ONE PENNY

Workers' Dreadnought

FOR GOING TO THE ROOT.

Vol. X. No. 46. February 2nd, 1924. WEEKLY.

PRISON POEMS BY WILFRID SCAWEN BLUNT.

MITIGATIONS.

Fellow ex-prisoners will be interested in Blunt's prison poems:—

My prison has its pleasures. Every day
At breakfast-time, spare meal of milk and bread,
Sparrows come trooping in familiar way
With head aside beseeching to be fed.
A spider, too, for me has spun her thread
Across the prison rules, and a brave mouse
Watches in sympathy the warders' tread,
These two my fellow-prisoners in the house.

But about dusk in the rooms opposite
I see lamps lighted, and upon the blind
A shadow passes all the evening through.
It is the gaoler's daughter fair and kind
And full of pity (so I image it)
Till the stars rise, and night begins anew.

A DREAM OF GOOD.

To do some little good before I die;
To wake some echoes to a loftier theme;
To spend my life's last store of industry
On thoughts less vain than youth's discordant dream;
To endow the world's grief with some counter-scheme
Of logical hope which through all time should lighten
The burden of men's sorrow and redeem
Their faces' paleness from the tears that whiten;

To take my place in the world's brotherhood
As one prepared to suffer all its fate;
To do and be undone for sake of good,
And conquer rage by giving love for hate;
That were a noble dream, and so to cease;
Scorned by the proud but with the poor at peace.

HER NAME LIBERTY.

I thought to do a deed of chivalry,
An act of worth, which haply in her sight
Who was my mistress should recorded be
And of the nations. And, when thus the fight
Faltered and men once bold with faces white
Turned this and that way in excuse to flee,
I only stood, and by the foeman's might
Was overborne and mangled cruelly.

Then crawled I to her feet, in whose dear cause
I made this venture, and "Behold," I said,
"How I am wounded for thee in these wars."
But she, "Poor cripple, wouldst thou I should wed
A limbless trunk?" and laughing turned from me.
Yet was she fair, and her name "Liberty."

FAREWELL DARK GAOL.

Farewell, dark gaol. You hold some better hearts
Than in this savage world I thought to find.
I do not love you nor the fraudulent arts
By which men tutor men to ways unkind.
Your law is not my law, and yet my mind
Remains your debtor. It has learned to see
How dark a thing the world would be and blind
But for the light of human charity.

I am your debtor thus and for the pang
Which touched and chastened, and the nights of thought
Which were my years of learning. See I hang
Your image here, a glory all unsought,
About my neck. Thus saints in symbol hold
Their tools of death and daring manifold.

THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT.

by Sylvia Pankhurst.

The Labour Government is as safe as Threadneedle Street" says Tory Mr. Garvin, in the "Observer"! Certainly it promises to be a government more acceptable to the Tories than to Socialists such as William Morris and Keir Hardie.

The inclusion in the Cabinet of Lord Chelmsford, the Conservative ex-Viceroy of India, and of Lord Haldane, one of the men who made the late war, must cause serious heart-burnings to Mr. MacDonald's faithful followers in the I.L.P. to say nothing of Socialists of a robuster type.

The mention of Lord Chelmsford, the ex-Viceroy, recalls Mr. MacDonald's own pronouncement to India, his first public pronouncement since assuming the office of Prime Minister. In that pronouncement he declares to the Indian non-co-operators that "no party in Great Britain will be cowed by threats of force, or by policies designed to bring government" to a standstill. He urges Indians to "come nearer to us" which means, of course, to the Imperial Government.

To declare that "no party in Britain will be cowed" by the agitation of the non-co-operators is a cruel travesty of the facts. The resistance of the non-co-operators is officially at least, and certainly on the whole purely passive. Mr. MacDonald indeed includes passive resistance in his strictures, calling it "passive force." Even were the non-co-operators active and not passive resisters to the Imperial Government, it would be a callous absurdity to suggest that in the desperate struggle of a subject people to free itself from an alien domination, there is any question of cowing the British home population or political parties in Britain. Mr. MacDonald cannot be ignorant of the essential falsity of his assumption. The non-co-operators are fighting with nothing more than their courage and willingness to suffer, against the might of the Imperial armies and the cowed torpor of a people submerged in ages of poverty, ignorance and oppression.

Shall the Indians who are striving for independence, for genuine self-determination, look in vain for any loosening of the grip of British rule now that a Labour Government is in power?

INDIAN POLITICAL PRISONERS.

The non-co-operators have demanded the release of all India's political prisoners, including Gandhi. Will the request be acceded to by the British Labour Government? The Government has the power to do this, since this is purely an administrative matter for which no vote of Parliament is required.

To Indian Nationalists, both in India and in Britain, the questions of the prisoners will be a first test of the MacDonald Government.

The test is not a very difficult one. Many a capitalist government has done as much.

The inclusion in the MacDonald Cabinet of Lord Chelmsford, whom they regard as a reactionary is in itself an offence to the sentiments of the non-co-operators.

Sir Sydney Olivier, the new Secretary of State for India, has been a Fabian. He has also been Governor of Jamaica and other subject territory, and he received his title for services to capitalist governments. These facts are not calculated to recommend him to Socialists of the school of William Morris or to Indian Nationalists striving to free their land from the oppression of Empire.

HOW ARE MINISTERS CHOSEN?

It is surprising that the Labour Government did not at least endeavour to choose for the offices of state which deal with industry persons who have a knowledge of the industries concerned. The Labour Government had opportunities of doing this which other governments have lacked and one really expected that it would pride itself on taking this commonsense course.

The exactly opposite policy seems, however, to have been followed. The time honoured Tory plan of choosing every man for the office he knows least about has been adopted instead.

For the Board of Agriculture, instead of selecting one of the men who have actually worked on the land and have been associated with agriculture all their lives, Mr. Noel Buxton has been chosen, presumably because he has made a special study of foreign affairs. The "Manchester Guardian" in eulogising this appointment, observed, however, that Mr. Buxton is the son of a landowner!

For the office of Parliamentary Secretary of Mines, instead of choosing one of the many miners who are Labour Members of Parliament, Mr. MacDonald has preferred Mr. Emanuel Shinwell, a tailor who has lately been organising seamen. Mr. Stephen Walsh, who has been a miner and is a miners' official, is made Secretary for War, a post for which apparently his only qualification is that he was a jingo in the late war. Mr. Hodges also an ex-miner and miners' official is made a civil lord of the Admiralty.

The Postmaster General is Mr. Vernon Hartshorn, another ex-miner and like the other miners' officials, a representative of a mining constituency. Mr. Ammon who has been a post office worker, is Parliamentary Secretary to the Admiralty.

The Minister of Health might have been chosen from the medical profession, or for special experience of sanitation. Since it is said that the provision of houses is going to be his greatest task, one might have expected an architect or a builder. The Minister of Health turns out to be Mr. Wheatley, a Glasgow publisher. We understand, however, that he has made a special study of housing. The appointment may therefore possibly prove one of the best made by Mr. MacDonald.

The Parliamentary Secretary for the Ministry of Health is Mr. Arthur Greenwood, a lecturer on economics, and the Under Secretary of Health for Scotland is Mr. James Stewart of Glasgow, a hairdresser. Glasgow unfortunately is not the only spot in the United Kingdom where housing is deficient. We are sorry that the Glasgow M.P.S. should raise the slogan that they will bring Glasgow up to the English level. That is hardly hitching the wagon to a star.

The legal offices according to precedent, are all filled by people who have had, at least some experience of the work they are supposed to undertake. Obviously the legal trade union is still the one that is most efficient in protecting its craft! Even under the guise of Government it allows no invasion of its province by laymen.

No doubt it is reassuring to all lovers of the established order to find Mr. Arthur Henderson occupying the responsible post of Home Secretary. They will feel confident that he can be trusted to deal firmly with the Reds, since it was Mr. Henderson, who when a member of Mr. Asquith's Coalition Government, deported the Clyde shop stewards.

One might have expected Mr. J. H. Thomas to be Minister of Transport, but he is Colonial Secretary. Perhaps it is as well for the loco-

motive men that the office of Mr. Thomas is somewhat removed from home affairs.

Mr. Gosling, who is an official of one section of transport workers is Minister of Transport. Thus, so far as the industrial departments are concerned he is almost the only exception to the rule of placing the Minister in the position he knows least about.

A "Safe" Chancellor.

Everyone expected Mr. Philip Snowden to be Chancellor of the Exchequer. That had been long announced. The capitalists will feel that he is really a safe man, as he has made it plain that confiscation of private property without compensation would, in his view, be an "outrage" and because he has so fiercely condemned the Russian revolution.

India versus Scotland.

It was a foregone conclusion that, according to precedent the Scottish offices should be occupied by Scotsmen. Mr. MacDonald would have shown himself a man of greater courage, larger heart and more sense of justice, had he created a similar precedent for India, since he has neither the power, not, it seems, the will, to set India free from the Empire.

Woman and the Cabinet.

Mr. MacDonald is being widely criticised for not having put a woman into his Cabinet.

The critics are right. We suspect that Miss Bondfield would have got a seat in the MacDonald Cabinet had she been a man. Miss Susan Lawrence, if a man, would probably have got into he Cabinet or at least, would have been given an Under Secretaryship.

The stupidity of Ministerial Management.

The real stupidity of Cabinet and Ministerial government is in nothing more clearly evidenced than in the manner in which Ministers are appointed to supervise work of which they have no knowledge. As a rule, Cabinet Ministers stay but a short time in the responsible highly paid posts in which they have the power to influence the lives of thousands, even millions of persons. The real administrators are of course the permanent officials,but the Cabinet Ministers are supposed to determine the larger and more important issues.

The Government at present occupies mainly the position of an outsider in regard to industry. It merely inspects and regulates to a certain extent, the carrying out of the great services of the community by private capitalism. Were the large industries and services to be nationalised the inefficiency of the Cabinet system of management would be increasingly felt. The Cabinet system necessarily entails an inefficient Chief, for, obviously, no man can learn the business of managing a great department in a few days, as is expected of Cabinet Ministers. The Minister at the head of the department, possesses absolutely autocratic power in conjunction with the Cabinet, which knows even less than he of the business. The power of a Government Department over its employees and over the work of the department as a whole is much less restricted than that of the ordinary employer of labour. No employee has a chance of getting the redress, for instance, for dismissal from a government department which he might obtain from a private employer.

The Futility of Parliamentary Nationalisation.

Democracy is a word which has fallen into bad odour now-a-days because democracy in a class society, based on private ownership, cannot exist.

To-day those who realise this truth recognise that nationalised industry, managed as the Post Office is managed would be managed with radical inefficiency at the top and would offer to the worker no freedom, no share of intelligent co-operation.

Ministers versus Committees.

It has been suggested, but we think, not accepted by Mr. MacDonald or by his most powerful colleagues, that the Ministerial system should be changed for the Committe system which is employed by Town Councils and other local bodies. The Committee system is only a shade less evil than the Ministerial system The Committee system is more democratic than the Ministerial, for the choice of the Committees is not vested in the will, or the whim of a single man. It has a possibility of being more efficient, because amongst a Committee of several persons there is a larger probability that some have had previous knowledge of the work in hand; there is moreover, a wider possibility of the management acquiring detailed knowledge when several persons are able to apply themselves to the vast field of inquiry which a state department represents.

On the other hand a Committee gives possibilities also for greater inefficiency than a Minister, for in the battle of policies inevitable amongst the representatives of warring parties, the main result will be talk, and the decisions made may frequently hinge on some rivalry of party or personality which has no essential relation to the work in hand.

Just as is the Minister, moreover, the Committee is outside and apart from the department it is supposed to manage. It is a body of persons not trained by actual experience in the department, and in no sense representing or in touch with those who work in the department.

The Ministerial system and the Committee system are alike undemocratic and inefficient. They must inevitably check spontaneous development from amongst the body of persons who are doing the work of the department. It is the worker in the department or industry itself who should, and will in a true democracy, undertake all management. Management in the form of an autocratic outside body, imposed from above, will no longer exist when democracy is actually achieved. Willing co-operation will remove the need for the coercive element in management which is present to-day. Co-ordination will be mutually developed, mutually agreed upon.

Downing Street.

The removal of the Downing Street barricades is a pleasant and friendly gesture of the Labour Prime Minister. Incidently it re-opens the way for those propaganda demonstrations in Downing Street which had become so frequent in pre-war days. Will it be Indian non-co-operators whom the police will first arrest for ringing at the Prime Minister's door or chaining themselves to his railings? Or will it be the wives of dockers on strike, or perhaps the unemployed?

The Government and the Strikers.

Apparently the Labour Government took no active step in the railway stoppage. Not only the engine drivers who faced the dread arbitrament of starvation to maintain their wages, but the large numbers of miners and others who had been incidently deprived of employment and the miners and dockers who are on the verge of striking, waited to see whether the Labour Government would come forward as the friend of the workers.

Capitalist Governments have frequently intervened to assist the Capitalists in time of strike. They have not done so when the employers have been winning, only when the solid unity of the workers has shown that they could not be beaten without undue losses to capitalism.

When the workers' strength has thus been manifest, Capitalist Governments have stepped in to coerce with a pretence of impartiality.

First they have ensured either by force or negotiation, that the deadlock created by the workers should be removed. Then the decision of the case has been handed over to some member of the employing class, some successful lawyer or business man, or a member of the hereditary nobility who has awarded the workers as little as they would quietly accept.

The workers will expect other methods from a Trade Union Government. They will tolerate no pretence of impartiality as between the capitalist and the worker. They will say that after a generation of effort, the Trade Union officials have been put into the seats of government to act as the friends of the wage workers, who are the majority of the people and the producing section of the community. The Trade Union officials were not returned to hold the balance even between employers and employed.

Moreover, to the Socialist (and the Labour Party claim to be Socialist) the existence of an employing class is a social evil, to be abolished as soon as possible.

It is strange to find in a government calling itself a Labour Government, such personalities as Lord Chelmsford and Lord Haldane.

Nevertheless, masses of workers are looking to the Labour Government to prove their friend in every struggle.

It will be some little time before they realise that by setting up their own workshop councils they can better attend to their own affairs.

It is certain that the men of lowly birth who have climbed into the seats of the mighty will govern, even with the handicap of dependence on Liberal votes, at least as worthily and efficiently as any of their blue-blooded predecessors. Some of them may even become real converts to Socialism, realising that within the Capitalist system an equitable system of society cannot be devised.

CHICHERINE ON THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT.

Mr. Chicherine, the Soviet Commissary for Foreign Affairs, has been interviewed by Mr. Arthur Ransome as to his views on the British Labour Government. Mr. Chicherine's words are courteous, but they have a decidedly acid flavour of scepticism.

Speaking of Mr. MacDonald he says:

MacDonald and Gladstone.

"I cannot, however, observe without some apprehension his advent to the Foreign Office. I remember another man whose oratory had the same moral philanthropic character, the same religious undertones concerning foreign policy—namely, Gladstone. I cannot forget that Gladstone, the man who had the strongest condemnation of violence towards weaker nations, the man who when in Opposition had opposed colonial expansion, and particularly opposed English colonial policy in regard to Egypt, was himself the man who bombarded Alexandria. With the best wishes for the success of Mr. MacDonald, I think I can allow myself to quote the example of Gladstone's colonial policy with the Latin words, 'Vestigia terrent'."

The Trade Union Leaders.

Mr. Chicherine adds:

"It is difficult for me to make general remarks about the Trade Union Leaders who have now come to power because, so far as I know British politics, the Trade Union movement had no unique foreign policy, and every Trade Union Leader had his own policy, Tillett one, Smillie another, and Clynes a third. I am very impatient now to learn what will be the common foreign policy of these Leaders working together.

Humanitarian Views at the Air Ministry.

Sharp irony distinguishes the references to Brigadier-General Thompson.

"Brigadier-General Thomson has been in Moscow, when I had the pleasure of talking with him on the repatriation of fugitives and on other humanitarian matters. I am glad that he will be able to apply his humanitarian views to the control of the air force."

From Spain.

Since the reactionary coup in Spain the Liberals have practically disappeared and the forces of Left Wing Communism and revolutionary Syndicalism have been greatly strengthened.

German Militarists and Toller Play.

The "Observer" reports:

"The production of Ernst Toller's new play "Hinkermann" at the State Theatre in Dresden has led to the biggest theatrical disturbance since Schnitzler's "Reigen" was produced in Berlin. Toller, who is still imprisoned in Bavaria for his active sympathies at the time of the Räte-Republik, has been the particular object of nationalist students' animosity for some years past. The organised protest and panic that occured early in the first act of "Hinkermann" was political in principle, though it professed to be the outward and visible sign of outraged youth, fighting for the ideals of unsullied morality.

"Toller has been unfortunate in his subject, even from the point of view held by his well-wishers. His hero, Hinkermann, is a war victim, sexually mutilated. The audience split into two factions, one pleading for a further hearing of what might turn out to be a perfect work of art, the other demanding the curtain at any price. In the general commotion, amid an atmosphere vitiated by the gas-bombs the disturbers had brought with them, one member of the audience died of heart-failure.

"Certain Dresden ratepayers demand an explanation from the director of the theatre, whose upkeep they pay for, for the staging of such a production. For his part the director expresses a desire to try the play again befor an unbiassed audience in the interests of art, Socialism, and Ernst Toller."

A complete translation of this play of Toller appears in Germinal from 152, Fleet Street, London, E.C.; from Henderson's, Archers, and by order through all newsagents.

LENIN.

So many articles are written on Lenin now that even the best of them are wearisome. When Lenin was a lonely pioneer people did not write of him. Most of those who eulogise him to-day were coldly indifferent, contemptuous, or hostile when Lenin faced real danger and hewed out for himself the position for which he is to-day admired.

Make no mistake; it is not Lenin, not his personality, his thought, his conception of sicial life which is so widely admired now—it is the power he weilded, the prominent position he held which is regarded with awe.

Many who were aloof and doubtful when the dauntless few were fighting the struggle of 1917-18, are prepared now to make a very god of Lenin, to proclaim him the man who was always right, who "never made a mistake."

This of course is absurd. It is a claim Lenin would never have made for himself, combative and keen as he was on his own standpoint. He believed in his theories, his tactics and policy, but again and again he of course knew that he had made mistakes, he of course regretted them and strove to overcome the results. An eager, vital, enthusiastic human being, he was struggling by the untried ways of social progress.

Certainly he was as the poles apart from the little popes who would make a god of him to enhance themselves. His merit is not that he was infallible; that he never was, but that he had great energy, great determination, great courage and that curiosity of the mind which causes people to seek for the truth, however unpopular, or unpalatable it may prove.

The little popes who sing his praises to-day do not possess the spirit of investigation which raised him above the many; they keep to the mental pathways he has made, and now that he is dead they will try to stereotype his utterances into a series of dogmas, which can never be amended or extended.

The simplicity that made Lenin the loved Ilyitch of his comrades is quite alien to such deification. Like others who rise above the puerilities of small minds Lenin was dogmatic in argument and strove hard to prevail not because he desired to be deified as an infallible but simply because he wished to make converts in the interests of the results he believed his policies would bring forth.

For ourselves we have differed from Lenin; our differences remain, but we do homage to him as one who fought wholeheartedly for principle, who burnt his bridges and threw himself into the thick of the struggle, who was not afraid to go forth alone, toiling without praise or encouragement till others should be converted to his views.

Of such are the makers of history.

E.S.P.

A MANIFESTO FROM RUSSIA.

from the Communist Workers' Group of the Russian C.P.

(Third Instalment.)

Every Bolshevik and especially the average members of the party who possessed little experience in political intrigues, cried at every street-corner to the Mensheviks: "you faithless traitors of the working class! We will hang you to the telegraph poles. You carry the guilt of the international carnage in which the working people of all countries were drowned. You have murdered Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht. The streets of Berlin become red; thanks to your atrocities, with the blood of the workers who rose in indignation against the capitalist exploitation and oppression. You are the makers of the treaty of Versailles, you have committed numberless crimes against the international proletariat by betraying them at every step." The readers must admit that it is not quite proper to offer to a communist worker with such an attitude the "socialist united front" i.e. a united front with Noske Scheidemann, Vandervelde Branting and Co.

It must be somehow masked. The theses are not entitled simply 'Socialist united front' but 'on the unified workers' front and on the relation with the workers who follow the 2nd, 2½ and Amsterdam Internationals and also to those who support the Anarcho-Syndicalist organisation." The same comrade Zinoview who writes these theses, a little earlier had invited us to take part in the funeral of the 2nd International. He has apparently received news from this International that the announcment of its death is a little exaggerated. Therefore comrade Zinoview has not lost his presence of mind and invites us now the the marriage of the Communist International with the 2nd International.

An agreement with the workers is not spoken of only with the parties of the 2nd and 2½ Internationals. Every workman, even if he has been a refugee abroad, knows that the parties are represnted by their head offices and there sit Vandervelde, Branting, Scheidemann, Noske and Co. With them, an agreement will be arrived. Who was at the Berin Conference of the Three Internationals? To whom has the Comintern offered its heart and hand? To Wels, Vandervelde among others.

Have they tried to come to an understanding with the Communist Workers' Party (KAP) of Germany, although the same comrade Zinoview says that in it very valuable proletarian elements are to be found.

It is true, comrade Zinoview says in the theses that no amalgamation at all of the Comintern with the 2nd International is attempted and that the former will keep its organisationary independence.

The Communists impose upon themselves a discipline in activities, but they must preserve unconditionally with it the right and the possibility, not only before and after but even when necessary during action, to give expression to their opinions about the politics of all workers organisations without exception.

Discipline in action and independence in expressing the views is formally recognised for the inner party life in the Statutes of the C.P. of Russia. That does not mean anything other than: one must do what the majority has decided.....you can exercise only criticism..... Do that which has been commanded to you, but if you are too angry and know quite definitely that it does harm to the cause of world revolution, then you can give your anger free vent, during, before and after action—speak. That is synonymous with giving up independent action, exactly as Vandervelde had provided a clause when he subscribed to the Treaty of Versailles.

In the same theses the executive gives out the watchword of 'Workers' Government' whereby it slyly substitutes for the slogan of the "dictatorship of the Proletariat" the slogan of "Socialist Ministries." What is exactly then 'Workers' Government'? It is a government which will be formed out of the Central Committees of Allied Parties and Ebert (Socialist) is President, f.ex. in Germany—even if a cabinet. as befits him, is added,.....we get an ideal programme which is built upon these theses. Then when this watchword is not accepted, the Communists must support with their voice the Socialist Prime Minister Branting in Sweden and Ebert in Germany. Comrade Zinoview offers them the united front and proposes to them the formation of a Socialist government with communist supplement.

Noske, Ebert, Scheidemann and Company will go to the meetings of workmen and will tell them that the Comintern has declared amnesty and offers instead of gibbet, Ministerial Chairs. But upon one condition, viz. that the Communists will receive one, even if the worst Ministerial Chair. To give or not to give? It will be voted and decided to give it. They will tell the whole working class that the Communists have recognised that only together with them and not against them is it possible to fight for Socialism. Only look at these people! They lept and they jumped, they buried and hanged us and finally, however, have they come to us.

The Communist International has certified the political trustworthiness of the 2nd International and has received from it a certificate of political poverty. What is really the cause of this change?

Why does comrade Zinoview offer Ebert, Scheidemann and Noske a Ministerial seat instead of a gibbet?

Only a little previously had he sung the burial hymn to the 2nd International and complained against its spirits. Why does he sing now a panegyric? Shall we see its resurrection and worship it?

The theses of comrade Zinoview answer this question thus: "The economic world crisis is sharpening, unemployment is increasing, capital is taking the offensive and endeavours to press down the standard of life of the proletariat." Also a war is inevitable. For these reasons, the working class is going more to the left. The reformist illusions are destroyed. The broad workmen's circles begin for the first time to prize the Communist vanguard..... and therefore.....one must form a united front with Scheidemann.

The end does not correspond with the beginning. We would not be just unless we added a few more grounds which comrade Zinoview adds in his defence of the united front. He makes a wonderful discovery: "The working class strives towards unity. And how can it do otherwise than through a united front with Scheidemann?!!!

Every conscious worker to whom the interests of his class and of the world revolution is not foreign, can ask: Is it only now, in the movement when the necessity of united front is supported, that the working class has desired to become united? Everyone who has lived in the moment of the appearance of the working class on the arena of political struggle, knows the desperation which rises in every workman: why do the Mensheviki, Bolsheviki, the Social-Revolutionaries and the members of the Workers' Party fight one another? They all want the best for the people. Then what do they fight each other for? Every workman lives in this doubt. But what conclusion must one draw from that? It is necessary to organise and lead the working class into a self-dependent class-party, in which act one must place oneself in antagonism to all other parties. That our petty-bourgeois prejudices must be laid aside, was correct. It is true also till to-day. We must prepare the working class in all capitalist countries where the era for social revolution has arrived, for open armed attack, exactly against International Menshevism and Social-Revolutionaries. In this case the experiences of the Russian Revolution must be considered. It must be tightly hammered into the working class of the whole world that they, the Socialists of the 2nd and 2½ International are at the head of counter-revolution and will continue to remain there. The propaganda of united front together with the social traitors of all shades attempts to convince that the latter also fight for and not against Socialism.

The time when the working class could im-

(Continued on p. 8.)

Workers' Dreadnought
Founded 1914.
Editor: SYLVIA PANKHURST.
✣ ✣ ✣
All Matter for Publication— To THE EDITOR.
Business Communications — To THE MANAGER.
WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT,
152, FLEET STREET, LONDON, E.C.4.
SUBSCRIPTIONS. Post free.
Three months (13 weeks) ..... 1s. 7½d.
Six months (26 weeks) ..... 3s. 3d.
One year (52 weeks) ..... 6s. 6d.
Subscriptions can start from any week.

Vol. X. No. 46. SATURDAY, FEB. 2ND, 1924.

Our View.

THE RAILWAY STRIKE.

The result of the railway strike is certainly amazing.

The reduction in wages against which the strike was directed is still to take place, but will now be gradually imposed. The first cut will be immediate, the second in July, and the last in January, 1925.

The strike has been terminated without consulting the rank and file, who suffered its hardships, whose ballot vote decided it, and who, of course, are the people whose wages are reduced. The fact that prices have been steadily rising during the last six months is overlooked in all these wage settlements.

Here, once again, is shown the undemocratic character of trade union management. The strikers, it seems, were ordered back to work without even being told what the terms were. It was late on Tuesday afternoon before the newspapers announced the facts. Mr. Bromley says his union has contributed to "stopping the rot which has set in against wages and conditions of all workers."

No, Mr. Bromley; you have merely slowed down the process a little, although solid action of the members of the A.S.L.E. & F., with the support of N.U.R. comrades, had paralysed the railway service.

It was a shame, in our opinion, to stop the strike, short of victory, unless the rank and file had themselves decided to accept a compromise.

The necessity for the setting up of Workers' Councils becomes always more evident.

* * *

MR. McKENNA AND THE CURRENCY.

Mr. McKenna, in his address to the shareholders of the Midland Bank, made a plea for inflation of the currency. That means increased prices, and prices already are steadily rising. From the already rising prices wages are suffering a continual reduction. They will be reduced still more if Mr. McKenna's policy is adopted. We anticipate that it will be, since Mr. Keynes, who is in many ways the financial leader of the Labour Party, favours a large inflation. In that case, inevitably, the workers will be forced to revolt against their present low wages, the purchasing power of which will become less. The workers will then look for something more robust from the Labour Government than the passivity displayed in the railway strike.

From the Trade Union Executive they will expect better tactics than the present habit of allowing one section of workers to fight its battle alone, before the next section takes the field.

Certainly, as the struggle for existence grows keener, it must be borne in upon the wage workers, just as it was in the war, that the workshop councils, the councils of themselves, organised at the point of production, alone can enable them to fight effectively.

The see-saw of wages contests is a very depressing one. It is a struggle that never will end till the wages system is abolished.

* * *

WILL STRIKES DESTROY THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT?

It is strange that men who are drawing salaries in the neighbourhood of £1,000 a year out of the Labour Movement, can find it in their hearts to ask poor people whose wages are below the subsistence level, to refrain from striking to better their economic position.

In last week's "New Leader" Mr. Brailsford had a bitter attack on the railway strikers, which evoked many protests from his readers. This week he again denounces strikes, and, moreover, calls Mr. George Lansbury to reinforce his arguments.

Mr. Brailsford postulates that the industrial movement has been at a low ebb for several years, and that the workers have therefore turned instinctively to political action. Thus the Labour Party has got its chance:

> "Its main task is now, by setting in motion its plans for unemployment and housing, by its foreign policy and by administrative action converging on these central problems, to bring about a revival of trade. That will mean more for the whole body of workers, now and for years to come, than a whole series of victories (if victories were possible) won by strikes. The two methods cannot easily be combined. A series of strikes, first on the railways, then at the docks, and finally in the mines, would delay any improvement in trade, and for a time at least aggravate the general unemployment, and make it harder than ever to raise revenue for our social aims. More certainly than anything else, they would bring down the first Labour Government with a crash, and after creating dissension in our own ranks, and distrust among the public, postpone for many a long year our hopes of attaining a majority in the country. Our strategy must be concerted between the political and the industrial movements. If they work independently, and, worse still, at cross purposes, both are doomed to failure."

This is not Socialist teaching; it is sheer Liberalism. We urge all good I.L.P.'ers to realise that. Let them read Mr. Brailford's words with careful impartiality. They will not fail then to recognise that such is not the teaching required to develop a Socialist movement.

Mr. Brailsford does not know that his argument is not Socialist. He ought, however, to understand that it is harshly callous. He, with his snug thousand a year as reward for the leisurely, pleasant work of editing a small weekly paper, assisted by a professional sub-editor, beside the usual office staff and numbers of able contributors, should contrast himself with those engine drivers, rushing through the country with their anxious freight of lives, rising by night, in all weathers, at any hour, when the call for a driver comes. The railway companies have said that some of those drivers get £6 a week, but Mr. Brailsford, for his genial, dilletanti strolling through the short columns of the "New Leader," gets £20 a week. Let him compare himself, moreover, with the miners in their hard, dangerous toil below ground, whose earnings are now down to the poor law level; and the dockers; aye, let him go down to the docks some morning, and fight to be taken on, and shoulder his load with the rest, if he be so lucky as to be picked out from the crowd.

Mr. Brailsford does not pretend the Labour Government will raise wages; he tells the wage earners they must wait for an improvement in trade to better their conditions. He knows that the financial politicians are planning to inflate the currency and reduce the purchasing power of the present miserable wages.

When Mr. Brailsford turns in his next paragraph to express sympathy for the German workers, who have lost the legal eight hour day, the last relic of what they won by their revolution, one feels that his words ring hollow. Mr. Brailsford professes "amazement and indignation" that "men in British uniforms" are requisitioning labour, to replace the German strikers who refuse to work a ten hour day in the British zone of occupation. One contrasts his insistence that "whatever else is postponed, this matter calls for instant redress" with his own desire to postpone the urgent case of the miners and dockers at home.

Mr. Brailsford's plea that a series of strikes "would bring down the first Labour Government with a crash" is hardly in harmony with the fact that the railway strike and the Labour Government came in together.

Mr. Lansbury takes another line than Mr. Brailsford; he asks the ill-paid wage earner whose conditions are "so bad as to make strikes appear inevitable" to wait a few weeks to give the new Government a chance to do something for them. Under normal conditions Mr. Lansbury says he considers the proper answer to Lord Devonport would be "nothing but a strike," but he urges "conditions are not normal." He begs the dockers to wait till their officials have hammered out a scheme "to deal with the whole transport business so far as docks and wharves are concerned which can be brought before Parliament by the Minister of Labour." To the miners Mr. Lansbury makes the same plea, asking them to wait for the means to buy more food, till the Labour Government has secured legislation "to get the industry reorganised, either in regions or nationally."

Such measures take many months, at least, to find a way through Parliament, and meanwhile the dockers and miners are in need; their children are short of bread. The Labour Government has no majority; it can pass no measure of radical improvement.

If they were frank and fearless and wise, these Labour Party politicians, they would say to the workers: We can do very little for you; but if you will create an impossible situation, we may be able to use their fear of you to manœuvre the Liberals and Tories into acceptance of some ameliorations.

Parliamentarism is bound to fail, but these Labour Party politicians do not even play the Parliamentary game in an effective way.

* * *

MILITARY JUSTICE.

On February 13th, 1915, Lucien Bersot, a private in the French Army, when issued white duck trousers, refused to accept a pair which had been soiled in store. No doubt the poor fellow would have been punished had he appeared in them. For his refusal he was condemned to a week's imprisonment. His comrades were indignant. They sent a protest to the lieutenant. Thereupon the colonel of the regiment sentenced Bersot to death. He was shot next morning. The Court of Appeal has now quashed the sentence and awarded the widow of Bersot 20,000 francs.

* * *

THE RECOGNITION OF RUSSIA.

It was expected that the Labour Government would take immediate steps to recognise Russia, but now there are rumours that a deadlock has arisen. Mr. J. J. O'Niell, the Liberal M.P. for Lancaster, has confidently asserted, as though he were in the inner councils of the Labour Party, that the Labour Cabinet considered the question at its first meeting, but recognition cannot take place until the claims of British creditors upon Russia have been settled. The statement was surprising, because it had been widely stated that such questions would be left over for discussion after the recognition had opened the way to diplomatic intercourse between Russia and Britain. Certainly that was what seemed to be implied, both by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's Albert Hall speech and his recent pamphlet on Labour Party foreign policy.

The *Daily Telegraph*, however, persists that Mr. MacDonald is finding difficulties in the way of recognition. The wish is probably father to the thought, but the *Telegraph* declares that a number of obstacles have been discovered. Not only are the British debt claims raised up as a spectre by the *Telegraph*. It discovers also that Mr. MacDonald will make recognition conditional on Russia's acceptance in principle of the covenant of the League of Nations and an expression of willingness to enter the League when the Allied Powers permit. The old Anglo-Russian Treaties are mentioned as another barrier, and, yet another, the suggestion that recognition would nullify the political clauses of the Trade Agreement, thus setting the Soviet Government free to carry on propaganda in the East. It is also suggested that the countries bordering on Russia may be unfavourable to the recognition of Russia by Britain. It is hinted that Lords Parmoor and Chelmsford may also be raising objections.

We imagine that all this is mere speculation, and that the Labour Government will carry out its pledge to recognise Russia without delay.

* * *

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

We have often said that the next war will be called by the British Government a war for the League of Nations. It will, of course, be in reality a war for the harmony of Europe between Britain and France.

Mr. MacDonald's Government has begun by giving the League of Nations greater prominence than has hitherto been accorded to it. Lord Cecil, who represented the last Government on the League of Nations Council, was only a sort of unimportant accessory to the last Government. Lord Parmoor, who is to represent this Government on the Council, is an important personage in the Government, and will be in charge of foreign affairs in the House of Lords.

Lord Grey, whose responsibility for the diplomacy which created the last war has been so ably exposed by Mr. E. D. Morel, M.P., and Mr. H. N. Brailsford, is now making pronouncements which seem to be in substantial accord with the policy of the Labour Party. At Cannon Street Hotel the other day he said:

> "Germany should be got to sign the Covenant of the League of Nations, as well as France and ourselves. And then I think this country might come to an agreement that if France and Germany both broke the Covenant of the League of Nations we would have nothing to do with either of them; but that if one of them broke the Covenant and the other stood by it, then we would take action, not for the sake of supporting one country against another, but for the sake of supporting the Covenant of the League and the country which stood by the Covenant. In that way you will get security which is an equal security for every nation which signed the Covenant, and that is the only way you can get real security."

The *Daily Telegraph* observes that Mr. Bonar Law adopted that idea a year ago, and that Lord Cecil was instructed to take secret soundings on it at Geneva. M. Poincaré, however, would have none of it, and demanded a military convention with Britain.

* * *

THE PALATINATE.

The anxiety which the Powers are displaying as to the independence or otherwise of the Palatinate is explained by the fact that it includes one of the big Rhine harbours and one of the greatest dye works in the world. It has, moreover, a backbone of hills and ridges suitable for defence in war, and is wedged into the corner formed by the Rhine and the frontiers of Alsace Lorraine and the Sarre basin.

* * *

THE SWISS FREE ZONES.

It is stated in many quarters that France is moving to the Left, and that, therefore, the French Government is becoming less aggressive. It requires keen and optimistic eyesight to discern such tendencies in the French Government. During the past few weeks France has incorporated into her own economic system the Savoy free zones contrary to the Treaty rights of Switzerland. M. Poincaré has agreed to allow the dispute to be arbitrated, provided that the right of France to suppress the free zones is excluded from the judgment! All that M. Poincaré is willing to discuss is the problems which have arisen from the suppression—not the suppression itself.

* * *

CHILD EMIGRANTS.

We recently published information regarding the conditions under which child emigrants are sent from this country to the colonies. The suicide of a boy emigrant to Canada, who had been thrashed by his employer, and the rider of the jury that the inspection of the children and their homes is inadequate, come to confirm our warning. Disguise the question as one may, this traffic in child emigrants is slavery of a cruel type.

* * *

GERMAN GOLD BANK AND REVOLUTION.

The Committee of Experts appointed by the Reparations Committee recommends the establishment of a gold bank in Germany.

It is proposed that the capital of the bank should be placed in a neutral country to prevent seizure by an enemy Power or in case of a German revolution. If the German revolution is a genuinely Communist revolution and abolishes the money system, the gold will be thereby rendered practically valueless in Germany and the depositors may do as they please with it.

* * *

THE U.S. OIL SCANDAL.

The important thing about the leasing of U.S. Government oil pools to certain private companies is not so much whether there was what the Americans call "graft" in particular cases. It is that 80 per cent. of the oil reserves which the United States was supposed to be setting aside for its Navy as a measure of national defence have passed into private hands. This is a remarkable instance of the difficulty of maintaining public spirit and care for the general good under a social system based on capitalist competition. It is not the oil wells and the Navy that matter, but the fact that the interest of the community has been so readily sacrificed.

* * *

CONTROL IN THE COTTON TRADE.

Control in the cotton trade, as agitated for by Sir Charles Macara, and the Provisional Emergency Cotton Committee, is on the eve of becoming an established fact. This control, as recently explained in our columns, includes restriction of production, the fixing of basic selling prices for yarn, and levies on employers and employed to compensate workers unemployed through "the state of trade in the section controlled."

This is the capitalist alternative to Socialism. It is a desperate attempt to attain security for the manufacturer and to modify for him the evils of competition by his compatriots and from abroad. There is also an effort to combine to insure raw material.

The worker remains a wage slave, and the security offered to him by the contract is of a very meagre and conditional variety.

Sir Charles Macara and his Committee have by great energy, in an incredibly short space of time, secured the acceptance of controlled capitalism amongst a very conservative body of capitalists. We should display a much more fervent energy and faith in converting the workers to the abolition of capitalism.

* * *

THE SINGAPORE BASE.

The expected abandonment of the Singapore base is one of those rare earnests of pacifist intention which governments occasionally offer. Yet even this must be taken in conjunction with many things. If for the Singapore base are substituted military, naval or air preparations or alliances with other Powers which will add their forces to those of Britain, then the abandonment of Singapore will prove but a passing and minor incident.

Pacifist effort in a capitalist society seems all too often, indeed, like carrying water in a sieve. To realise this fact in all its force, we must remember that the very basis of capitalism is competition, and conflicts of interest. A sort of war, like a low fever ravaging the body politic, is always going on, between the producer and the employer, between the vendor and the purchaser, and between the rival vendors.

MR. J. H. THOMAS ON ROYALTY AND DEMOCRACY.

> "We have all settled down to the fact that there has come into being, and is governing our great Empire to-day, a new party. There were many who were apprehensive. The least apprehensive was our guest of to-day—the Prince of Wales. The only exception to him I would make would be his illustrious and distinguished father. They were the least disturbed of all people, and they were the least disturbed because they were the most wise. They were the most wise because they knew their people better than others. . . . I hope that in 136 years' time our successors will be able to say that we did nothing as pioneers to weaken this great Empire of which we are all so proud. I accepted the seals of office with pride and gratitude—pride because I can look back to the day when I was a little errand-boy nine years of age, gratitude to the Constitution that enables the engine-cleaner of yesterday to be the Minister of to-day. That Constitution, so broad, so wide, so democratic, must be preserved, and the Empire which provides it must be maintained."

* * *

"Mr. J. H. Thomas's statement in the House of Commons last week that he was a recipient of Russian gold, because he got £2,000 damages in his libel action against the Communist newspaper, cannot be allowed to pass. It is true he got £2,000, but not from the Communists or the Russians—they paid nothing. The £2,000 he got, and he must know it, came from the National Labour Press, a venture of the I.L.P. He insisted upon prosecuting the printers of the paper as well as the Communists who owned it. It was the I.L.P. he skinned of the £2,000, and it is rather shabby to make a cheap score of it as 'Russian gold.'"—Mr. T. Johnston, M.P., in the "Forward."

THIRD AND FOURTH INTERNATIONALS.

The manifesto of the Communist Workers' International, which we published last week, said:

> "We believe in a majority of the workers becoming consciously Communist."

That is a very sound saying. It is one with which we wholeheartedly agree. That belief must guide our whole policy. It contains many deep implications. It forces us to be thorough in our educative propaganda and organisation, not to rely on chance or fickle impulse to achieve that which can only be brought forth by earnest labour. It forever cuts us off from the race for popularity, the effort to be all things to all men. It removes us from the temptation to pander to prejudice, and to disguise our real objectives, in the hope that by securing office, we can impose on the masses for their good, a millennium they are too undeveloped to desire.

The belief that the workers must become conscious Communists lays on us the obligation to be, not the dominant leaders, or the clever wirepullers, but the brotherly ones, prepared to discuss our complete belief with

all who are prepared to listen. For us there can be no question of expounding a diluted doctrine, of telling people only that which they desire to hear, and avoiding mention of those principles to which our hearers are not yet converts.

WORKERS AND PEASANTS.

A point which frequently crops up in Continental manifestoes is the relationship of the worker and the peasant. The Fourth International manifesto we published last week referred to the fact that the Third International believes it can build a dictatorship of workers and peasants.

Leaving aside for the time being the question of the term "dictatorship," let us consider the relationship of the worker and the peasant. In England we have no considerable class of peasants, tilling their own soil and employing no hired labour. In England the labour on the land is mainly that of hired workers, whose position is precisely that of the factory worker in the town. The peasant who employs no hired labour is more suitably compared to the cobblers, and other small craftsmen, who make and sell their own wares, or even to the hawkers and the small shopkeepers, than to the wage worker. The peasant with his plot of land is, however, in a more secure economic position than the small manufacturer and shopkeeper, because he has a permanent property in his land, and because he can raise his own food—or some of it, at least. It must not be forgotten, however, that in bad times small peasants are often driven to sell or mortgage their land, and from their loss a richer peasant class grows up.

Of course, we are all agreed that in a Communist society there will be no peasants, not that the people who are peasants will actually die out, but that which makes them peasants —the ownership of land—will disappear. Land will be held in common, production from the land, as in industry, will be for use, not profit.

Of the many discussions which naturally, and rightly, are held on the tactics of the Russian Revolution, the most heated point of contest is whether there should have been a "dictatorship of the industrial proletariat," or a "dictatorship of the industrial proletariat plus the peasants."

In spite of its time-honoured character, we must affirm that, in our view, the use of the term "dictatorship" in such discussions is responsible for much confusion and misunderstanding. Let us put the matter in another way; let us consider whether the peasants on the land and the workers in the factories can co-operate in constructing a Communist community—in which, of course, property is held in common and production is for use, not profit.

We see at once that before this can be done, not only must the town workers cease to be the employees of capitalists, but the peasants must cease to be peasants: that is to say, they must cease to be owners of land and to produce for sale. Otherwise there is no communism.

No reasonable person believes that what was required in Russia was that the relatively small number of industrial workers in Russia should act as the dictators—in the sense that the Czar and Napoleon were dictators—over the vast peasant masses of Russia.

Those who join issue with the policy pursued by the Third International, and oppose the attempt to build a new society on the basis of peasants and proletariat, argue that the existence of a peasant proprietary ought not to have been accepted as a factor upon which to build. The effort, constant and unremitting, ought to have been to secure the socialisation of the land, as well as of the industries, and to brand individual ownership of land as essentially anti-communist, and to be condemned.

Instead of urging the peasants, and leading the peasants, to seize the land and cut it up for *individual ownership*, the right course was to have endeavoured to induce them to seize the land for *common ownership*, its products being applied to common use.

It may be argued, but it cannot be proved, that had the Bolsheviki called for the common ownership of the land they would have failed.

Rosa Luxemberg, herself a Russian Pole, declared *at the time* that the effort ought to have been made.

For us, whether the effort would have meant early success or not, the effort undoubtedly should have been made and continued, and continued, and continued.

> "We believe in a majority of the workers becoming consciously communist."

Therefore we cannot cut off a section of the people because they happen to be employed on the land, and decide it is unnecessary for them to be Communists.

We believe that what most retarded the development of the Russian Revolution was the cessation of effort to secure communism by the vast majority of the active propagandists, who, under Bolshevist influence, became infected with doubt in the possibility of further progress, and imagined that if they did not stand still, or retreat, they would lose what they had gained.

As a matter of fact, the history of all revolutions is that as soon as they cease to advance, they begin to retreat. In or out of revolution, there is nothing to be lost by endeavouring to progress; no advance can be made by pretending that things are all right as they are.

The attempt to build a Workers' Republic, on the basis of private ownership of the land and production of agricultural produce for sale, coupled with State Socialism in the towns, proved abortive. The result was the new Economic Policy, which was the re-introduction of private capitalism into industrial production and town economy.

The attempt to save time by refraining from bringing the land workers to a state of Communism led directly and inevitably to reaction, the saddest feature of which is the attempt of those in power in Russia to check the essential propaganda and organisation for Communism.

E. Sylvia Pankhurst.

AN OIL CLUE.

The clue to the supply of armaments to General Obregon by the United States and the placing of an embargo upon the supply of munitions to his enemies is to be found in the fact that General Obregon has recently established the oil concessionaires on unusually advantageous terms. The rebels against the government of the General have seized the oil wells and so displaced the concessionaires a large proportion of whom are subjects of the United States.

The United Sates has also permitted Obregon's forces to march across American soil and has sent a squadron to the oil port of Tampico to prevent a rebel blockade there.

FROM THE PUBLISHERS

MEMORIES OF THE RUSSIAN COURT.

by Anna Viroubova. (MacMillan)

Perhaps the most remarkable statement in this book is that the British Ambassador in Petrograd, Sir George Buchanan, conspired with the Grand Dukes to overthrow the Czar Nicholas II and replace him by his cousin the Grand Duke Cyril Vladimirovitch in order to weaken Russia as a factor in the future peace conference.

The Czar said he would communicate the matter to his cousin George V. and the Empress advised him to demand the recall of Sir George Buchanan. The Czar replied that he could not at such a time make public his distrust of an Allied representative. Whether the Czar wrote to King George on the subject at all, Mme. Viroubova does not know.

She attributes the original outbreak of the revolution and the fall of the Czardom entirely to the Grand Dukes.

Mme. Viroubova insists that the Czar was not a weak man, but again and again she shows that he was extremely weak and extremely superstitious.

She gives a striking instance: in November, 1916, Grand Duke Nicholai Michailovitch brought a letter to the Czarina charging her specifically with mischievous political machinations and saying: "unless this is stopped murder will certainly begin. This letter the Grand Duke had laid on the Czar's desk. The Czar transmitted it to his wife, who was overcome with indignation and grief. All the staff knew the contents of the letter and expected the Grand Duke to be ignominously ejected from the Czar's room. On the contrary the Czar remained quite friendly with the Grand Duke, who stayed to lunch with him. Mme. Viroubova cannot understand why the Czar allowed the insult to his wife to pass off in this way. She concludes that the Emperor was so much engrossed in the war that he thought "the plotter's gossip" harmless.

Again she tells that a certain General Alexieff dismissed a faithful old General Ivanoff falsely telling him that his dismissal was due to the Empress and her accomplices Rasputin and Mme. Viroubova. General Ivanoff told Mme. Viroubova the story, and she, in turn, told the Czar, but without result.

> "The Emperor's wrath against Alexieff was indeed kindled but he evidently felt that he could not at that critical hour, dismiss an officer whose services were so urgently demanded. Afterwards, however, his manner to old General Ivanoff became conspicuously kind."

On another occasion, in dismissing a Minister, the Czar expressed regret saying: "They demand it; I cannot refuse them at such a time as this." He referred to the Grand Dukes.

When Rasputin whom the Czar regarded as a saint, was murdered, the Czar was supplied with complete evidence that it was the work of the Grand Dukes, but he made no move to punish them, save to order two of them stay on their own estates for a time.

Mme. Viroubova is at pains to defend Rasputin from all the charges levelled against him, but quite incidentally, she observes that the saint, as she regards him, had an unfortunate weakness for strong drink. She subjoins, by way of appendix to her book, a statement of Judge Roudneff, appointed by Kerensky to investigate the associates of the Russian Imperial family. This report contains decidedly unsaintly evidence against Rasputin, though it exonerates Mme. Viroubova herself of all the charges made against her.

The Roudneff report shows that Rasputin obtained considerable sums of money from those who approached him to secure them government posts, railway concessions and so on.

Mme. Viroubova testifies that both the Czar and Czarina believed Rasputin to possess the power of prophecy and to be in direct contact with God for the special benefit of Russia and its Royal House.

The Roudneff report shows that the court officials being aware of this belief on the part of their rulers thought it desirable to give effect to the recommendations of Rasputin in order to retain the favour of royalty for themselves.

Apart from any appointments which may have been made under the influence of Rasputin purely for the enrichment of his purse, Mme. Viroubova unconsciously reveals the evill of the system which permitted one individual to appoint and depose at will all the high officials of an immense country with a population of over two hundred millions. The Czar would meet someone at lunch or dinner, and immediately decide that he would make, for instance, an ideal Minister of the Interior. The thing would be no sooner said than done.

A few weeks of confinement in the underriver cells of the fortress of Saints Peter and Paul, were naturally very terrible to Mme. Viroubova. She was greatly indignant that such hideous punishment should be meted out by the revolutionary governments of course, but she forgot that those hideous cells were created and maintained by generations of that old regime she so dearly loves and so passionately desires to recall.

The picture which Anna Viroubova gives of the Czarina to whom she is devoted, is of a credulous and superstitious woman with exceedingly limited intelligence and education. The Czarina, if one may judge from her letters, which are filled with trivialities, apparently read only devotional books and novels. She spent her time largely in sewing, knitting, and painting post cards. With the aid of a number of tutors she gave lessons to her children, mainly, it seems, in religion and sewing.

Mme. Viroubova's book has apparently been written in the United States. She observes that she was assisted by an American Journalist. That would make for exaggerations.

Her account of Gorky and his statement to her that the Czar was not even an aristocrat but a bourgeois caring for his wife and family is one of those foolish pieces of bourgeois sentimentality which ignore facts.

THE OIL TRUSTS AND ANGLO-AMERICAN RELATIONS. Davenport and Russell Cooke. (Macmillan, 7s. 6d.)

IRISH NATIONAL TRADITION. By Mrs. Stopford Green. (Macmillan.)

PANZERZUG Nr. 14-69. By Wssewolod Jwanow. Translated from Russian into German by Eduard Schiemann. 2/-. A very vivid story of an episode in the Russian Revolution, when an armoured train was taken by the peasants. The scene is laid in Siberia.

FARBIGE WINDE. By Wssewolod Jwanow. Translated from the Russian into German by Eduard Schiemann. 2/-. Karl Hoym Nachf., Hamburg.

THE AWAKENING OF A MOTHER.

By Maxim Gorky.

Life in the little house of the Vlasovs flowed on monotonously, but more calmly and undisturbed than before, and somewhat different from everywhere else in the suburb.

The house stood at the edge of the village, by a low but steep and muddy declivity. A third of the house was occupied by the kitchen and a small room used for the mother's bedroom, separated from the kitchen by a partition reaching partially to the ceiling. The other two-thirds formed a square room with two windows. In one corner stood Pavel's bed, in front a table and two benches. Some chairs, a washstand with a small looking-glass over it, a trunk with clothes, a clock on the wall, and two icons—this was the entire outfit of the household.

Pavel tried to live like the rest. He did all a young lad should do—bought himself an accordian, a shirt with a starched front, a loud-coloured necktie, overshoes, and a cane, and externally became like all the other youths of his age. He went to evening parties and learned to dance a quadrille and a polka. On holidays he came home drunk, and always suffered greatly from the effects of liquor. In the morning his head ached, he was tormented by heartburn, his face was pale and dull.

Once his mother asked him:

"Well, did you have a good time yesterday?"

He answered dismally and with irritation:

"Oh, dreary as a graveyard! Everybody is like a machine. I'd better go fishing or buy myself a gun."

He worked faithfully, without intermission and without incurring fines. He was taciturn, and his eyes, blue and large like his mother's, looked out discontentedly. He did not buy a gun, nor did he go a-fishing; but he gradually began to avoid the beaten path trodden by all. His attendance at parties became less and less frequent, and although he went out somewhere on holidays, he always returned home sober. His mother watched him unobtrusively but closely, and saw the tawny face of her son grow keener and keener, and his eyes more serious. She noticed that his lips were compressed in a peculiar manner, imparting an odd expression of austerity to his face. It seemed as if he were always angry at something, or as if a canker gnawed at him. At first his friends came to visit him, but never finding him at home, they remained away.

The mother was glad to see her son turning out different from all the other factory youths; but a feeling of anxiety and apprehension stirred in her heart when she observed that he was obstinately and resolutely directing his life into obscure paths leading away from the routine existence about him—that he turned in his career neither to the right nor to the left.

He began to bring home books with him. At first he tried to escape attention when reading them; and after he had finished a book, he hid it. Sometimes he copied a passage on a piece of paper, and hid that also.

"Aren't you well, Pavlusha?" the mother asked once.

"Yes, I'm all right," he answered.

"You are so thin," said the mother with a sigh.

He was silent.

They spoke infrequently, and saw each other very little. In the morning he drank tea in silence, and went off to work; at noon he came home for dinner, a few insignificant remarks were passed at the table, and he again disappeared until the evening. And in the evening, the day's work ended, he washed himself, took supper, and then fell to his books, and read for a long time. On holidays he left home in the morning and returned late at night. She knew he went to the city and the theatre; but nobody from the city ever came to visit him. It seemed to her that with the lapse of time her son spoke less and less; and at the same time she noticed that occasionally and with increasing frequency he used new words unintelligible to her, and that the coarse, rude, and hard expressions dropped from his speech. In his general conduct, also, certain traits appeared, forcing themselves upon his mother's attention. He ceased to affect the dandy, but became more attentive to the cleanliness of his body and dress, and moved more freely and alertly. The increasing softness and simplicity of his manner aroused a disquieting interest in his mother. . . .

Once, when after supper Pavel drew the curtain over the window, sat in a corner, and began to read, his tin lamp hanging on the wall over his head, the mother, after removing the dishes, came out from the kitchen and carefully walked up to him. He raised his head, and without speaking looked at her with a questioning expression.

"Nothing, Pasha!" she said hastily, and walked away, moving her eyebrows agitatedly. But after standing in the kitchen for a moment, motionless, thoughtful, deeply preoccupied, she washed her hands and approached her son again.

"I want to ask you," she said in a low, soft voice, "what you read all the time."

He put his book aside and said to her:

"Sit down, mother,"

The mother sat down heavily at his side, and straightening herself in an attitude of intense, painful expectation, waited for something momentous.

Without looking at her, Pavel spoke, not loudly, but for some reason very sternly:

"I am reading forbidden books. They are forbidden to be read because they tell the truth about our—about the working men's life. They are printed in secrecy, and if I am found with them I will be put in prison—I will be put in prison because I want to know the truth."

Breathing suddenly became difficult for her. Opening her eyes wide she looked at her son, and he seemed new to her, as if almost a stranger. His voice was different, lower, deeper, more sonorous. He pinched his thin, downy moustache, and looked oddly aslant into the corner. She grew anxious for her son and pitied him.

"Why do you do this, Pasha?"

He raised his head, looked at her, and said in a low, calm voice:

"I want to know the truth."

His voice sounded placid, but firm; and his eyes flashed resolution. She understood with her heart that her son had consecrated himself for ever to something mysterious and awful. Everything in life had always appeared to her inevitable; she was accustomed to submit without thought, and now, too, she only wept softly, finding no words, but in her heart she was oppressed with sorrow and distress.

"Don't cry," said Pavel kindly and softly; and it seemed to her that he was bidding her farewell.

"Think what kind of life you are leading. You are forty years old, and have you lived? Father beat you. I understand now that he avenged his wretchedness on your body, the wretchedness of his life. It pressed upon him, and he did not know whence it came. He worked for thirty years; he began to work when the whole factory occupied but two buildings; and now there are seven of them. The mills grow, and people die, working for them."

She listened to him eagerly and awestruck. His eyes burned with a beautiful radiance. Leaning forward on the table he moved nearer to his mother, and looking straight into her face, wet with tears, he delivered his first speech to her about the truth which he had now come to understand. With the *naïveté* of youth, and the ardour of a young student proud of his knowledge, religiously confiding in its truth, he spoke about everything that was clear to him, and spoke not so much for his mother as to verify and strengthen his own opinions. At times he halted, finding no words, and then he saw before him a disturbed face, in which dimly shone a pair of kind eyes clouded with tears. They looked on with awe and perplexity. He was sorry for his mother, and began to speak again, about herself and her life.

"What joys did you know?" he asked. "What sort of a past can you recall?"

She listened and shook her head dolefully, feeling something new, unknown to her, both sorrowful and gladsome, like a caress to her troubled and aching heart. It was the first time she had heard such language about herself, her own life. It awakened in her misty, dim thoughts, long dormant; gently roused an almost extinct feeling of rebellion, perplexed dissatisfaction—thoughts and feelings of a remote youth. She often discussed life with her neighbours, spoke a great deal about everything; but all, herself included, only complained; no one explained why life was so hard and burdensome.

And now her son sat before her; and what he said about her—his eyes, his face, his words —it all clutched at her heart, filling her with a sense of pride for her son, who truly understood the life of his mother, and spoke the truth about her and her sufferings, and pitied her.

Mothers are not pitied. She knew it. She did not understand Pavel when speaking about matters not pertaining to herself, but all he said about her own woman's existence was bitterly familiar and true. Hence it seemed to her that every word of his was perfectly true, and her bosom throbbed with a gentle sensation which warmed it more and more with an unknown, kindly caress.

"What do you want to do, then?" she asked, interrupting his speech.

"Study and then teach others. We working men must study. We must learn, we must understand why life is so hard for us."

It was sweet to her to see that his blue eyes, always so serious and stern, now glowed with warmth, softly illuminating something new within him. A soft contented smile played around her lips, although the tears still trembled in the wrinkles of her face. She wavered between two feelings; pride in her son, who desired the good of all people, had pity for all, and understood the sorrow and affliction of life; and the involuntary regret for his youth, because he did not speak like everybody else, because he resolved to enter alone into a fight against the life to which all, including herself, were accustomed.

She wanted to say to him: "My dear, what can you do? People will crush you. You will perish."

But it was pleasant to her to listen to his speeches, and she feared to disturb her delight

in her son, who suddenly revealed himself so new and wise, even if somewhat strange.

Pavel saw the smile around his mother's lips, the attention in her face, the love in her eyes; and it seemed to him that he compelled her to understand his truth; and youthful pride in the power of his word heightened his faith in himself. Seized with enthusiasm, he continued to talk, now smiling, now frowning. Occasionally hatred sounded in his words; and when his mother heard its bitter, harsh accents she shook her head, frightened, and asked in a low voice:

"Is it so, Pasha?"

"It is so!" he answered firmly. And he told her about the people who wanted the good of men, and who sowed truth among them; and because of this the enemies of life hunted them down like beasts, thrust them into prisons, and exiled them, and set them to hard labour.

"I have seen such people!" he exclaimed passionately. "They are the best people on earth!"

These people filled the mother with terror, and she wanted to ask her son: "Is it so, Pasha?"

But she hesitated, and leaning back, listened to the stories of people incomprehensible to her, who taught her son to speak and think words and thoughts so dangerous to him. Finally she said:

"It will soon be daylight. You ought to go to bed. You've got to go to work."

"Yes, I'll go to bed at once," he assented. "Did you understand me?"

"I did," she said, drawing a deep breath. Tears rolled down from her eyes again, and breaking into sobs she added: "You will perish, my son!"

Pavel walked up and down the room.

"Well, now you know what I am doing and where I am going. I told you all. I beg of you, mother, if you love me, do not hinder me!"

"My darling, my beloved!" she cried, "maybe it would have been better for me not to have known anything!"

He took her hand and pressed it firmly in his. The word "mother," pronounced by him with feverish emphasis, and that clasp of the hand so new and strange, moved her.

Extract from "Comrades."

THE LABOUR LEAGUE OF INDIA.

The Labour League of India has been established in India with a view to bring together all trade unions and Labour Associations in that country and to uplift the conditions of all classes of Labour as also to see that Labour is not used by interested people for their own ends or creeds. It has already succeeded in bringing together a large number of Unions and is taking up topics that affect Labour in the East. Mr. H. W. B. Moreno is the present President of the League and Mr. K. C. Roy Chowdbury, India's Labour delegate to this year's International Labour Conference, is a Vice-President. Mr. B. Biswas is Secretary of the League at 13, Wellesley Street, Calcutta.

Laborista Esperanto Klubo.

Public meeting will be held in England at 144, High Holborn, Top Floor, on "Esperanto and Labour." Questions and Discussion. 7.30, Saturday, February 2nd.

Refreshments provided. All welcome.

COMMUNIST WORKERS MOVEMENT.

(Anti-Parliamentary.)

For particulars of membership apply Secretary, 152, Fleet Street, London, E.C.

Wanted, copies of "Workers' Dreadnought" for July 12th, 1919.

A LITERATURE PITCH.

Comrade Mrs. Ironside is organising a literature selling pitch in Oxford Street. Comrades willing to assist are asked to communicate with the "Dreadnought" office in order that we may forward their names to her.

SPICE.

DEMOCRATIC ? THINKING.

The Liberal "Manchester Guardian" looks favourably upon the Ministry of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald. It observes that he has "an obvious need for quiet" and fears that the "noisy and quarrelsome Mr. Bromley" may distract his attention.

The existence of some thousands of workmen who make up the membership of the A.S.L.E. and F. is apparently unknown to the Liberal organ.

* * *

The prophet who is without honour in his own constituency.

The Derby Loco Section of the N.U.R. is most militant in denouncing the policy of Mr. J. H. Thomas, in joining the locomotivemen on strike, and in demanding a special meeting of the N.E.C. of the N.U.R. to reconsider the strike.

* * *

"Manchester Guardian" and "Workers' Dreadnought."

The "Manchester Guardian" says: "The 'Morning Post' is quite unlikely to become a public danger. Its politics, like those of the 'Workers' Dreadnought' and the 'Communist' are so extreme."

The vague and woolly-headed Liberal organ intends its two-edged shaft to wound both ourselves and the Tory organ, which by the way, is the favourite newspaper of Mrs. Philip Snowden. The "Manchester Guardian" is evidently unaware that the "Communist" is extinct.

* * *

The "Manchester Guardian" leader concludes by observing that the "Morning Post" is "so useful a pointer—again like the "Workers' Dreadnought" &c. to what some ungoverned fanatics are thinking."

We make our bow to the "Manchester Guardian". To those who wait on the fence till causes becomes popular, their pioneers will always be regarded as "ungoverned fanatics" and to the centrist in social thought the advance guard is as hateful as the reactionary.

DREADNOUGHT £1,000 FUND.

Brought forward, £182 17s. 11½d.; F. Brimley, £1 11s. (monthly); N. Rosenbloom, 2s. 6d.; A. Golub, 2s.; S. N. Ghose, 8s. 6d.; G. Bairstow, 5s. Total for week, £2 9s. Total, £185 6s. 11½d.

CLERIAL WORK.

Volunteers are needed for Clerical and Organising work. Comrades should write to the "Dreadnought" office.

Germinal Circle. Fifth evening, Wednesday, February 20th, 7-11 p.m., Rehearsal Theatre, 3, Bedford Street, Strand. Admission Free. Silver Collection.

COMMUNIST WORKERS' MOVEMENT.

Sunday, February 2nd, 3 p.m., Hyde Park. Sylvia Pankhurst, N. Smyth.

Sunday, February 3rd, 7 p.m., New Morris Hall, 79, Bedford Road, Clapham. Sylvia Pankhurst, N. Smyth.

Read EIRE The Irish Nation

Weekly Review of Irish Republican Opinion

PRICE TWOPENCE

On Sale Saturdays

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION

A blue mark in this space indicates that your subscription is now due.

The high cost of production of the paper necessitates prompt payment.

WANTED, a copy of "Theatre Craft" (No. 8).

(Continued from p. 3.)

prove their material and legal position by strikes and entrance into Parliaments is irrevocably past. The fight now is a fight about power. We must drive home by our propaganda that, though we have called for strikes in various cases, these cannot really improve the workers' conditions.

But, you, workers, have not overcome the old reformist illusions yet and are carrying on a fight which only and chiefly exhausts yourselves.

We, the party, which desires the conquest of power by the workers themselves, will follow you but always and always remember that it will not free you from the slavery of oppression and hopeless want. The only way to happiness is the conquest of power by your rough hands.

(to be continued.)

TOM MOONEY.

Another effort is being made to secure the release of Tom Mooney, wrongfully convicted on purjured evidence of a bomb outrage which occured on July 22nd, 1916. Mooney was sentenced to death. His innocence being proved conclusively the U.S. authorities refrained from hanging him, but have held him in prison ever since. A photograph of Tom Mooney and his wife watching the preparedness procession from the roof of their home was seized by the prosecution and kept locked up in the prosecuting lawyer's safe till after the conviction. When the negative was afterwards developed by an impartial expert it showed the hands of a public clock pointing to one minute past two, the very moment at which Mooney was alleged to have committed the bomb outrage a mile and a quarter away. The man who took the photograph did not know Mooney. He refused to give his photographs to the defence and said he had destroyed the prints he had taken from the negatives held by the prosecution. The negative was only obtained from the prosecution for the expert to examine after a written order from the court.

The witnesses for the prosecution who testified to the bomb being placed on the pavement in a suitcase by Mooney include a drug fiend and a prostitute. The drug fiend contradicted himself on the three occasions he testified in court. The prostitute has made a sworn statement that she was bribed to give false evidence. Mrs. Sadie Edeau, another prosecution witness offered to give evidence about "old men" with a suitcase and when first shown Mooney and Billings, who were in prison charged with placing the suitcase, said she could not identify them. She did so however, in the witness box.

Dr. Moss and three reputable women witnesses, one of whom was wounded by it, saw the bomb thrown from the roof of a building.

The most damaging evidence against Mooney was given by a witness called Oxman. A Federal Commission, appointed by President Wilson, inquired into the Mooney case. This Commission reported that Oxman attempted to procure perjured evidence to corroborate his own testimony. The proof was contained in letters confessedly written by Oxman.

Most of the other U.S. political and industrial prisoners now having been released, a big effort is now being made for Tom Mooney.

Comrades in the United States believe that a Trade Union Government in Great Britain will assist them by endeavouring to influence the U.S. Government in this direction.

Resolutions for Mooney's release should be sent to Governor Richardson, Executive Mansions, Sacramento, Calefornia.

THE "ONE BIG UNION BULLETIN"

The One Big Union seeks to organise the workers on class lines. Read about it.

10/- per year; 5/- six months.

Plebs Buildings, 54 Adelaide Street, Winnipeg, Canada.

Published by E. Sylvia Pankhurst, at 152, Fleet Street, London, E.C. 4, and printed by the Agenda Press, Ltd. (T.U.), at 10, Wine Office Court, London, E.C. 4.