ONE PENNY

Workers' Dreadnought

FOR GOING TO THE ROOT.

Vol. X. No. 50. March 1st, 1924. WEEKLY.

THE ROMANCE OF THE FUTURE.

By Sylvia Pankhurst.

Mr. Arnold Lupton insists that his "Happy India"* is not a political book. We are glad of that, for if it were, we do not think it would be so wise as it is, nor would it open up those suggestive vistas of thought which are so rich and which stimulate great hope and enthusiasm in its readers.

The rich vast country is described and the present hideous poverty is vividly presented. Not less than fifty million Indians "never eat from beginning to end of the year one good and sufficient meal." They have only one meal a day and that meal is insufficient. The feast held at the marriage of a son or daughter is paid for with borrowed money and the father remains in debt for it to the end of his life.

When the rains fail and famines result the people are destitute. They cannot save even after many years of good harvest anything to maintain them when the harvest is bad. Even the greatest famines are only local, but the deathrate from famine is great in one part of India whilst the crops are good in another.

The Indian cultivator of the soil lives in a mud hut without doors or windows. Its roof is of sticks and palm leaves. His bedstead, if he has one, is of twisted sticks. His one garment is a cloth round the loins and he has nothing to wear whilst he is washing it. The average income of the Indian working classes is one halfpenny a day per man, woman and child.

THE IMPOVERISHMENT OF THE SOIL.

The Indian wheat crop is on the average, only one-fifth per acre of the British wheat crop. This is mainly because the Indian soil is impoverished. The poverty-stricken people burn the dung of their cattle for fuel and smear it on the walls of their huts. The dung is even sent to the towns for use as fuel. It is needed to manure the soil. The soil grows poor for lack of it.

When a visitor protests, as Mr. Lupton did, government officials reply: "Oh! it cannot be helped, there is no other fuel that these people can afford to buy; there is no wood, they cannot afford to pay for coal, and, therefore, they must use this manure for the purposes of fuel."

Yet India is rich in forests, in coal, in petroleum. The forests, however, are far away from many districts and a great part of the country has been deforested, much to its detriment. The result is an increasing dryness of climate leading to famine and other evils.

*George Allan and Unwin 6/- or from the Dreadnought Office.

From the loss of the trees it has resulted that the mountain torrents rush down with unchecked velocity, and so have worn away the river beds. When there are forests on the mountains the water is held up and let down more gradually. As a result of the destruction of forests the bed of the river Jumna has been lowered 50 feet. Some rivers have been lowered more than 100 feet below the surrounding ground, and the water is too far down to be raised by oxen-driven pumps. Electric power could raise the water, but is not yet supplied. The Indian forests could supply 100,000,000 tons of fuel each year without damaging them, or reducing the production of timber suitable for building and wood work.

The forests are mainly situated in the mountains, and there is a lack of roads and railways to bring the wood to the people.

If the soil were properly manured, Mr. Lupton contends that the yield of the soil could easily be increased by 50 or 100 per cent.

The value of the present crops amounts to £1,000,000,000. If the value were raised by only 20 per cent., Mr. Lupton contends that the cost of 20,000 miles of railway would be thereby repaid twice in one year. The cost of carrying 40,000,000 tons of coal would be £10,000,000. The Indian mines could easily supply an increase of 20,000,000 tons a year in five years' time, and the coal could be carried an average journey of 300 miles for 10s. per ton. Allowing for a price of 10s. at the pit mouth and 5s. for other charges, the coal could be sold to the cultivator at 25s. per ton.

Mr. Lupton points out that the Afghan War of 44 years ago cost £100,000,000, and that the recent preparations for a recent war that did not materialise were very costly; also that much money is spent on the Indian Army and Government.

He urges that the Government should spend £1,000,000 in one year on afforestation, £1,000,000 on roads and railways, £1,000,000 on artificial manure, supplying the fuel and manure free on condition that the cultivators would put the dung of their animals on the soil and pay to the Government half the profit from the increased crops. He contends that the Government would reap an immediate profit from which it could carry out in a few years all such work that India requires. He points out that certain trees planted in India would in two years provide for the cultivators more fuel than the dung they burn.

The Voluntary Plan.

This argument recalls to us an account which appeared in the *Daily News* a week or two ago, of the "Forest Destroyers" of Africa who had been converted by intelligent advice from the habit of destroying their forests to be careful planters and foresters, and who are performing a great work of reconstruction without the intervention of the capitalist and the tribute he exacts. We recall, too, the building of the Jersey Granary carried out on a voluntary basis, without the medium of money or capitalists and the old practice of "calling in of aids" in parts of Switzerland and France for road-making, harvesting and so on.

If the people were enlisted in the great work of restoring and developing their country for their own benefit, it would be their pleasure to spend their spare hours in tree planting, road-making and other necessary work.

The non-co-operation movement has done so much in the homespun movement as a political and practical expedient for throwing off the grip of the foreign exploiter that we may look for it to expand in this most essential direction indicated by Mr. Lupton. Mr. Lupton points out that the modern innovations introduced by the British occupation have greatly increased the evil plight of the people.

The building of railways and other works by the British accelerated the cutting down of the trees, which help to make climate temperate and to moisten and enrich the soil. The building of high embankments to prevent river flooding in order to protect the railways also deprived the soil of a valuable annual means of enrichment.

To-day and Two Hundred Years Ago.

Two hundred years ago Mr. Lupton believes the crops were larger per acre and much larger per man than to-day. Moreover, the Mongol conquerors recognised no landlords, the cultivators of the soil had no rent to pay, only the taxes of their rulers, which were lighter than at present.

Indeed, we must recognise that the lot of peoples cultivating the soil under primitive conditions is infinitely harder than was the lot of Western peoples when they also lead a primitive life, because the extortions of Governments, even of Eastern princes, are more extravagant than they were in past times. Western rulers, because of the greater wealth which can be produced under modern conditions of production, have increased their exactions and largely set the pace even for native rulers. The upkeep of Governments and armies to-day is vastly more costly than it ever was before in the history of the world. The Indian landowner pays no income-tax on the revenue he draws from his land. He is under no obligation to keep it in good condition. The British Government prefers to tax the salt of the poor rather than the land of the rich.

Diseases.

Mr. Lupton goes on to show that the deforestation and consequent drying up of the soil has led to many diseases. When water is lacking people leave their homes and encamp on the river beds; human excreta befouls the rivers; cholera results.

Plague comes of the poverty of the people. It can only be stamped out by feeding them better and burning down their old disease-ridden huts and erecting other dwellings.

One hears of the English being obliged to return from India's evil climate to recover health in England periodically. The fact is, that the well-fed English officials endure the climate far better than the starved Indian masses, who die off like flies from disease. In 1918 the death-rate in India was 62 per 1,000, that in England 17 per 1,000.

As to small-pox. India is the most vaccinated country in the world, yet the death-rate from small-pox runs up to 743,000 in a year.

Malaria is a terrible scourge in India. The infection is conveyed by mosquitoes. The way to stamp it out is to remove the pools and the swamps in which the mosquitoes breed. This has been done in Suez, where there was a deadly form of malaria. It would be a gigantic work in India, but eventually it must be done.

Blundering Irrigation.

Great has been the neglect by the Government of the soil of its Indian dependency, and when it has taken to some measure of irrigation it has often blundered. The irrigation canals of the Ganges have been anything but watertight, and have raised the subsoil water to within 3 feet of the surface. By capillary attraction through the heat of the sun, the water has been drawn to the surface and evaporated, leaving mineral deposits on the surface which have left it incapable of growing proper crops.

Such defective irrigation also makes the ground swampy, and produces, not food, but mosquitoes, and, with them, malaria. This is notably the case in the neighbourhood of Amritsa, in the Punjab, a city notorious for other instances of misgovernment. Here the subsoil water level, once 60 feet below the surface, is now but two or three feet below, and when, in view of the desperate swampiness, pumping was attempted, it was found that quicksands clogged the pumps.

The Saving Electric Power.

Major John Ashford invented, however, a pump which overcame this difficulty. It was, moreover, arranged to dam the canals at convenient points, and to step them down from four to nine feet. Some hydro-electric stations have been erected at these dams to take the power of the falling water, which serves to work the pumps by electric motors. The water pumped up is sold for irrigation, and brings in more than the cost of pumping, whilst power gained from the hydro-electric stations is conveyed on overhead wires to work other pumps or for other purposes.

Ten years after this plan had been put into operation there were only fifteen little wells, though thousands were required.

Making Manures from the Air.

Mr. Lupton goes on to point that such hydro-electric stations could be used for extracting nitrogen from the air to make nitrolene, or with sulphuric acid, sulphate of ammonia, or other compound of nitrogen which could be used for the manure India so much needs, and obviate buying it from abroad.

The Aid of the Mountains.

The mountains, with all their wealth of timber and minerals, can yield to man armed with scientific knowledge a still mightier power. Unlimited electric power may be derived from the mountain rain and snowfall. Professor Shiv Narayan is quoted showing that 1,000,000,000 kilowats, or 1,300,000,000 horse power in potential energy, is there.

Already the hydro-electric plant of India is extensive. The Mysore gold mines are worked by it. The Canvery Falls provide 22,650 electrical horse power. 60,000 horse power is now used in the Bombay mills from the fall of water from the Western Ghats. The great Indian company of Tata has built on the Western Ghats artificial reservoirs where the rainfall is 100 to 250 inches a year, and falls during three months. The rain stored in the reservoirs is afterwards allowed to fall 1,725 feet. The power of the waterfall is used for electricity, and the water is afterwards sold for irrigation. The Tata company has in progress or contemplation works to produce 915,000 electric horse power from the waters of the Western Ghats.

Mr. Lupton urges that the Government should do the same on the eastern side of the Western Ghats, on the Eastern Ghats, in the Himalayas and elsewhere.

The uses to which the electric power could be put for the popular good are limitless. Electric fans in the houses would mitigate the great heat. Motor-cars, aeroplanes, electrically run trains would provide transport. Electric power would light and heat the houses and drive the industrial plant. Electric wires stretched across the fields have been shown to increase the crops.

Scarcity.

At the present time Mr. Lupton estimates that the food produced in India, apart from export, is just sufficient to keep alive the human population. There are, however, as many animals as people, and since the animals eat more grain and their pastures are often dried up so that they must be artificially fed, it is inevitable that many people and animals must starve.

Storage.

When a surplus is produced to meet the years of famine, storage will become a great problem. Mr. Lupton points out that an experiment which promises success has been tried. Ten per cent. of the corn is crushed and mixed with the whole grain, which is then heated to 160 degrees Fahr. The mixture is then put under a hydraulic press and converted into solid lumps weighing 1 cwt. These lumps are too hard for mice and rats to bite, and weevils and their eggs are killed by the heat.

How much better would it be for the richer youths of India to qualify themselves to assist in such work than become lawyers, as so many of them do!

What a noble ambition would it be thus to assist in the developing of India, not for their own private gain, but in the interests of the whole people.

Can this age produce no heroes who will embrace personal poverty and hard toil in such a quest?

Turning to England.

It is not alone in the far countries of the East that the future beckons with romantic allurement. Everywhere science reveals new riches in spite of the cold shouldering of vested interests and the straitened circumstances of most of her votaries.

J. B. S. Haldane, in a slender little volume, *"Daedalus, or Science and the Future," reveals a new world to us here within our own shores.

*Kegan Paul, 2s. 6d.

The Energy of the Winds.

He says:—

"Personally, I think that four hundred years hence the power question in England may be solved somewhat as follows:

"The country will be covered with rows of metallic windmills working electric motors, which, in their turn, supply current at a very high voltage to great electric mains. At suitable distances there will be great power stations, where, during windy weather, the surplus power will be used for the electrolytic decomposition of water into oxygen and hydrogen.

"These gases will be liquefied and stored in vats, vacuum jacketed reservoirs, probably sunk in the ground. If these reservoirs are sufficiently large, the loss of liquid due to leakage inwards of heat will not be great; thus the proportion evaporating daily from a reservoir 100 yards square by 60 feet deep would not be 1/1,000 of that lost from a tank measuring two feet each way.

"In times of calm, the gases will be recombined in explosion motors working dynamos which produce electrical energy once more, or more probably in oxidation cells.

"Liquid hydrogen is weight for weight the most efficient known method of storing energy, as it gives about three times as much heat per pound as petrol. This will not, however, detract from its use in aeroplanes, where weight is more important than bulk.

"These huge reservoirs of liquified gases will enable wind energy to be stored, so that it can be expended for industry, transportation, heating, and lighting as desired.

"The initial costs will be very considerable, but the running expenses less than those of our present system.

"Among its most obvious advantages will be the fact that *energy will be as cheap in one part of the country as another,* so that *industry will be greatly decentralised;* and that *no smoke or ash will be produced.* . . .

"Even now perhaps Italy might achieve economic independence by the expenditure of a few million pounds upon research on the lines indicated."

The End of War.

"Even now perhaps Italy might achieve economic independence by the expenditure of a few million pounds." The words are pregnant. Italy on the verge of a Soviet revolution recoiled, because her leaders called a halt on the ground that Italy is economically dependent upon the stronger capitalist powers.

More than this, if the power which is contended for in coalfields, oil wells, and so on, can be procured at home by all countries, a great cause of war will cease.

Aluminium.

As to metallurgy, Professor Haldane says:

"Perhaps the biggest problems . . . in metallurgy are the utilisation of low-grade iron ores, and the production of aluminium from clay, which contains up to 24 per cent. of that metal . . . it and its alloys will certainly take the second, and possibly the first place as industrial metals."

The End of Cities.
The End of the Dunghill and the Slaughter-House.

Sings this adventurous scientist:

"There's many a strong farmer whose heart would break in two
If he could see the townland that we are riding to.
Boughs have their fruit and blossom at all times of the year,
Rivers are running over with red beer and brown beer.
An old man plays the bagpipes in a golden and silver wood,
Queens, their eyes blue like the ice, are dancing in a wood."

As shown already, he predicts that since "energy will be as cheap in one part of the country as another, industry will be greatly decentralised," and the pollution of smoke will disappear. The great hideous city of to-day will, therefore, eventually disappear. Moreover, he believes that beauty in their surroundings will be found to increase the efficiency of the workers.

Synthetic Foods.

He further predicts:—

"Synthetic food will substitute the flower garden and the factory for the dunghill and the slaughter-house, and make the city at last self-sufficient."

He explains:

". . . Chemistry will be applied to the production of a still more important group of physiologically active substances, namely, foods. The facts about food are rather curious. Everyone knows that food is ultimately produced by plants, though we may get it at second or third hand if we eat animals or their products. But the average plant turns most of its sugar, not into starch, which is digestible, but into cellulose, which is not, but forms its wood skeleton. The hoofed animals have dealt with this problem in their own way, by turning their bellies into vast hives of bacteria, that attack cellulose, and on whose by-products they live. We have got to do the same, but outside our bodies. It may be done on chemical lines. Irving has obtained 95 per cent. yield of sugar from cellulose, but at a prohibitive cost. Or we may use micro-organisms, but in any case within the next century sugar and starch will be about as cheap as sawdust. Many of our foodstuffs, including the proteins, we shall probably build up from similar sources such as coal and atmospheric nitrogen. I should be inclined to allow 120 years, but not much more, before a completely satisfactory diet can be produced in this way on a commercial scale.

"This will mean that agriculture will become a luxury, and that mankind will be completely urbanised."

Some further adventurous, though by no means improbable predictions, Professor Haldane couches in the form of an essay supposed to be read by a rather stupid Cambridge undergraduate to his supervisor during his first term 150 years hence:—

"It was not until 1940 the Selkosis invented the purple alga *Porphyrococcus fixator* which was to have so great an effect on the world's history.

". . . *Porphyrococcus* is an enormously efficient nitrogen fixer, and will grow in almost any climate where there are water and traces of phosphates and potash in the soil, obtaining its nitrogen from the air. It has about the effect in four days that a crop of vetches would have had in a year. It could not, of course, have been produced in the ordinary course of nature, as its immediate ancestors would only grow in artificial media and could not have survived outside a laboratory. Wherever nitrogen was the principal limiting factor to plant growth it doubled the yield of wheat, and quadrupled the value of grass land for grazing purposes. *The enormous fall in food prices and the ruin of purely agricultural States* was, of course, one of the chief causes of the disastrous events of 1943-44. The food glut was also greatly accentuated when in 1924 the strain of *Porphyrococcus* escaped into the sea and multiplied with enormous rapidity. Indeed, for two months the surface of the tropical Atlantic set to a jelly, with disastrous results to the weather of Europe. When certain of the plankton organisms developed ferments capable of digesting it, the increase of the fish population of the seas was so great as to make fish the universal food that it is now."

That last prediction simply means that science will take to cultivating the fish and the fish foods in an extensive fashion ere long.

Plenty for All.

Professor Haldane is naturally aware that under the private property system greatly increased food production means ruin for the food producer. When production is for use, not for sale, the production of abundance will mean plenty for all.

The student goes on to tell that in 1957 a lichen was produced which bound the drifting sands of the world's deserts.

All this should make the dullest pause to ask whether, with limitless possibilities of wealth opening before it, humanity will continue to tolerate want and poverty in its midst.

Regarding the vast army of unemployed which the present rate of production of social necessaries has produced, even the most contented cannot fail to ask how vast indeed will be the unemployed army of the future unless society will abandon the private property and production for profit system.

Communism is the only remedy.

Next week we shall discuss Professor Haldane's views on the reproduction of the race, and state our own views.

THE FREELANDS.
H. G. WELLS.

by Ivor Brown. (Nisbet 2/-)

This is a diverting, easy study of the works of an author who has done a good deal to form the opinion of his day. It is quite uncritical, but the reader can supply his own criticism. Mr. Brown gives a faithful account and provides a convenient guide to those who want to know what a particular book of Wells' is about, and who desire to observe, without reading all the works of Wells, how his thought has been evolving.

COMMUNIST WORKERS' MOVEMENT.
Meetings.

Sundays, 3 p.m., Hyde Park. N. Smyth and others.

INDOOR MEETINGS.

Sunday, March 2nd. 7.30 p.m. Hamilton Hall, 375, High Road, Willesden Green. Sylvia Pankhurst and others.

Sunday, March 9th, 7.30 p.m., S. London Socialist Club, 131, Newington Causeway, S.E. Discussion on "Communism." Opener, Sylvia Pankhurst.

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION

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

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FROM THE PUBLISHERS

OIL TRUSTS AND ANGLO-AMERICAN RELATIONS.

E. H. Davenport and Sydney Russell Cooke. (MacMillan 7/6.)

This book contains wealth of information and excellent maps. It is brightly written and should be great use to the propagandists and all who wish to master the oil question which is so fruitful in its tendencies towards war. The extracts from diplomatic conference are illuminating.

IN PETRA.

By Eric Gill and Hilary Peplar. (St. Dominic's Press 5/-.)

The paper, printing, and decorations of this book are pleasant, but the matter does not appeal to us. It is an unhappy excursion into mediævalism.

THE HISTORY OR IRELAND.

By Stephen Gwynn. (Macmillan 12/6.)

This book covers a wide field passing from the legendry period through the earliest historic period, the coming of Danes and Normans, the invasion of the Bruces, the Plantations, the Cromwellian conquest, the Battle of the Boyne and right down to the present period.

Comming to modern politics Mr. Gwynn endeavours to be impartial. He succeeds in giving a clear, rather colourless statement of facts and one feels he was probably never a strong nationalist and that he disliked the coming of Sinn Fein, and only tolerated it because of its success and that he probably is a supporter of the Treaty because it brought the war to an end. Yet he makes few comments in recording fact and his book can therefore be read without much offence by partisans.

YEA AND NAY.

(Brentano's Lt. 6/-.)

A series of amusing debates between such witty and brilliant people as Mr. H. G. Wells, Miss Rebecca West, Mr. St. John Ervine, Miss Clemence Dane, Mr. G. K. Chesterton. They are not serious, nor are they meant to be.

All books reviewed in our columns may be obtained from our Bookshop, 152, Fleet Street.

UNDER THE STARS AND STRIPES.

After Imprisonment—Deportation.

Eight British subjects who have served sentences as war opinion prisoners in the United States have at last been released.

They are now to be deported, though there is much ground for contending that such deportation is actually illegal.

U.S. comrades ask you to protest against the deportations of these comrades: Herbert Mahler (Canada), William Moran (Australia), Joseph Oats, Harry Lloyd, Bert Lorton, and Richard Brazier (England), Donald Sheridan (Scotland).

Anti-Lynching Bill.

Representative L. O. Dyer, of Missouri, has introduced into the United States House of Representatives a Bill to punish lynching. This Bill recalls the cruel lynching of Frank Little at Bute, Montana, in 1917, and of Wesley Everest, at Centralia, Washington, on December 31st, 1919. Apart from the punishments for those who take part in the lynching and the State officials who do not take proper steps to prevent it, the county in which the lynching takes place is also liable to a fine which will be used to compensate the dependents of the person lynched.

Five Years for Propaganda.

In March, Tom Connors, an official of the California Defence News Service, posted 20,000 circulars urging the repeal of the Criminal Syndicalism Law. One of these circulars chanced to reach a man named D. H. Arnold, who shortly afterwards was drawn for a panel of jurors, but not actually chosen to try the case. Because this circular by chance reached this man later drawn for the jury panel, Connors was tried for "corruptly attempting to influence a juror," and has been sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

The thing seems almost incredible, but remember it happened in California.

HOW TO FEED THEM.

By John Galsworthy.

"The usual week-end was in progress. Clara had made one of her greatest efforts. A Bulgarian had providentially written a book in which he showed, beyond doubt, that persons fed on brown bread, potatoes, and margarine, gave the most satisfactory results of all. It was a discovery of the first value as a topic for the dinner-table—seeming to solve the whole vexed problem of the labourers almost at one stroke. If they could only be got to feed themselves on this perfect programme, what a saving of the situation! On those three edibles, the Bulgarian said—and he had been well translated—a family of five could be maintained at full efficiency for a shilling per day. Why! that would leave nearly eight shillings a week, in many cases more, for rent, firing, insurance, the man's tobacco, and the children's boots. There would be no more of that terrible pinching by the mothers, to feed the husband and children properly, of which one heard so much; no more lamentable deterioration in our stock! Brown bread, potatoes, margarine—quite a great deal could be provided for seven shillings! And what was more delicious than a well baked potato with margarine of good quality? The carbo-hydrates—or was it hybo-cardrates—ah, yes! the kybohardrates would be present in really sufficient quantity! Little else was talked of all through dinner at her end of the table. Above the flowers—which Frances Freeland always insisted on arranging, and very charmingly, when she was there—over bare shoulders and white shirt fronts, those words bombed and re-bombed. Brown bread, potatoes, margarine, carbo-hydrates, calorific! They mingled with the creaming sizzle of champagne, with the soft murmur of well-bred deglutition. White bosoms heaved and eyebrows rose at them. And now and again some Bigwig versed in science murmured the word "fats." An agricultural population fed to the point of efficiency without disturbance of the existing state of things! Eureka! If only into the bargain they could be induced to bake their own brown bread and cook their potatoes well! Faces flushed, eyes brightened and teeth shone. It was the best, the most stimulating dinner ever swallowed in that room."

SPICE.

U.S.A. Secretary Denby declared that he handed a billion dollars worth of oil to Messrs. Sinclair and Dohemy, from motives of pure patriotism.

He arranged that the Government should get only 10 per cent. of the oil, and be charged for the erection of storage plants and such other improvements as Messrs. Sinclair and Dohemy might deem necessary.

The Moplars are small cultivators of the soil. Their revolt was mainly directed against the Hindoos, who are their landowners.

The economic question again.

Destitute People occupy Police Cells.

Destitute people were permitted to use Glasgow police cells as follows:—

Year.	Men.	Women.	Total.
1920	2,206	1,458	3,664
1921	12,766	2,457	15,223
1922	48,167	6,428	54,595
1923	43,654	7,944	51,598

SPICE.

What Is and What Might Be.

Major H. L. Nathan, the prospective Liberal candidate for Whitechapel and St. George's, who is a solicitor, proposes to open two legal bureaus for free advice to the poor in the constituency.

Mr. ——, the prospective —— candidate for ——, who is a butcher, proposes to open two butchers' shops for free meat to the poor in the constituency.

Mr. ——, prospective candidate for ——, who is a Poor Law Guardian in the constituency, promises generous Out Relief to all applicants so far as his voice and vote can secure it.

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. 50. Saturday, Mar. 1st, 1924

Our View.

The Testing of the Labour Government.

The Labour Government has just encountered two of those great testing questions which will prove whether, operating within the capitalist system, the Labour Government can make any real difference to the fundamental management of world and national affairs.

The two great questions on which the Government has been tested are armaments and the capitalist exploitation of native races. In both these questions the forward tendencies and aspirations which are to be found in the Labour Party went down before the might of capitalist tradition. The dock strike settlement spared the Government a clear testing on the subject of the capitalist exploitation of home populations.

The Cruisers and Destroyers.

Mr. MacDonald defended the policy of his Government, in building five new cruisers and two destroyers, on the ground that the wastage, through failure to replace old ships, that has been going on for the last few years must be made good.

That is not a consistent attitude for a Prime Minister who last year, as Leader of the Opposition, attacked the Tory Government for not having still further reduced naval expenditure.

If a Tory Government, calculating, as Mr. Amery said it was calculating, that there would not be another great war for at least ten years, could let naval construction drift up to last year, surely the Labour Government, pledged to social amelioration, to retrenchment, to pensions, and the reduction of armaments, could also have let the matter drift one year longer.

The mothers' pensions, Mr. Snowden's dictum appeared, the other night, to postpone could be provided from naval retrenchment. The money to be spent on these cruisers and destroyers would go far to improve the schools.

We are not persuaded that this naval building is merely replacement. The Admiralty has doubtless represented it so to the Labour Ministers, but we are not convinced of the fact. Even if it be so, however, we still ask why the Labour Government failed of the courage to let naval construction drift one more year—as "a moral gesture"—as a measure of retrenchment.

This was the first little test on a great question: there are far more difficult tests ahead. We regret that many whom we believe are genuine in their pacifist convictions obeyed the call of the Party Whip and voted for the battleships.

Some others merely absented themselves from the division.

* * *

Cruisers to Cure Unemployment.

As to the argument that the cruisers had to be built to prevent dismissals from the dockyards, it will not hold water. It would be cheaper to pay the men their full wages and send them for a holiday than to retain them to build battleships. Is there, however, no useful work that such men could do? Let Trade Unionists say what they will, those men could help in building houses. They could learn every operation connected with building houses. It would be better to employ the dockyard men in making children's toys than in building battleships. It would be better to follow the example of the French Government by employing them in making apparatus for harnessing the tides of the sea to provide electricity. It would be better to employ them in constructing apparatus for procuring electric power from the winds, as suggested by Professor Haldane in his "Daedalus," which is reviewed in another column. It would be better to employ the dockyard men in constructing stoves, boilers, and electric fittings for the vast number of houses the Government promises to build, and for existing working-class houses or public buildings. It would be better to employ them in making pleasure yachts for the parks, agricultural machinery for Russia or for Britain, even if such machinery were eventually to be given away. It would be better to employ them in making roads, quays, bridges, waterways, or in any other useful work than in building up armaments.

* * *

The Sudan Irrigation Scheme.

Equally significant, from the Socialist standpoint, was the defeat of the Labour Party's forward aspirations, involved in the acceptance by the Labour Government of the capitalist exploitation of the Sudan. Last year the present Prime Minister most strongly denounced this very scheme in an article quoted by one of his Scottish Labour colleagues, Mr. Thomas Johnston, in the House of Commons, and also in our own Parliamentary report on another page.

It will be remembered that last year it was Mr. Johnston who drew attention to this iniquitous exploitation, at the same time accusing Mr. Asquith, who had led a deputation to the Government on behalf of the scheme, of having a family interest in it. Mr. MacDonald repudiated the attack on Mr. Asquith, and tendered an apology for what his colleague had said. At the same time he made an even stronger attack upon the scheme itself than that of Mr. Johnston. His opponents pointed out, however, that Mr. Clynes had joined Mr. Asquith in the deputation.

Now, without modification, Mr. MacDonald's Government accepts the capitalist exploitation of the Sudan and its natives sanctioned by their predecessors and guarantees the syndicate a further £3,500,000.

This action is defended on the ground that if the Government were to refuse this guarantee the scheme might collapse altogether. So much the better. The Government could then take up the work itself and carry it forward on a socialist basis, or at any rate upon a basis which would protect the native from the present grievous exploitation.

Mr. Ponsonby endeavoured to prove that the exploitation he joined in denouncing is not exploitation. Yet Mr. MacDonald has himself vouched for the fact that *the syndicate has made profits of 35 per cent.* Mr. Ponsonby further explained that *after the Plantation Syndicate has paid its working expenses it takes 25 per cent. of the proceeds of the sales whilst the Government takes 35 per cent. The cultivator takes the remaining 40 per cent. out of which he, of course, pays his working and living expenses, though it is he, the cultivator, who provides the profits drawn by both the syndicate and the Government.*

* * *

The Soviet, the Asiatic and the African.

Considering the workers of Western countries in relation to Parliament, we realise how little freedom, how little real initiative and control over his work that frigid machine would allow to them, were the industries all to be nationalised, as the Post Office is nationalised.

How much more does this apply in the case of Asiatics and Africans; peoples who in large measure have been deprived of all academic education, who are innocent of the methods of what is called statesmanship, but who not merely support themselves by their labour, but also a host of native and alien parasites. Such peoples are able to organise amongst themselves the affairs of their local communities; they would be absolutely unable to exercise control over the far-off Governments that oppress them even were such Governments constituted with some show of democracy, which at present they are not. To the contention that the primitive masses of Asia and Africa are ignorant and backward, it must be retorted that the exploitation to which they are subjected precludes their advancement. Neither the knowledge of modern science, nor the possibility to take advantage of its teaching in agriculture, industry, housing, sanitation or education is offered by the Governments. Those who would lead the primitive communities should settle amongst them, not as exploiters seeking to draw riches from their toil, but as teachers and co-workers. Let them go in the spirit which led the early Russian revolutionaries to leave positions of comfort to adventure as labourers and craftsmen amongst the workers and peasants, to teach them both the learning of the schools and also the truth about their economic position.

* * *

United States' Armaments.

President Coolidge recently told the United States Congress that America wants no competitive armaments. Nevertheless, he added, "A people who neglect their national defence are putting in jeopardy this national honour." Mr. Coolidge is evidently a pacifist of the same kind as some of our compatriots. The weapons of defence recently introduced by the New York Ordnance Department include a 4,000 lb. aerial bomb containing 2,000 lbs. of explosives and capable of making craters 150 feet in diameter and 57 feet deep, a capillar tractor that can go 35 miles an hour on a 45 degree gradient and through water up to the driver's chin, and a gun that can shoot five miles further than the longest range French gun used in the world war. The United State's Assistant Secretary for War has indicated that his department is so organising matters that on receipt of a telegram from the War Department every manufacturer who is to undertake war work "will go to his safe, take out his production schedules, plans, specifications and contracts, and immediately begin to work as previously arranged."

* * *

The Dock Strike.

The result of the dock strike is hailed as a great victory for the dockers, but life in dockland will be little changed by it. It is said that the full wage demand has been conceded, but that is not so. The Union asked 2s. a day increase; the employers offered 1s. The Union refused the 1s., and struck for 2s. The terms of settlement give 1s. a day increase now and another 1s. in June, but the cost of living is rising, and the men are likely to lose more than 1s. a day in prices before June is here.

As to the question of decentralisation, that is referred to a joint committee of employers and trade union representatives, with a chairman nominated by the Minister of Labour. The appointment of a committee guarantees nothing; it merely postpones the decision as to whether anything shall be done.

* * *

The Labour Government and the Versailles Treaty.

Mr. MacDonald, when heckled by Parliamentary questioners, has repudiated Mr. Henderson's election statement that the Treaty of Versailles must be revised. The capitalist Press has united in rebuking Mr. Henderson and applauding Mr. MacDonald. *The Times* declares that Mr. Henderson has failed to realise the importance attached by the world to the statements of British Cabinet Ministers. The *Star* naively observes that the statement, in fact, represents the mind of the Government, but "could hardly have been made at a more inopportune time than when Mr. MacDonald had accomplished so much in the establishment of a more friendly atmosphere between France and Britain." Out of office Mr. MacDonald reproached the Government for abandoning principle to keep peace with Poincaré. In office he is apparently following the same course. He is learning that not merely moral gestures and the will to peace are necessary to preserve peace. It is brought home to him that who wills the end must also will the means. The expansion and rivalry of international capitalism is again making towards inevitable war. Already the Labour Government is following in the footsteps of its predecessors: striving to postpone war and at the same time preparing for it. Mr. William Leach, lately a strong pacifist and now Assistant Air Minister, has disclosed the fact that he is helping to carry out the Air Force programme prepared by his Tory predecessors, because, he asserts, the country desires that policy to be followed. Why, then, it may justly be asked, did the country turn out the Tory Government?

The Labour Party promised a new spirit, but, like the other Governments, it is preparing the next war. The French Government is apparently setting the pace, but the retiring programme of the Tory Government was a move towards increased armaments, and the Labour Party has adopted it.

French War Preparations.

Now M. Poincaré and his colleagues have tabled proposals for organising France for the coming war. Every individual "of both sexes and of whatever age" is to receive his or her "mobilisation card" for military service or the new "duty of National Defence." Thus there is to be industrial as well as military conscription in the fullest sense, and what is done in France in that respect will certainly be done in this country also.

All corporations and firms are required to place their services at Government disposal, and State requisitioning of factories, patents and so on is provided for. The State monopoly of industry is, however, to be exercised by delegates chosen and appointed by the representatives of the manufacturers and merchants. Workmen of military age suspected of dangerous tendencies are to be transferred from the industrial army to the fighting army. There undoubtedly they will be shot in the back, as was done to many a good French rebel in the last war. The project indicates that the coming war will be longer and more terrible than the last:

"The stake at issue in the struggle being the very existence of the belligerents, none of them will lay down its arms before utter exhaustion."

The only alternative to this war is the abolition of the capitalist system.

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PARLIAMENT AS WE SEE IT.

The Sudan Plantation Syndicate.

Mr. T. Johnston (Lab.), in protesting against a further Government guarantee of £3,500,000 for the Sudan Plantation Syndicate, Ltd., observed that the firm has 18 shareholders, 7 of them connected with the firm of Wernher Beit. The shares stand at £5 2s. 6d., and paid 35 per cent. last year. He quoted what Mr. Ramsay MacDonald wrote of the affair a year ago after analysing the balance sheets of the firm and studying the Sudan agreement, as follows:

"The Sudan Plantation Syndicate has an agreement under which it is to benefit enormously, *to such an extent that no sane business man would ever have granted such an agreement.* By this agreement it has already exploited the Sudan, and with the concurrence of the Government so successfully that it has given a *bonus of 10 per cent. on the new shares,* while the *dividends have stood at 10, 25, 25, 15 and 35 per cent. through a series of years. The corruption which surrounds all business dealings with the Sudan Government is notorious,* and has been exposed by Lieut.-Colonel Kelly, formerly on the Council of the Governor-General of the Sudan. *This syndicate, the nature of its business, and the amounts of the profits, are a type of the group of exploiters who get together to scrape wealth into their own pockets, not by service, but by opportunity and putting their hands into other people's pockets. It is a bad example of capital using political influence for its financial ends. The people connected with this affair may be as white as angels, but they have hit upon an affair whose financial and political connection and shareholders' lists must inevitably create suspicion. . . .*

"*Everything about this transaction smells, and it is the duty of Parliament to probe the whole thing to the bottom.* Astonishing facts have come to light, and an early opportunity must be found next session for a discussion on the subject."

Mr. Johnston added that the shareholders of the syndicate include the Earl of Derby (1,200 shares), Godfrey Isaacs (3,400 shares), Lord Vesty, of the Meat Combine (500 shares), Sir Otto Beit (9,000 shares), William Mosenthal (2,500 shares). The company has had, including the present £3,500,000, £15,000,000 in guarantees from the British Government. £6,000,000 of the money was paid to a Greek contractor on the basis of his getting paid 10 per cent. of all the money he spent.

Mr. Johnston asked for the limitation of the Plantation Syndicate's profits, for a guarantee that British cotton consumers will be supplied with cotton at a reasonable price, and that the 6,000,000 natives of the Sudan will be fairly treated.

Mr. Ponsonby's Reply.

The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, the ex-Liberal, Mr. Arthur Ponsonby, admitted he cheered Mr. Johnston for making a similar protest last year. He felt differently now. This was a legacy the Government had taken over from its predecessors. The Labour Government, however, would not have failed to drop it had it been unworthy of support. It would bring raw cotton to Lancashire, and it would bring orders for plant to this country. It was true, as Mr. Johnston had complained, that the natives had sent petitions to the British Government and these had not been forwarded by the Sudan Government, but in Oriental countries the natives sent up petitions much as British constituents forward printed postcards to their Members of Parliament.

Endeavouring to show that the natives of the Sudan would benefit by the scheme, Mr. Ponsonby said:

"Practically all the land within the area is *the registered freehold property* of the natives. *Their titles were acquired by centuries of occupation* . . . and were finally settled and granted to them by a Land Commission in 1908.

"The Government have rented the whole of the area from its owners for 40 years, and *the land will be reallotted to the owners as tenants in plots of regular size,* bounded by canals, but lying as near as possible to the original holding. Throughout the period of renting, the native retains the freehold of his land . . . and when the period of the lease is over, the full use of the land with all the benefits of development will revert to the freeholder."

Mr. Ponsonby said he had not known of these provisions when he joined in attacking the scheme last year. A good deal of criticism might be levelled at those who inaugurated the original scheme, and he shared Mr. Johnston's indignation to a certain extent, but "*it would ill become us to start on these criticisms when we have pressed on us an obligation to see that this scheme is sanctioned by the House.*"

A Socialist Protest.

Mr. Maxton (Lab.) could not assent to the view that the Labour Government should carry on the contracts of its predecessors, however dishonourable. He would not vote for this. He protested, as a Socialist, against Mr. Ponsonby's assumption that private enterprise is necessary to skilled management.

Mr. Acland (Lib.) said that he was Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs when the Sudan irrigation scheme was started. At the time the British Government was only asked to back with its credit a Sudan government scheme, and the Plantation Syndicate had not been heard of. He considered that as the shares of the company stand at such a high figure, it should be able to find what further money it requires without coming to the House of Commons for guarantees.

Mr. W. Graham (Financial Secretary to the Treasury) then rose with cries of alarm to predict disastrous results to cotton and to unemployment if the scheme were abandoned, as it might be if the Government guarantees were withdrawn.

He could not give any assurance as to the supply of cotton, because the British House of Commons could not control either the Sudan Government or the syndicate, but at the end of the agreement with the syndicate the British Government can review the situation. He did not explain why the Government could not attach conditions to the present grant.

Democracy and a "Condonium."

The Government of the Sudan, by the way, is called a Condonium. Mr. Ponsonby explained it, as the House of Commons did not know what a condonium is:

"The Governor General of the Sudan is under the British High Commissioner at Cairo; and the Sudan Budget is submitted to the Egyptian Council of Ministers. Beside this, there is a Financial Secretary to the Sudan, who is an official selected after consultation with our Treasury, and His Majesty's Government, through this official, has a general control over the policy of the Sudan."

Democracy, O, dear democracy; you certainly have made some very odd compromises with autocracy.

Mr. Johnston and Mr. Maxton did not press their objections to a vote. Party discipline, O, party discipline!

The Five Cruisers.

Mr. C. G. Ammon, lately a pacifist, and now Parliamentary Secretary to the Admiralty, announced that "in view of the serious unemployment" the Government have decided to proceed with the laying down of five cruisers and two destroyers. Three of the cruisers would be built in the Royal Dockyards, two in private yards. Tenders from contractors would be invited at once, so that the work might be proceeded with as soon as Parliamentary sanction had been obtained.

The Government had not decided what to do regarding the submarine depot ship, the mine layers, and other items of the programme submitted by the Tories a month ago.

The Tory Government had proposed eight cruisers, not five.

Mr. Pringle (Lib.) later moved the adjournment of the House to protest against the Labour Government's inconsistency.

What Philip Snowden Said Last Year.

He quoted Mr. Philip Snowden (Lab. Chancellor of the Exchequer), who moved a vote of censure on the late Government, on March 12th, 1923, for making:—

> "No approach to a redemption of the wartime promises of a great reduction in expenditure on armaments."

On July 23rd, 1923, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald had secured a day for the purpose of condemning the growing expenditure on Army, Navy and Air Force.

Another Ponsonby Echo.

Mr. Pringle further quoted Mr. Ponsonby (Lab. Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs):—

> "I am uncompromising on this matter. I came into political life on this question of disarmament, and I feel very deeply on this matter, because I see the same thing beginning again to-day. The curtain was rung down on one great tragedy, and it is being run up upon another."

Lieut.-Commander Kenworthy (Lib.) said:—

> "Already our naval distribution and forces are giving alarm. . . . There is a movement of alarm to-day in Italy because we have concentrated on the Mediterranean Fleet, and the Italians are approaching France, according to the Press, with invitations to join them in meeting this threat from England."

Mr. MacDonald's Defence.

Mr. Ramsay MacDonald said the five cruisers were only wanted to replace others which were worn out, "in order to keep up what is practically the existing standard. . . . I am informed that fifteen years is the life of a cruiser." He withdrew nothing from his statement that the nation which trusts to armaments is bound to be deceived, but he could not agree to carry out disarmament by allowing the Navy to disappear by wastage from the bottom.

In reply to some interjections, Mr. MacDonald further explained that the new cruisers were to replace those of the County Class which were built for North Sea purposes during the war. "There was **an over preparation** built for North Sea purposes during the war," he said, and such vessels must now be replaced because they are no use for trade route purposes.

The explanation seems as though the Admiralty has been twisting Mr. MacDonald round its finger.

Are They Scrapped?

Mr. Ammon was later asked point blank whether the craft it is proposed to replace have actually been scrapped. He answered:—

> *"No. We have to replace many that are now obsolete and practically useless, and there are only about four which, from sheer old age, as judged by naval requirements, are falling out of use."*

Mr. MacDonald added that if these new ships were not built, 2,250 men would have had to be dismissed from the Royal Dockyards on March 22nd, and a further 2,250 during the year.

"No Labour Government would ever do anything of the kind."

He added that the Labour Government is "rebuilding to fill up—not to complete—but to fill up a substantial part of the wastage we have allowed to go on during the last few years."

Is this the British policy Mr. MacDonald promised, and complained that the other post-war Governments have failed to give?

Tory Support.

Those ultra-Tory Imperialists, Mr. Amery and Lord Curzon, warmly defended the Government's action in building the cruisers. Mr. Amery had in March, 1923, stated that this country and Dominions had 50 cruisers and light cruisers against 20 of the U.S.A. Mr. Baldwin at Plymouth last October said of the light cruisers his Government proposed to lay down this session to reduce unemployment:

> *"It is merely anticipatory work which must have been undertaken in a couple of years' time."*

Nevertheless, Mr. Amery and Lord Curzon now would have it appear that these five cruisers and other ships are really most urgently required.

Pacifists Turn Tail.

Mr. J. H. Hudson, lately a prominent C.O., and now Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had promised Mr. Pringle that he would second his motion, which was virtually a vote of censure on the Government, yet finally he went so far as to vote for the Government. Indeed, something must have been happening in the ranks of the Labour Pacifists, for only the Rev. Herbert Dunnico, of all the Labour Party, went into the Lobby to vote against the battleships. One was surprised to find such pacifists as W. H. Ayles, Margaret Bondfield, T. Johnston, Morgan Jones, George Lansbury, Susan Lawrence, Neil Maclean, F. W. Pethrick Lawrence, John Scurr, Robert Smillie, Philip Snowden, C. P. Trevelyan, R. C. Wallhead supporting the battleships. Even Mr. Thurtle, who asked indignantly: "Is this a moral gesture?" voted for them. Evil communications corrupt good manners.

Party discipline! O, Party discipline!

A Savage Sentence.

A Manchester boy of 14 stole a £5 note. He was sentenced to an industrial school for three years. He escaped. His sentence was increased to five years. His father, who earns £2 8s. a week, has to pay 5s. a week for this boy. Protests were raised. The Under Secretary agreed to let the boy go if work is found for him.

Erith Explosion.

As the Erith factory where 13 girls were killed is under the control of a Government Department, it does not come under the Explosives Act, and certain precautions—for instance, only three persons to work in a shed—are not enforced. No inquiry save the inquest is obligatory. The Government is considering whether an inquiry shall be held.

Why hesitate?

Rent Bill.

The Private Members' Bill introduced by Councillor Ben Gardner, M.P. for the Labour Party, was supported by the Government and passed the second reading. It extends the period of control, reduces the 15 per cent. increase allowed on standard rent to 10 per cent., and the 25 per cent. repairs allowance to 15 per cent. It only allows landlord to get possession for his own use and by offering alternative accommodation.

Mothers' Pensions.

Mr. Dukes (Con.) moved a Mothers' Pensions resolution, expressly excluding unmarried mothers and separated and divorced wives. He proposed to pension civilian widows on the war pensions scale of allowances for themselves and children. He said this would cost £20,000,000 a year. Mr. Philip Snowden (Chancellor of the Exchequer) said that he and the Government viewed the question with sympathy, but he was asked to reduce taxation, and at the same time the Government was committed to social reform. It was going to amend the Old Age Pensions Act and to proceed with Housing. All this would be costly. He must have time to overhaul the national finances and get them into a sound condition. "Then this will be one of the first measures to which I shall apply the resources which will then become available."

Mr. Pethick Laurence (Lab.), in his maiden speech, appealed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to make a beginning, if only a small one, in setting up these pensions. The motion was carried without dissent.

COMMUNIST WORKERS MOVEMENT.
(Anti-Parliamentary.)
For particulars of membership apply Secretary, 152, Fleet Street, London, E.C.

Communist Life,

from A. Hodson, 36, St. Peter's Hill, Grantham.

(Translated from the International Language Ido.)

Two more years have flowed into the ocean of eternity since I related to my friends of **La Socio** what I had experienced and how I had spent my time in attaining the great aim of my life: the construction of the basis of a new Anarchist-Communist Society, and I now wish to give a report concerning these two years.

When I left Germany at the beginning of 1913, because I could no longer tolerate the unnatural and therefore so largely hypocritical life of bourgeois society, I had for more than two years been prosecuted by the public prosecutor for having killed two patients by operating upon them carelessly. The whole accusation was merely an attempt to render me innocuous as a very disturbing political influence, and because I was prudent enough to keep always within the law, they tried to ruin my medical practice. But here also I could not be caught until they found my guilt proved by the fact that I had gone away, and they issued a warrant for my arrest. Despite the continued validity of this warrant, I returned to Germany after the 'great revolution' and began to establish the new great Anarchist-Communist family. I was soon imprisoned but in consideration of a sufficiently heavy bail I was allowed to go about freely until I was finally sentenced to two years' imprisonment. But I had used my time and had brought about an organisation consisting of some 50 persons distributed over seven groups. When, therefore, after nine weeks there occurred some difficulties within the groups and about communication with the State authorities, I was granted ten weeks' leave to rearrange the work of my organisation. For meanwhile a case had arisen which no one else could deal with. I had educated the child members of the cave in Berlin, i.e., two girls from Berlin and seven from Uerdingen-on-the-Rhine. Now a society for the protection of children against exploitation and corruption asked the tutelar judge to take away the two daughters of the Berlin mother and place them in a State industrial establishment because the ideas which they had learned while with us were immoral and anti-state. The judge in fact decided that the mother, in educating her daughters in the ideas and the system of "The Cave of Zarathustra," was misusing the right of looking after her daughters, and ordered that they therefore be taken away from the mother. When the police came to fetch the two girls they found five others with regard to whom they had no power because these belonged to Uerdingen. Therefore, the Berlin chief-of-police asked the tutelar judge in Uerdingen to decide that the right of educating her daughters be taken away also from the mother of these five. Now the public prosecutor gave me leave from prison so that I could negotiate with the Uerdingen authorities. The result of this negotiation was that the Uerdingen judge declared that he had no reason for such a decision but thought that the children could not be better educated than now. Naturally we appealed against the decision of the Berlin judge, and the higher tribunal upheld the decision of the judge. But now the Supreme Court reversed these decisions and the case is again being gone into by the higher tribunal.

Without any propaganda, merely by our life and constructive work, therefore, we have already compelled the State authorities to examine the question whether they have reason for, or possibility of, hindering such construction of a purely Anarchist-Communist Society. I am able to say that these two questions were negatived by almost all the authorities, that in Düsseldorf they even gave us State land for a colony and in Uerdingen a whole house belonging to the town, so as to be no longer bothered by the fellow-tenants. Also the question of the children's education will finally be decided as we desire, but we want to have a decision by the Supreme Court to settle this question once for all.

This is what we have achieved up to the present; we have four town groups, one purely country group, in which money is now being earned, and one mixed, i.e., country situated so near the town that most of the group members can still go into the factories to earn money. The State recognises the Anarchist-Communist organisation and protects us against the intrusions of some of the police or lower officials.

The question still remains: Is this an Anarchist-Communist organisation that lives so devoutly and obedient to the State laws, that the State authorities protect us? With a clear conscience I say, yes! For what is an Anarchist-Communist organisation? Certainly an organisation which lives according to the Anarchist-Communist principle, i.e., commercial production and individualist conscience, an organisation held together not by laws and statutes, but solely by the love and reason of each individual, an organisation governed not by coercive authority but by the competence of the most capable person, voluntarily recognised by those who wish to co-operate with him and follow his higher wisdom and capability. An organisation which lives according to this principle is an Anarchist-Communist organisation and it does not matter whether such an organisation contains 50 or 500 million people; whether the whole of mankind, or a tiny group, lives according to this principle. But an organisation which, only for a few hours each week or month, brings its members together to discuss Anarchist-Communist principles, to publish papers or reviews and otherwise lives quite in accordance with the standpoint of capitalist morality, certainly is not an Anarchist-Communist organisation. Within our organisation, then, we live entirely according to Anarchist-Communist principles, we have no personal property, all values created by each individual, whether by earning money or working on the land, in the tailoring or shoemaking establishments, or the kitchen, belongs to the organisation and not to the producer, so that all can dispose of them. Everyone creates which he can, and takes what he needs. We do not recognise marriage or father for the maintenance of the expectant or actual mother and the child; the child belongs to the mother in accordance with natural law, both are members of the organisation, supported by the organisation. When the mother is again strong enough, when the child has grown, they take part in the common production. Here is an Anarchist-Communist organisation! To be able to be in this society, one must be able to think Anarchist-Communistically, for the Anarchist-Communist principle alone decides in differences of opinion.

Nevertheless, people are always telling me: "Anarchist-Communist Society ought to contain the whole of mankind. Such little groups are not an organisation but mere child's play." I reply: "First, you see whiter the propagandists are led, who want to introduce even Anarchism by centralisation, and who cannot understand that even Anarchist mankind must always be dissolved not only into little groups but even into self-governing individuals, who nevertheless, work together economically, as we are doing now. Secondly; can we force people to live as Anarchist-Communists? Certainly not! I am truly convinced that all mankind will never be Anarchist-Communists, just as all will never be Buddhists, Christians or followers of Moses; but there will always be people who will like a coercive authority to relieve them of the responsibility for their actions, just as we have, and shall have, people who consider this responsibility a sign of their human dignity. Have these no right to live as free human beings just because the others are slaves? For we are only the slaves of our own weakness, and not of external things or conditions.

I understand the capitalist system as a natural event, a natural force. As the earth compels me to work in order to live, as it does not voluntarily yield the fruits that I need for the satisfaction of my hunger, houses wherein to live, clothes for protection against the unfavourable climate, in the same way capitalism compels me to work. But the principal mark of slavery is not this work, but the dependence also in the matter of my private and family life, and this we can liberate from this slavery, and furthermore, we can by means of such an organisation take out more and more brothers from the factories and the whole process of capitalist production, and make ourselves more and more independent of this system.

But in the meantime this system still exists, and if we should try to overturn it to-day, to-morrow we should have nothing to eat, for we have not yet learned how to organise the process of production otherwise than capitalistically. This we must learn, and we can only learn it by building society from the beginning. We here in Germany have been attempting this task for five years and we have certainly succeeded. Being now free for my work, I call upon all those who truly desire the realisation of our Anarchist-Communist ideal, to help me build the one great Anarchist-Communist World-Family. Wherever two or more brothers live in the same town, let them begin by living communally, and let everyone who wishes to help, write to:—

Filareto Kavernido,
La Kaverno di Zaratustra,
Mulackstr. 21,
Berlin, N.54.
Germany.

THE INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' REVOLUTION.

V.

By Herman Gorter.

Even in a peasant country like Russia the proletariat has become so important, and its development has progressed so far, that its leaders, its party takes up the establishment of capitalism and runs it against the proletariat.

In the beginning of 1918 the Bolshevist party, which was still more or less Communist, tried to support itself by aid of the landless and the poor. Now it supports the peasant proprietors and creates tenant farmers and landless labourers—in short, it makes capitalism.

Industry is no longer in the absolute possession and control of the State. Small industry has quite freed itself from State control.

A part of the heavy and wholesale industry, including a few of the most important branches, has been handed over to trusts formed by State and private capital. Under these trusts the workers are mere wage workers. These trusts have a large measure of independence from State control, yet they are assisted by the State. They compete with private firms, and also with State industries.

Internal commerce in Russia is now unrestricted. One can buy or sell anything. Large and small capitalists are cropping up everywhere, both in town and country. Capitalism is growing up with commerce in Russia, as it formerly did in other countries, from the basis of a peasant State. The capital created by commerce is used in founding or enlarging banks and industries.

Foreign trade is apparently in the hands of the State, but actually this is no longer the case. The huge Russian Co-operative Society, the Centrosojus, has already the privilege of foreign trade, with a few unimportant restrictions. The Centrosojus, which is spread over the whole country, especially where the peasants are, was always and still is a bourgeois-capitalist institution. Even now it conducts its commerce on purely capitalist principles. The great trusts still require the consent of the departments for their foreign trade, but they are too powerful for any demands to be refused. At the Hague, Krassin gave the representatives of the big States a long list of such commercial enterprises.

The Russian Government is prepared to give great concessions to foreign capitalists. It gave to Krupp's four millions in foreign agricultural enterprises. It has given out various concessions in petroleum, forests, mines, and so on.

Local finances have been separated from State finances. One can understand what use the peasant proprietors have made of this power. Wages are introduced again, even indirect taxes on tobacco, coffee, matches, soap, petroleum, sugar, salt, beer, and textiles. The end will be a State bank, which acts as agent for home and foreign trade and discounts bills of exchange.

Sokolnikov declared at the Hague that these rights are already given to private persons and to the trusts which are partly State and partly private concerns, and that a constantly increasing bill of exchange business is being done.

At a sitting of the Financial Department in April, 1923, Aron Scheimann, director of the Russian State Bank, said that the financial section was in favour of allowing private banks.

In the large towns of Russia the exchanges are again open. An army of contractors, merchants, bankers, agents, brokers, speculators, stock jobbers and profiteers are very loosely held in by a sort of State capitalism. There is a growing middle-class of shopkeepers and middlemen, small employers, salaried employees and intellectuals, all non-producing vampires, living on the proletariat. Beside them is the vast army of peasant owners.

The small proletariat is very weak, notwithstanding all appearances to the contrary. The army consists mainly of peasants' sons.

All are waiting for foreign trade to be quite free to everyone as well as to the co-operative societies, the trusts and the high and mighty private persons. That will not be long.

Then all the bonds of capitalism will be loosened and the proletariat will be completely fettered.

Is there a great difference between the creation of capitalism out of a peasant in former centuries, or even in the 19th century, in South Africa, Australia and North America and this creation in Russia?

Certainly the circumstances are different in the Colonies. There the peasants were free: in Russia they came out of despotism, even in part out of mediæval conditions.

Yet are the Russian peasants free now?

No; the difference between the creation of capitalism in Russia to-day and in past times is very slight. In the past capitalism was created by capitalists who had sprung from the peasants or from foreign countries. Now capitalism is created by a party sprung out of the proletariat.

Poor Russian workers! Even before Kronstadt you had no power to guide or control the State, neither you nor your organisations. That power was held by a bureaucratic party and a dozen leaders. Nevertheless you had won something by the revolution: you had a few rights and capitalism had disappeared from the towns.

Now you, or rather your *class*, has no longer any hold over industry or commerce, even in the towns. It never secured possession of the soil; it no longer has either the most important food stuffs or the raw materials.

The obligation for all to work no longer exists. The State no longer supplies them with food and other necessaries. It gives nothing without money. There are capitalists again and capitalist organisations. Wage battles and unemployment have returned, and there is even compulsory arbitration. Your class are wage slaves precisely as before.

There is still a little State capitalism left, and the leaders of the capitalist State are the old favourite leaders of the Communist Party.

What is the object of your work? To what end do you create surplus value by your labour?

It serves capitalism. Firstly, the Government of the Soviet State uses it to enrich the peasantry, that this class may grow and assist the growth of a peasants' and capitalists' Russia.

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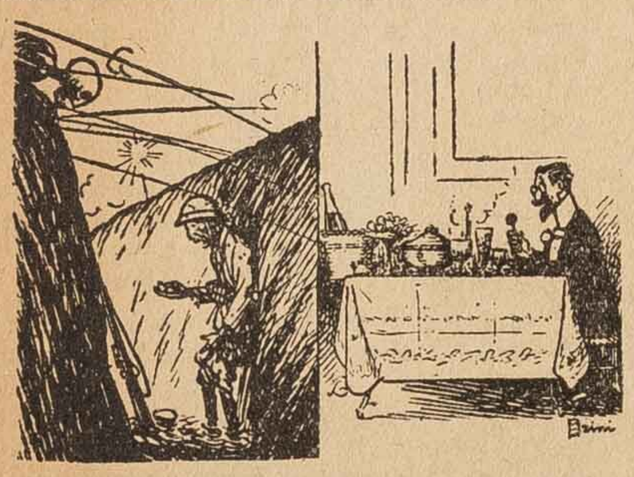
(To be continued.)



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