MAY-DAY GKEETINGS.

ONE PENNY

Workers' Dreadnought

PRODUCTION FOR USE AND PLENTY FOR ALL.

Vol. XI. No. 7. May 3rd, 1924 WEEKLY.

All I have is this life, brief yet full of potentiality, it is ebbing away; each day, each hour it is passing from me and rushing onward towards its end.

Small as I am, I bring my quota to the world; my thoughts, my actions go forth into the flood of endeavour: they do their part in making its monstrous sum.

My children go forth; they enter into the race. They are marked with my seal, the seal that I set upon humanity. Their part, which is also mine, is added to the rest.

My children are of my flesh: they will get other children. They are links in the chain of race, meshes in the wide net of population.

My deeds also are my children; deeds with their far-spreading reverberations : deeds that bring changes to me and you, their influence travelling further than we can know.

Thoughts and words also are my children; little marks scratched with a piece of lead, impressions of printer's ink on papers that journey whither I do not know.

All these; all these are making me and others.

Other folk also are my children; and I theirs. I make them as they make me. In our thoughts and our deeds we are creators; creators of men and times; creators of waves of thought that go passing on. Only my life I possess, my life, my body with all its powers. Only these I possess; all else is dross. Save for these I have only some fugitive gear about me; some gear that perhaps might give me the power to summon others to serve me. But that is nothing; it strengthens not that little pump, my heart, that must beat till the days of my living are ended. It increases not the power of my hand or the keenness of my thought.

Only myself have I; my body with its powers. Only this for a space, for this will perish, my body that came down to me from the cave folk, down from the ancient hunters and the women who squatted before the camp fires, weaving and potting and scratching the earliest writing for ages after the dawn of people, after the time of those who had scarcely the art to fashion tools by knocking stone on stone.

I have only this body of mine that ages of men and women have fashioned, making me what I am, a complex of powers unknown in the distant ages.

What shall I do with this body of mine ? All that I do with it helps to fashion the men and women of this, my time. It helps to fashion the men and women of the future.

What great things shall I do with my little span of life ? What shall I do to enhance the life about me; to make us stronger and finer, the people of now and to-morrow; we people of flesh and thought and deed and endeavour ?

What shall I do with my little span of life; that only which is mine ?

E. S. P.

THE SOCIALIST IDEAL IN ART.

By William Morris

Some people will, perhaps, not be prepared to hear that Socialism has any ideal of art, for in the first place it is so obviously founded on the necessity for dealing with the bare economy of life that many, and even some Socialists, can see nothing save that economic basis and moreover, many who might be disposed to admit the necessity of an economic change in the direction of Socialism, believe quite sincerely that art is fostered by the inequalities of condition which it is the first business of Socialism to do away with and indeed that it cannot exist without them. Nevertheless in the teeth of these opinions, I assert first that Socialism is an all-embracing theory of life, and that as it has an ethic and religion of its own, so also it has an aesthetic: so that to anyone who wishes to study Socialism duly, it is necessary to look on it from the aesthetic point of view. And, secondly, I assert that inequality of condition, whatever may have been the case in former ages of the world, has now become incompatible with the existence of a healthy art.

But before I go further I must explain that I use the word art in a wider sense than is commonly used amongst us to-day; for convenience' sake, indeed, I will exclude all appeals to the intellect and emotions that are not addressed to the eyesight; though, properly speaking, music and all literature that deals with style should be

considered as portions of art; but I can exclude from consideration as a possible vehicle of art no production of man which can be looked at. And here at once becomes obvious the sundering of the ways between the Socialist and the commercial view of art. To the Socialist a house, a knife, a cup, a steam engine, or what not, anything, I repeat, that is made by man and has form, must either be a work of art or destructive to art.

The Commercialist, on the other hand, divides "manufactured articles" into those which are prepensely works of art, and are offered for sale in the market as such, and those which have no pretence and could have no pretence to artistic qualities. The one side asserts indifference, the other denies it. The Commercialist sees that in the great mass of civilised human labour there is no pretence to art, and thinks that this is natural, inevitable, and on the whole desirable. The Socialist, on the contrary, sees in this obvious lack of art a **disease** peculiar to modern civilisation and hurtful to humanity; and furthermore believes it to be a disease which can be remedied.

This disease and injury to humanity, also, he thinks is not at rifling matter, but a grievous deduction from the happiness of man; for he knows that the all-pervading art of which I have been speaking, and to the possibility of which the Commercialist is blind, is **the expression of pleasure in the labour of production;** and that, since all persons who are not mere burdens on the community must produce, in some form or another, it follows that under our present system most **honest** men must lead unhappy lives, since their work, which is the most important part of their lives, is devoid of pleasure.

Or, to put it very bluntly and shortly, under the present state of society happiness is only possible to artists and thieves.

It will at once be seen from this statement how necessary it is for Socialists to consider the due relation of art to society; for it is their aim to realise a reasonable, logical and stable society; and of the two groups above-named, it must be said that the artists (using the word in its present narrow meaning), are few, and are too busy over their special work (small blame to them), to pay much heed to public matters; and that the thieves (of all classes), form a disturbing element in society.

Now, the Socialist not only sees this disease in the body politic, but also thinks that he knows the cause of it, and consequently can conceive of a remedy; and that all the more because the disease is in the main peculiar, as above said, to modern civilisation. Art was once the common possession of the whole people; it was the rule in the Middle Ages that the produce of handicraft was beautiful. Doubtless, there were eyesores in the palmy days of mediæval art, but these were caused by destruction of wares, not as now by the making of them: it was the act of war and devastation that grieved the eye of the artist then; the sacked town, the burned village, the deserted fields. Ruin bore on its face the token of its essential hideousness; to-day it is prosperity that is externally ugly.

The story of the Lancashire manufacturer who, coming back from Italy, that sad museum of the nations, rejoiced to see the smoke, with which he was poisoning the beauty of the earth, pouring out of his chimneys, gives us a genuine type of the active rich man of the Commercial Period, degraded into incapacity of even wishing for decent surroundings. In those past days the wounds of war were grievous indeed, but peace would bring back pleasure to men, and the hope of peace was at least conceivable; but now, peace can no longer help us and has no hope for us; the prosperity of the country, by whatever "leaps and bounds" it may advance, will but make everything more and more ugly about us; It will become more a definitely established axiom that the longing for beauty, the interest in history, the intelligence of the whole nation, shall be of no power to stop one rich man from injuring the whole nation to the full extent of his riches, that is, of his privilege, of taxing other people; it will be proved to demonstration, at least to all lovers of beauty and a decent life, that private property is public robbery.

Nor, however much we may suffer from this, if we happen to be artists, should we Socialists at least complain of it. For, in fact, the "peace" of Commercialism is not peace, but bitter war, and the ghastly waste of Lancashire and the ever-spreading squalor of London are at least object-lessons to teach us that this is so, that there is war in the land which quells all our efforts to live wholesomely and happily. The **necessity** of time, I say, is to feed the commercial war which we are all of us waging in some way or another; if, while we are doing this, we can manage, some of us, to adorn our lives with some little pleasure of our eyes, it is well, but it is no **necessity,** it is a luxury, the lack of which we must endure.

Thus, in this matter also does the artificial famine of inequality, felt in so many other ways, impoverish us despite of our riches; and we sit starving amidst our gold, the Midas of the ages.

Let me state bluntly a few facts about the present condition of the arts before I try to lay before my readers the definite Socialist ideal which I conceive for the future. It is necessary to do this because no ideal for the future can be conceived of unless we proceed by way of contrast; it is the desire to escape from the present failure which forces us into what are called "ideals": in fact, they are mostly attempts by persons of strong hope to embody their discontent with the present.

It will scarcely be denied, I suppose, that at present art is only enjoyed, or indeed thought of, by comparatively a few persons, broadly speaking, by the rich and the parasites that minister to them directly. The poor can only afford to have what art is given to them in charity; which is of the inferior quality inherent in all such gifts — not worth picking up except by starving people.

Now, having eliminated the poor (that is, almost the whole mass of those that make anything that has **form,** which, as before said, must either be helpful to life or destructive of it), as not sharing in art from any side, let us see how the rich, who do share in it to a certain extent, get on with it. But poorly, I think, although they are rich. By abstracting themselves from the general life of man that surrounds them, they can get some pleasure from a few works of art; whether they be part of the wreckage of times past, or produced by the individual labour, intelligence, and patience of a few men of genius of to-day fighting desperately against all the tendencies of the age. But they can do no more than surround themselves with a little circle of hot-house atmosphere of art hopelessly at odd with the common air of day. A rich man may have a house full of pictures, and beautiful books, and furniture, and so forth; but as soon as he steps out into the streets he is again in the midst of ugliness to which he must blunt his senses, or be miserable if he really cares about art. Even when he is in the country, amidst the beauty of trees and fields, he cannot prevent some neighbouring landowner making the landscape hideous with utilitaarin agriculture; nay, it is almost certain that his own steward or agent will force him into the like on his own lands; he cannot even rescue his parish church from the hands of the restoring parson. He can go where he likes and do what he likes outside the realm of art. but there is this? Simply because the great mass of effective art, that which pervades all life, **must** be the result of harmonious co-operation of neighbours. And a rich man has no neighbours — nothing but rivals and parasites.

Now the outcome of this is that though the educated classes (as we call them), have theoretically some share in art, or might have, as a matter of fact, they have very little. Outside the circle of the artists themselves there are very few even of the educated classes who care about art. Art is kept alive by a small group of artists working in a spirit quite antagonistic to the spirit of the time; and they also suffer from the lack of co-operation which is an essential lack in the art of our epoch. They are limited, therefore, to the production of a few individualistic works, which are looked upon by almost everybody as curiositiees to be examined, nad not as pieces of beauty to be enjoyed. Nor have they any position or power of helping the public in general matters of taste (to use a somewhat ugly word). For example, in laying out all the parks and pleasure grounds which have lately been acquired for the public, as far as I know, no artist has been consulted; whereas they ought to have been laid out by a committee of artists; and I will venture to say that even a badly chosen committee (and it might easily be well chosen), would have saved the public from most of the disasters which have resulted from handing them over to the tender mercies of the landscape gardener.

This, then, is the position of art in this epoch. It is helpless and crippled amidst the sea of utilitarian brutality. It cannot perform the most necessary functions; it cannot build a decent house, or ornament a book, or lay out a garden, or prevent the ladies of thetimes from dressing in a way that caricatures the body and degrades it. On the one hand it is cut off from the traditions of the past, on the other from the life of the present. It is an art of a clique and not of the people. The people are too poor to have any share in it.

As an artist I **know** this, because I can see it. As a Socialist I know that it can be bettered as long as we are living in that special condition of inequality which is produced by the direct and intimate exploitation of the makers of wares, the workmen, at the hands of those who are not producers in any, even the widest, acceptation of the word.

The first point, therefore, in the Socialist ideal of art is that it should be common to the whole people; and this can only be the case if it comes to be recognised that art should be an integral part of all manufactured wares that have definite form and are intended for any endurance. In other words, instead of looking upon art as a luxury incident all to a certain privileged position, the Socialist claims art as a necessity of human life which society has no right to withhold from any one of the citizens; and he claims also that in order that this claim may be established, people shall have every opportunity of taking to the work which each is best fitted for; not only that there may be the least possible waste of human effort, but also that that effort may be exercised pleasurably. For I must here repeat what I have often had to say, that the pleasurable exercise of our energies is at once the source of all art and the cause of all happiness: that is to say, it is the end of life. So that once again the society which does not give a due opportunity to all its members to exercise their energies pleasurably has forgotten the end of life, is not fulfilling its funtcions, and therefore is a mere tyranny to be resisted at all points.

Furthermore, in the making of wares there **should be some of the spirit** of the handicraftsman, whether the goods be made by hand, or by a machine that helps the hand, or by one that supersedes it. Now the essential part of the spirit of the handicraftsman is the instinct for looking at the wares in themselves and their essential use as the object of his work. Their secondary uses, the exigences of the market, are nothing to him; it does not matter to him whether the goods he makes are for the use of a slave or a king, his business is to make them as excellent as may be; if he does otherwise he is making wares for rogues to sell to fools, and he is himself a rogue by reason of his complicity. All this means that he is making the goods for **himself;** for his own pleasure in making them and using them. But to do this he requires reciprocity, or else he will be ill-found, except in the goods that he himself makes. His neighbours must make goods in the same spirit that he does; and each, being a good workman after his kind, will be ready to recognise excellence in others, or to note defects; because the primary purpose of the goods, their **use** in fact, will never be lost sight of. Thus the market of neighbours, thus the interchange of mutual services, will be established, and will take the place of the present gambling market, and its bond-slave the modern factory system. But the working in this fashion, with the unforced and reciprocity of service, clearly implies the existence of something more than the mere gregarious collection of workmen. It implies the consciousness of the existence of a society of neghbours, that is of equals; of men who do indeed expect to be made use of by others, but only so far as the services they give are pleasing to themselves; so far as they are services the performance of which is necessary to their own well-being and happiness.

Now, as on the one hand I **know** that no worthy popular art can grow out of any other soil than this of fredom and mutual respect, so on the other I feel sure both that this opportunity will be given to art and also that it will avail itself of it, and that, once again, nothing which is made by man will be ugly, but will have its due form, and its due ornament, will tell the tale of its making and the tale of its use, even where it tells no other tale. And this because when people once more take pleasure in their work, when the pleasure rises to a certain point, the expression of it will become irresistible, and that expression of pleasure is art, whatever form it may take. As to that form, do not let us trouble ourselves about it; remembering that after all the earliest art which we have record of is still art to us; that Homer is no more out of date than Browning; that the most

For in fact, considering the relation of the modern world to art, our business is now, and for long will be, not so scientifically-minded of people (I had almost said the most utilitarian), the ancient Greeks, are still thought to have produced good artists; that the most superstitious epoch of the world, the Middle Ages, produced the finest art; though there is reason enough for that if I had time to go into it.

muct attempting to produce definite art, as rather clearing the ground to give art its opportunity. We have been such slaves to the modern practice of the unlimited manufacture of make-shifts for real wares, mthat we run a serious risk of destroying the very material of art; of making it necessary that men, in order to have any artistic perception, should be born blind, and should their ideas of beauty from the hearsay books. This degradation is surely the first thing which we should deal with; and certainly Socialists must deal with it at the first opportunity; **they** at least must see, however much others may shut their eyes; for they cannot help reflecting that to condemn a vast population to live in South aLncashire while art and education are being furthered in decent places, is like feasting within earshot of a patient on the rack.

Anyhow, the first step toward the fresh new-birth of art **must** interfere with the privilege of private persons to destroy the beauty of the earth for their private advantage, and thereby to rob the community. The day when some company of enemies of the community are forbidden, for example, to turn the fields of Kent into another collection of cinder heaps in order that they may extract wealth, unearned by them, from a mass of half-paid labourer; the day when some hitherto all powerful "pig-skin stuffed with money," is told that he shall not pull down some ancient building in order that he may force his fellow citizens to pay him additional rack-rent for land which is not his (save as the newly-acquired watch of the highway-man is), that day will be the beginning of the fresh new-birth of art in modern times.

But that day will also be one of the memorable days of Socialism: for this very privilege, which is but the privilege of the robber by force of arms, is just the thing which it is the aim and end of our present organisation to uphold; and all the formidable executive at the back of it, army, police, law courts, presided over by the judge as representing the executive, is directed towards this one end — to take care that the richest shall rule, and shall have full license to injure the commonwealth to the full extent of his riches.

"THE DREADNOUGHT" AND PURE COMMUNISM

The only weekly which maintains the ideal of Pure Communism as a constructive vision is the "WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT." It will help you to preserve and develop the idea pristine.

THE CASE OF W. RUTHERFORD

We have already reported in our columns the case of W. Rutherford, a British subject and ex-member of the I.L.P., who is receiving 14 years in California. Rutherford gave evidence on behalf of a fellow-member of the I.W.W., to which he belongs. On declaring his membership of the I.W.W. he was on that groud alone charged with Criminal Syndicalism, and sentenced to 14 years imprisonment. It was hoped that the influence of the British Labour Government might be used to procure a remission of this outrageous tyranny, and efforts were made to get the matter raised at the Easter Conference of the I.L.P.

Comrade Louis Larkin of the I.W.W. approached Mr. Fenner Brockway, who expressed his sympathy, but stated that it must be left to someone else to raise the question.

A resolution in regard to Comrade Rutherford's case was put forward by the Stockton-on-Tees branch of the I.L.P., but the Standing Orders Committee ruled it out of order. It was said that the United States Government might be prejudiced against the British Labour Government by any reference to the matter, and the friendly relations of the two countries might be jeopardised thereby.

Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 14th inst. re William Rutherford of Glasgow. Rutherford happens to be a very old frend of my own, and I heard from his own chum, Arthur Hendry, that he had been arrested, but I did not hear as to his sentence. Rutherford was a worker with me in the Socialist movement 15 years ago, and I know him very well to be an exceptionally good fellow.

I shall raise the matter at the I.L.P. Conference at York and give it as much publicity as possible, but I am afraid much more would need to be done than that. California is a hell of a place for any worker who has the guts to fight against capitalism. However we will do what we can.

With very best wishes

Yours fraternalyy

J. McClure.

Organising Secretary Glasgow I.L.P., 20 Buchanan Street.

SPICE.

***

VIRGINIA MINES AGAIN.

107 miners are entombed through an explosion in the Brentwood mine in Virginia; there is little hope of saving them.

Not long ago the same miners were being bombed when on strike.

* * *

Sir Frederick Milner in his fight for the war pensioners "never felt more hopeless than now."

His experience ought to make him turn a Communist.

* * *

A Royal Insurance Policy.

Entertaining the Prime Minister at Windsor.

* * *

The Labours of a Prime Minister.

From Wembley with the Duke to

* * *

Windsor with the King.

"It has been discovered that the dominant factor in human society is not political organisation, but industrial organisation; and that to secure to the people control of the political organisation, whilst letting the industrial organisation slip through their fingers, is to intensify slavery under the political forms and pretensions of freedom and equality."

Bernard Shaw in 1897.

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Our View.

THE SOVIET OR WORKER'S COUNCIL is the system by which they who do the work organise the work. This year's conference of the National Union of Teachers shows that, throught their desire for efficient and congenial management of the schools, the teachers, conciously or unconsciously, are more and more stretching out towards the Worker's Council system.

Teachers Progress towards Soviets

A resolution was carried urging co-operation between the Board of Education and the teachers in matters affecting the control of education, the unification of the educational system, and the professional status of teachers. Mr. Hill, the mover, likened the State to the cumbersome steam roller, the advent of a Labour Government having left it as it was. Mr. Merrik demanded teachers' control, to put a check upon the bureaucratic control. Mr. Patten desired "a real Board of Education," on which the teachers would be represented. Another resolution was carried urging that inspectors should meet the school staff in conference before presenting their reports.

***

COMMUNISM WILL BE WELL SERVED by the Cawnpore Conspiracy Trial. Communist propaganda had made no great headway in India. The field was held by nationalism. The Government has brought Communism into great prominence by taking action against the Communists. It has caused millions of people to ask: "What is Communism? What is it the Communists desire?" The question is whether the communists are able to answer this question of the multitude in a clear and attractive manner: whether they can cause the masses to say: We understand Communism and we mean to have it.

The Indian Communist Trial.

If the Communists can do that they are not being persecuted in vain.

***

THE MANCHESTER GUARDIAN chides M. Shinwell for observing that whilst he is preparing a Bill to nationalise mining royalties, he has not been able to carry it through Parliament. The **"Manchester Guardian"** protest that Mr. Shinwell is unduly timid, since all sections of the Sankey Commission, even the coal owners, reported in favour of the step. We should like to know whether Mr. Asquith and the rest of the Liberal Party share the view of the **"Guardian"** and are prepared to let the measure go through. We do not think so.

To Nationalise Mining Royalties.

The cost of buying out the royalty owners is estimated at 55½ to 68¾ million pounds, according as the royalty owners are allowed ten or twelve years purchase. If the royalty owner gets ten years' purchase, and is abe to find an equally safe investment that will bring him in 10 p. 100 interest on the money he receives, he may be no worse off than before, but even so we doubt whether he will surender what he regards as his rights without a struggle. It should be observed that there were no royalty owners on the Sankey Commission. There are 4.000 owners of mining royalties, some of whom are probably members of the Liberal Party. Moreover, we believe that many members of the Liberal Party would object to the precedent created by nationalising mining royalties, even though they are not themselves royalty owners. Private property is the principal shrine at which both Liberals and Tories worship.

Mr. Shinwell had probably made such reflections before he declared the unlikelihood of his securing the passage of his Bill. The Labour Government is only too painfully aware of the things which its opponents will not permit it to do.

We would urge Mr. Shinwell forward to his task. Let him make a fight for it. The workers will then see what the forces of vested interests will do to protect their position.

We wish that Mr. Shinwell and his colleagues would seriously attempt nationalisation without compensation, for compensation maintains the parasites upon the back of the producer.

Mere nationalisation is not what we desire. We desire the autonomous organisation of the resources of the community by those who are doing the actual work for the free use of the community. We do not desire the present organisation, with its waged employees and its production for profit and sale, perpetuated under a Government Department.

Nevertheless we should like to see the Labour Government come to grips with capitalism on the subject of nationalising either mining royalties, or anything else.

We should like to see the Labour Government brought to fight on that issue. Had we the power, we would throw it into that struggle, as one throws a young dog into the water to make it learn to swim. We should do that, not because we believe the Labour Government ever will, or ever could swim forward into Communism, but because such a struggle would carry the anti-capitalist movement in this country a distinct stage further.

The Labour Government will never embark on such a struggle without great pressure from outside. At the present time there is no such pressure.

***

THE FOLLOWING TABLE OF WAGES paid to the lowest paid adult labour in various mining districts, shows the unhappy state into which British mine workers have fallen. It must be remembered that clothing and many necessary commodities are more costly in the mining villages than in the large towns.

Miners' Miserable Wages.

Scotland 7/-
Durham 6/8½
South Yorks 8/5½
Derby 7/6¼
Leicester 6/9
Warwick 6/4
Lancashire 6/3
North Wales 5/6
Shropshire 5/6
Bristol 5/-
Somerset 5/-
Northumberl'd 6/9½
South Wales 6/8
Notts 7/8
South Derby 6/4
Cannock 6/4
Pelsall 6/4
North Staffs 6/1¼
South Staffs 5/6
Cumberland 6/7½
Forest of Dean 5/3
Kent 6/3½.

Miners have to face many deductions from their wages. A certain man who earned £3-15-0, Mr. Herbert Smith told the Court of Inquiry, had to pay 3d. to the blacksmith for sharpening his tools, 1/2 insurance, £1-1-7 for explosives, 2d. for a "lift" or collection, and 1/- for the checkweighman, leaving only £2-10-10. When miner's wages are quoted, such deductions are frequently ignored.

In 1922, a year of abnormal depression for the miner some collieries made 1/6½ profit per ton, the average for the industry was 10¾ per ton raised. In 1923 some districts made 2/6 per ton profit, and the average for the country was nearly 2/- per ton. Yet some miners were fainting in the mines for lack of food, and many who were working were obliged to ask for Poor Law relief.

***

THE ISLE OF MAN LEGISLATURE has failed to extend the Rent Restriction Act to the Island, and, as a result, 300 people have received notice to quit. The Manx Labour Party has decided to take direct action as soon as an eviction takes place. In that case the island trams will cease to run and no steamers will sail to and from the island.

Direct Action in Manxland.

***

MRS. NINA BANG, Minister of Education, in the newly formed Social-Democratic Cabinet of Denmark, is the first woman to occupy so important a government position. We desire to see the end of governments and Cabinets. Nevertheless we are glad to see the breaking down of the sex prejudice which has hitherto barred women from the most important positions.

A Woman Minister of Education.

***

LIBERALS AND TORIES, and particularly Mr. Garvin in the Tory "Observer," have been saying that Mr. Ramsay MacDonald will only be permitted to remain in office if he agrees to legislate by consent of the other parties and by arrangement with them. At Aberavon, on May 28th, Mr. Macdonald replied to these claims, by a friendly tribute to the virtues of the capitalist parliamentary parties and by observing :

Is it a Non-Party Government ?

"So far as I am concerned I ought to be exceedingly grateful, because from the first day, I have been privileged to be regarded as a sort of non-party leader."

Keir Hardie, the founder of the Labour Party, would not have considered that a privilege.

Such utterances should urge on the rank and file to assume control of the movement and to a more aggressive fighting spirit.

***

THE PROTEST of the All-Russian Council of Trade Unions against the British Bankers' Memorandum shows that there is opposition in Russia to further surrenders to capitalism of the Revolutionary conquests. Mr. Rakovsky's daily statements to the British press indicate on the other hand, a willingness on the part of the Soviet Government for further compromises in certain respects.

Russia and the Bankers' Memorandum.

The Russian Trade Union Manifesto says:

"Russia cannot recognise the debts of the Tsar and of Kerensky, which would degrade Russians to the level of Chinese coolies."

It adds as a sort of postscript, which shows the specious manœuvering of the politician whose desire is to please the Left and give way to the Right :

"If England gives us credits we shall repay a moderate percentage."

Mr. Rakovsky declares, however, that the reason Russia is asking for British credits, is in order that the debts Britain is claiming may be liquidated.

Liability for the pre-revolutionary debts, both to governments and private persons, was at first repudiated by the Soviet Government. The repudiation should have been maintained on grounds, both of principle and economics.

The Trade Union Manifesto adds :

"Private property shall never be given back to foreign owners."

Mr. Rakovsky nevertheless promises that such properties shall be leased to their former owners as long term concessions. That, in effect, is to hand them back to the foreign owner subject to tax.

This concession to the private property system is a very serious and regrettable one.

The British bankers further demand that the Russian State monopoly of foreingn trade shall be abrogated and that full freedom of trading shall be permitted between British and Russian private interests. This demand is repudiated, both by the Russian Trade Unions, and by Mr. Rakovsky.

The Soviet Government, may be buttressed in its refusal to comply with this demand of the bankers by the fact that its trade monopoly is a source of profit, the surrender of which would cause the Government serious financial embarrassment. State capitalism creates vested governmental interests, just as private capitalism creates private vested interests. The expropriation of the capitalist is therefore automatically endowed with an element of permanence.

When plenty for all and production for use are established, the vested interest of the masses will oppose any return to the private property system.

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NO FEWER THAN 23 PARTIES are contending for the votes of the people in the German elections. The Government is calling for the acceptance of the Dawes Reparation Report, though it is declared in Germany that the Report is a greater outrage than the Peace of Versailles.

The German Elections.

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THE DAWES REPORT, as the Experts' Report on the reparations has come to be called, after its chairman, is regarded in America as being produced at the dictation of the great financial interests, of which Mr. Pierpont Morgan is the head. Mr. Morgan has been dining with the Reparations Committe in Paris and the press tactfully reports that the Committee has consulted him on the practicability of its plan.

U. S. A. and the Experts' Report on Reparations.

U. S. President, Coolidge, has hailed the Report as "unsurpassed in importance since the Armistice." He hopes "it will commend itself to all European Governments." Quite obviously the Report embodies the provisions which the great creditor nation, the United States, insists upon, to safeguard its financial preponderance, and to benefit its trade in the markets of Europe. President Coolidge has promised that America's private capitalists will provide a loan to Germany. He did not speak without consuting the interests concerned.

All this is a sad anti-climax to the German Revolution.

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THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE DAWES REPORT by the British Government and the evasion of a definite reply by M. Poincaré are what everyone must have anticipated from the recent pronuncements of the two governments. The British reply observes, it should be noted, that : **The recommendations of the experts do not apepar to involve any reduction of the total of the German Reparations debt."** The hideous total of the war indemnity therefore remains, and the British Labour Government has made itself responsible for the enormity. It may be said that the Labour Government had no alternative but to fall in with the demands of the Crown and the ruling classes of Britain in this regard, especially in view of the fact that the French Government desires even harsher treatment of Germany. In our view the Labour Government is covering itself with shame by accepting responsibility for an instrument so iniquitous as the Dawes Report. We are quite aware that the Labour Government would be turned out immediately were it to refuse to accept the Dawes Report. That is one of the reasons why we declare that Socialists and Communists should refuse to accept responsibility for carrying on what is called "the King's Government" under capitalism. Meanwhile the French Government shows plainly that is is not disposed to relax its hold on the Ruhr.

The European Allies and the Report.

E. Sylvia Pankhurst.

EVILS IN SOCIETY

Society to-day is divided into two distinct classes; one class that performs all the labour of the world, and another class that does no useful labour.

The former class, the working-class, lives in poverty, want and distress. The latter class, the idling class, has all the pleasures and luxuries. This proves that one class in society is living upon the labour of another class.

Surely if someone put his hand into your pocket and extracted therefrom one single shilling, you would want to have the individual punished, and you would demand a restitution of your property.

The idling class robs you year in and year out; it robs you while you are awake and while you are asleep; it keeps you poor and wretched from the time you are born until you go down into yur grave. Yet, do you ever cry robber ? Do you ever demand a restitution of your property ? You respect these robbers, many of you even look upon them as your benefactors.

Nay, more than that, many of you are ready and anxious to fight the battles of these robbers and defend their lives with your own.

You see a sleek and graceful-appearing couple, dressed in silks, satins and broadcloth, and bedecked with jewels and diamonds, and express your admiration for them and call them "Lady" and "Gentleman."

You see another couple plainly and shabbily dressed, with hands suggesting hard toil, with careworn faces, emaciated bodies and awkward, clumsy gait. You turn away from them with contempt. It does not occur to you that these two careworn people are the benefactors of the sleek and graceful "Lady and Gentleman." Yet even the intellectual polish of the latter has been received at the expense of the plain couple. The plain, homely couple belongs to the class that furnished all the beautiful and lovely things that go to feed, clothe, shelter, ornament and educate the sleek couple.

Why is this ? Why does a class of robbers that keeps you in live-long want and misery receive your admiration, whilst the poor fellow whom want and despair have caused to make this single attack upon you, provokes your wrath and indignation? Simply because the single robbery is carried out in a clumsy way, whilst the class of robbers does its work indirectly in a stealthy, systematic way. The robbery by the class is called by such pretty, sweet-sounding names that you would spurn the very thought of its carrying on anything but the most honourable enterprises. This form of robbery is called Profit, Rent, Interest **and Taxes.**

Did you ever think what these respectable terms imply ?

Profit implies that for the price of the commodity you procure, you must pay as much more over its actual cost price as is necessary to keep the gentlefolks who dispense these commodities in comfort and enable them to amass a fortune without labour. Supposing that some people are required to perform such services, it is neither reasonable nor just that the compensation for their services should consist of the lion's share of the product to be exchanged, or that there should be a whole army of middlemen preying upon the producer.

Rent implies that you must deliver up to the gentry a big slice of the results of your hard work for the privilege of living upon the planet, which of course Nature created for the exclusive use of the landlords. Why, consider it ! The idea of men claiming money for land, the earth our common mother, men selling what they cannot produce. No human being was instrumental in producing land, and no human being has therefore any just title to the ownership; for the just title to the ownership of anything rests exclusively upon the effort, the exertion, the labour expended in producing the same.

People driven off the rural land are driven into the slums of the cities. For every man driven off the land, the demand for the produce of the workmen of the cities is decreased, and the man himself with his wife and children is forced among those workmen to compete upon any terms for a bare living. That forces wages down, that is the reason the cities are overcrowded.

Open the land that is locked up that is held by landlords who will not use it themselves, or will not allow anybody else to use it. Surely if a man claimed the sea, or the air, or the light as his, you would laugh at his presumption. Why not laugh at the landowner, for he is in

the same position ?

As a Free Communist, I say that land should be, and would be, as free under rational social conditions as is the air, and the water and the sunlight.

Now let us consider Interest, which implies that you must part with an additional big slice of the results of your labour, and deliver it up to the gentry, directly or indirectly, or in both ways, for the privilege of exchanging the product of your labour. Interest on money is supposed to be the money lender's reward, and is the greatest sham, the most horrible imposition, and the most specious form of robbery in existence.

First we must consider what money really is, for interest is based on the monopoly of the issue of money, just as rent is due to the monopoly of land. Money is only a tool to relieve the parasites from doing any useful labour. So long as there is money the working class will never receive the full fruits of its labour. Money should simply amount to a certificate of labour, or services performed, a labour check. Indeed the Free Communists would dispense with all kinds of media of exchange, they would produce and enjoy in common upon the principle, "from each according to his ability, to each according to his need."

That is the most idealistic system of living conceivable, in my estimation.

Profit, Rent and Interest being abolished, most of the avenues of robbery would be closed, and labour would very nearly receive its due. Instead of one million industrial slaves hunting for masters, masters would be hunting for slaves, and being unable to find them, they would be obliged to come off the perch and join the workers' ranks and take a hand in the co-operative association, which would be the inevitable result.

Another item to rob the worker of most of the balance of the Profit, Rent and Interest the robbers have left him, is the Taxes, represented by Government. Financially considered, it is the most insignificant item of robbery here specified. Yet Government is the most dangerous foe to Humanity. Government protects the landlord and the money monopolist. Without Government monopoly would be impossible. Government is only a big helpless pauper that cannot survive without the support of the people through taxation.

Now let us consider certain evils among the working-class that the employers like to hear. Some workers are always insisting that their trade is superior to any other trade. A mechanic looks down on a labourer. The labourer in turn looks down on the unfortunate who happens to be out of work, and takes a secret pleasure in seeing the mechanic who formerly sneered at him, begging for work. Of course the professional man looks down on the whole batch below him, either with complete indifference or with contempt. Folly is the name of trade distinctions. The man who pulls the throttle of the locomotive is no more essential to the running of the train than the fireman who keeps up the steam pressure. The engineer may possess more knowledge concerning the mechanism and the operating of the engine, but if the fire goes out all his knowledge is of no avail. The fireman looks down on the coalheaver, but his ability to keep up the steam pressure depends upon the sure supply of coal.

In the building trades we find the same folly; the bricklayer considers himself the better of the hod carrier, while the hod carrier looks upon his job as superior to that of the mortar mixer. The man who is skilled in some branch of industry is considered better than one who is unskilled, or whose skill is confined to some other occupation. The man earning 12s., a day feels himself above one who only earns 9s. a day. So all through society as now organised we find an elaborate and foolish assortment of trade distinctions tending to disunite the workers.

Fellow workers, throw aside this foolishness. Recognise the equality of all workers, and the grand possibilities before you, when you stand together and push forward the work of reclaiming the world for the workers.

A. B. HOWIE.

SEAMEN AND SOLIDARITY

By A SEAMAN.

Yes, We Have No Dispute With The Shipowners.

The policy of the National Sailors and Firemen's Union during the recent dock strike, was clearly defined by its president, Mr. Havelock Wilson, in his reply to inquiries from his own membres, asking him what was to be their attitude in relation to the docker's action. "Sign on and go away in your ships if you can. We have no dispute with the shipowners," he told them.

Upon reflection it will be seen that this advice distinctly favours the owners, and if acted upon, must place the seamen in a very false position.

The strike commenced at noon on the Saturday, February 16th, and with the exception of those who had completed loading or discharging at that time, no ships would have left port except for two reasons :

1): that they had been worked by blackleg Labour ;

2): for the purpose of discharging their cargoes at another port not affected by the strike.

Happily, complete solidarity amongst the dockers' branch of the Transport and General Worker's Union, prevailed at all British ports, and the blackleg Labour employed was insignificant. How long this position would have been maintained it is hard to say. Had the struggle continued for any length of time, it is quite possible that one or more ports might have capitulated and accepted the masters' terms.

Helping the Employers.

Had this occurred, there is no doubt shipowners would have endeavoured to send their ships to these ports, and in all probability some seamen and firemen, acting on Mr. Wilson's advice, would have taken the ships to the destinations required by their respective owners. This would certainly have strenthened the owners' position in resisting the dockers' demands.

Remember this is exactly what did occur during the previous dock strike, and, even during the recent strike, at least one ship, to the writer's knowledge, left London for a Continental port, for the purpose of diverting her cargo. This ship was manned by members of the N. S. and F. U. Mr. Wilson's advice therefore must be regarded as being very unsympathetic towards the dockers, and detrimental to their action in enforcing their demands. It is also directly opposed to all principles of Industrial Solidarity.

An N. S. F. U. Parody.

It is not always for what is written therein that a book is valued; sometimes it is for what has been left unwritten. Many things we should like to say are best kept to ourselves, and if several members of the Executive Council of a certain Trade Union could have expressed their sentiments openly, at a recent meeting, the proceedings might have been as follows :

Amongst other business discussed was that of German competition, and the methods employed by German shipowners in securing freights; low wages and false register of tonnage. It was declared that the wicked Hun was to carry cargoes at a lower rate than the British shipowners could do, and even British merchants were taking advantage at this fact. The noble president of the above mentioned Union, his blue eyes flashing with anger, denounced such methods, as unfair, unscrupulous, and several other nasty names. He plainly indicated that something would have to be done to protect the poor British shipowner, who really ran his ships for the benefit of his employees. Profit was but a very minor consideration, but of course, he would like to make enough to clear working expenses.

"We have already induced several German crews to hold up their ships in a demand for higher wages," the president continued, "but what was the result ? On their return to Germany these crews were promptly arrested and sent to goal. They have my entire sympathy, and all that, of course, but what can I do ? I am sure, my friends, that we have done all that we possibly can."

"Hear, Hear!" cried somebody.

"In fact, are we not doing our own members for a jolly old bob a week ?"

"Certainly we....."

"Silence!" thundered the president, "Remember where you are; and besides, we've got to get it somehow, a'in't we fathead ? Now, we have got to devise a plan for meeting this unfair competition, so as to enable the British shipowner to carry on his philanthropic work."

"But, look here, my dear old pres.," interjected the delegate from Dartmoor, "Don't you think that the shipowners are capable of looking after their own interests without our help ? We are a Trade Union, and therefore represent a body of workers, and I think....."

"Never mind what you think," shouted the president, now thoroughly roused," you shut up."

Cries of "Bolshevik" 'agitator,' and "chuck him out" from the other delegates effectively silenced the interrupter.

Harmony being restored, the president continued : "Surely it is our duty to help our shipowners. Their interests are our interests; in fact only by their benevolence can we hope to exist, and our members to live in comfort. Yet what is their position ?

Shipowners' Poverty.

"To day many are almost reduced to absolute poverty. Only a few days ago, my dear friend Lord Inchcape, with whom I chanced to be dining at the Ritz, informed me that he seriously contemplated going on the R. O. if things did not improve. Just imagine, my frineds, the noble lord having to do that ! Then there is poor old John Ellerman expecting the broker's man in any day, and Walter Runciman, he of the generous heart, thinks that he may be able to scrape long by carrying sailor's bags and cashing their advance notes. So I am sure you will agree with me when I say that somebody — I mean something will have to be done."

"Why not have another war," suggested the delegate from Pentonville," surely that would put the kibosh on the Hun, and help our dear friends to recover the trade."

"A splendid idea," replied the president, but I am afraid this Ramsay MacDonald fellow would not listen to me, However I will discuss the matter with Mr. Winston Churchill. In the meantime we must find a temporary remedy."

"What about "Kruschens ?" shouted one, but nobody heeded him.

Feeling that it was up to him as representing the premier port of the Empire, the delegate from Lewes now rose, and after clearing his carburreter, started off at top-speed : "I venture to suggest," he said, "that considering the straitened circumstances to which the shipowners have been reduced, the only solution, is a reduction of wages."

Loud and angry protests greeted this announcement, and several delegates, their evil intentions painfully apparent, made an ugly rush to seize the speaker. Before they could reach him however, he hastily assured them that they misunderstood him, "My dear brothers," he explained,' it is not our wages to which I refer, but those of our members."

The sighs of relief, in various keys, that herewith filled the air, clearly indicated, that this was a quadruped of a very different colour, and after the victims of the shock had been revived, the next round commenced.

Extravagance of the Workers.

"Not only is it in the owners interests ,that I make this suggestion," the speaker continued, "but also for the moral benefit of the members themselves. It is painfully apparent to us all that they are earning far more than they receive. That is, I mean to say, receiving more than they earn. Their entravagance is sad to behold, and many, I know, possess banking accounts. Then again witness them now-a-days when they join their ships. One would imagine that they were passengers, with their suit-cases and valises Compare this with the good old days when the labourers went aboard singing and happy, with their whole outfit wrapped n a bundle handkerchief. I think you will all agree, that a little check on their spending powers, will be really beneficial, and teach them the value of thrift."

Having got this off his chest, the speaker sat down amidst applause, which lasted several minutes, until the president, entreating silence, complimented his faithful disciple and thanked him for his suggestion, assuring him that it was in strict accordance with his own views."

"But, went on the old sea-dog, "I am afraid it can't be done, at present. You know I have already put the jolly old reduction across them several times since the war; but the old mutual sacrifice dope is getting a bit stale. Besides conditions have changed, and workers are actually demanding increases of wages. Some, the dockers for example, have even gone on strike to enforce their demands. Whilst on the subject of the dock strike, gentlemen, I must inform you that I have received several letters from members of our union, asking me, what our attitude is to be in the present situation. What the devil do they think it will be ? Do they want to strike too, are they dissatisfied ? However, I told them that it was their duty to sign on and go in their ships if required to do so, I have informed them emphatically, that **We have no dispute with the Shipowners.** The idea ! Do they think that we are going to support a crowd of misguided dockers who are being led astray by their leaders ? How different it would have been," he continued reflectively, "had they placed the control of their destinies in my capable hands. I'd give them strikes !"

"However, my dear friends, you will see that it would be rather inadvisable to propose a further reduction at the present time. The silly blighters, I mean to say, our members might not grasp the fact that it was for their own good, and would probably resent such a measure. So I will make a proposal myself: on behalf of our dear friends and masters, that we open a fund for the purpose of providing needy shipowners with Sunday dinners, and I hope that you will get busy when crews are being paid, and make it a success."

Shouts of approval greeted the grand old warrior's proposal and it was carried unanimously.

"Now, my friends,' went on the president, "I will not detain you longer, it has gone two o'clock, and I am sure you are all longing to push a couple back before they close, so I will just ask you, as many as are here present, to accompany me with a pure heart and humble voice, saying after me : we love our masters and for what we have received may their Lord make us truly thankful, for we have no dispute with the owners."

After pronouncing the benediction he bade his followers adieu, and they departed singing :

"Jack's the boy to work a dozen hours a day
"And, when the boss complains of loss,
signs on for lower pay.
"He sings 'God save the King' of freedom
loudly raves
"So Jack my lad, you must be glad,
Brittania rules the slaves.

ROBBO.

FASCIST ELECTION METHODS

The following pasages are taken from the Fascist instructions to their elections agents:

It is of the utmost importance from the very start to obtain complete mastery of the polling-stations and arrange for keeping away the scrutinisers on whom we cannot rely and the representatives of the Opposition lists.

We have reason to believe tht the magistrates presiding at the polling-stations are for the most part faithful and to be relied on; you can freely arrange with them the manner and method necessary to adopt for the voting.

In the case of those few presidents of polling-stations who may oppose us it is left to the tact and energy of the political secretaries and of the representatives of our list to prevent them from ruining our plebiscital vote.

It is undesirable to use the actual polling-booths. Open voting prevents our adversaries from voting against us.

Where the presidents, from hostility or too great zeal in their office, insist on the use of the polling-booths, arrange that uncertain voters or suspects are traced by a control sign. Such a control sign can be arranged by giving each elector one, two, or three preferential votes which the elector will vote for, writing on the paper the name and corresponding number. For this reason and in order to use it as an identification mark we invite all Fascisti to abstain from preference votes.

THE LEFT WING IN RUSSIA

The international Working Men's Association protests that in Soviet Russia there is "systematic destruction of all who dare think differently from the Tcheka." It urges a "world wide campaign." "to demand that all Anarchists, Syndicatists, Socialists and non-partisan revolutionists be liberated." A partial list of prisoners and exiles is giyen, including Herman Askeroff, an Anarchist of 20 years standing, several Kronstadt sailors who took part in the revolutions of 1905 and October and February 1917; several soldiers of the Red Army, Paul Kalabuschkin, an Anarchist who spent many years in the Schusselburg prison under the Czar, Meyer Rubntchik, a well known Anarchist of the Golov Truda publishing house, who is now ill in Moscow prison under the Czar, Meyer Rubintchik, whom are prominent in the movement.

The Anarchist Red Cross has also sent a similar manifesto as far as possible to every working class organisation in this country. This document complains that many of the prisoners are confined in the Solovetzky prison, on an island in the White Sea to which boats go only twice a year. This prison was in use under the Czar, and, according to the statements of the Anarchist Red Cross, the old treatment continues there. Prisoners are said to be beaten for the slightest infraction of rules, undressed and forced to stand naked in a dark cell. Two prisoners, Klysiev and Zapetzin, are said to be lying there crippled with hands and feet frozen, spitting blood, and awaiting death as a release from their sufferings. On December 19th the prisoners in Solovetzky revolted, and four persons were killed and two wounded. The Soviet Government has appointed a committee to investigate the occurence.

These statements make very unpleasant reading. What have the Russian delegates to the Anglo-Russian Conference to say about them ?

THE EARTH'S BOUNTY

"I verily believe that the earth in one year can produce enough food to last for thirty. Why do people die of starvation or lead a miserable existence on the verge of it ? Why have millions upon millions to toil from morning till evening just to gain a mere crust of bread ? Because of the absolute lack of organisation by which such labour should produce its effects, the absolute lack of distribution, the absolute lack even of the very idea that such things are possible. Nay, even to mention such things, to say that they are possible is criminal with many. Madness could hardly go further." **Richard Jeffreys.**

THE LIME TREE

A-thwart the sordid greys of slums I saw thee,
Fair lime in thy new-budded spring time green,
New ope'd this hour from dusky sheaths thy [foliage,
Ethereal vision 'mid the sordid grime.

E. S. P.

MODERN SLAVERY

By H. Brown

We are supposed to be living in a state of civilisation; but our civilisation is far from humane. Slavery is supposed to be dead in this country, but there is a complete form of it existing at Belmont Institution, Sutton, Surrey.

In 1921 I went to Belmont. The authorities there brand one on arrival. All one's clothes are stamped: Belmont Institution, Sutton, Surrey. One is given a number of identification. Mine was H. Brown 1062.

In this institution there are men from all parts of England, Ireland and Scotland, and men are sent from different Boards of Guardians round about London.

The conditions reminded me of ancient times. The food is of the coarsest quality and insufficient to keep up bodily health. It may be sufficient for old people, but young, growing people, like myself, were always ready for meals. The shortage of food is unnecessary, for men are set to growing all that is required, but the greater part of the vegetables are left in the ground to rot instead of being used for useful purposes. The cows used to get the green stuff and when I worked in the kitchen all the potatoes left after they had been rationed out to the men were given to the pigs.

The beds were of the roughest material and in a filthy condition.

We worked eight hours a day for five days and four hours on Saturday. After that we were allowed recreation in the so-called day rooms. These were supplied with two sets of draughts, two ring boards with no rings, and two packs of playing cards, for about 400 odd men. We were allowed one sheet of writing paper, one envelope, one stamp and half an ounce of tobacco in return for our work.

Through wearing odd boots, one seven and one nine, I got a poisoned foot. From sleeping under a broken window the draught and rain blew in, I had got a bad face. On the advice of the medical steward I agreed to have a tooth extracted. I shall never forget the experience. I was told to sit in a chair, then, without doing anything to deaden the pain, he got hold of me and pulled my jaws, leaving me in terrible pain.

Belmont is worse than prison, and instead of the Labour Party making an inquiry. it would be more to their credit to abolish Belmont altogether.

***

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