' Union, and so a meeting was called at Central Hall, Westminster. The meeting was packed, and now comes the gem: Dallas and Gibson practically said that, as the Workers' Union had not called a strike, there was no claim on the funds of the Workers' Union. Nevertheless, Dallas, Duncan and Co. were there to give the strikers every encouragement and support in their fight. In other words, "Do not come to us for strike pay."

Again the strike failed, again the Workers' Union sold the workers. Hundreds of earnest, good trade unionists became bitter, tore up their cords in Compton Street, and once again were the employers triumphant. I was one of those who became very bitter towards the Workers' Union. I joined the United Catering Trade Union, was placed on the E.C., and made vice-president.

We began to organise the staff of Lyons and Co. A strike was called, and every morning during the strike trade union carmen delivered trade union made bread, etc., to the strike shops. Once again the workers of the catering trade were sold by members of other trade unions, including the Workers' Union.

The French Cooks' Union worked with the Waiters' Union during 1911—14. During that time we, the members, decided what to do and when to do it, not the E.C. We were always in debt. We had no M.P., but got restaurant workers included in the Shop Hours Act. We did not walk the streets on strike for months, and yet we won thirty-eight out of forty strikes, simply by keeping silent, doing our work till the signal was given (always during a dinner or banquet). Then *no* dinner until an agreement was signed by the manager or proprietor. I regret the break-up of this union, which was caused by the war, its members being mostly Frenchmen who had to join France's capitalist army or navy, and Germans who were interned. The direct action work of this union will long be remembered.

I have written to the "Daily Herald" a statement of the above facts, but this great Labour paper, always for truth and justice, refuses to open its columns to one of the rank and file. The "Herald" has only room for Bobby Bear muck and letters from parsons re the Singapore millions, or else reports of the great speech by Jack Beard, of the Workers' Union.

Now we turn our attention to the five unions catering for the hotel and restaurant worker, which is being fathered and blessed, with the benediction of the General Council of the Trade Union Congress. They have at last waked up to the fact that all unions should support the one on strike. My word!

But how do they propose to organise the catering trade worker? Each union will take a given area, with paternal guidance from the Council.

Let us see how it would work. My friend joins A area, I join B area. A dispute arises in A area; result, a strike. I am out to support my friend, so I insist that B area strike also. Question: will B area and all other areas support A area by striking or not? Please notice it is left to the Council to decide. Not good enough!

The members themselves, and no one else, should decide what action to take, and how to take it, not the E.C. or secretary.

The rules, benefits, and subscriptions differ in these five unions. Therefore we have this position: Thousands of men, women, lads and lasses all engaged in the same industry, will be told to submit to rules that they had no voice in making, and pay subscriptions they did not decide upon. There are to be different rules and different unions for the same industry. There will be the petty jealousy of rival unions, the autocratic authority of the Council which the catering workers never helped to build, never heard of, and do not care about.

What is needed is an organisation composed of men and women in the catering trade only, who will make their own rules, fix their own subscriptions, and appoint their own officials. Only those actually engaged in the same know all about it. This union should be open to all nationalities and all grades of workers in the industry. One industry, one class; not five unions to one industry. Each industry should be complete in itself in organisation. All industries work in unison every time, all the time.

The rank and file should decide and control the union, not the officials.

Yours fraternally,
M. McCARTNEY

THE WRITING ON THE PAVEMENT.

Poplar unemployed have been writing on the pavement. Outside the Guardians' offices they have written:

BUTCHERS:
PLAY THE GAME, LABOUR PARTY.

The same message has been written in front of the houses of the Labour Guardians. Outside the door of the Mayor they have written "sCURr."

THE GENERAL STRIKE.

The "New Leader," the I.L.P. organ, is advocating a one-day demonstration strike to induce the Government to deal with unemployment. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, an I.L.P. leader, condemns the proposal in that other I.L.P. publication, "The Socialist Review."

"DREADNOUGHT" £1,000 FUND.

Brought forward, £76 16s. 10d. Per A. Hodson, 6s.; Tovarish, 5s.; F. Brimley, 10s.; Irene Smith, 1s. (weekly); Hackney meeting collection, 4d.; J. Leakey, £2o; per Mrs. Cahill, 4s. 6d.; P. F. Malnik, 5s. Total for week, £21 8s. 10d. Total, £98 5s. 8d.

1,750,000 elementary school children are massed in classes of upwards of 50.

Karl Liebknecht's Letters.

Luckau, 20th May, 1918.

. . . . In July, in three week's time, it will be your visiting day again. Two months already since your last visit. I hope then to get all the news in detail, and to hear more about your relations with the Russian "deputation." You know what I think about it.

I was very pleased to hear Helmi's account of the new turn of affairs in Rostow. Do they expect a regular correspondence to be kept up on both sides? I have put in a couple of lines, anyhow, but it is impossible to write anything, not even to our "ally" Ukrainia.

As to what you say about the money question and similar problems, of course it is not desirable to accept assistance from any but one's near relatives. I neither can nor will hang myself from all sorts of moral ropes in the future.

Certainly you will take care of all my papers, manuscripts, and everything. But you must not think they are all equally valuable; only a few parts of them are useable, and I should like, if possible, to do something with them. You brought a MS. with you in April to be corrected. Of course, heaps of other things occurred to me at once, things to be completed or corrected.

You will find somewhere a chapter on "The Dilemma"; please insert the following passage in it:

> "In the social struggles of all countries and peoples, class opposition, which is not to be confounded with the constant class war, is often reciprocal, is often found below the leveling influence of capitalistic and proletarian migration, and does not abolish the international character of capital and labour, but on the contrary stimulates the tendency to demonstrate it."

Towards the end of the chapter you must put in something like this:

> "Expansion comprises both production and distribution. It takes place in a double and ever broadening spiral, etc."

At the end of the chapter please insert this:

> "Thus, imperialism, if it is not first overthrown by social catastrophe, leads automatically to an economic catastrophe, to its own annihilation by the social forces which will crush it, annihilation by the abolition of its own reasons for existence; so is its doom doubly sealed."

Now a word or two of business. So far, the newspapers have always come punctually, but the last twice I got them two or three days late. This is really much more important to me than the parcels of food which I care about much less. You complain that you cannot understand from my letters whether I have sufficient or not. But my dearest Sophy, I have plenty, plenty, really. Please believe me. I do so wish you would keep most of these things for yourself, for yourselves. . . .

How is Rosa? Have you seen her lately? Remember me kindly to her every time you see her or write to her. She must take care of her health. Now I want to talk about you again. . .

Not long ago, in looking for the third chapter of Ecclesiastes, my eye fell on the seventh chapter of the Proverbs. They are like wild hissing flames in form and style. There is nothing that surpasses them.

My present tremendous flow of thoughts is overwhelming—indeed, it makes my work very difficult. I have so little time for myself now, although these are the longest days of the year. But I am not slacking down.

Kurt looked very well. You wrote me that he was stationed in a small hamlet away from the front. Unfortunately, such is not the case. He is as near the front lines as it is possible for a doctor to be. You must know that we have been intimate friends from our earliest years. I was his master in many things, especially in the rearing of butterflies, which formed a large part of our youthful happiness.

The newspapers have just arrived, early, and with Saturday's included. Many thanks. I have had a dirty bath—phew!

My dear child, I often wonder if you are strong enough to bear the daily attacks of the present on all that is good, noble, sacred, and to bear the sight of the daily triumph of cowardice, meanness, bestiality, servility, of everything that is low and vile. This is the greatest hardship of the present day. But you will not quail. The consciousness of superiority and the firm faith in future victory are the best helps in similar hardships. A reasonable survey of what is happening, of its causes and its action, is the best support, in these times, for it transports our participation in the events from the stormy atmosphere of passion to the cool heights of rational observation.

My cardboard business interests me more than you think. I meditate on the psychology of invention, on the conception of human capabilities. You will laugh at me, and certainly such experimental psychic research has often been made, and accounted for scientifically. But only careful personal observation can give one a clear idea. Every smallest movement of the body, or even of one member, its mode of action, the smallest modifications in the use of the senses, especially of sight and touch, the part played by the spiritual functions and by mental states, by the kind and class of material and the continual repetition of analogous movements, the rythm of manipulation, the observation of others and learning from them, as well as by one's personal experience, innumerable peculiarities and trifles of all sorts, from all these things spring finally one of the most important laws of movement in human development, a law which applies equally to the greatest things and the least.

But scientific theories notwithstanding, I have never yet succeeded in completing my allotted task. Time and again I have to return to the directions of Mephistopheles—I can demonstrate with beautiful clearness that it must be done *so* —but still I have not yet become a satisfactory weaver. But I still hope. The work is so easy that even a numskull like me must learn it in time, partly by practice, and partly by watching the others, and such an opportunity can only be found in prison.

To-day is the 590th day of my sentence and there are 870 more yet. I have been shut up for 775 days. When you come to see me in July, it will want two or three weeks to the half of the time, from my arrest to the end of the sentence. The serious things that I have in my heart I cannot write you. Last year you were thinking of settling in Luckau. You had even looked for a house, so the rooks whispered to me. But you are still a long way off. What will you do this year? I leave it to you. Goodbye, my sweetheart, my dearest; think of yourself a little more now you have settled all the others—and think of me. Love to you and many kisses. Your KARL.

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SYLVIA PANKHURST is booking provincial lecturing engagements.—Apply for dates to "Dreadnought" office, 152, Fleet Street.

COMMUNIST WORKERS' MOVEMENT, meetings to explain the policy of this movement, can be arranged on application to the Secretary, 152, Fleet Street, E.C.4.

Those desiring to learn GERMAN, either by private lessons or in a class, should write: G.N., Box 10, "Workers' Dreadnought."

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Outdoor Meetings.

Friday, October 5th, 8 p.m., Paragon St., Hackney.—N. Smyth and others.
Friday, October 12th, 7.30 p.m., The Grove, Hammersmith.—N. Smyth and others.
Sunday, October 14th, 3 p.m., Peckham Rye.—N. Smyth and others.
,, Mile End Green, 7.30 p.m.—N. Smyth and others.

A Branch of the C.W.M. is being started in Stepney. Those wishing to join should write to L. Goldstein, 26, Apsley Street, E.1.

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