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TWOPENCE

OPEN LETTER TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE P. & O. Co. (Owners of the s.s. "Egypt")

By J. T. WALTON NEWBOLD

MY dear Inchcape,—
The lamentable disaster which befell the mail steamship "Egypt" some ten days ago, when she was rammed and sunk by a French steamer in the fog, has had attendant upon it several unfortunate and, as yet, unexplained circumstances.

It would appear very doubtful as to whether these circumstances are capable of any explanation that will be satisfactory to others than the parties interested in the parsimonious operation of what, by all the showing of capitalist authorities has, for long, been a most profitable property.

The crew consisted, we are assured by the press, of Lascars. When the ship was struck, these Lascars are reported to have completely lost their heads and to have been panic-stricken in their conduct. It is due to them, we are told, that the number of lives lost was as great as it was, and we are given to understand that, had the number of passengers been greater, the disaster would have been, from the number of lives lost, terrible.

Now, we have no particular complaint to make against you and your colleagues for your employment of coloured seamen. We are internationalists. We welcome the sight of seamen of all colours—except green—in our ports. (Pardon me, *your* ports. Nowhere, so far as my memory serves me, do you let the workers get any appreciable measure of control of ports, however else owned or controlled.)

What we object to about your employment of Lascars is your reasons for so doing. We object to the conditions under which they can be induced to work and the wages for which they can be hired.

When there are thousands of British seamen out of work, we have serious cause for complaint that your extremely prosperous combine should man its passenger ships with coloured crews. These coloured crews, even according to Government figures, work for £5 a month for skilled, and £1 12s. 6d. for unskilled men. We know that these wages are a considerable improvement on those paid prior to 1917 (for carpenters), and 1919 for others. We know, why. The former were getting higher wages in Mesopotamia. The latter had to get more because of the considerable increase in the cost of living in India.

Your plea for not employing Britishers, will be, of course, that wages had increased "enormously" after November, 1917. You will contend that you could not afford to pay them "when the vessels came to be discharged from Government service and

things got back to economic conditions, and when world freights had to bear the disbursements" (to quote your own speech last November.)

You had "a wretched year" in 1921. Of course you had. You were only able to pay a dividend of 12 per cent. That was terrible, was it not! "Most distasteful"—as you remarked!

In 1916-1917, and 1918, you paid 18 per cent. (free of tax) every year; in 1919, 12 per cent. (free of tax) plus a bonus of 6 per cent.; and in 1920, 15 per cent. (free of tax) plus the same bonus of 6 per cent. You have only paid 105 per cent. in six years, have you, my parsimonious and poverty-stricken peer?

You are, I suppose I am correct in saying, the most influential of our British shipowners. You are at the head of the largest shipping fleet in the world. You are a man whose influence here and in Calcutta is almost incalculably great. You are the senior partner in McKinnon, McKenzie and Co., a concern whose *status* in India grows every year more elevated.

You are accompanied on the board of your P and O., and its associated companies, by the most influential merchants in the East. You are a figure in banking circles, at home and in Asia, of outstanding eminence. You are a big man in oil. You represent H.M. Government on the board of the Anglo-Persian Oil Co., Ltd.

You sit with Irvine Campbell Geddes on the board of Anderson, Green and Co., who manage the Orient Line. You sat with his brother, Eric Campbell Geddes, on the Geddes' Economy Committee. Your daughter is married to the Hon. Alexander Shaw (since elected to the P. and O. board), whose father, Lord Shaw, of Dunfermline, was the chairman of the Dockers' Inquiry. . . . So impartial don't you know! One Geddes managed the Orient Line—what was it that *John Bull* had to say about steerage accommodation in its ships on, at least, two occasions? and the other Geddes managed the Ministry of Transport and, before that, the Admiralty.

You are "well in," aren't you, my lord?

I should not be at all surprised if the affair of the "Egypt" is forgotten before so very long. The P. and O. is, after all, a great company, has a great record, and, to my certain and private knowledge, has a very warm corner in the hearts of many Indian Civil Servants, who have retired, and who have yet got to retire.

You talk about competition with other lines, my lord, when you are on the theme

of wages. What other lines have you in view?

Your relations with Ellerman are of shareholding intimacy. Your relations with the Nippon Yukea Kaisha have been, I know, the most cordial.

Most respectfully I suggest to you, my lord, that much of your talk about competition and inability to pay high wages, is so much "fudge." You know, as I know, that you have nothing to fear from "the old man of the sea," Havelock Wilson. You know that you can treat his union members with good-humoured toleration. You know that you can hire Lascars in every port from Karachi to Canton, at wages grading down from £4 to £1 10s. a month. You know that, as at Hong-Kong, you have only got to ask, and the whole machinery of imperial repression is at your service.

You have economic power, both East and West, and it conveys with it all other power besides . . . as yet.

The Amsterdam International will not tie you up, my lord. The Second International has no means to bring you to book. You have the official trade unionists all ends up. "Yes, your lordship" . . . as Bob Williams would say, arguing before a Court of Arbitration.

But the Red International of Labour Unions has got your measure. The Third International has you taped from Tokio to Teheran and from Singapore to Suez.

You got a shake-up in Hong-Kong. That was a nice little "bust-up" your oil-men had at Barra a few weeks back. Calcutta is not so cosy as it used to be for capitalism, eh, my lord?

Well, well! There is "plenty much" coming to you yet, your lordship!

Meanwhile, no doubt, you will continue to develop the Steel Corporation of Asia, with its gangs of coolie labour; to enlist more Lascars for your syndicated shipping combine; to preach to the Government the same economy in housing that your Anglo-Persian board practises in the shale oil villages of West Lothian, and to confirm it in the admirable resolve to replace unreliable Moslem troops on guard at your oil wells by aeroplane-police drawn from your own social caste.

You will go on, you and your colleagues, a little while longer. You will still continue to risk lives by sea in ships, and lives by land in phthisis-breeding slums. You will still stand for £4 a month to deck hands and 105 per cent. (free of tax) every six years, to shareholders.

Just a little while longer, my lord!

The Liberalism of the BRITISH LABOUR PARTY

By M. N. ROY

THE ridiculousness of Wilsonian Liberalism fades away into insignificance when compared with the sanctimonious zeal of the international Social Democrats and Labourites for the doctrine of "self-determination."

When the Liberals, who do not conceal their pious anxiety to save bourgeois society, talk about such things as the "self-determination of peoples," etc., they at least deserve credit for loyalty to their class; but to the Social Democrats and Labourites, it is nothing but a doctrine; a doctrine to be utilised, not in order to serve the interests of the workers they profess to represent, but to mislead them, blindfold them, betray them.

Were it not so, how can we explain the shameful way in which the attempt to build a united front of the world proletariat to resist the determined assault of the bourgeoisie has been and is being sabotaged by the redoubtable Social Democrats of Europe and the liberal Labourites of England.

Second International—First Humbug

What possibly could be the motive of Vandervelde or Ramsay MacDonald in adopting the obstructionist policy which almost wrecked the Berlin Conference? Can anybody help seeing through the crocodile tears shed by these two honourable gentlemen over imprisoned Social Revolutionary terrorists and the well-deserved fate of the Georgian Mensheviks, on recollecting how silently the one connived at the butchery in the Congo and how conveniently the other forgets about the Irish political prisoners rotting until recently in subterranean dungeons—or the wholesale massacres in India, Egypt and the Rand?

Before taking the Soviet Government to task for the alleged violation of the sovereignty of the Georgians, the Second International would do well to look after the morals of its own members. What about the colonial policy of the British Labour Party, one of the mainstays of the Second International?

The leaders of the British Labour Party never committed the crime of calling themselves Socialists (the Socialism of the I.L.P. brand can be calmly discounted), but the Second International has in its folds a number of the celebrities of renegade Marxism, and as an organisation it still pretends to lead the working class in the struggle for social regeneration (the word revolution is taboo). Cannot the Second International see that if the victory of the European proletariat depends in any way upon the self-determination of the peoples subjugated by the various imperialist powers, then it should leave Georgia alone, and turn its attention to such nations as the Irish, Egyptians, and Indians, who are coerced into slavery with the connivance, if not support, of the British Labour Party! We know that the Georgian bogey has no earthly connection whatsoever with the much needed unity of the European proletariat. It is conjured up purely to serve the interests of the bourgeoisie.

India? Egypt? Ireland?

But let us take for granted the sincerity of the democratic liberalism of the British Labour Party. Let us believe for the moment that Ramsay MacDonald, together with his kin on the Continent, believes in the doctrine of self-determination. Let us also acknowledge that the Georgian Mensheviks are not tools of the Entente, but "legitimate representatives" of the Georgian people. Now, if the British Labour Party is so passionately in love with the abstract principle of "self-determination" that it will not work for the consolidation of a united proletarian front against a concentrated capitalist offensive, until and unless the Communist-International induces the Soviet government to stop the "Bolshevik aggression" in Georgia—may we not remind them that the Egyptians and the Indians stand in need of self-determination no less than the Georgians? Would not the juridical knowledge of the leaders of the Second International be equally, if not more usefully employed, were it devoted to the defence of the harmless pacifist Gandhi, locked up for six years, to securing an equitable trial for those terrorists who have systematically tried to kill the leaders of the Russian Revolution? If a Tseretelli's right to deliver the Georgian workers and peasants over to the exploitation of the English capitalists is to be respected as sacred, why does the British Labour Party look askance at the movements led by a De Valera, or a Zaglul Pasha or a Gandhi? Is it because Tseretelli's "most democratic republic" accepted the dictatorship of British capital, whereas the right of self-determination accorded to the movements headed by the latter three would mean the disruption of the British Empire?

We are expected to believe that the Social Democrats and the Labourites stand for freedom for all, as against the principle of proletarian dictatorship professed by the Communists. Well, the sincerity of the British Labour Party in this question cannot stand the test when its attitude towards the national movements in the colonies is examined. Let us look into its record. Never has the British Labour Party defined its attitude on the Colonial Question. Of all its leaders, Ramsay MacDonald has written the most about the imperial administration of the subject countries. We search in vain all through his writings to find a sentence which unconditionally recognises the right of the colonial peoples to determine freely what sort of government they would like to have. The most liberal statement he makes amounts to this: the old jingoist imperialism is untenable under the present circumstances; more liberal methods have to be adopted if the safety and permanence of the Empire is to be insured; the word Empire has become too odious, a more democratic term—Commonwealth—has to be introduced. He is sure that the "democratic Federation

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of the British Empire" will be safe and secure in the keeping of the Labour politicians; a Col. Wedgewood in the India Office and a Ramsay MacDonald in Delhi will be a great improvement upon the noble lords now occupying those comfortable positions. The Irish policy of the Labour Party has never committed the sin of exceeding the limits of Gladstonian liberalism. So much by way of generalisation; now a few particulars.

When at the beginning of the war the Boer Nationalists of South Africa rose in revolt with the object of declaring an independent republic, the liberalism of the British labour leaders fell into line with those rank imperialists who found German intrigue behind that revolt and damned it as treason. Not a murmur was to be heard from the British Labour Party when De Wet was sentenced to hard labour.

Such an event as the 1916 Easter Revolution in Ireland could not make the British Labour Party define its attitude regarding this thorny question. As a member of the War Cabinet, Henderson did not raise a finger to save James Connolly, not to speak of others whose genuine fervour for national independence cannot be blackened by the insinuation of underground German intrigues. The British Labour Party did not find it necessary out of loyalty to the working class at least to withdraw from the Coalition which had killed the champion of the Irish proletariat.

In the present Irish embroglio, the British Labour Party has succeeded only in making itself ridiculous. Lloyd Georgian (not even Gladstonian) liberalism has stolen its thunder. The perfunctory Irish Settlement, which resulted in the betrayal of the

Irish people by Collins and Griffith, has satisfied all the demands the British Labour Party ever put forth on this question. Consequently, there is no other way left to it but to look on stupidly and impotently at the hopeless mix-up in Ireland.

The British Labour Party has maintained a sublime indifference towards the brutal repression in India ever since the earlier years of the present century. When the so-called "war services" of the Indian people—services for which even the pacifist Ramsay MacDonald congratulates the Indians and recommends a better lot for them—were paid for by the infamous Rowlatt Act, which practically put the entire country under martial law, not even a word of protest was raised by the British Labour Party. But the Amritsar massacre, which followed upon the heels of the Rowlatt Act, disturbed the philosophic calm of the British Labourites and elicited a conventional protest from them. This document, signed among others by Henderson, J. H. Thomas, Robert Williams and Lansbury, deplored the foolishness of such a policy of repression, and pointed out that thereby "the lives of the thousands of English women and children in India were endangered." The apostles of humanity, who are so indignant over the imaginary terrorism in Georgia, were only concerned about the precious lives of helpless members of the ruling class, when the unarmed workers of India were being bombed and blown up by hundreds.

Terror in India

When Col. Wedgewood and Ben Spoor attended the Indian National and Trade Union Congresses as fraternal delegates in the stormy days of 1920, all they did was to prevent any dangerous turn in the Non-Co-operation movement by stalwartly pointing out the possibilities of the Montague Reforms, as well as the Divine Providence behind the Anglo-Indian bond which, they exhorted, should be preserved for the welfare of civilisation. On his return to England, Wedgewood warned the British ruling class of the seriousness of the Indian situation and advised them to be careful in handling it.

The reign of terror initiated in India by Lord Reading last winter has been overlooked by the British Labour Party. The situation became such that even the capitalist press was full of news about the daily arrest and imprisonment of hundreds of nationalist leaders and volunteers on mere technical charges. The debate in the House of Commons upon the Indian situation placed the British Labour Party in a very delicate dilemma. In order to evade the frankly imperialistic rôle of supporting the Government's Indian policy as against the blood-thirsty resolution of the "Die-hards," Col. Wedgewood led his flock dramatically out of the House. But no one can be fooled any longer by such naive political manoeuvres.

The resolution subsequently adopted by the joint session of the Labour Party Executive, the Trade Union Congress and the Parliamentary Labour Party concerning the reign of terror in India was a shameful instance of pseudo-liberalism. It suggested that the Indian National Congress should stop all Non-Co-operation activities before meeting with the Government for the purpose of negotiations. Such instances, which are but veiled imperialism, can be added to indefinitely. But these are enough to expose the hypocrisy of the doctrine of self-determination, so dear to the British Labourites.

A few words more about Egypt. The Labour Party did not have anything to say against the proclamation of the British Protectorate over Egypt at the beginning of the war. The repeated persecution and the ultimate deportation of Zaglul failed to inspire these champions of liberty with holy indignation. They tacitly support the present policy of coercing the Egyptian people with the help of a few landed aristocrats, bought with sham concessions.

Wake 'em Up

Such, in short, is the glorious record of those who are sabotaging the proletarian struggle. As at the just concluded meeting of the Commission of Nine, the representatives of the Second International attempted to sidetrack the issue of proletarian unity by raising the Georgian question and that of the imprisoned Social Revolutionaries, our representatives asked them to put their own house in order first. They called upon the British Labour Party to demand the recognition of the Irish Republic and the freedom of Egypt and India, under the threat of direct action by the British working class. At least let the British Labour Party openly advocate the right of self-determination for the peoples subjugated by British Imperialism as ardently as they hold the brief for the Georgian Mensheviks. We know what the Second International and the British Labour Party will answer. They are defending the interests of the bourgeoisies of their respective countries. This will be another way of tearing the mask from their face so that the workers, who are still following them, will see them in their true light.

COMMUNISM AND LITERATURE

By FRED SILVESTER

WHAT should be our attitude to literature? Should we study it for its own sake, or should we study it in the light of the materialist conception of history?

Postgate's conception of the amount and kind of knowledge requisite to mentally equip the average Marxist is absurdly narrow. While I admit that many British Marxists only possess a smattering of Marxist education it by no means follows that they are content with that.

The difficulty is to get hold of a sufficiency of Marxist literature.

The regular demand for Kerr's publications indicates there is a public in this country which wants Marxist books. The extraordinary sale of Russian revolutionary literature has astonished more than one British publishing firm when handling some of it.

Undoubtedly there is a splendid potential market for Marxist literature in England, and given the capital, the writers and the translators, a fine business could be established by an enterprising publishing firm like Chas. Kerr & Co., of Chicago.

One great advantage would result from this. At present there is a paucity of Marxist literature dealing with the industrial history of these islands.

We need historical text books written by Marxists which will replace the works of de Gibbins and other bourgeois industrial historians. We need general historical surveys of particular epochs, such as, for example, the Peasant Revolt, the Reformation, the Puritan Revolution, the Industrial Revolution and Chartist movement, written from the viewpoint of historical materialism.

At present we have to depend mainly on writers who in studying the original documents interpret these epochs influenced either by bourgeois prejudices or by a conception of history which is not scientific.

Were the work I have indicated done in a really scholarly way by groups of workers engaged upon research work covering the particular epochs, an immense impetus would be given to Marxist education. Tutors would feel they were on firmer ground and apply themselves to the task of tuition with keener zest.

In connection with these historical studies certain representative literary men, certain schools of literature could be interpreted from the viewpoint that it was not their consciousness which influenced their age, but their age which influenced consciousness. For example, instead of troubling whether Bacon wrote Shakespeare or not, or how much in his plays is his own work and how much is the work of others, the Marxist critic would place Shakespeare and his fellow dramatists in the framework of their age, explain why they refrained from touching on vital controversial matters relative to religion and politics, and show from their works that their minds reflected some of the social consciousness not of the strictly feudal period, but that of the Renaissance-cum-Reformation period which in the last analysis was an economic transitional period between feudalism and capitalism.

In contrast with this period a study of Milton and his age would be extremely interesting, especially as Milton, as the stern and eloquent defender of regicide and supporter of the Cromwellian revolutionary dictatorship, has not been popularised by our bourgeois historians.

I don't quite understand what Postgate means when he says that "very frequently mental conditions persist long after the conditions to which they correspond."

Would he agree that the ideology of Christianity is an example of this persistence? But historical materialism would be unscientific if this survival could not be made to fit in with the general evolution of society.

Do we not find from the commencement that the concrete application of the abstract principles of Christianity has corresponded to the particular consciousness of certain groups or classes in society? Roughly, we can say there has been specific forms of Christianity applicable to Roman society, Feudal society, and Capitalist society.

We can also show how the same religion has provided ideological weapons for contending classes in society fighting out their economic differences. This was conspicuously illustrated in the period of the Reformation.

Postgate argues that "we cannot study literature wholly, or even mainly, as an example of the materialist conception of history." Postgate is wrong, and he is wrong because he has made the mistake of

assuming that historical materialism implies the interpretation of history merely from the viewpoint of economic progress.

As I understand it, the materialist conception of history implies an interpretation determined by not only the economic anatomy of a given society, but "by that combination which clothes and covers that anatomy even up to the multicoloured reflections of the imagination."

Therefore, literature *can* be studied wholly and mainly as an example of historical materialism and in my judgment such studies can be made as fascinating as instructive.

Finally, I would point out to Postgate that literature never has been and never will be, as he believes, an expression of the fundamental characters of men and nature considered apart from the underlying economic structure. The origin of language itself, its technique and its development, has been determined absolutely by economic evolution.

The particular consciousness of any particular literary genius as expressed in his writings can only be explained by a study of the general consciousness of the age which produced him or her, and that general consciousness in the last analysis is

'Communist' Returns NOTICE TO AGENTS

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In no case can credit be given for returns more than one month old.

Unsold copies for May must be returned by June 15th.

CIRCULATION MANAGER

determined by the underlying economic structure associated, as the case might be, with slave-labour, serf-labour, or wage-labour.

Another Go

Bootham School, York.

Dear Comrade,

I have always been afraid that bourgeois culture was too deeply ingrained ever to be eradicated or even completely nullified by doses, however continuous, of *Plebs* and the *COMMUNIST*. Now, after reading Postgate's article on "Literature and Communism," my fear has become a certainty. He begins quite happily, but before we can get our bearings he has lured us into the morass of bourgeois thought. The Materialist Conception of History, I should imagine, deals in ideology, which surely expresses itself in literature; the logical conclusion from this, and I believe it to be true, is that literature "dates"; that if we know the economic conditions of an epoch we know the kind of literature it produces, or vice versa. Postgate does not accept this, and therefore the whole superstructure of the M.C.H. comes tumbling to the ground. Postgate's argument, in fact, if pressed to a logical conclusion, means that people are actuated not by their economic conditions—Oh! No! nasty bread and cheese!!—but by their ideals, which happens—strange coincidence—to be exactly what the bourgeois would have us think—that he is in business for our good, not his own.

I quite acknowledge that the theme may be something unaffected by economic conditions, but in the method of treating it and in the actual choice of subject the author is controlled by his economic circumstances.

Now do not, I beg of you, ask why Keats wrote an "Ode to the Nightingale." Although one may be in revolt against the economic circumstances, they are still the driving force.

Even Postgate would admit that, though the desire for liberty may be a permanent characteristic, it has always taken on the form best suited to its economic surroundings.

Of course, the M.C.H. is not an infallible rule which is never under any circumstances broken, but the exception proves the rule, and Postgate has to admit that the Dryden he quoted was only a temporary lapse. The Materialist Conception of History works, however, in nearly every case, and is a much better guide than Postgate makes it out to be.

I do not think that Postgate is quite a hopeless case, but he must be constantly on his guard against such outcroppings of his bourgeois upbringing. There is a passage about fearing the Greeks even when they bring gifts, and though I would not adopt that attitude to him, I would suggest that he should adopt that attitude in dealing with his bourgeois culture.

Yours fraternally,

A. J. P. TAYLOR.

Postgate Replies

R.W.P. writes: I so strongly agree with practically everything that Silvester says that I am at a loss to know why he should have felt himself moved to oppose me. Particularly do I wish to endorse the paragraph I have taken the liberty of italicising—it is the most important thing of all in Communist education.

Where Silvester mistakes me is here. I did not attack the M.C.H.—far from it. What I did attack was the imbecile misinterpretation of it which assumes that every writer is a mechanical reflection of the economic conditions and no more—the common error which assumes that (in Silvester's words) "historical materialism implies the interpretation of history merely from the viewpoint of economic progress."

As for my statement that "mental conditions persist long after the conditions to which they correspond," surely that is not only orthodox Marxian (see Preface to the *Critique* and Engel's *Feuerbach*) but also good sense. In all sorts of unexpected corners of England there are places where relics of the old aristocracy stick to ideas and prejudices whose justification died with the old Duke of Wellington.

As for A. J. Taylor, of Bootham School, he has not troubled to understand what I wrote and the whole of his argument is that I am a bourgeois and therefore a fool. The logical corollary is that I should be expelled from the Party. However, I console myself with the thought that there are some things which even the Boys of Bootham

WORKERS' FAMINE RELIEF

THE Committee has been granted several concessions by the Soviet Government and will work them in the ordinary way, except that they will be worked in the interests of the Russian workers. Full details of the scheme are not yet available, and a conference will be held in Berlin on June 21st to discuss the project in all its bearings.

* * *

Our Famine Fund now totals £7,200.

* * *

The tool collections were very successful, particularly in London, Manchester, Glasgow, and Greenock. We have received several items of agricultural machinery, and an excellent collection of engineering and joiners tools, together with a number of spades and picks. Free space has been given to us on a steamer chartered by the *All-Russian Co-operative Society*, and all the tools collected will be shipped in the first week of June.

In the next few weeks we will issue an appeal for clothing and boots, and meanwhile local committees can be making arrangements to collect goods of this kind. They will be shipped direct to Petrograd for transport to the Volga region.

* * *

Two Famine Fund Bazaars will be held in London in June at the Brotherhood Church (which has been kindly lent to us free) on June 9th and 10th, and at the Furness Road Schools, Willesden, on June 17th. Goods that can be sold at the Bazaars will be gratefully received. W. McLAIN



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NOTES: Industrial, Political and Occasional

The Rats

These same miserable crowd of leaders who are trying to slip in a surrender on the quiet in the ballot paper, have not even the virtue of consistency to themselves. All like John Hill, their chairman, they are hot and fiery in the provinces, and as weak as water when they meet the boss in London.

They pose now as the men of peace and call the A.E.U. stiff-necked. Well, in Monday's *Daily Herald*, there was reported a small paragraph of Brownlie's speech, which you may not have noticed:—

On March 21st the employers were prepared to confer without a basis. While the A.E.U. was in conference and the chairman of the Employers' Federation was prepared to go a long way, a communication came from the 47 other unions. If it had not been for that they might have arrived at a settlement and there would have been no Court of Inquiry.

There you have it. On March 21st, when there was a possibility (just or unjust) of peace, the 47 leaders butt in and stop it. Men of peace! Ay, when there's a fight on, but noisy fighters when there's nothing doing!

* * *

Foundry Workers' Objection To their credit, be it said, that the Boilermakers and the Foundry workers are not recommending the terms to their members. This is not altogether the result of their own revolutionary zeal, but rather the effect of considerable pressure from their respective memberships. The Glasgow district of the Foundry Workers for example, have been crashing broadsides of dour Scots logic into their N.E.C. ever since the dispute started. Listen to these extracts from the appeal of the Glasgow District Committee to their E.C.:—

"To prove that the present policy (i.e., apprentices, non-federated shops and head foremen allowed to remain at work), is playing into the hands of the employers, let us examine the case of Beardmore's. This

firm controls the following shops—Parkhead Forge, Mossend, Dalmuir, Sentinel and Port Eglinton. Of these Parkhead Forge, Mossend and Port Eglinton are working, whilst Dalmuir and Sentinel are locked-out, which proves that one section of our members is being used by the employers to defeat the other with little or no inconvenience to themselves."

It is to be hoped that all the live members in the 47 unions will take good care that they are not beaten by an alliance of treachery and apathy. If the weary and faint-hearted section have their way, the A.E.U. will follow the miners by fighting to the last gasp in defence of the standards of a week-kneed collection of invertebrates, who refuse to fight for themselves. This is not good enough. The workers in the engineering industry can beat Sir Allan Smith by presenting a united front. The disruptive Communists have been pointing this out ever since the dispute started, and every constitutional leader in the 47 unions has been practising disunity for the same period.

* * *

Cigarettes

The Cigarette Makers' Union are in dispute with the firm of De Reszke. This firm, which specialises in smokes for the boss class, thinks that low wages go well with luxury production. Mr. Millhof, the principal of the concern, has a great dislike for trade unions who interfere with his little schemes. His plan for weakening the union and breaking the spirit of the workers has been to send the men home for a few weeks' "holiday," and then throw the shop open again later at lower wages. This has always meant a strike. On the present occasion the men were given a holiday ten weeks ago and, after eight weeks' unemployment, the shop stewards were informed that the workers could come in at 1s. per thousand reduction. The excuse for the holiday had been that there was plenty of stock made up, and that no more could be made up before the Budget. As the Budget did not even mention tobacco duty, it is

curious to note that the result of the holiday was to bring wages down to about 35s. per week. The men struck, and are still out. They are determined that they are not going to be beaten. In the meantime, perhaps J. H. Thomas or G. H. Roberts, will bring this case of stopping production to the notice of the National Alliance of Employers and Employed. The "identity of interest" between Mr. Millhof and his workers seems to have dropped a stitch.

* * *

The Warsop Case

The action of the Stavely Coal and Iron Co., at Warsop pit is likely to be serious. The checkweighman, Iliffe, is a good rebel, though not a Communist, and the Company brought an action against him for "impeding the working," and moreover, shut down the pit, giving a clear indication through Mr. Charles Markham that it would remain shut until Iliffe was finally removed.

Evidence was given to the effect that relations "had not been good" between the management and the men, and that Iliffe had done his duty in standing up for the men. As for the other side, even Frank Hall told Markham that his behaviour was "vindictive." The case came before the usual Bench of factory owners and shopkeepers, who removed the checkweighman on this evidence. It is regrettable that two miners, calling themselves Communists, but in no way connected with the party, were misled by Iliffe's anti-Communism, so far as to be silly enough to give evidence against him.

Apart from that, the position is serious enough. If the checkweighman carries out his duty to the workers, he "causes friction." (What pit was there ever in the whole of Britain that does not have "friction"?). If he "causes friction," he can and will be removed, by the local Bench, even if the company does not shut his pit. Therefore, the boss can have removed one by one, each good worker who comes up to take the checkweigher's job, as easily as a man knock's off poppy-heads.

YOU OF THE 47,——HALT

WAIT a moment, boys. Look before you leap. Examine that ballot paper before you make the cross. That ballot paper is one of the most treacherous documents ever placed in the hands of trade unionists. Look at it. Turn it over. Scan every line, and ask yourselves what you are getting out of it individually and collectively. The ballot paper declares that you and your representatives may talk and the employers may decide about any changes in your conditions or any grievances you may have.

Either you *refuse* these terms, or you will be called upon to do skilled work for "unskilled" wages.

Either you *refuse* these terms, or you will be called upon to work two or three machines for one man's wages.

Either you *refuse* these terms, or you will have to work under whatever system of payment the employer may think fit, "day" work or piece work, premium bonus, or any other damnable method he may think of.

Don't you realise the game, boys? Can't you see how the bosses are trying to set you at each other's throats, with the aid of your present leaders? In putting these terms before you when large unions in the same industry are prepared to stand against them, is right down cowardice and treachery.

By this act the leaders have set the pace to a pitched battle between the skilled and unskilled unions.

The Engineering and Shipbuilding Federation is no longer acting as a unit, it is divided against itself. The boiler-makers and the moulders have reserved the right to act alone. The A.E.U. is already alone.

There is the new alignment, clear and strong. The skilled workers versus the unskilled. What a mess to which to lead us! And secret circulars in the background too—and wage reductions, and payment by results. Never was there such rottenness and treachery!

Look at it. Handed to the 47 on the 20th of May. Published first in the *Daily Herald* on the 26th:—

"Note handed to the Negotiating Committee of Trade Unions."

"The Federations agree that except where agreements exist providing for the introduction of systems of payment by results, such systems shall not during the period of one month from the date of resumption of work be introduced in the case of members of unions not parties to such agreements.

"Systems at present in operation shall meantime continue.

"The period referred to shall be utilised by the Federation and the trade unions concerned in negotiation for the purpose of arriving at an agreed basis for the introduction of such systems."

And they said never a word. Let it be clearly understood a 16s. 6d. per week immediate reduction in wages is on the boards too.

* * *

From the moment the leaders of the 47 were forced into this struggle by Sir Allan Smith, they have cut a most sorry figure, in spite of the fact that they were placed in

a strong position by the rank and file, both on wages and on the memorandum. On wages the shipbuilding workers gave a 16 to 1 vote against reductions on the first demand, and, when ordered to go to work on the further compromise, refused to go. The memorandum was rejected by a 3 to 1 vote, and still the leaders squirmed before Smith and cut the most pitiable sight before the Court of Inquiry. These things we have said before and we repeat them because of the dangers of the present moment.

We do not ask you to reject the proposals embodied in the ballot paper, for the sake of the A.E.U. We ask you to reject the proposals because of their effect upon you. They cut at the foundation principles of unionism. They will turn your organisations into scab organisations, wherein everyone is struggling to destroy the position of the other. Whilst two million workers are unemployed you are to exercise no control over the overtime that is to be worked.

Fling the terms back into the faces of the employers and your officials.

They deserve no better fate.

It is one of the ironies of life that the organisations which have been most conservative, are thrust into the position of taking the lead in safeguarding the first principles of unionism. Many members are fighting to safeguard their craft. But, in attempting to do that, they have been compelled to do more. They have to hold aloft the challenge of *all labour's right to exercise control over the conditions of labour.*

That is why we stand by the A.E.U. in this struggle. Their attitude to the memorandum is now the correct attitude. *There must be agreement before changes are permitted.* We cannot permit overtime to be worked whilst unemployment is eating the vitality of millions of workers and their families.

These demands we believe to be, and proclaim to be, not simply craft union demands. They are in accord with the basic demands and needs of the working class movement. We have no option but to support them and appeal to you not to betray your class interests at the behest of fools, and people who will not have to work under the conditions which will follow. Stand by the A.E.U., because in their struggle to survive, they are fighting what is vital to you.

* * *

Our complaint against the A.E.U. leaders has not been against their refusal to give way once they had received instructions from their members. Our complaint has been against the method of conducting the actual organisation of the fighting forces of the unions, a complaint which can be levelled at your unions as much as at the A.E.U. They are now meeting in national conference (even while you are voting), to consider the next step. If they mean business they will now do what they ought to have done from the beginning of the fight. They will do what you ought to do now—

that is, pull the full weight of their organisation into the fray.

For the first time for many a long day, the skilled and unskilled workers have been united on the streets. We cannot afford to break that unity. Joint committees have been set up in many centres. Practically every important centre has declared against separate settlement of the dispute. Let us have

NO SEPARATE SETTLEMENT

The offer gives you nothing but slavery. It does not even guarantee that you will be re-started or that the "blacklegs" will be dismissed.

The London Conference of District Committees, held on May 24th, has given a further lead. 23 district committees of the Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades' Federation, represented by 121 delegates, declared for the rejection of the terms, and, as a counter-move, *the withdrawal of all the members of the organisations from the non-federated firms and the stopping of the utility services.* It is the only immediate effective reply which can be given. Reject the memorandum, and compel the leaders to line up together for *united action* in the lock-out, *united action* in the factories, *united action* in the control of the changes of industry.

Give the call to the A.E.U. Conference on June 2nd to stand firm. Tell them and prove to them that the rank and file of the 47 are not backing their leaders in their treachery. Tell the A.E.U. to pull its full strength and insist that your own leaders do likewise. We stand by the practical measures we have put forward to meet the requirements of the situation. We repeat them:—

(1) Stop the whole membership of the unions in non-federated and federated firms alike.

(2) Form joint committees of the unions in the districts.

(3) Form shop committees and factory committees elected by all the unionists in shop and factory, irrespective of particular unions, for the exercise of control in workshop and factory.

(4) No separate negotiations.

(5) No overtime, so long as there are unemployed workers on the streets.

(6) Every person doing skilled labour shall get skilled men's rates of wages.

(7) The changes in conditions of labour involved through the development of machinery, shall be controlled by the unions operating through the shop and factory committees.

(8) There shall be no reduction of wages.

(9) Re-instatement of all locked-out workers immediately terms are accepted.

Anything less than these is a definite retreat—a retreat which will help to drag down the working conditions to lower levels, from which it will be still more difficult to arise.

Reject the memorandum emphatically. Stand by our programme. Make again the united front, and fight like men.

From the Outposts

At a recent meeting of the Motherwell Trades Council, the following resolution was carried:—

"That as no organisation affiliated to the Trades Council has nominated a candidate to contest the Motherwell and Wishaw Parliamentary Division, this Trades Council considers the advisability of supporting the candidature of J. T. Walton Newbold."

This means, in effect, that the Labour forces in Motherwell will be behind Newbold's candidature. It is a victory for the C.P., as Newbold is standing definitely as a Communist candidate.

* * *

Since Com. Leckie was adopted as Communist candidate for Coventry, yeoman work has been done by him and the branch there. Robert Williams was dragged in as Labour candidate some time after the adop-

tion of Com. Leckie, but the interposing of Williams has got anything but the united approval of the Labour movement. He is simply being used by those people, who are prepared to use anything and anybody to hit at the C.P.

There are two motions down before the next meeting of the Coventry Trades Council. One is to the effect that the T.C. endorses Leckie's candidature and the other for the endorsement of Williams' candidature. It will be an interesting meeting. The C.P. is not pursuing a wrecking policy. Its candidate was first in the field, and there can be no question that the demands from the organised unemployed and from the locked-out engineers for Leckie's services, as to who the active masses want.

* * *

Dundee—William Gallacher versus Winston Churchill. Not Bum Bishop versus Bum Journalist, but two genuine fighters on either side. For Churchill is a genuine

fighter. He makes no attempt to hide the fact that he is fighting the workers in a class war. And that Gallacher is a fighter we know.

Perhaps it was only to be expected that the Labour Party in Dundee should not be able to make up its mind to join in fighting Churchill: anyway, it is so.

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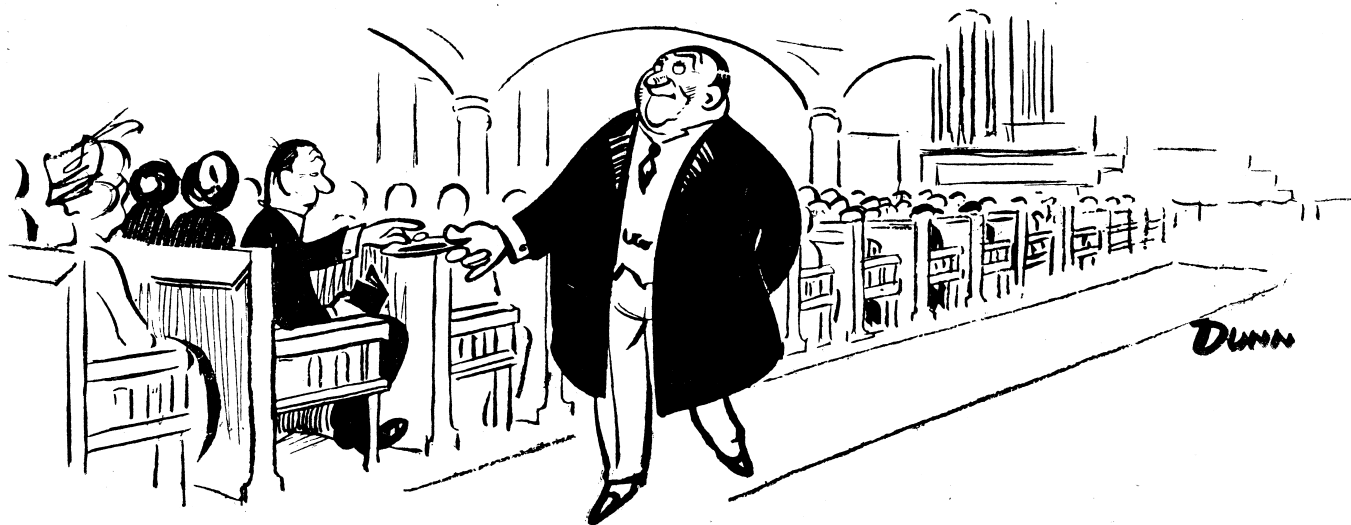
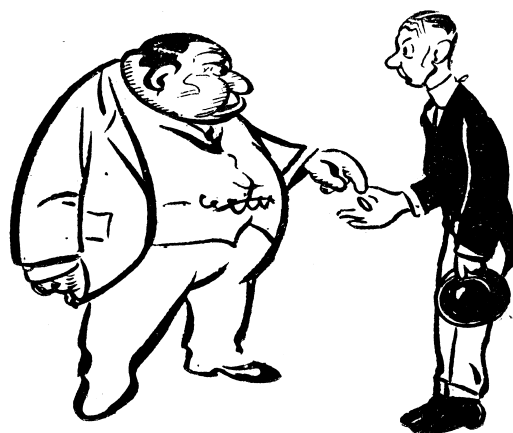
Labour—



and do—



all thy work—



the Seventh is the Sabbath

Dunn

The Editor welcomes contributions from any member of the Party, or from sympathisers, on any industrial or other subject of interest to the Party. The return of these cannot be guaranteed unless they are accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope. They should be sent to 16, King Street, London, W.C.2. They cannot be paid for at the present.

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UNITED FRONT SABOTAGED

IT is eight weeks and more since the informal Conference in Berlin raised hopes of a united front against capitalist aggression.

The Commission of nine appointed from the Three Internationals to arrange the details of a general Conference has met, wrangled, and separated with nothing done. The united front remains, therefore, an aspiration.

The blame for this rests on the shoulders of the Second International; upon those of the German Majority Social Democrats, and the British Labour Party, led by Ramsay MacDonald, in the fury of obstinate spleen.

The Communist International has strained every nerve to make the united front a reality. Mr. MacDonald and his friends have exhausted the possibilities of political and logical manoeuvre in order to evade it. Moscow wanted the united front—therefore (and for no other reason) Mr. MacDonald's International determined it should not be.

Nothing can excuse this wanton act of sabotage. Nothing that MacDonald can say or his party hint, can disguise the plain truth that the interests of the workers all over the earth have been sacrificed to party pride and doctrinal obstinacy.

Unity from Below

We feel sure that if the British worker can be got to see just what has happened the result will be uncomfortable for Mr. MacDonald and those who share with him the seat of the scornful. The united front was needed to save the British worker from being abased to a level as low as the beasts of the field.

It was needed to make a concerted resistance to wage-cuts, to extension of working hours, to the contemptuous neglect of the unemployed.

These were the issues upon which the united front should have been formed, and these are the things that the Second International refuses to fight upon.

The moral is that, if the official leaders of British Labour—the leaders, who, by reason of their official standing, have been able to keep the British Trade Unions affiliated to alike the Second and Amsterdam—if these are too far gone in surrender to see neither hope nor advantage in a united stand on these points, the rank and file must do it themselves.

The rank and file must do it. Only those who must grapple from day to day with the concrete problem of making the miserable pittance which is all the boss has left to the worker last out through a week's expenses, can understand in its full horror what the succession of wage-cuts is rapidly bringing the worker to. Only those flung into unemployment can visualise to the full either the horror of unemployment or the terror of a descent to a coolie level. The rank and file know, if only half consciously, the need for a united stand. And will learn, soon, how the miserable jealousies and poltrooneries of the trade union head offices have stood as obstructions to its formation.

These difficulties could have been got over if the political party of labour had issued a call and exercised its great influence in favour of a stand and a stand now.

Why was that call not issued?

Why has the influence of the Labour Party upon the engineering and shipbuilding lock-out been almost entirely a counsel of surrender?

Why has the party, which aspires—or should aspire—to be the next party to take control, given simply no lead at all to the workers during this terrible aftermath of Black Friday?

These questions must all be raised at Edinburgh by men who will insist upon an adequate answer.

The Work at Edinburgh

We can be forgiven for assuming that it was a prophetic anticipation of situations like this which made the official leaders of the Labour Party take such a determined stand against the admission of the Communist Party. They knew well enough that we could not let such things pass without demanding an explanation; could not sit tamely and allow such a disaster to overwhelm the worker and no word of protest uttered.

They knew on the contrary, that the Communist Party would be a rallying centre for every rank and file movement against official cowardice and delay. And that the Communist Party would demand a political policy designed to express by its vigour the extremity of the situation with which the workers are faced.

Knowing that this would be the action of the Communist Party, the official leaders found a pretext for its exclusion. Whatever may be pretended, the Communist Party was excluded from the Labour Party, not because it was lukewarm in its zeal for the cause of the worker, but because it was feared that its zeal would rage at fever-heat.

Taken together, the conduct of the 47 unions during the lock-out and the collapse of the Berlin negotiations make up a tale of disaster almost incredible.

The whole story of either is a shame paralleled only by the other. Together they stand out as a warning, which the workers will neglect at their peril.

The Communist Party demands affiliation to the Labour Party as a right. It can only be excluded, because the leaders of the Labour Party have turned their backs upon the workers' class struggle, and have persuaded a sufficient number of the rank and file that this base desertion is a "wise and statesmanlike" course.

The question is made more difficult by the appalling political ignorance of the mass of the trade union rank and file. Probably the most unkind thing that can be said of them is (to quote the old saying), that they have the leaders they deserve. To this cynicism we refuse to subscribe. It was the duty of their leaders to see to it that this ignorance was dissipated. Have they done so? Have they made any serious attempt to reach and teach their own members the serious nature of the issues involved? Have they even attempted to teach themselves?

"The eyes of a fool," says the proverb, "are in the ends of the earth," and the eyes of the Labour Party are glued to the Treasury Bench. It is safe to say that such education in political matters as the average trade unionist gets is either from a Communist speaker at a street corner, or from the only "Labour" Daily—a paper which the leaders all but left to die, because of their hatred for its relatively vigorous prosecution of the workers' struggle.

Such regular study classes as there are in the constituencies represented by "Labour" members, are either Plebs, or Communist study classes to which the Labour member is loftily hostile, or W.E.A. classes, established for the express purpose of reasoning the class struggle out of the minds of rebellious workers. These latter the Labour Party never fails to patronise—just as they are punctilious in their respect for the clergy of every denomination.

All the organised sophistry which the bourgeoisie have evolved in the centuries of their ascendancy is by these official leaders of labour, taken at its face value, and passed on as "broad" and "liberal" education, while the Plebs or Communist study class in history and economics has been boycotted, ignored or denounced as a model of narrow-mindedness.

The plain truth is that official circles of the Labour Party are thoroughly saturated with the creeds and illusions of social-pacifism. They are labour members because the claims of "Labour" "merit some attention," but, at the same time, it is their aim to legislate "in the interests of all classes in the community."

The Difference

The breach between these and the Communist Party is as wide as the poles. The Communist Party is of the working-class and for the working class, until the day comes when a period of working class dictatorship has ended in the disappearance and absorption of all classes except the workers, who will then become the whole people.

Because the Communist Party is of the working class, and because it seeks only the emancipation of that class, the Communist Party has the right to inclusion in a federation whose sole justification for existence comes from the facts of working class life, and the need of the class, for emancipation.

If the leaders of the Labour Party are allowed to cling to their ancient superstitions and to sacrifice the Communist Party on the altar of these idols—because they fear lest the Party, if admitted, might destroy their hold over the rank and file—it will be the final proof of the truth of the Communist claim that their feet may be in the camp of Labour, but their heads are in the clouds of bourgeois superstition.

NOTES: Political, Industrial and Occasional

Bottomley's Goodbye Horatio Bottomley: "I can stand up here, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, and say that I got more men to join the army than any other man."

Sentence: seven years . . .

And now that the idol has fallen, we want to know—who pushed it over? Who, and why started the whole attack and financed Bigland? Was it an unknown enthusiast for virtue?

We wonder. We wonder too what Mr. Whiteley has to say about this sudden end.

* * *

The Commune These words are written on the day that, fifty-one years ago, the last fortress of the Commune ran down its flag. At the time that you read this note, it will be the anniversary of one of the greatest massacres the world has known—the murder of some twenty thousand Paris workers by the victors.

Fifty-one years ago, for a brief space of two months, the workers of Paris took power into their own hands: they held it for that short period, and were crushed with horrible brutality by their bosses.

We do not celebrate this anniversary for sentimental reasons only. Sentimental reasons are not to be neglected. Most of us are borne up in difficulties by the thought of the trust of our comrades and their respect and gratitude. Those who died for the Commune, believed that they would not be forgotten. We shall not cheat them of that.

But there are more than sentimental reasons. When Joe Hill, the I.W.W. poet, was murdered by the bosses, he left as his last message—"Don't mourn for me, boys, organise." That too would be the Communards' message to us.

* * *

Its Lesson We must not mourn for them, but organise. We must learn from their failures while we admire their heroism. We must learn from their disunity to permit nothing but unity in the organs of proletarian battle. We must learn from their vacillations to strike hard and carry through right to the end without flinching. We must learn from their timidity before democratic forces, to sweep these aside and go straight for realities. They were deceived by protestations, elections, and forms, and so lost the class war that they were fighting. We will learn to strike right home and break the power of capitalism right away at the centre.

* * *

The Outcome of Genoa Genoa is over. All the politicians have returned home and delivered their respective explanations. With practically the single exception of Poincare, they have returned defeated. The total effect of Genoa is summed up in a very few words—victory for Russia. Russia has given nothing away, and has the tangible and important achievement of the Rapallo Treaty with Germany on the credit side.

More than that, she has made the latent divisions in her enemies acute. The rivalry between England and America—not confined to oil by any means—seemed to have died down before Genoa. At Genoa, France acted as America's agent, and, as America's agent, very nearly brought about an open breach with England. The quasi-alliance against the Soviet Republic is utterly in disorder, and the Allies are quarrelling among themselves. The capitalist collapse at Genoa has been sufficiently miserable to make the positions of some of the Premiers very shaky indeed. Most pitiable of all is probably Mr. Lloyd George, whose fall is being freely prophesied.

* * *

Lloyd George Falling? It may be, of course, that he will fall. But he will fall, if he does so, merely because he himself wishes to leave an unpleasant job. It will not be because there was any other policy open to British capitalism, or any better leader. The White Hope of the Opposition, Lord Robert Cecil, offered no alternatives. He wished to "be friends with France," and yet to oppose French policy. Precisely: he would do merely what Lloyd George is doing. He

could no more control the forces that are leading to conflict than he could control the moon.

There is only one alternative and that is to follow the Die-Hards and give in entirely to French capitalism—to surrender to America in matters of finance, to abandon all the claims of British capitalists for a revival of European trade. And that course is impossible.

* * *

The Collins' Compact The present Irish situation is one that calls for a few comments. At the moment that we write the Collins-De Valera compact is "on," and, although there are many prophecies of its collapse, and there, without doubt, will be grave strain upon it, it is by no means improbable that such a compact, or some substitute for it, will hold.

Brailsford, writing in the *Daily Herald*, pointed out that the compact, on the face of it, and if there were no secret clauses, was an absurdity. No single one of any of the formal grounds of quarrel—not the Treaty nor the Oath, nor anything—was settled. "They have only agreed—to agree." He put this down to a fear of conflict and lamented that now there would be no chance for a straight poll for the Free State. If there had been (he went on, day-dreaming to himself), perhaps even Sinn Fein itself might have lost some seats to "moderates." Perhaps, he decided, that was the reason of this puzzling alliance. Also there was the fear of Irish Labour.

* * *

Irish Labour In those last words Brailsford got nearer the truth than he knew. He thought that the truth was that the chiefs of the I.R.A. were afraid of Tom Johnson and the

NOTICE

THE SCOTTISH OFFICE

of the COMMUNIST PARTY has removed to
196, ST. VINCENT STREET, GLASGOW

officials of the Irish Transport Workers' Union. That idea is more than a little comic. But both De Valera and Collins are afraid of Irish Labour in one sense. They are afraid of the revolutionary temper of the town and agrarian workers. That temper is not expressed by the officials of the I.T.W.U. and the revolution is not being led from Liberty Hall. It is expressed in all manner of ways, and by one Republican leader after another. The Irish proletariat is revolutionary, without being Communist, and consequently, turns from one leader to another, because, while it wants a revolution, it is utterly unable to make a decision on methods. What the Irish workers are looking for, perhaps unconsciously groping for, is a strong Communist leadership. That is why they want Jim Larkin back. That is why Arthur Griffith must be praying each night that Fellow-President Harding will be "firm."

Until they get this leadership, the action of the Irish proletariat will remain uncertain and sporadic. But this Collins-De Valera agreement brings the day of clarification nearer. As happens only too often, the enemies of the workers are quicker-witted than the workers. They have joined together against Orangeism on the one hand and the workers on the other. The effect of this alliance, sooner or later must and will be to weld the proletariat into one mass against them.

* * *

Patents of Nobility According to the daily press, the Nobel Peace prize committee have decided to

discontinue the Peace Prize. This announcement coming on the heels of Mr. Lloyd George's peace triumph at Genoa is causing considerable consternation in Coalition circles, and Welsh nationalists are, we believe, on the eve of making representations to the Nobel Committee protesting against this slighting of the Welshman's claims to the Peace Prize. Lloyd George, they argue, is surely as much entitled to the Nobel Prize as the late lamented Teddy Roosevelt, whose chief effort as an apostle of universal peace, seems to have been accomplished when he bit the ear off a Spaniard . . .

Welshmen are quite willing to admit that, while Lloyd George has never actually bitten anyone's ear, he has admittedly been badly bitten by the Russians, and, as this was really a case of the biter bit, the Nobel Prize should not be withheld from the principality merely because Chicherin was a little more lively off the mark than David.

* * *

Kron Prinz The Crown Prince is not only issuing his memoirs, but writing articles in English weeklies. In these articles he not only proves to his own satisfaction that if he had been followed (a) there would be no war (b) the Germans would have won the war. To that he adds that the German soldiers loved him so much that they wept when he spoke to them before Verdun. Maybe they did weep. What is more, we feel that after his back they expressed their admiration in a translation of the British seaman's song:—

"Damn and blast old Admiral Jarvis,
For he was no sailor's friend."

* * *

The Lord's Anointed Lord Bearsted, formerly Sir Marcus Samuel, and chairman of the "Shell" Transport and Trading Company—who, it is said, inspired the building of the "Tin Lizzie" and other super-Dreadnoughts, designed to burn oil fuel only—has excelled himself by his commendation of Lloyd George Senior (not Lloyd George Junior, of the Pearson firm), on his return from Genoa.

In the columns of *Lloyds*, he writes:—
"Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

Is this what the *Morning Post* meant to imply when it spoke of "Oil Driven Politics"?

* * *

The Ballot An attempt is being made to betray the engineers. The other 47 unions at present involved in the dispute are being ballotted upon "new" terms offered by Sir Allan Smith, and the result will be known this week-end. The new terms are the old terms with verbal alterations so slight and unimportant that we have yet to meet any responsible member of the unions concerned who can explain what are the precise advantages gained which have led them to force a further ballot upon the members who have already expressed themselves. The employers will still have the right under the new terms to decide when overtime is necessary and what is work of urgency. Above all, the unions concerned appear to have forgotten that they are at present faced with the challenge of the "open shop." They are ignoring the life and death issues involved in the dispute, and indulging in verbal sparring with the bosses.

* * *

Read the Ballot Paper The ballot paper now issued to the 47 unions by their leaders must be read carefully. The secret agreement with the employers (after the *Daily Herald* had spilled the beans), is added to it in the form of a note. But one thing is carefully not made clear, and that is, that by voting for acceptance, the workers would not merely agree to the matter contained in the mass of the statement on pp. 2 and 3, but also to this modest little note, which is apparently nothing to do with it.

Therefore, if they vote "yes," they will automatically hand over to the employers all rights to determine piece or time work, and so on. They will sacrifice altogether the safeguards and customs secured by years of fighting.

* * *

"Non-Federated" How blessed is the word "non-federated"! How sweet to the souls of the officials of the 47! In Sheffield it has done real service to one, Blackburn of the N.U.G.W. This excellent gentleman has now signed a note in common with Mr. Marshall and Vickers, permitting a certain department to work because it was a "non-federated department." "Non-Federated Department!" In Vickers! Champion.

NOTES: Industrial, Political and Occasional

Transport Unity? The united front is being attempted in the transport industry by the inclusion of the three railway unions in the Transport Workers' Federation. Any such move should receive the support of the active members of the rank and file—but don't support it with your eyes shut. The mere inclusion of the railway unions in the Federation brings us no nearer to real working unity, unless it is coupled with a new spirit and the removal of the reactionary obstacles to mass action who adorn Unity House and other trade union headquarters. The new Federation, to which the Locomotive Engineers and Firemen have already given their adhesion, will embrace all transport workers by road, rail, air, or sea. As an end in itself it may not be of much value; as the first step of the long road towards the perfect industrial union it is of great importance.

Cotton Cotton will fight. Cotton will not fight. One would imagine that the operatives are getting just a little tired of being marched up the hill that leads to a dispute—and then marched down again. For the second time in a few weeks a national stoppage has been averted by the simple method of conceding 99 per cent. of the demands of the bosses. Will the operatives never learn from their own bitter experience that every concession to the boss simply whets his appetite for more and more.

Miners in the Commons—and Outside The Labour Party had a full dress debate in the House of Commons on the Vote for the Mines Department. Adamson, Brown, Walsh, and others, poured out oratory on the subject of conditions in the mining areas. They stated that the wages were down at starvation level, that men in South Wales were drawing 36s. for a week's work, that the limit of endurance had been reached. The sleek representatives of the F.B.I. taunted them back, telling them that other industries were to be brought down to the level of the miners. The railwaymen were plainly warned that their turn is coming. And after it was all over—what then. Will the miners get anything more in their pay envelopes? Will the coal-owners repent? Not likely. But, you see, "the matter has been raised in the House," and it doesn't matter if you are on the threshold of the other "House," so long as your M.P.'s are—talking about you. Fortunately, the miners do not depend upon their M.P.'s, except, perhaps, as a dumping ground for senile officials. Down in S. Wales and in the other coal-fields they are stirring and the forces will clash again very soon and not in debate this time. There is such a thing as grinding down a beaten enemy too far, and the mine-owners have done it.

Goodnight! The Workers' Educational Association is dead. It is a body which exists to provide safe education, and, in an article in an American paper, Arthur Greenwood, its representative, says that they have only 6,800 pupils and "the future" lies with Labour Colleges. Goodnight, auntie!

AN AGRICULTURAL WORKERS' CONFERENCE will be held on 16th and 17th June, in Memorial Hall, London. All Communists attending the above are asked to get in touch with National Organiser, 16, King Street, W.C., who will welcome any information relative to the business of this Conference. Members and sympathisers please note.

WARNING

Comrades are warned against a woman named Ennis Matthews, who claims association with Comrade Minnie Birch, and is approaching individuals for the purpose of borrowing money. Minnie Birch repudiates all responsibility for this person.

SWANSEA.—Meeting to reorganise and revive C.P. Branch in the "Bomb Shop," at 7.30, Friday, June 9th.

PECKHAM RED ORCHESTRA. Stop Watch. Time 8/54/41. Sheet.—W. Southgate, 17, Filey Avenue, N.

NOT SO FAST, SKINNER

A GENTLEMAN, provided by his parents with the singularly appropriate cognomen of Skinner, produces a paper called the "Stock Exchange Gazette." In the issue of May 25th, he waxes both enthusiastic and eloquent over the impending collapse of the working class movement.

"The defeat of Socialism and revolution," he says "will prove far more beneficial than any settlement devised by politicians." He makes one mistake in that sentence. He writes *will* where he means *would*. "Germany's ability to undersell England," he says, "is not due to the low value of the mark, for goods are exchanged for goods, but to other causes, and principally to labour." In Germany, it seems, "labour has been most exemplary in its attitude towards production. . . . the output, per worker, has greatly increased, and, in many cases now, falls little below that attained before the war." (Report of Department of Overseas Trade). Having quoted the above with approval, he goes on to the question of hours:—

"Owing to the pressure of philanthropists, cranks and agitators, paragraphs dealing with the shortening of the hours of labour throughout the world, and aiming at making the eight-hour day compulsory and universal, were inserted in the Treaty of Versailles, and not satisfied with an eight-hour day, British and other labour demanded a seven-hour day and a six-hour day. . . . lately not only administrators and business men but the more far-sighted labour leaders recognise that goods can be made plentiful and cheap only by increased working hours. In the *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, of April, Herr Max Schippel points out at length that the eight-hour day is disastrous to the workers themselves. In France, Belgium and Italy the opposition against the compulsory eight-hour day is becoming stronger and stronger. The attitude of Holland in this respect was shown in our last issue. English labour leaders are joining in the chorus of the Continental colleagues."

Are they, the dear "far-sighted" prospectors for places with Shackleton, Brace Wardle, Button and the rest of them? Does this then account for the deliberate sabotage of the united front to resist lengthening of the working day? Is this why Macdonald, Henderson and Co. are so anxious to meet

without the representatives of the Third? Again:—

"Discipline is gradually returning into industries. Its re-introduction should greatly increase efficiency and output to the benefit of all. The German Government. . . had the courage to dismiss those agitators who brought about the recent railway strike. . . . Agitators in Germany bitterly complain, that the Government has victimised hundreds, if not thousands, of the strikers. According to the Government, 168 leaders have been dismissed. . . . The funds of the most combative trade unions, both here and abroad, have vanished, the great fighting organisations have become weakened, vast numbers of workers are deserting them, the Labour Socialist press is in the greatest difficulties, and last, but not least, the terrible experience of Russia has utterly discredited the Communists and revolutionaries, who recently were in the ascendant. . . . The defeat of the extremists throughout the world *should* open a period of commercial and industrial prosperity. The engineering trouble over here and the American coal strike may do a great deal to clear the air, and *may* prove powerful factors in the world's recovery."

"Should" and "may"—What blessed words, oh doubting Thomas Skinner! He knows, does Skinner, how desperately his clients are in need of even this scanty hope of improvement in their prospects.

He is reckoning without his host. Those of us who know intimately the position in our own organisation, and who know, also, the condition of capitalism, have no such fears as he would assume us to experience.

His clients are in a mess financially. They are in a mess commercially. They are in a mess industrially. They are in a mess politically.

Washington, Cannes, Genoa, Paris, the Hague. . . *ad infinitum*.

Soviet Russia, all things considered, compares very favourably with them. Do not worry, comrades, about Soviet Russia. Soviet Russia will keep the red flag flying. Your job is to get it flying here—in this country.

Your job is to catch your pal, convert your mate, control your union branch, co-ordinate all the potential fighting elements in your area, combine them industrially and concentrate them politically, and so capture—all power!

THE MURDER OF VICTOR KINGISEP

An Interview with the Estonian Legation

By ARTHUR MACMANUS

WE agreed, on the suggestion of the Executive, to send a deputation to the Estonian Legation. This was duly done. Comrades Peet, Jackson, Cook and myself visited the Legation. I had a personal interest from the fact that when I was in Russia concern was felt about the welfare of Kingisep.

The Estonian Ambassador himself was absent, so we discussed the case with the secretary, who was most polite. Relying upon the information of the *Daily Herald* (in which the Russian delegation emphatically asserted that Kingisep was shot three hours after arrest) we delivered our protest.

I spoke about Kingisep and the statements which had been published concerning his arrest, his trial, and, finally, his murder.

The secretary was somewhat nonplussed. He felt, he said, that the reply of the Estonian League some days previously in the *Daily Herald* had sufficiently covered these points. When I perused that reply I discovered two things. One was that there was no denial at all of the accusation that Kingisep had been shot three hours after arrest, and the other was that there was still a considerable doubt regarding his alleged Estonian citizenship. Much rests upon the outcome of these two points.

The impression that we brought away was that the Estonian Government had done one of two things: (a) taken in conjunction with Genoa and the whole atmosphere of Genoa was it a "move" to placate Western Europe? or (b) had they been unable to resist a chance of wreaking vengeance on a Communist who had been somewhat of a nuisance to them?

The childish prattle about the distinction—a very nice distinction—between martial and civil law in Estonia failed entirely to impress our delegation. We could not escape from the impression that all had not been said about Kingisep. They had caught him, and time alone would tell whether

Genoa or vengeance was the motive that inspired the arrest and hasty destruction.

Comrades of the Communist Party of Great Britain! The Government of Estonia for its governmental security depends to a considerable extent upon the Government of Great Britain. The amount of political liberty and license exercised is determined by the Government of Great Britain.

Our Comrade Kingisep was murdered more because of our inertia and our inaction than because of any other influence that I can think of. The moral is not lost on us. As a Communist Party we must use not only the power of our organised and unorganised workers in Britain, but we must see that their influence penetrates into the innermost recesses of even the ministerial offices in London. Particularly when such Governments as Estonia rely upon telegrams received from Lloyd George.

In future our tactic should not be a deputation after a murder but a telling and significant deputation *before* the execution.

We have lost a good Comrade, a good Communist. Unfortunately we have not even in the loss been able to reap the political advantages of the sacrifice that Kingisep has made. We must give more attention to the great tasks and difficulties which our comrades in other countries have placed upon their shoulders.

As far as we and our Government are concerned we must, in future, be more alive to our responsibilities to the extent to which we think can prevent a repetition of such brutalities as were practised on our Comrade Kingisep.

To the members of the Party I say—Raise your hopes by Kingisep's sacrifice and square yourself into allegiance behind his work. To those who murdered Kingisep we snap our fingers. They will regret this opportune and very ill-considered action. Long live the work for which Kingisep has died.

LAND WAR IN IRELAND By Liam O'Flaherty

THE vapourings of the political leaders have at last ceased. The contending factions have compromised with their principles and declared a truce. Not, as one would imagine, to present a united front to the machinations of the British Empire, but—to “put down chaos and anarchy,” to “restore law and order” to this distracted country, and to go ahead with its economic development.

We, the common people of Ireland, dispossessed slaves, the working class, understand only too well what this means—even when it comes from the mouth of the prophet who but yesterday would not abate one jot or tittle of the rights of Irish Republicans. It means that we are going to be brought once more under the capitalistic police and law-court system, with, of course, the difference that the police will be dressed in green uniforms and their baton will be of Irish oak and native manufacture.

For the past few months a quiet little revolution has been going on in Ireland, without anybody in the cities of the Empire taking much notice of it. It was given the back page in all the papers, under the caption of “local disorders.” It was mixed up with raids on banks and motor cars, and proclamations by local brigadiers of the Free State Army. I refer to the seizure of land and estates by the agricultural labourers and small cottier farmers all over the country.

While the two bourgeois factions were fighting as to whether documents No. 1 or 2 were the true expression of the national tradition, the common people of the countryside were worshipping at the shrine of Lator. They were giving the English landlords notice to quit, and calmly appropriating the rich soil of their motherland. These misguided men, thought that, because they had fought for the country they had a right to go and take possession of it without further ado, and without giving notice of motion in the English Law Courts. They were going ahead with the job in good revolutionary style. Returning Americans of the I.W.W. pattern, and not of the Irish American politician type, were showing them the way. In some parts, Red units

of the mutinous I.R.A. were giving support. Men who had learned the gospel of the class war from the lips of Jim Larkin, were flouting the authority of the officials of the Transport Union and hoisting the Red Flag in various parts of the country.

It looked as if Ireland were going to become a second Russia. Then the leaders, who had been rending the air with protestations, declaring their loyalty to the doctrines of Pearse, Connolly, and Lator, suddenly found that it was necessary to restore order in the country. In other words, they found that in order to establish a Republic at some later date, it was necessary to give the land back to the landlords and oust the common people.

During the few days that have intervened since the signing of the agreement between Collins and De Valera, the eviction of the people from the captured land has commenced. There have been arrests of agrarian agitators. The whole agrarian movement is going to be put down with an iron hand. The forward movement of the working class is going to be arrested for some time to come.

Why has this been possible? Why were the politicians able to arrest the progress of the revolution, and turn it into a grab for a few acres of land, a few motor cars, and an odd hundred pounds out of the Bank of Ireland?

It is because the revolutionary force in the country has been without a leader. The cry in Ireland during the past few months has been for somebody to lead. The Labour Party were obviously in the camp of the Free Staters, even as early as the debates on the Treaty. The revolutionary elements around the country that were outside the ranks of the Labour Party were unconnected and there was nobody sufficiently courageous or strong to act as leader or organiser. The only man capable of rallying all the Reds under a common banner and with a common programme, was lying in an American prison. As a result, everything drifted. The progressive elements became disorganised, and nothing was done until the anti-climax had arrived, and everybody was so demoralised with the constant bickering and intrigue, that real constructive action was impossible. Instead of a

widespread mass movement, there were only local outbreaks, with no definite end in view. Thus, when the re-union of the politicians has come, the workers are still in the middle of the road, instead of being strongly fortified behind impregnable positions.

There will be probably further local attempts at gaining possession of the land and factories, but it is certain that the possibility of a successful revolution in Ireland has passed. The workers have been deserted by the leaders of the Labour Party. Instead of lobbying for the Free State and drawing up programmes for mothers' pensions, etc., they should have boldly rallied the workers to seize the land and set up the dictatorship. They would have had the support of the whole country—at least of every rebel in it.

The Labour Party was the only working class organisation in the country at the time; it was a powerful organisation, but it had no head. Its head was in jail, and the other members were too busy with things that didn't matter, to have time or desire for revolution.

A big defeat is disheartening. We in Ireland have just had our Black Friday. Still, we are going ahead to prepare for the next struggle. The present betrayal is bound to breed discontent and anger in the ranks of the agricultural workers. The ranks of the Irish Citizen Army are wide open to them. And it is within these ranks that their hope lies.

Let us hope that, when the next opportunity comes, that the workers will have a company of the army in every village in Ireland, to protect the spoils of the victory they will win. The agricultural workers are the backbone of the working class in Ireland. They have proved that in the past. Even under the leadership of William O'Brien's “tailor” organisers, they have been daring and courageous in their attacks on the reactionary farmer bosses. When they have arms in their hands, and they have been trained and disciplined in the ranks of the I.C.A., with Jim Larkin once more at their head to lead them—then we shall be able to put Lator's idea of an Irish Republic into practice.

The Shipowners or the Lascars?

By GUNNAR SODERBERG

A P. and O. liner, the s.s. *Egypt*, has had a collision and sunk. Many lives have been lost, both passengers and crew. According to the Press, they could all have been saved had it not been for the Lascars rushing the life boats in a state of panic. According to the Press the Lascars even used revolvers, and one of the passengers is said to have had his brains blown out by a bullet fired by one of them. The Lascars, on the whole, get the blame. Are they to blame? Why are the Lascars aboard British ships at all?

A seaman myself, I have been shipmate with them many times during my seagoing life, and have had the opportunity of studying their ways and know also why they are employed on British ships. Is it because the shipowner loves them? Not likely.

They are aboard British ships for the simple reason that they are able to exist on wages seven and eight times smaller than those of a white seaman. Whilst the wages to-day are £10 for a white fireman and £9 10s. for a white A.B., the Lascar receives, usually, a wage amounting to £1 and £1 10s. per month. The same applies to the food. The Lascar aboard those ships lives on a handful of rice with a little curry now and then, the whole lot not exceeding the value of 1s. 6d. per day, whilst the white seaman and fireman must have something more substantial in order to be able to stand his watch.

Ninety-nine per cent of the Lascars do not speak English, much less read it, so when they put their crosses in place of a signature they do not know what they sign.

I have asked many a Lascar and Coolie, when aboard, what his wages was and he did not know. The consequence is, that he signs on under any condition the Captain or the shipping master likes to impose upon him. When he pays off he does not know what is due to him; so he takes what he is given and when asked if he thinks it is right

and if he is satisfied, all he can say is, “Yes, Sir, me savvy.” Or when the purser pays them they shrug their shoulders and say, “You speakie right, me speakie right,” and there it ends.

The Lascar is hated and detested by everybody on the ship, and he is made to know it. Can you then blame him if he makes a fight for it when his life is in danger? Knowing that they are

Owing to the Whitsuntide holidays, we shall go to press a day later next week. Supplies will be available mid-day Thursday, and the paper should be on sale everywhere in the country Friday morning

detested and despised by every white man, whether passenger or crew, they know perfectly well that if they do not make a fight to save themselves, no one else would care a hang what became of them.

The shipowner hates them just as much as anybody else, but he knows they are satisfied with anything given them, and so can be used to make huge profits. It does not matter to him whether the Lascar is a competent seaman at all, or whether his employment on the ship is a danger to the lives of the passengers or crew. The ship and the cargo are always insured for more than their worth, so he loses nothing even should the ship sink.

Now the Press says that had the *Egypt* carried a white crew the lives of all could have been saved. No doubt they could. If the *Egypt* had carried

a white crew only, it would not have carried half the crew it was carrying, and the chance of saving all would have been almost a certainty. For every white man the ship has to hire 3 Lascars. For instance, a ship that carries 15 men on deck under ordinary circumstances carries, when engaging Lascars, as many as 45. This was the case with the *Egypt*.

Make a little calculation and you will see why Lascars are employed. A white seaman is paid £9 10s. per month, a Lascar £1. It takes three Lascars to do the job of one white seaman. They cost £3 in wages, still leaving £6 10s. Six more are employed and three white men's jobs are done for the wages of one. If only white men were employed the cost would be £19 10s. instead of £9. This is the reason why Lascars are employed in preference to whites, while 10,000 British seamen starve in London alone—not to mention other great seaports.

Some of the dailies have said that a Lascar is a better seaman and stands the warm stokehole better than a white fireman. Let me tell them that that is a lie. I speak from experience, and know what they are worth, and so do the officers and owners. “A Lascar is more disciplined than a white.” Yes, they are, because they do not know better. Until quite recently they were not allowed to join the Seamen's Union even if they wanted to. Havelock Wilson and the rest of his officials have always worked hand in glove with the owners where Lascars, Coolies and Chinese were concerned. They are quite content with having them scabbing so long as they keep quiet. Had the *Egypt* carried a white crew only, she would not have had half of them rushing the lifeboats. She would have had seamen that knew how to handle a boat and no lives would have been lost. These seamen, who would be only too willing to go, are left on the dock starving. Lives and property count for nothing when profit is at stake. Thousands of lives have been lost at sea through insufficient manning of the ships. Many ships which have left port and never since been heard of have gone in this way.

Who are guilty, the shipowners or the Lascars? What is Havelock Wilson going to do about it?

QUESTIONS, COMPLAINTS, and Editor's Answers

Why?

DEAR COMRADE,—(1) It is only (I am told) a real duke who can afford to be discovered wearing a ready-made dress tie, or a real millionaire to sport frayed cuffs. It is only a really good review that would bear to be self-labelled "rotten" in public. My review was far from good; and my label "rotten" was for your private eye alone. The review was rotten because it was entirely inadequate to a very wonderful achievement (as words, even had they been well designed, must always be about any wordless art); and precisely because it was rottenly inadequate you oughtn't to have called it so.

(2) Why did you insult and injure Espoir by means of those miserable little blisters of pictures—impossibly small reductions of his drawings? On his behalf let me protest it was indeed a reductio ad absurdum.

Yours,
F. M. MEYNELL.

[Francis, you put that title on. You chose two of those blocks and you said "one column" reproductions. Now then.—R.W.P.]

A Grouse

DEAR COMRADE,—Might I be allowed a word of criticism of T. A. Jackson's article "Taking Things Seriously" (May 20th)?

I take it the purpose of the article is a protest against the stupidity of the I.L.P. setting themselves up to teach Socialism to Lenin and Trotsky and the great people of the C.P. before they have learnt what it means themselves.

No doubt we all agree that this is a piece of colossal impudence, due to swelled head. But why waste a whole page of our small weekly journal in stating the fact. And the needlessly silly, violent and meaningless language used makes the waste all the more serious.

Take the following gem:—

"... the mean-souled, pigeon-livered, bat-brained, spidery-spirited gnomes who creep in and out

among the legs of better men, with Fabian leers on their offensive fronts, and their protuberant posteriors positively clamouring for pedal percussion—have the brass-corned, copper-riveted impudence to stand where the babbling bone-heads bray," etc., etc.

I would like to remind Comrade Jackson that quite a lot of the readers of the COMMUNIST are engaged in active propaganda of Communism: that task is hard enough without him, or anyone else, loading us down with a heap of taproom filth of this variety.

The whole article is just a damper on propaganda. If that is the only way an intelligent Communist can express himself he had better get out of the C.P. and join the Salvation Army.

Jackson's articles are usually full of useful matter, fully appreciated by every reader, but this effusion is suggestive of mental overstrain. Give him a rest until he develops some new ideas.

Yours fraternally,

A. RILEY.

P.S.—Since writing the above I see Jackson is to be sole Editor of the COMMUNIST—Gawdelpus.

[T. A. Jackson begs to assure Comrade Riley

(1) That the article in question was not, and could not be supposed to be, anything more than a somewhat fantastically-worded "protest" against a tendency.

(2) That the "purple" passage quoted was a brick-bat hurled at a certain type of critic of Russia and Communism—a type representative of nothing essential to, or truly characteristic of, the working class movement. It was intended to, and should, have the effect of stiffening the backs of propagandists when forced into collision with this type.

(3) That T. A. Jackson was to be the sole Editor was announced in a large type article in the same issue. He thanks Comrade Riley for the compliment implied in the fact that his article was turned to first. He feels sure that if Riley will read the article again he will, as others have done, find useful propaganda matter in it.]

Jekyll and Hyde

DEAR COMRADE,—May I point out that there is no family, trade union, or other connection between myself and Mr. Frank Smith, of the E. and S. Federation. This is necessary because of a certain amount of confusion that has taken place recently.

I am of the Dist. Committee A.E.U. Divisional Council A.E.U. (25 and 26) Area, and London Secretary Red Trade Union International.

Yours fraternally,

FRANK SMITH.

From the I.L.P.

DEAR SIR,—I am instructed by the Council of the Birmingham I.L.P. Federation to ask the favour of the insertion of the following in your valuable paper:—

The following resolution was moved by Mr. J. E. Southall and passed unanimously at the monthly meeting of the Birmingham I.L.P. Council held on Friday last:—

"This meeting of the Birmingham Federation of the Independent Labour Party protests solemnly against any renewal of French aggression in Central Europe such as is threatened for May 31st."

Yours faithfully,

ARTHUR LANE,

Hon. Sec.

[We do not quite agree with the resolution—we think the I.L.P. could do worse than turn its attention to British Imperialism—but we are quite pleased to publish it, and indeed whenever I.L.P. or other Socialist bodies find the meagre publicity and small circulation afforded by their own publications an obstacle, we shall do our best, in accordance with the principles of the United Front, to assist them.—ED.]

Answers to Correspondence

CANADIAN.—Best wishes for success over yonder. There is much in what you say—but also a lot on the other side. The situation will be clearer soon.

J. W. MCATEER.—Your letter very welcome. Glad to hear from a veteran who has read all the Socialist papers since 1885, and flattered to know that you think the COMMUNIST the best of the lot. Your other points will receive attention of business manager.

Reconstruction on the Volga

The Restoration of Agriculture in the Famine Area. Translated by Eden and Cedar Paul. Labour Publishing Co., Ltd. 5/-.

THERE is an extreme thoroughness and a practical utility about this interim report, published by the State Economic Planning Commission appointed by the Soviet Government Council for Labour and Defence, which makes it a most valuable piece of work.

In turning over its pages—pages crowded with facts, admirably marshalled and concisely stated—one has the impression of a twentieth century Domesday survey, except that the latter was a rate book for the purpose of estimating the amount of tribute to be collected, and this is a census of production and of productive resources with a view to their development primarily in the interest of the cultivators of the soil themselves, and secondly of the workers of the world at large. The method of the report is, moreover, modern to a degree and is the obvious work of men who are experts in their own particular line. It offers to the reader just that kind of information which, properly absorbed and subsequently presented, will enable him effectively to flatten out the prejudiced and ignorant critics who seek to put a sprag in the wheel of famine relief.

There are tabulated requirements of farm implements, garden seeds, and other necessities of scientifically developed and supervised agriculture that should send a thrill of excitement through the selling agents of nursery seedsmen and arouse an almost passionate enthusiasm for renewed economic relations with Russia in the bosoms of dejected dealers in galvanised iron-ware, small tools and agricultural implements throughout the Midlands and the Eastern Counties.

On the one hand, the manufacturers of machinery and public works contractors must be devoured with anxiety to be first in to stock the farm buildings with tractors, reapers and binders, ploughs and harrows and drills, choppers and cutters, and all the paraphernalia of modern large scale agriculture; with cement and ferro-concrete, and pumps and iron tanks and pipes; with dynamos and every manner of electric installation. On the other, must be the "Big Five" meat and produce monopolists of Chicago and their friends and the mill-owners and grain dealers of Minneapolis and Montreal as feverishly anxious to prevent the overflowing of this potential cornucopia of cheap foodstuffs on to the markets where the European proletariat must now obtain the staff of life.

Our speakers who this summer are going to force the pace and to compel the authorities to find work for the millions of our unemployed on the execution of contracts for Soviet Russia must get this book, either individually or through their branches, and equip themselves for the task of translating Russia's needs and their own fraternal enthusiasm for international solidarity into concrete demands expressive of the urgent needs of the (would be) toiling masses of Birmingham, where they make tools; and Sheffield, where they make steel goods; and Openshaw, where they make locomotives; and Glasgow, where they make everything fabricated of iron and steel.

Our comrades would also do well to mark what is entailed in the consolidation of a revolutionary victory in terms of hard work, keen thinking and precision of calculation. Someone in Russia must not only have read Lenin's little pamphlet on the need for accounting and for business methods being adopted by Communists; but have decided to act upon it. Suppose we copy them. It would not be a bad idea!

We cannot close this notice without congratulating those two indefatigable workers for the revolutionary cause, Eden and Cedar Paul, upon their painstaking and very readable translation of what must have been no easy report to handle.

J.T.W.N.

Workmen's Compensation

Workmen's Compensation Act. By W. H. Thompson. Labour Publishing Co. 2/6.

THE intricacies of the law relating to Workmen's Compensation, made more complicated by the various decisions that have been given since 1906, have led to such confusion in the minds of workmen that they are frequently cheated out of their rights by unscrupulous employers, or their still keener Insurance Companies, and are persuaded to sign away valuable claims for an utterly inadequate lump sum. Many trade union officials and branch secretaries have the haziest notions as to what to do when an accident takes place, and so matters are allowed to drift until the situation is seriously compromised (even three days delay having been held to invalidate a claim) or put into the hands of a lawyer when too late.

Most of the books dealing with the matter are large, expensive, and wearisomely technical, so that the Labour Publishing Co. have shown considerable enterprise in publishing a small guide to the Acts,

by W. H. Thompson, a young solicitor growing in popularity for his clever work on behalf of Labour in the Courts. For 2/6 any branch secretary can secure this handy reference book, small enough to be slipped into the pocket, and thus available on all occasions.

In addition to an outline of the Acts, the book contains a list of Industrial Diseases which come under the Acts, and also specimen forms suitable to be used to give notification of accidents, and forms of Memoranda of Agreements. Mr. Thompson might perhaps have emphasised still more strongly that the all important thing is to give notice of the accident in writing to the employer immediately after the accident, even if at first it seems that the injury is only trivial. No special form is needed for this, but the date, time and circumstances of the accident must be stated.

E.C.W.

Education—The Real Stuff

More Production and More Poverty—The Case for the Labour Colleges. By J. P. M. Millar. Preface by Robt. Smillie. 2d. N.C.L.C., 11, Penywern Road, S.W. 5.

THIS is an excellent little pamphlet on the need for working class self-education, and could very well be put in the hands even of some members of the Party. There are a good many of us after all who don't know so much as we think we do. This little booklet does not merely give the constitution of the National Council of Labour Colleges, but also ten pages of general simple argument which is extremely valuable and lightened by comic illustrations.

R.W.P.

A SYMPATHISER has given the Dundee Branch a Case of Spoons to be raffled in aid of the funds; he also donated 7s. to purchase cheap pamphlets for free distribution. "Go thou and do likewise."

United Methodist Church, Doncaster Road, Mexboro.—June 7th, at 7 p.m.—A PUBLIC DEBATE between Geo. H. Fletcher, C.P. Executive, v. Rev. W. W. Foulston, "Should the people support the Socialism of Karl Marx or the Christianity of Jesus Christ."

ENFIELD AND WALTHAM CROSS BRANCH.

The above Branch is in process of organisation. Will all readers prepared to join same please communicate immediately with T. Schooling, 19, Hertford Road, Enfield Wash, Middlesex.

WHEN LABOUR CONFERS

By F. WILLIS

THE agenda of the Labour Party Conference to be held in Edinburgh on June 27th consists of 20 pages and, approximately, 180 resolutions. The subjects down for discussion range from affiliation of the Communist Party to the reform of Parliamentary procedure; that is to say, from the sublime to the ridiculous.

Like all agendas, of all Conferences, of all parties, this one is a curious hotch-potch, wherein a single luminous idea has to be dug out painfully from a mass of hardy annuals, mere redundancies, and bright thoughts of the local cranks. In this respect no better and no worse than any other agenda.

Many of the resolutions are as hopelessly out of date as the cold mutton of the week before last. They fit no possible situation to-day. It is as if a party in Ireland should arise with a demand for Home Rule; or an agitation be set on foot in England for the points of the Charter.

Excluding these, we can consider a few of the more important issues to be raised.

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Quite a number of local bodies are perturbed by the presence in leading positions of members of His Majesty's Privy Council. Obviously the events of Black Friday, and the wide publicity given to the Privy Councillor's oath in the course of the Thomas libel action have caused great uneasiness in the minds of the rank and file.

This feeling is given most drastic expression in the clear-cut resolution of the Blaydon Divisional Labour Party (where is Blaydon, by the bye?—[Tyneside hinney! Divven ye know?—Ed.]—which reads thus:—

"That this Conference requests all members of the Party who are members of the Privy Council to resign such office or clear out of the Labour movement."

* * *

Stepney Trades Council—Stepney has written itself large all over the agenda—advocates the right of recall of members of Parliament. All very well, of course, and clearly entitled to Communist support, but hardly practicable with constituency representation and Parliamentary institutions. G. H. Roberts would have been kicked out of Norwich long ago had it been possible to exercise the right of recall. And Roberts is not the only one. The principle will only be really operative under a Soviet system. Stepney must wait—and work.

A solitary resolution appears under the heading "War." Bristol asks the delegates to refuse "to support any war entered into by any Government for the defence of the present commercial system." Simpletons! Bristol should know by now that no war is entered upon for such an object. All capitalist wars are for justice, freedom, democracy, and so forth. As in 1914, for instance.

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Full recognition of Soviet Russia is demanded by three resolutions. On this point, at least, there should be complete unanimity at the Conference. It is the very basis and foundation of the united front of the working class. Long ago the workers made up their minds on this issue, and there will be no going back.

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One suspects ulterior motives in the case of the Textile Workers' call for "self-government" for the people of India. The same "self-government," mark you, "which is in operation in Canada, Australia, and South Africa." Lancashire has been badly hit by the boycott, so that even the very conservative Textile Workers Association is forced into desperate, revolutionary courses.

But, what on earth has self-government on the Colonial model to do with it? The peoples of India have a perfect right to mould their own destiny, along their own lines, even to the point of complete severance from the British Empire. It is sheer hypocrisy for any body of workers to insist on maintaining a link which was forged originally in capitalist interests, and is still maintained by brute force for the same unholy purposes.

However, true to old traditions, the United Textile Factory Workers Association again vaults into the arena with another resolution in defence of the great, the unalterable, the never-to-be-forgotten, principles of *Free Trade*.

My God! And this is the year 1922, with the old order falling in ruins around us, and the workers everywhere being crushed down to coolie level. We do move; unquestionably, we do move.

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The question of unemployment looms large on the agenda. Birkenhead demands work at trade union rates, or, "failing this, adequate maintenance allowances." A good

word "adequate," and capable of a thousand interpretations. The delegates will do well to take their courage in both hands, and plump outright for maintenance at trade union rates.

A resolution from the London Trades Council supplies a curious commentary on the afore-mentioned resolution of the Textile Workers on Free Trade. The Londoners hold, apparently, that the whole industrial and manufacturing era, Free Trade and all, has been a dead failure, and urge a policy of home development of food supplies.

As a preparation for a revolutionary period of crisis, this latter point is not to be ignored. Its importance will increase as time goes on.

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One of the first items on the agenda to be decided will be affiliation of the Communists to the Labour Party. Undoubtedly a strong feeling has been growing in many localities against the exclusion of men and women who previously had been among the most active and self-sacrificing workers in the Labour movement. This feeling is reflected in the resolutions sent in.

The position at the moment is that the questionnaire drawn up by the Labour Party Executive has been submitted to the Communist Party and answered categorically. Questions and answers will be laid before the Conference. And there the matter stands until a decision is made.

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A few minor matters remain for consideration.

Freemasonry in the Labour Movement troubles some delegates; the adoption of an International auxiliary language is urged with much force by others; and Halifax, for some unearthly reason, is concerned because of its disenfranchisement in consequence of its representation by the Speaker.

An echo of the Thomas libel action comes from Gorton, in the shape of the following resolution:—

"That in the event of any members of the Labour movement being in dispute, they must not on any account sue or seek a decision in the bourgeois Law Courts. To facilitate the settlement of any such dispute, the National Labour Party and the General Council of the Trade Union Congress be instructed to set up a Representative Committee of Inquiry, which shall be empowered to give a decision."

So that's that.

"OUR HERITAGE"

A Review

The British Empire. By T. A. Jackson. Published by the C.P.G.B. Price 6d. 16, King Street, Covent Garden, London, W.C. 2.

WE hear a great deal about the British Empire—few working men are well informed of its practical working. Regarding the world's politics, British imperialism has broadened matters out considerably, and we should all know what the British Empire really is and what part it plays in the affairs of the world. Joseph Chamberlain, the old Tory chief, used to tell us to think Imperially. It makes very little difference to-day whether we think imperialy or not. One thing is certain—we feel imperialy, that is to say, we suffer from imperialistic effects. The more the working class understand imperial politics, the less chance there will be of the jingo spirit—of shouting about the Sun that never sets on this glorious Empire of ours.

The beating of the big drum about the Empire no doubt fills the ear. And ears are no doubt good things to possess sometimes. It depends largely upon what use we make of them. When Mark Anthony asked the Roman citizens to lend him their ears he did a splendid piece of ear biting. The British imperialists have always been up to his mark. Anthony has certainly been their guide in making the most out of empty sounds.

The author lays bare the antagonisms among the ruling sections within the Empire; also the antagonisms between workers and rulers within the boundary of the same Empire.

Its dangers from within are great and its dangers from without are even greater still. The outside dangers are explained and illustrated by a map

By Patrick Fitzpatrick

specially drawn by J. F. Horrabin. This map is itself a lesson on economic geography; showing as it does the relative positions of the hostile Empires in the Pacific.

Jackson, in his brief outline from the Roman Empire to the present day, shows the development of trade—that the Mediterranean, the Atlantic, and at the present time the Pacific, have all played an important part. Which Empire is going to control the Pacific? is the question that Jackson asks. With the help of the map he points out the various conflicting interests, the points of vantage held by the disputing Empires. He traces the lines of islands, wireless stations, coaling stations, etc. He makes our blood creep at the prospects of a new Imperialist war in which the late European war will pale into insignificance by comparison. However, these shivers which run down our spine are twenty century experiences. They are thrills of an adverse order. The British Empire gives us the guarantee that if there is a war in the Pacific we will be in it.

According to Jackson the world isn't yet safe, he takes us away from our peaceful satisfaction at the Versailles Treaty and transplants us in full view of America, Japan, Australia, China, and Great Britain possessions—all of them contending fiercely for something which democracy does not understand.

Workers would be well advised to get this pamphlet and take a mental trip to those disputed parts. It is no theoretical discussion, but living modern politics which require some special attention outside of propaganda of Communist principles.

Jackson, dealing with the Indian question, gives Indian politics a rough shaking. He touches on the main events from the Sepoy rebellion, 1857, to Tilak, the extremist leader, down to that dreamy personality Ghandi. The "non-co-operation" policy is well explained. The Westernised (educated) agitation seems limited only to the surface, beneath the stormy surface a strong labour impulse is manifesting itself. In dealing with Egypt the author implies that the Imperial bandits simply stole that African country. They had to beat their French rivals to bag India. In the case of Egypt it was simply carrying off the swag by sheer bluff. That old humbug, William Gladstone, gave his solemn promise that Egypt was to remain free. Lloyd George still believes in that promise. The British Government doesn't believe in saying one thing one day and a different thing another day, when they make a promise they mean it, they still keep that promise, what unfailing consistency. Ask them in Egypt—they know!

In dealing with Ireland, Jackson gives a tabulated list of the murders and killed in action during the Black and Tan terror, also a list of destruction by the Crown forces in the year 1920. You get a good and clear idea what the Irish had to suffer for daring to set up a Republic. The author treats the Irish questions fairly well and submits good reasons for the "spoiled child of the Empire" being the rebellious boy he really is.

After reading this pamphlet one greatly wonders how the British Empire holds together at all. However, though threatened, it will not collapse through its own rottenness. All other Empires are in a similar state of rotten ripeness. It is to be hoped that some tactics are to be found to attract the toiling masses to a class conscious interest in imperial world politics. Comrade Jackson's production is a good stimulus in this much desired direction.