

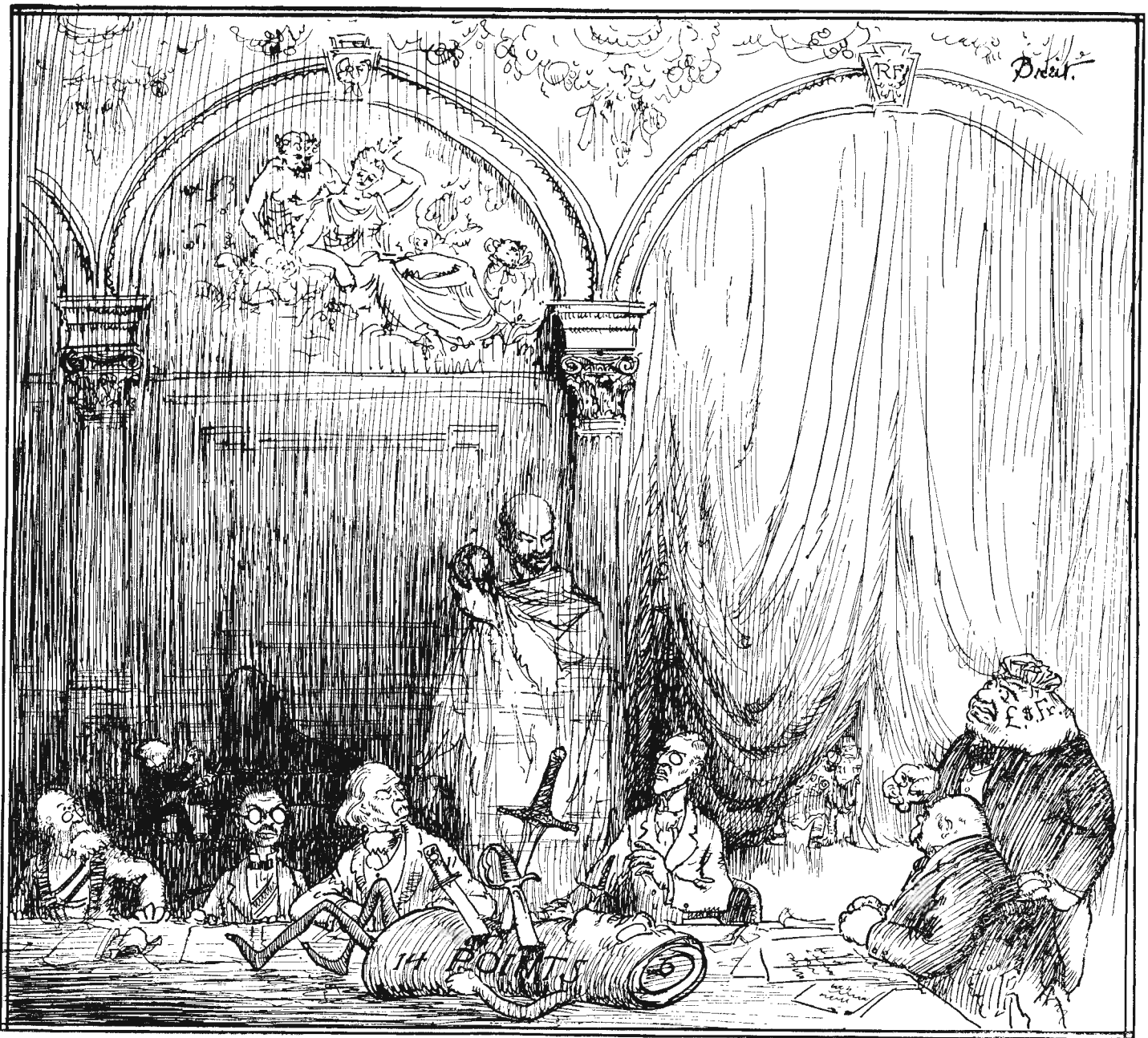
THE
PROLETARIAN

A Journal of International Socialism.

Vol. II. No. 2

JUNE, 1919

Price Ten Cents



Lenin—The Spectre at the Peace Table

SPARTACAN SPARKS

"Bolsheviki persist in their suppression of minorities."

The howl the capitalist press puts forth reminds us of one of Aesop's fables. "A wolf, seeing some shepherds eating a sheep in a tent, came near and said 'What an uproar there would be if I were doing this.'"

* * * *

"U. S. Scientists organize union. Five hundred Government botanists, physiologists, pathologists, chemists, and other research workers make application with the A. F. of L. for affiliation."

In 1848 a young fellow by the name of Marx said this: "The Bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honored and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage laborer." It's rather late, but we are pleased to know the scientists have finally discovered this fact, and maybe, perhaps, someday, sometime, the lawyers will find it out too.

* * * *

"City won't pay strike troops," says Mayor of Sandwich, Ont.

That a boy. Workers who double-cross their fellow workers, need a dose of their own medicine.

* * * *

Edward Price Bell says: "United States must check exports."

Wouldn't it be a grand and glorious feeling if the worker decided to consume the products he produced himself?

* * * *

"There is no name that stands higher than yours in the cause of Humanity," said George Gordon Battle in pinning medal on Sammie Gompers.

George evidently never heard of Judas Iscariot or Benedict Arnold.

* * * *

Presbyterian General Assembly at St. Louis decides to give women more rights.

In the sixteenth century the Catholic Church decided by a majority of one vote that woman

had a soul, and now the Presbyterians give the women the right to hold office in the church council. Next thing we know the church will get radical and decide that woman is human. You never can tell.

* * * *

According to the "Edinburg Scotsman," Dr. Harry Campbell has a theory that the fate of the world lies in the hands of "statesmen" with blue eyes.

Since the discrediting of Mr. Gompers in Europe as the oracle of American labor, Samuel is anxious to know if there is any magic in a black eye.

* * * *

Scott Nearing says that his most important work after the revolution will consist in gathering statistics.

Why in hell don't you confine yourself to that now, Scott?

* * * *

Montaigne said: "The greatest masterpiece of man is to be born at the right time."

It really is too bad our Postmaster General was born five hundred years too late. What a fine companion he would have been to Torquemado.

* * * *

We are reliably informed that "nationalization of women" is being abandoned by the Bolsheviki in spite of the fact that the scheme was indorsed by two old maids. Another minority suppressed!

THE PROLETARIAN

Published Monthly at
174 Michigan Avenue

The Proletarian is the official paper of the Proletarian University of America and has the endorsement of Local Wayne County (Detroit) and of the Socialist Party of Michigan.

Subscription one dollar a year; single copies ten cents. Rates to dealers on application.

No advertising matter accepted.

Make checks and money orders payable to The Proletarian Publishing Company.



"Mr. Taft arrived in Detroit on the invitation of a workingmen's committee to explain the League of Nations. He is the guest of Charles B. Warren."

Our genial editor has no book on etiquette in his sanctum sanctorum, but if our memory serves us rightly it is a breach of etiquette on the part of the guest not to stay at the home of one of the workingmen who invited him.

Then again the workingmen may keep boarders, and haven't a spare room.

Maybe Charles B. Warren, who is attorney for the Havemeyer interests in Michigan, is one of the workingmen who invited Injunction Bill.

* * * *

"Allies refuse foe peace referendum."

We fought for democracy to prohibit the German people from deciding the most important thing in their lives for themselves.

* * * *

"Gompers gets medal for war achievements."

When the capitalist class starts to pin medals on a labor leader, it certainly cannot be seditious to suggest that the laboring class tie a tin can to him.

* * * *

"Twenty minutes after graduating from police school, Patrolman Tennant was en route to the hospital. He saw a shadow and shot himself in the leg."

And these are the men who decide whether a class conscious worker has made statements detrimental to society.

* * * *

Detroit is rather peeved at the War Department's refusal to allow the 85th division to parade there.

It is said that an effort will be made to secure the 32nd division for a celebration on its return to the State, but what we want to see is that company of Detroit's Own Regiment that refused to fight the Bolsheviki.

THE PROLETARIAN

Vol. II

JUNE, 1919

No. 2

All in the Name of Liberty

By Dennis E. Batt

WITH a callousness and brutality unequalled in any other country (with the possible exception of Japan, our imperialistic ally in the struggle for world democracy) the government of this country has thrown into jail countless men and women of the organized labor and socialist movements. Hundreds upon hundreds of our fellow-workers have been summarily arrested, tried and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment, there to suffer under the brutal treatment of degenerate jailers. And for what? Simply because they refused to declare the class war suspended while the nations battled with one another.

Many of these men and women have committed no crime other than that of being members of labor organizations of one sort or another. Unrelentingly and to the best of their ability they have carried on the class struggle—and for this they now lie in jail. They are our Comrades; they have fallen in the struggle. Let us ever remember that we must carry on the fight they were forced to relinquish when they fell into the clutches of the powers that be.

The apologists and lick-spittles of the capitalist class endeavor to give the impression that these men and women are but common criminals who have been jailed for violations of the law of the land. But what are the laws which they have violated? Class legislation—measures designed to protect the interests of the capitalist class. Surely we have had evidence enough to bear out the statement that the machinery of government is used almost exclusively in the interests of the exploiters of labor. One has but to review the history of the past two years to understand that.

Upon the entry of this country into the world war the crusade of oppression began. We soon found that the right of free speech did not exist. It was clearly demonstrated to us that Might makes Right. Thick-necked, bullying officers of "justice" began to apply the iron heel of oppression—both figuratively and literally. Guardians of "liberty" lost no opportunity to disturb and break up our meetings. The Czar was proven a mere amateur. America was thoroughly Prussianized. Our (?) public officials were applying the methods found most useful by the world's most famous autocrats. These indeed were dark days, but darker were to follow.

The offices of labor organizations and the members thereof were the legitimate prey of every amateur would-be snoop in the land. Under the direction of the Department of Justice raids were made upon the headquarters of these organizations and the homes of the members. Literature and records were carried away for "evidence"; in one way or another many organizations were crippled in handling their work. All in the name of liberty.

Papers that dared to voice the protest of the workers were "Burlisoned." The Thought Censor's autocratic power was used to make difficult the maintaining of the labor and socialist press. Without even the formal-

ity of the usual mock trial, issue after issue of papers were held up in the mails, thereby failing to reach the readers. The results were ruinous to these papers. All in the name of liberty.

In Arizona, hundreds of workers were loaded into cattle cars, deported into the barren desert and there left without food or drink because they dared to strike for better living conditions. Because they insisted upon a larger share of the wealth they produced they were subjected to this abuse and torture. The Federal Government was cognizant of this outrage but nothing has been done to punish the patriotic lovers of law and order responsible for these barbarities. All in the name of liberty.

Many were arrested at socialist meetings and, without any charge whatsoever being placed against them, were shanghaied into the army. Many were arrested and held incommunicado for a period of time, the next heard of them they were wearing a uniform and preparing to do battle for democracy and freedom. All this is in the name of liberty.

Jails throughout the country held many workingmen who were imprisoned for months without any charge being placed against them. Filthy jails were overcrowded with the militant members of the working class in the effort to still the voice of protest. "Rights" that were supposed to be inalienable were ruthlessly ignored. The Constitution became a "scrap of paper." In Butte, Frank Little, a cripple, was taken out in the night and choked to death at the end of a rope, after being maltreated by a gang of the "best citizens." Frank Little's crime was organizing the miners in defiance of the Copper Barons. All in the name of liberty.

More than a hundred members of the I. W. W. were "rounded up" and haled to Chicago for trial; of these ninety-three were finally convicted. They were accused of conspiring to lend aid and comfort to the enemy. In reality their crime was that the only enemy they recognized was the capitalist class. The history of that incident is a narrative of atrocities committed against the workers, equalled only by the brutalities of the Huns and Turks; a tale of men seized in the night by Vigilantes (patriotic lovers of liberty!), beaten into insensibility and in some instances killed. It is a story of ceaseless struggle between masters and slaves. All of the forces of the state were mobilized in behalf of the masters; prison sentences totaling hundreds of years have been meted out to the victims of the profit-lust of capitalism. All in the name of liberty.

A list of the names of men and women who have been outraged under the guise of "patriotic activity" would fill pages. A general resume of these persecutions reads like a page from the history of the Inquisition in its palmy days. Through the connivance of the public press, and the suppressive powers of the government, the facts have been kept from the public. Nor is the arrest and conviction of these men and women all that they have suffered. Inside the prisons they have been brutally discriminated against. Many are the stories that have emanated from Leavenworth

and other federal prisons telling of political prisoners being beaten with clubs by thugs employed as guards. All in the name of liberty.

Lured to these shores by the enticing advertisements of the capitalist class many workers have found that the boasted liberty and prosperity was but a sham used as bait to coax them here. Upon trying to better the conditions in the industries by organizing themselves they discovered that the capitalist class of this country is as ruthless and brutal as the one they fled from in Europe. Becoming loud in their protests against the treatment they receive, they are being seized and imprisoned, and ostensibly held for deportation. Many of them would gladly leave the country if the authorities would grant them passports. This, however, is not done. The masters do not want them to leave the country, rather they would have them remain and be contented, docile slaves. The whole of the governmental machinery is used to break up the organizations with which these workers resist the aggressions of the capitalists. No means are too vile or contemptible to use in order to accomplish this disruption. All in the name of liberty.

Unknown members of the rank and file have fallen victims of this struggle. Their courage and deeds unsung, they have borne themselves well in the privations through which they have had to pass. Not only the rank and file have had to suffer but also the officers and so-called "leaders" of these organizations. To cap the climax, and as though to show contempt for the working class, the best beloved of Labor's spokesmen was seized and imprisoned. For having continued his struggle in behalf of his fellow members of the working class, Gene Debs is serving a life sentence in a Federal prison—for ten years means a life sentence to the aged champion of the workers. Liebknecht suffered less at the hands of the Prussian

Junkers. For years Debs has voiced the protest of the workers against the exploitation of capitalism. He was but voicing as he had voiced before that protest on the fateful day at Canton. But the masters had found that Debs was dangerous to their supremacy, and his sentiments were outlawed. For delivering the same message that he had delivered for years, for fighting the same fight that he had always fought, he must spend ten years in a felon's cell. All in the name of liberty.

With head unbowed and spirit unbroken, Debs has given us an example of courage we will do well to emulate. With unflinching determination he has entered his prison cell, cheered by the thought that we "out here" will carry on the struggle to which he has given the best years of his manhood. And the class conscious workers will not fail him. By the pressure of our organization and education of the workers we must force the masters to give up our Comrades. We can expect nothing but the most bitter opposition from the capitalists and their henchmen.

It is essentially our fight—the workers fight. These men and women have fallen in the class war—and it is the working class that must free them. We can depend upon no one but ourselves in this work and, therefore, we must do nothing to obscure the class nature of the struggle. To do otherwise would jeopardize the success of the movement for which these our Comrades have gone to jail.

The immediate future is pregnant with the promise of working class victory; we must lose no opportunity for advancing our cause. With the arrest and imprisonment of our comrades the capitalists have issued a challenge to the workers. Our comrades must be released. The gauntlet is at our feet. Let us not hesitate but pick it up and hurl it back in their teeth.

Peacing Out the Pieces

By John Keracher

TOWARDS the close of the war it was often stated that victory for the Allied cause would bring in its train, a universal peace, with a settlement that would make future wars impossible. Many people believed it, and there may still be some innocent people who believe in the miraculous powers of "peace" delegates.

In the early days of the peace conference, when the fourteen points were new and sharp, and the "League of Nations" and "World Democracy" still charmed the ear of the unsuspecting idealist, all was rosy and bright. Harmony seemed to be the keynote of the negotiations. The laying down of abstract principles of justice, and the drafting of general programs of proceedings, was the chief work of the conference, but when it came to the application of these idealistic schemes, everything resolved itself into the cold material calculation of how much can we take, and how little can we leave the vanquished, compatible with safety for the present social order.

The occupation of certain portions of the German Empire, such as the Rhineland west of the great river, was to be expected, also the giving of Alsace and

Lorraine to France, but the peace treaty goes much further. It turns over the greater portion of Upper Silesia to the new independent buffer state of Poland, and creates a narrow funnel-like strip through Prussia, connecting Poland to the Baltic at the port of Danzig. It is proposed to internationalize this "corridor" thus separating East from West Prussia. A plebiscite will be taken to determine the control of East Prussia and Schleswig, which was forcibly taken from Denmark by Bismarck in 1864. The German colonies will be retained by those who conquered them. What has happened to Germany is likewise true of the former Austrian Empire which is already pieced into separate states.

All this has been carried out with little or no conflict, the conquered countries so far have been powerless to resist, but when it came to decide about certain territories that were to be held by some of the Allies themselves the fat was in the fire.

Italy, through its delegation headed by Premier Orlando, kicked over the traces and bolted the conference over the Adriatic dispute. The trouble was brought to a head, according to some of their spokes-

men, by President Wilson. Premier Orlando returned in triumph to Rome where the populace greeted him like one of the conquering heroes of the old Roman Empire. One of the Italian periodicals "Popolo Romano" charges that "President Wilson has fallen into a trap in aiming to estrange Italy from America." The "Corriere d'Italia" says President Wilson is mistaken if he thought that he could divide public opinion in Italy "for it is in universal revolt against the unparalleled outrage." This outrage it appears took the form of publicity given by Mr. Wilson to his side of the argument over the division of the spoils of war. In May 1915, when Italy entered the war it had already been agreed upon, by the Treaty of London, that certain territories were to be ceded to her as the fruits of victory. Those now annexed by Italy are Trent, Dalmatia, Trieste and Fiume. It is over the latter port that the dispute has arisen. Mr. Wilson contends it should be given to the Jugo-Slavs.

When the crisis was at its height over the Italian withdrawal the Japanese took advantage of the situation to push, to a triumphant conclusion, their dispute with China over the province of Shantung. This province was formerly held by Germany, taken from China in 1897 upon a threat of war. In 1914, the Japanese drove the Germans out and took possession themselves, promising to restore the territories to China at the conclusion of hostilities. Later on, however, they demanded that the former German concession be turned over to them; threatening the Chinese with war if they would not sign the concession, in fact, giving them only 48 hours to do so.

At the "peace" table the Chinese were simple enough to believe they would get redress, but the "peace of justice" so much talked of has not turned out that way. World Democracy in theory is one thing and world democracy in practice seems to be another. The result is that China is outside the League of Nations and refused to sign the peace treaty.

On the whole there seems to be considerable opposition to the terms of the treaty not only in Germany but in many of the neutral and Allied countries. On the other hand there are powerful elements in most of the leading countries ready to back the treaty and its provisions to the limit and to callously sneer at the claims of China. As for the Russians, formerly a powerful ally, they are given no voice in the settlement, in fact, considered outside the pale of civilization entirely.

The Detroit Free Press, a fair example of American jingo journalism, editorially comments on the Chinese dispute as follows: "Undoubtedly China is the prize 'goat' at the peace conference. Logically the arguments of its representatives against the Japanese acquisitions in the Shang-tung peninsula are impeccable. The delegates from Peking point out that so-called German rights in the district under dispute originated in an act of wanton aggression in 1897, and that to transfer these rights to Japan is to confirm that act of aggression * * * countenancing the despoiling of one member of the prospective league of Nations by another. But the Chinese commissioners have received no consideration at all in Paris. Their pleas and arguments have been utterly ignored. The Chinese statesmen are wise in their

way but they seem unable to understand the remainder of mankind. For instance, they seem to have been simple enough to take at its face value all the talk of a few months since about the application of the 'moral judgment of the world to the particular settlements' to be attempted at the peace conference, and about the organization of that 'moral force' for the preservation of those settlements. They accepted too literally dissertations concerning the 'great tide running in the hearts of men' and the new realization of 'how little difference there is between right and justice in one latitude and in another.' They did not consider that 'sudden and potent union of purpose' might not be permanent union of purpose. They forgot that after all it is a fundamental maxim in the occident that 'God helps those who help themselves,' and perhaps they never had even heard the companion piece, 'Every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost.' In time the Chinese leaders will acquire a working knowledge of the ethics of the white race."

This gem of an editorial shows quite clearly the workings of capitalist "democracy", it is headed "Faith without Force proves vain." This devil take the hindmost policy which this bourgeois journal calls "the ethics of the white race" is but the ethics of capitalism. The white race and capitalism are identical in the bourgeois mind.

Another phase of the Treaty as submitted to the Germans is the "labor" clause contained therein which has already brought a protest from the German delegates. Notes have been submitted asking for an extension of the concessions to labor contained in the treaty. These clauses, it is pointed out, cover principles already in force in Germany and they do not go far enough for this day and age. It looks as if Sam Gompers, Arthur Henderson, Albert Thomas and the other labor leaders who were in on the framing of the labor program for "World Democracy" are out-democratized by autocratic Germany.

Much speculation is being indulged in by the press of all countries as to what Germany will do, accept or reject the peace terms. The present gang that are in power will do anything that is most likely to hold them in office. Ebert and Scheideman, the former backers of German imperialism, are making a loud squeal. Ebert in true opportunist style says "Germany has seized and unfurled a new banner on which are inscribed President Wilson's fourteen points, which the president apparently has deserted." This is really funny as the "new banner" is but a second hand one that has served its purpose. Scheideman tho protesting seems ready to accept the terms. All shades of protest are being expressed from a mild passive one to something in the nature of defiance. One of the delegates, Herr Biesberts, says "the only road open is immediate peace with Russia and the employment of Bolshevist forces for Germany."

Such is the tumult caused by the submission of the draft of the peace terms. In all probability with certain modifications the present German Government will sign up. Should they refuse, it will likely mean occupation by the Allied troops. In which case the German working class will get a new set of exploiters—nothing more.

Don't Be a Wooden Indian!

MANY workers, upon coming into contact with the socialist movement are puzzled by such oft-repeated terms as "class struggle" and "class consciousness."

The story is told of a certain street-corner speaker who used the latter term somewhat lavishly. He was interrupted by a question:

"What is class consciousness?"

The orator paused in his discourse and, pointing down the street, said:

"My friend, if you will look in front of that cigar store down the street you will see a wooden Indian on the sidewalk. Now, that fellow is a member of a whole class of cigar-store wooden Indians—but he's not conscious of it!"

Which condition is about the same as that of the non-socialist workingman, who is a member of a worldwide class of workmen, who function in capitalist society in certain well-defined ways. Without regard to geographical location, or religion, the workers—or "proletarians"—are exploited of the major portion of the wealth which their labor brings into being. This wealth is enjoyed by the owners of the means of wealth-production, the capitalist—or "bourgeois" class, which also functions as such without regard to racial or geographical bounds.

But the point to be noted is that the worker—not being aware of the relationship existing between him and the rest of the world's workers—is, unhappily, to be compared to our sphinx-like friend—the wooden Indian of the cigar store.

Let us examine more closely the meaning of the term "consciousness." At a certain stage in the life of every individual he acquires a "consciousness" of personal identity. He becomes aware of his distinctiveness, physically and mentally, from the external conditions which progressively stimulate his susceptibility to impressions, and possessed of power to recall, combine and analyze by successive stages these impressions and emotions. This sense of individuality (briefly, "consciousness") is the result of the development of the requisite brain organ; and, as each individual from conception to maturity successively reproduces the stages through which the species as a whole has passed, by comparison we can ascertain the relative degree of development reached by any individual. When an individual becomes "conscious," that is, when he has arrived at that stage of growth at which he perceives both the distinction and relation between himself and the rest of his kind, he has acquired a power of reacting upon his environment; a power limited but REAL—of self-determination, within, of course, his physical powers and his environment.

Society, we find, is an organism progressing through stages of development. The present stage is that in which economic classes have been differentiated within the social organism: the propertied bourgeoisie and the propertyless proletariat.

Now, whether they are aware of it or not, the interests of these two classes are conflicting. The workers fulfill the function of production, i. e., their associated labor adapts all natural resources to human use; the bourgeoisie or capitalist class retain ownership of the tools of production, appropriate the products and control the function of distribution.

Hence the social function of production (the prime necessity for social existence and development) is fettered and hampered by the survival of the obsolete bourgeois system of production—by bourgeois control of the function of distribution if you will.

Just as the chicken developing within the egg is compelled as a condition to further development and even existence to burst the shell which up to that point has served as a necessary condition of further growth, so the working class will, sooner or later, become conscious of this hindrance to their development. They will see what it is that causes wars—panics, strikes and the general pitiable condition of their class.

They will become conscious that they are the only useful class in society, conscious that they ARE the "society of the future," and bursting the shell of capitalist political control and consequent economic bondage, set themselves (and society) free to commence a new and higher stage of evolution.

Class consciousness, then, on the part of the individual worker, entails the recognition by him of his place as a unit in a class—at present politically ruled and economically enslaved. The historic mission of this class is to carry society forward to a higher development. He must know that the interests, and therefore the impulses, of the individuals comprising the ruling capitalist and ruled working class, respectively, are mutual; and those of the two classes antagonistic. That the development of society produces more and more a class struggle, the highest expression of which is a struggle for political power as a necessary precondition for rule on the one hand, and on the other for emancipation.

Without the workers consciously organized and educated to this end no work of emancipation can be accomplished. And any advocacy of palliatives of our present system of wage-labor and capital is—no matter by whom—an act of betrayal of the working class.

The first thing to do, then, is to make the workers "class conscious."

Moral: "Don't be a Wooden Indian!"

—JOHN DAVIS.

"Babushka"

MADAME Breshkovsky, the "Little Grandmother of the Russian Revolution," has been touring the United States for several weeks, speaking against the Russian Bolsheviks. Her reputation as a revolutionist in Russia for half a century, and the fact that she spent thirty years of this time in Siberian prisons, has been exploited to the full by the capitalist press,—a result which has caused much chagrin to many of her former admirers. These Socialists, in their anger and humiliation, have felt that she has grossly betrayed them; that she is, in short, a renegade and a turn-coat.

Now, is this the truth? I do not think so. I listened to Madame Breshkovsky in one of her recent lectures, and I was struck by what the chairman said when he introduced her:

"Madame Breshkovsky has told me a secret," he said, "She tells me she is not a Revolutionist."

Madame Breshkovsky herself made this clear when she explained that all her life she had tried to teach and uplift "her people." Goodness and kindness, evidently, were the extent of the contributions she desired

to make to the Russian workers. She did, it is true, oppose the Tsar, but her own teachings show that she has always been a Sentimentalist, not a Revolutionist.

Our "Babushka" is not, therefore, a traitor to Socialist principles; she never had any Socialist principles. She was not a Marxian Socialist, but a member of the "Social-Revolutionaries," the party of the peasants and petty bourgeois,—the party, too, that for years opposed the "reds" who insisted uncompromisingly on Marxism. Breshkovsky has then, throughout her life, consistently stood for the hazy maze of humanitarianism plus reformism which ever distinguishes the non-Marxian Socialists, and is now doing exactly what should be expected of her. The trouble has been that Socialists as a whole have failed to distinguish carefully between her brand of "Socialism" and genuine revolutionary Socialism.

The case of Madame Breshkovsky is not an isolated one, but is an example of a constant danger to the revolutionary working-class movement. Revolutionists must not, for example, allow themselves to be led by sentimentalists of the type of Scott Nearing, who, according to report, has "gone back on" the Dictator-

ship of the Proletariat! He has done no such thing, for he never in his life accepted the Marxian philosophy upon which Bolshevism is based. The truth is that sentimentalists are found everywhere, both among the liberal bourgeoisie, and in the ranks of the present Socialist Party. The former includes such men as Senator La Follette and Professor Chas. Beard; the latter such would-be "reds" as Rev. John Haynes Holmes, Carl D. Thompson, and Bouck White.

The fact is, that these sentimental idealists openly and constantly display their labels to the Socialists of all the world, and we need only look in order to understand their status. The Russian Bolshevists were never under any illusions as to the correctness of Madame Breshkovsky's "Socialistic" views, and Marxians in America have for years pointed out the compromising, reformistic, straddle-the-fence streak in our Bergers and Spargoes, and foretold the course they have since pursued. The lesson for Socialists may be summed up thus: Don't follow sentimentalists, and you won't be disappointed when sentimentalism backs down.

O. C. JOHNSON.

The Russell-Lawrence Letters

1. Can the Workers Understand Scientific Socialism?

Buffalo, N. Y.
October 10, 1912.

Dear Pal Harry:

Your last letter found me in good health and in fine spirits but I must confess that when I got through reading your sad tale of woe it left me feeling pretty glum. However, it didn't take the sun's rays long to pierce through the dark clouds you cast around me.

I don't wonder you are disgruntled with the hostility of the workers to Socialism but your analysis is quite wrong. To quote from your letter:

"It's disgusting the attitude the workers take to us who are trying to show them the way out from their present sufferings. The only thing that will teach them anything is their stomachs. After all, what do the workers care for science? If they have the right spirit, that is all that is necessary. What we want and need are Socialists of the heart and not of the head. The plugs can't be educated anyhow."

Well, well, my little pessimist, let us discuss this thing for a while. Are you going to let the magnitude of our task swamp you or are you going to rise to the full stature of your proletarian manhood and handle it properly? Never, never forget for one minute that the keystone, yes, the foundation stone of our entire propaganda is based on this fact alone: It is our own job, no one else's, to emancipate ourselves, the "plugs," from wage slavery.

Ours is an historic task. In the dim, distant past our forefathers developed simple, primitive tools with which to eke out their bare existence.

As the years rolled on and on, these tools improved and grew—until today, we find vast, social, machines producing the wealth of society. But in the growth from the swaddling clothes of early barbarism (Primitive Communism) to the first long trousers of present-day civilization (Capitalism), a vital difference has crept in. Our ancestors owned the tools with which

they worked and used the things they made. Not so, the Workers, however. The employes of any concern neither own the machines they must operate (or else starve for want of a job, their ONLY source of income) nor do they have any say as to the character or control of the disposal of the things they produce. In fact, only too often, the very goods they make are used to crush and exploit them. Those who constitute the vast portion of the population who, by applying their labor to raw materials, bring forth the wealth of the world, do not retain or enjoy it. Rather, their's is but starvation, misery and suffering. Such a condition of affairs can not continue. It's very existence stifles itself. In the course of human history it has become our duty to inaugurate a sound, logical system of Society. The master class will not do it because their class position in Society compels them to desire the perpetuation of Capitalism. A change in the basis of Society would threaten them in their parasitical character of reaping all the enjoyments of the wealth other hands wrought. It is plain to see that it is OUR job to remedy these conditions. How? By applying our knowledge and understanding of social progress and directing it into its proper channels.

You probably would be highly indignant if I should tell you that you have the same ignorance and contempt for the working class as has the capitalist class; that your position on Socialist education flows from a bourgeois viewpoint. But, then if I say that only the workers, as a class, are capable of a knowledge of the social forces at work, you should not remain satisfied without evidence.

But, first, what is knowledge? Knowledge might be defined as intimate understanding. For example: by a knowledge of furniture we mean the intimate understanding of furniture. But, then, the term "intimate understanding" is as vague a phrase as "Knowledge." My elaboration on this will, I hope, open your

eyes, at last, to whether the workers can understand Scientific Socialism.

Understanding is classification, division, comparison, etc. For example we divide furniture into various groups e. g. beds, tables, chairs, bureaus, etc. Then, we classify a particular group or the various groups e. g. colonial, mission, Louis XIV, etc. chairs. Then, again, it may be mahogany, oak, cedar, or canewood. By these divisions and classifications we reach an understanding of furniture. As our understanding becomes broader and deeper our knowledge of furniture arises. The same is true of biology, chemistry or any science. In a word, understanding is the "how" and knowledge, the "why" of any subject.

Now, let us see who grasps an understanding of capitalism and where the knowledge of social progress resides. Let us apply the above to the proletarian and bourgeois conceptions of society.

What are the experiences of the workingmen, as a rule? It is from their experience they gather the classifications, groups, divisions, etc., that go to make up society. In a word, capitalism is the school which teaches them an understanding of society.

The fluctuations of the markets which throw them out of work periodically; the panics with the resulting sufferings; the search for a job; starvation; tumble-down shacks; hard knocks; these and more are experiences which only the workers "enjoy."

Our environments have a tremendous influence upon our point of view. We look at things consciously or not through the spectacles of our position in life. Take old Phil Boland, since his reunion with his wealthy relatives, he is no longer the class-conscious rebel, but now thinks that after all things as they are aren't as bad as he imagined. Such as he offers poor hope for the understanding of Socialism. But is Phil's typical of the experiences of our class? By no means! Their environments of bitter experiences show things in a constant process of change. Nothing seems stable or permanent. They have no job, no home, nothing save the potential power of redeeming the world from Capitalism. Though they alone produce the wealth of the world, they see it all in the hands of their masters, whom in spite of appearances take no part in production. From these circumstances, comes his understanding i. e. a grasp of how Capitalism works. It is these very experiences that make our fellow workers dialectic i. e. cause them to see things in their interrelations with one another and in a process of change; makes them, unconsciously, scientific. In a word, Capitalism has made them ripe for a knowledge of Socialism.

But, how about the members of the capitalist class? They also view things from their position in life. Conditions as a whole are wonderfully favorable to them. All of the pleasures, enjoyments, travels, etc., are theirs (But they are not open for the pure pleasures of our class). Panics, unemployment, misery, etc., have a far different meaning to them. The evils of Capitalism do not impress themselves upon their minds like they do the workers. (It is true that some of the masters suffer from the anarchy of Capitalism but such are forced into the ranks of the working class, and, as ever, Capital becomes concentrated into fewer hands.) The fear of loss of income and profits blinds them, as a class, to the development taking place in Society. It becomes a virtual impossibility for the Bourgeoisie (the capitalist class) to even understand the Socialist

Philosophy because they fail to grasp the actual workings of Capitalism. There is no ignoramus that can compare with the average member of the master class; even their university graduates, spokesmen, and apologists. Never will I forget how the bricklayer, Hogan, tripped up and exposed Professor Carver of Harvard, a noted "authority" on political economy. Just as Capitalism has made us dialectic so has this same Capitalism made its "fatted calves," our masters, metaphysical i. e. caused them to view things as being fairly stable and permanent in spite of the changes taking place that soon are to doom parasites to eternal oblivion.

The class conflict has its reflex in a conflict of ideas. By means of the school, press, church and all available avenues of information, the Capitalist class attempt to foist their ideology upon us. Of course, with all power in their hands, they succeed. Then you, in true bourgeois style become discouraged, claiming "the plugs can't be educated, anyhow." Our campaign now, more than ever, must be a refutation of Capitalistic "education" by scientifically explaining Capitalism. It is our only hope. Will the workers grasp it? Who else can? Knowledge is the key that opens the gate to power. Life and all it entails lies before us. Knowledge and truth are our weapons, alone. And greater than all else, the rapid strides Socialism is making among the workers makes criminal the forsaking of the necessary preliminary moves.

Supposing, viewing it from the side of logic, we adopted your advice and by "appealing to their stomachs and to their hearts" we grew most rapidly but we neglected to give them the foundation upon which real rebels are built—scientific Socialism—what is to prevent our more silver-tongued bourgeois orators with their flowery speech and beautiful words leading them out of the fold and, even, against us? When it is seen that the workers are the only ones who can and do see science in all its fulness and that this paves the way for Socialist knowledge, then, your attitude becomes reactionary.

It is interesting to note, by the way, that it was in their workingmen audiences in London, that both Tyndall and Huxley, great British scientists, found their most interested and intelligent pupils. Dietzgen never attended a university, yet who has contributed more to the philosophy of the nineteenth century? Lastly, it has been but the all too common experience of genius to reap misery, poverty, suffering, and snubs from our "respectable, educated, best" people except when they could be exploited by them.

In conclusion, we have a house to build—Socialism. We have to hand all the materials and tools needed for it—social production and economic development. But we can not start building because we have not enough carpenters—Socialists, i. e. Scientific Socialists. Then, our first job must be to make carpenters—Socialists. Surely you would not substitute wood-butchers—sentimentalists. Would you? Our crying need is for Socialist Knowledge. There is no substitute for education, for only in this way can we make class-conscious rebels.

The sun of a new day is arising. Don't let the twilight of ignorance overwhelm you. Yours and mine is a monumental task. Gird on your armor!

Roamin' Bill.

International Notes

By John Keracher

Russia But little real news of the conditions in Russia has been given out during the month. Judging from past experience this would indicate that all is well in the Red Republic. Of course there have been the usual reports that the Bolsheviki regime was about to collapse, and Lenin and Trotsky being ready to make a hurried exit, etc.

It seems that the proposal of the Allies to feed Russia through neutral channels on the condition that the Bolsheviki cease hostilities has fallen through. Evidently the Reds were loath to enter into such round-about dealing without being assured that the Allied troops would be withdrawn. At the present time it appears that considerable forces are being mustered against the Red Army. Kolchak on the East Front is receiving considerable support from the Allies, while the Finnish bourgeois government, which has been recognized by the Powers, is assuming an aggressive attitude. British warships have been cruising in the Baltic, off Helsingfors, and the commander fraternizing with General Mannerheim, the assassinator of the Finnish Workers Government.

In the southwest the alleged Ukrainian government forces under the adventurer Petlura have ceased their struggle with the Poles. This "peasant leader" is now said to be cooperating with the Polish army against the oncoming Reds. If reverses do not overtake the Bolsheviki forces it is not for lack of opposition.

The conquest of the greater part of Ukraina, including the Crimea and the western shore of the Sea of Azof, has given the Red armies more territory to hold, and on the whole their gains have been greater than their losses. While it is difficult to learn the details of the internal economic conditions from the biased and prejudiced reports published in this country, the control of this great food producing territory and the increase of production in the industries now under proletarian State-control would tend to place the Workers Government in a strong position. It is now admitted by those opposed to working class rule that there are food supplies in Russia sufficient to feed the population, providing the transportation facilities could be improved. Last year great progress was made in repairing and extending the railroads; this work is still going on and in time the Bolsheviki will be able to solve the transportation problem as they have solved other problems which have confronted them.

France The overshadowing effect of the Peace Conference obscures the political and economic condition in France. There can be no doubt about the "we-won-the-war" spirit that pervades the whole nation and reflects strongly in the different channels of political expression.

While the war was on all political parties supported the government, the "socialists" vying with other opposition parties in proving their devotion to "La Belle France." Social-Patriots all, with a few notable exceptions; Lorient and his associates coming out more and more strongly for the uncompromising position of revolutionary socialism.

In the Chamber of Deputies quite recently certain "socialist" Deputies requested the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Stephen Pinchon, to state the policy of the Allies toward Russia and Bolshevism. These "yellow" socialists contended that the French government had not grasped the significance of the Russian revolution, arguing that the attitude toward Russia was undemocratic and contrary to the real interests of France. Pinchon replied that it was they who did not understand Russia, its revolution or Bolshevism.

One of the socialist Deputies, Marcel Cachin, declared he was absolutely opposed to any intervention in Russia, whether at Archangel, Odessa or the Ukraine, pointing out that the Red Army was very strong, and the French soldiers terribly exposed, and demanded their recall. He said that the French soldiers, defenders of liberty, had been asked to fight against revolutionary ideas for five francs a day. In spite of this bait no volunteers had been found, and this, he declared, was an honor to the country. He implored the French soldiers not to enlist in Minister Pinchon's volunteer army, the Deputies of the Left applauding warmly. He further alleged that the Russian soldiers in France were still being held and treated brutally because they would not enlist in the army of General Denikin. His remarks were vigorously protested by Minister Pinchon and his supporters.

Another socialist Deputy, Ernest Lafont, criticised the Entente policy and bitterly attacked the anti-Bolsheviki Generals Denekin, Krasnoff and Kolchak.

A few days later other Deputies replied to these attacks in defense of the Government, asserting that the country was becoming anxious, for in the face of barren discussions Germany was beginning to lift her head once more. M. Pinchon stoutly defended the actions of the Government. Speaking of Russia, he said: "We are not waging war in Russia as it is pretended, but only fighting Bolshevism, which is a scourge not only for Russia but for all humanity. It is to stamp out this hotbed of pestilence that the Allies are there."

Turning to the socialist Deputies he confronted them with their own words—"we are not violators of the laws. We will never be heard calling for insurrection"—saying: "Only lately you protested against the Bolsheviki but now you are all united to support them against us and against yourselves." The socialists protested that they did not want their opposition to intervention confounded with their attitude toward Bolshevism. Tumult broke out and Pinchon exclaimed "for you they are a government, for us they are not; they are merely an organization of anarchy by terror." When he asserted that the Peace Conference would deal with the matter, Jean Longuet exclaimed: "Happily, Wilson is there." Another of the socialist (?) Deputies proclaimed that "all socialists are not Bolsheviki."

While the above discussion shows the confusion French socialists are in, it shows also that the policy of intervention in Russia is meeting with vigorous opposition.

The demonstrations in Paris on May Day were apparently very weak, the bourgeoisie being well pre-

pared with armed forces to meet any attempted insurrection. In other parts of France conditions seem to be calm, though there is considerable dissatisfaction with the slow demobilization of the army. Should the German government refuse to sign the peace treaty (which is unlikely) and the occupation of Germany or further fighting begin, it may cause considerable trouble.

The United States Indifference to what is going on in these stirring times seems to be the condition of mind of the average Yankee worker—at least insofar as world affairs are concerned. On the industrial field, however, there is considerable dissatisfaction which is being expressed in numerous strikes. In practically every city of importance strikes are on, several of which have taken on threatening proportions. The principal cause of these industrial struggles is the continually rising prices of commodities. Thousands of workers are joining the labor unions, and many of these unions are taking quite a radical position, in some cases bordering upon revolutionary activity.

Always a day of action, the first of May this year saw larger and more vigorous demonstrations than ever before. In the larger cities parades and demonstrations were held, and in several instances the workers came into open conflict with the "guardians of liberty."

Considerable disturbances took place in Cleveland (Ohio) due to the action of soldiers and the police. Twenty thousand workers were in line and in the clash with the authorities several were killed and many injured.

In Detroit, a parade in the morning resulted in clashes with the police; later a second parade was organized, the police this time cooperated by keeping traffic clear for the enormous throng of workers who marched to the Arena Gardens. It is estimated that about 20,000 participated in the demonstrations which lasted all day. Many strikes are in progress in this city, the Timken-Detroit Axle workers being the latest to walk out. The men on the police force are demanding a straight eight-hour day.

The "workers and soldiers council" of Toledo (Ohio) has been quite active. Strikes at the Willys-Overland, the Auto-Lite and Ford Glass Co. plants adding to the general class conflict, which has been accompanied by considerable bitterness on both sides.

Rochester (N. Y.) held a successful parade with about 4,000 in line. This was their first May Day demonstration in several years. The parade terminated in a successful mass meeting at Convention Hall where speakers in different languages addressed the audience. The clothing workers made May Day a holiday, holding a parade in the afternoon.

In Buffalo, New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and many other cities mass demonstrations were made by the workers, and on the whole a marked advance was apparent over previous May Day activities, although the greatest credit must be given to the foreign-speaking workers.

While these expressions of class-awakening have been manifesting themselves, the capitalists have not been sleeping. In addition to the regular channels of bourgeois propaganda—the press, the pulpit and platform—they are devising other means to divert the workers' attention from their class interests. Anti-Bolshevik literature is being distributed in many factories in the large cities, and "Americanization

Leagues" are being formed to teach the "ignorant foreigner" American ideals—the Right to Life, Liberty and The Pursuit of Happiness. Some employers are getting the young workers to sign a Loyalty Pledge—the chief feature being to fight Bolshevism and uphold Americanism—which is synonymous with Capitalism. The plan is not working as well as anticipated, for workers who were entirely indifferent have had their suspicions aroused by the sudden solicitude for their welfare.

Jugo-Slavia When Italy entered the war few people knew of the secret treaty between that country and the Entente. Today all the world knows of the Treaty of London and the bargain entered into. To inspire the Italian people and stir up opposition to Austrian rule it was given out that the aims of Italy was the liberation of those racial groups who groaned beneath the hateful yoke of Austrian imperialism, the Croats, Slovenes and Serbians. Thus Italy, posing as a liberator, was fighting side by side with the Allied Nations for that illusive abstraction, World Democracy. The propaganda of anti-Austrian and anti-German imperialism met with considerable success among the peoples within those empires who held national independence as the goal to be attained. Among these the Czecho-Slavs are perhaps the most prominent, while the Poles may be considered as of second importance. National independence was the reward offered for assisting the Allied cause. In the case of Czecho-Slavia these services took the form of fighting the Russian Bolsheviki in Siberia. Poland and Czecho-Slavia now form important "buffer states" between Russia and Western Europe. With the Jugo-Slavs it is otherwise. The liberation from their imperial masters for which they struggled has to a large extent been made impossible by the action of Italy.

When the armistice with Austria-Hungary was signed, the Italians were assigned the work of occupation of certain portions of the territory held by Austria. This included the sections specified in the Treaty of London, and in addition the Italians occupied Fiume, all of which they are determined to hold despite the vigorous protests of the Jugo-Slavs, whose territorial claims are infringed. The Italians seem determined to remain, and the Jugo-Slavs will have but acquired new masters as a result of their struggle for independence. Austrian imperialism goes down and Italian imperialism goes up. The Jugo-Slavs are in despair because of the action of Italy and the desertion of their cause by the Allies. Such are the fruits of nationalistic ambitions. For the workers it will make little difference. Exploitation under Italian rule will be about the same as it was under Austrian. Their task is to rid themselves of all who rule and exploit them.

Left Wing Socialists Capture Party in Chicago

As we go to press word comes to hand that the convention of Local Cook County (Chicago) has adopted a Left Wing program, and that Seymour Stedman, National Executive Committee member, bolted the convention and threatens to organize a new party.

We have no further details of the action of the convention but when a Local constituted as Chicago has been for years, a stronghold of the reform element, makes this turn to the Left it is a strong indication of the change that is sweeping over the Socialist Party of America.

Revolutionary Political Action

The Road to Socialism

(First Instalment)

This is the first of a series of articles dealing with the various proposed methods of working class activity toward emancipation. Each of the many panaceas offered as substitutes for revolutionary socialism will be examined and discussed in detail. The subject will be dealt with under the following headings:

1. *Why This Discussion?* 2. *The Purpose of Politics.* 3. *Socialist Political Action.* 4. *Education and Political Action.* 5. *Political Action and Its Opponents.* 6. *Political and Economic Action.* 7. *Our Revolutionary Reformers.* 8. *The General Strike.* 9. *Is Industrial Unionism the Better Way?* 10. *The Value of Mass Action.* 11. *The Lessons of Russia.* 12. *Dictatorship and the State.* 13. *The Situation Summed Up.*

Owing to the extensive nature of the subject and the detail with which the writer has treated the different phases of the working class movement, we have thought best to publish the article in four or five instalments of approximately three thousand words each. Insofar as possible we will endeavor to make each instalment complete in itself.

THE EDITORS.

Why This Discussion?

We are told by some workers that politics are useless and out of date. We are urged to rely upon other methods, industrial or economic, to secure socialism. There are many causes for the attitude of these workers and we propose to examine them. The chief reason for the anti-political state of mind is the ignorance of the workers. They have relied almost blindly upon the capitalist political parties to help them and condemn political action because they have been betrayed. In their ignorance they have supported their enemies and suffered for their blindness. The workers have not understood their own interests and the causes of their subjection. They join with parties and organizations that use politics to maintain the present system. Social Reformers and pseudo-Socialists mislead the workers into voting for them and only after long experience do their victims realize they have been sold. The workers do not understand that only Socialism can abolish their poverty. They do not see that freedom from wage slavery can only be attained by the action of the working class themselves. Not merely here in the United States but in Britain, Germany, France, Austria, Belgium and Italy the workers have supported parties calling themselves Labor, Radical and Social-Democratic, whose policies and programs were opposed to socialism and the workers interests. The remedy for this unsound action of the workers is not "direct action" but education, and then organization to control society in the interest of the workers alone.

A further reason for the opposition to political action is the apparent simplicity of industrial action. It needs very little education to strike or engage in street combats and it appeals therefore to those uneducated workers who think economic action a swift and sure method.

The Russian Revolution has caused many to believe that organization, education, political and industrial action are unnecessary. All that is required ac-

ording to many workers is the sudden rise of masses of workers, led on by a few intellectuals. These views result from little knowledge and false ideas about the struggle in Russia. Some think that every method pursued in Russia can be used in all countries, independent of different conditions and obstacles to be overcome in the march to victory.

These ideas and tactics will be discussed later. Enough has been said to indicate some of the causes of opposition to political action, and misunderstanding of the revolutionary possibilities of political organization for socialism.

The Purpose of Politics.

The Declaration of Principles of the Soviets of Portland (Ore.) and of Toledo (Ohio) state the necessity for political action in these terms:

"That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the Nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly of the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organize consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic."

Here, in a few lines, is the explanation of political action and its necessity. We live in a society in which the population is divided into two different classes. Not only different but opposed to each other. Between those who own property and those who do not there is a conflict of interests. This conflict expresses itself as a class war. The workers are many and the capitalists are few. Just as with previous dominant classes, the capitalists rule over the workers because they control the machinery of government. This machinery, the political power by which society is controlled, is represented by all the national and local institutions of so-called law and order. The workers struggle to improve their conditions and find themselves always opposed by the forces of government in the hands of capitalists—the law, the police, the army and the navy. The capitalists realize that mere economic federations such as manufacturers' associations are not sufficient to defeat the workers. The employers consciously organize in political parties realizing that the class war is a contest for social supremacy. That is to say, that as classes become conscious of their material interests they see that the fight is not one for mere temporary advantage, but a life and death struggle for political supremacy in the interest of the victors. It is true that the efforts to keep up their standard of living or to raise it, through shorter hours or higher wages, becomes a part of the struggle between class and class, but this warfare leaves the social basis untouched. When the working class becomes conscious of its interests it devotes itself to the contest for political domination. The class who control political power control society. They rule and seek to preserve the social system which favors them. They use their power to subdue the class below them and maintain sufficient order to allow the smooth working of their economic system.

Socialist Political Action.

Political institutions arise from the material conditions of society and change in harmony with the changing base. Politics is the science of government. Political action, therefore, depends upon the nature of the political institutions. Where capitalist development has proceeded far enough we have all the democratic forms and institutions so essential to the smooth working of its system. The capitalists were forced by the very needs of the system to delegate their functions and extend voting power to the working class. In those countries where the central feature of the government is a parliament, where a constitution expresses itself in legislative and executive bodies responsible to the electorate, political action includes parliamentary action. In those countries and at those times where and when no such institutions exist, political action manifests itself in other directions. When, in 1905 the workers of Russia struck for a constituent assembly they were forced to form political bodies called "Workmen's Councils" to function under the special conditions of the times. No capitalistic country can exist long or develop without the workers having the voting power. Imperial Russia, Turkey, Persia, Mexico and Japan found this to be a fact; that arbitrary rule by open brute force prevented the ordered working of affairs.

Political action by the working class may be reformist or revolutionary. It may be action in the interest of capital or action in interest of workers. Properly defined, political action means any action to directly influence or change the policy of government.

Revolutionary political action by the working class means those actions taken to secure control of the institutions of government in order to transform the social system. All political parties express economic interests. Various sections of capitalists form their own parties but at bottom they are as one in keeping the basis of the system as it is. That is what binds them together. In detail they differ but they all exist to promote the interests of the class of employers. Hence, political parties must express either the interests of the worker or capitalists, these two groups being the only two classes in society. The workers who are not ripe for their economic emancipation will use politics blindly, that is, they will support parties and policies which strengthen the present system. The workers have secured the majority of votes and the capitalist, labor and so-called Socialist politicians have always induced them to vote for the very system which robs and enslaves them. After this kind of anti-socialist politics, many reformers get disappointed and become anti-political. They do not understand socialist or revolutionary politics.

Frederick Engels says ("Origin of Family," page 211) "The possessing class rules directly through universal suffrage." To use the suffrage therefore to fight for reforms, to support capitalist policies or to help labor misleaders, is to support the present system. Socialists do not use parliaments for the purpose of getting reforms or patching up a rotten system. That is the work of agents of capitalism.

Political action by socialists includes as the foremost thing, the educating of the workers in a knowledge of their position and the way out. Anything which obscures or confuses the line of class conflict such as reform programs, playing capitalist politics or supporting reform and pacifist movements is injurious.

Political action means the agitation carried on to arouse the workers, education to enlighten them and organization to marshal them for the conquest of political power in their own interest. The workers must struggle for the complete control of the machinery of politics as stated in the principles of the Soviets as above quoted. They do not enter politics to get remedial legislation but to abolish slavery.

In the words of Engels ("Origin of the Family," page 211)—"For as long as the oppressed class, in this case the proletariat, is not ripe for its emancipation, just so long will its majority regard the existing order of society as the only one possible, and form the tail, the extreme left wing of the capitalist class.

"But the more the proletariat matures towards its self-emancipation, the more does it constitute itself as a separate class and elect its own representatives in place of the capitalists."

Revolutionary political action is not merely concerned with getting votes and winning seats. We appeal to voters and non-voters alike, women as well as men, for a new social system will need the co-operation of all workers to make it a success. We want to educate and organize the workers, faced as we are by a strong capitalist class with a powerful press and church to poison the toilers minds and keep them ignorant. Well informed, well organized, alert and insistent—such a working class will be able to dominate the situation in spite of all that may happen. Engels further says "Universal suffrage is the gauge of the maturity of the working class. It can and never will be anything else but that in the modern state. But that is sufficient. On the day when the thermometer reaches its boiling point amongst the laborers, they as well as the capitalists will know what to do."

In concluding this section, we impress upon our readers the words of Marx and Engels in The Communist Manifesto that "the working class must first of all acquire political supremacy." On this point Lenin well said in 1916 ("International of Youth" in the Class Struggle—May, 1919)—"Socialists are willing to utilize the present government and its institutions in the struggle for the liberation of the working class and also insist on the necessity of so using the government in the creation of a suitable transition form from capitalism to socialism."

Education and Political Action.

The work of education is best conducted by a political party. In the unions and economic organizations the varying political faiths resent the expression of a definite social policy. When the I. W. W. was formed at Chicago in 1905 they refused to affiliate with any political party on these very grounds. Delegate Klemensic said at this Convention (Report, p. 232): "We must not overlook the fact that we are here as workingmen, and as such we do not recognize the Socialist, the Anarchist or any other kind of ist." The same is true today even of the I. W. W. Their paper "The Labor Defender" (Dec. 1, 1918) says that "members of the I. W. W. differ as much in political and religious views as do members of any other organization. As union men we all agree; but on political and religious questions we may disagree as much as we please." The same condition exists in the Workers' International Industrial Union. W. W. Cox, an Executive Board member of that organization,

writing in the Weekly People (December 30, 1916) said "The W. I. U. recognizes no political party and it has a Republican, Democratic, Progressive, Prohibitionist and Socialist Party as well as S. L. P. membership."

At the factory gate workers think they are rivals. In the competition for jobs, in the scramble to snatch another man's place, the unity of interest is blurred. Two brothers and even two I. W. W.'s have to fight for one job. In the workshop itself the speed and efficiency prevents "education on the job." Those who try to explain the socialist idea in the factory very often find themselves fired outside. Both at the factory door and at the machine men think of each other as tradesmen seeking the best price for their wares. And even in the trade and industrial unions they concern themselves with details of wages and hours and recruit members with the object of adjusting these matters from day to day. Revolutionary education and organization is outside their field, so much so that all of the prominent opponents of political action obtained their socialist knowledge inside political bodies.

The job is the place to fight we are told. The I. W. W. organ, *New Solidarity* (Feb. 8th, 1919) tells us: "The job then is the battle ground of labor and that is why we must organize on the job." But the same editorial is driven to the following confession. "But the owners of the job, the capitalist class, decided to prevent us from carrying out our program. They arrest and jail the active delegates. They place serious charges against them. They bring them into court. They go through the formality of a trial and even though they lose out in court they gain their immediate purpose. They hinder and delay the work of organization on the job. In doing this they chose the job on which they preferred to fight." He closes by saying that we "fight on the ground of our own choosing if we can but on the grounds of the enemies' choice if we must."

The very nature of economic organizations makes the revolutionary education and organization of the workers difficult. They are driven from time to time to strike and when the strike is over they drop out of the organization. They are brought into a union when a strike takes place and make the winning of some temporary improvements their object. If they win they regard their objects as attained. If they lose they apathetically drop away. Examine the situation of all the great strikes in this country. Great bodies of men join as on the Mesaba range, but where is that membership now? Several years ago the I. W. W. took part in the great Lawrence strike. When the strike broke out this year they confessed that no organization existed and they had to begin all over again.

On the other hand, a political organization for Socialism, alive to the class struggle, steadily builds up an army of workers and educates them. It is true that reformers and vote-catchers using the name of Socialists, are supported by large numbers which decrease after elections. These people are not recruited for Socialism. Numbers, not education, is the aim. They are the material out of which "direct actionists" and anarchists are made. Never understanding politics in the Socialist use of that term they try capitalist ideas of politics and sickened by it, turn to other methods.

While economic organization and the struggles rising from it have an educative value and give moral

strength to the workers, it has many limitations. To arouse men to strike, to engage in the battles over the terms at which labor power is sold, does not give a revolutionary outlook. To paralyze industry is not to change society. Strikes, general and local, have been declared by workers who do not want to change the social system. The resistance to attacks upon the workers standard of living and efforts to raise it do not necessarily change mens' minds towards the fundamental institutions of today. This is proved by the whole history of the modern working class and it is true of present strikes.

The chief occupation of the political party of the working class at present must be to bring home to the workers' minds the cause of and cure for their slavery. The I. W. W. paper "The Industrial Unionist" in a leading article by Walker C. Smith on "Our New Problems" (January 1st, 1919) said: "It is a world problem that now confronts the industrial workers and that world problem cannot be solved by our old dogma of pure and simple job organization." This is an admission but later writers do not agree with him. He further states that "We must be prepared to deal with questions which hitherto have been left to diplomats and politicians of various kinds."

Art Under The Bolsheviks

The general impression conveyed to the reader of the English Press is that the Bolshevik regime is one of sheer destructiveness; that art has perished and morals gone entirely by the board. The lie about the marriage law has been sent all round the world, and though now admitted by the New Europe to be a lie, the mischief has been done. Now we learn on unimpeachable authority that life in Moscow provides more aesthetic pleasures than London: Chaliapine is singing nightly to packed houses in opera—French, German, Italian, as well as Russian; the ballet is in full swing; and on any evening in the week the theatres offer a wide choice of classical and modern plays—Shakespeare and Moliere, as well as Tchekov and Gorki. Moreover, in Petrograd the Hermitage and Alexander III, museums are now more full of pictures than they ever were before. They are well looked after, no pictures have been stolen or damaged. On the contrary, many people have sent to these galleries the best works out of their own private collections. As regards the terrifying statistics given as to the decline in the population of Petrograd it should not be forgotten that it has long been the deliberate policy of the Russian Government—a policy attempted by Kerensky, unsuccessfully, and carried out, successfully, by the Bolsheviks—to induce the inhabitants of Petrograd to evacuate.

BOOKS WANTED

Many of our readers have at different times written us for books which are out of print or otherwise unobtainable. Each month we will print a list of books wanted. Should you have an extra copy of one of these books or know where they may be obtained communicate with us. If there is some book which you wish to secure write us and we will endeavor to locate it for you. There will be no charge for this service other than the necessary postage.

The Students Marx, by Edward Aveling.
The Poverty of Philosophy, Marx.

A New Basis for Ethics

By Oakley Calvin Johnson

THE psychological importance of moral ideas can scarcely be over-estimated— if at all. It is amazing to observe the tenacity with which humanity clings to what is considered right; but it is even more amazing to note the celerity with which humanity, after discarding a worn-out ethical principle, declares that the new one was right all the time but hadn't been discovered. And all the time mankind is perfectly sincere in thus standing for the Right and the Good.

It is these moral ideas that thwart and puzzle the minds of reformers in all times and circumstances. Some Pankhurst advocates equal suffrage, and is pained to find woman after woman declare against her own political "emancipation" because "woman's duty is to the home!"

No clear understanding of the nature of the moral ideas pervading society is possible unless based on a scientific analysis of the origin of these ideas. This implies, of course, that the supposed causes be carefully examined, and either accepted or rejected. According to the older theologians it was God himself who told man the difference between right and wrong, and handed down from some Mt. Sinai the commandments which minutely differentiated Evil from Good in human conduct. But it was early apparent that there were many gods, and that these gods did not agree in such matters. Baal and Jehovah, for example, were both discredited. One after another the divine rules became obsolete; Moses' "eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth" was ruled out by Christ who declared for "humility and turning the other cheek," and now our Newell Dwight Hillis's have shelved Christ's dictum in favor of "moral regeneration through war," and "hating the Hun."

The idea of divine fiat in the moral realm, not being supported by facts, was laid aside by the philosophers, and Human Reason appointed in its stead. It is plain, asserted the philosophers, that the laws of right and wrong are absolute, and if we apply our reason we can find out what is eternally good and what is eternally bad, then do the one and abstain from the other.

The moral philosophers of today are very sure of some, at least, of the absolute principles upon which morality is supposedly based. One principle is that it is wrong to take life; but we take the life of mosquitoes when they annoy us and of trees when we want a house. The "eternal" principle is then modified to mean, that it is wrong to take the life of animals that can feel pain; but tigers can feel pain. Then the rule is confined to humankind only; but we hang murderers and shoot our enemies. In desperation our philosophers finally apply the law to young children, for it is an "absolute" moral principle that the killing of young children is bad; but a Chicago doctor lets a hopelessly deformed baby die. Oh, well, persists the moral philosopher, of course there are exceptions. But we insist that an absolute principle in Ethics or anything else permits of no conditions, it is relative, not absolute.

Now the true basis of moral ideas has been scientifically analyzed and exposed by the Socialist thinkers,

Dietzgen, Engels, and Marx. Their researches gave rise to the principle that the economic interests of people have a very strong bearing on their conceptions of what is right or wrong. At the present time, for instance, it is considered immoral to use or spread the use of alcoholic liquors, a belief directly contrary to both the teachings and practice of two or three generations ago. But insurance companies discovered that heavy users of alcoholic beverages are not the best risks, and industrial enterprises were found to suffer through the neglect of drunken workers, and lo! it was deemed bad to drink. To be sure, the brewers and saloonkeepers, having a living to make, were convinced that the booze business is a divine institution, but the fact that there were more people whose economic interests were injured than there were benefited by King Alcohol led to the moral condemnation of the traffic, and is rapidly leading to its overthrow; again, songbirds are now protected by law, and it is a virtue to build birdhouses for them and feed them, while a few years ago they were sadly neglected, and in many cases rewards were offered for killing them. But at that time the birds were accused of ruining the farmers' fruit and grain, whereas it is well known now that birds are perhaps the most effective destroyers of insect pests that we have. Thus does Economics dictate the "truths" of Ethics.

It is not claimed here that liquors used for beverages ought not to be abolished, or that songbirds ought not to be protected; the point is that moral ideas are very largely influenced by economic considerations, by the manner in which people make their living. To the southern slaveholder of 1860 chattel slavery was right, and to the northern factory owner of the same year it was right to take the lion's share of the product of his factory hands. Our capitalists teach the Boy Scouts the doctrine of "unquestioning obedience," because docile workers are highly advantageous in industry; but the disillusioned workers in these industries agitate to "fan the flames of discontent." Great Britain and the former German government, to give another instance, solemnly justify themselves in their treatment, respectively, of Ireland and Belgium.

The economic factor in people's conduct, illustrated by these examples, has long been recognized. There are, however, two other factors that play a part in history, and these are styled by Enrico Ferri the Telluric and the Hereditary factors, respectively. The first refers to the physical conditions of life on the planet— climate, geographical influences, and so on. Thus, industry must be a virtue in a cold climate, but is superfluous in tropical countries. The second, of course, takes into consideration the influences that come down to us from the past, and their inevitable tendency to modify to a greater or less extent the institutions, moral or otherwise, which are grounded on the economic structure of society. Thus, the inheritance of Puritans and Cavaliers modified their social institutions in colonial America. At any rate all these factors are material causes of moral ideas; material and external causes, not spiritual or supernatural or divine. Hence, the method of explaining history on these principles is

styled the Materialist Conception of History, or, more simply, Historical Materialism.

Enough has surely been said to show that Socialism, which teaches the materialist basis of Ethics, is not "applied Christianity." Christianity is essentially metaphysical and idealistic, while Socialism is scientific and materialistic. But does this mean that Socialists propose the abolition of morality, of right and wrong? Are we no longer to have "high ideals?" This is not the case by any means. Socialists do not abolish morality, but they point out that it is relative, not absolute, and they show conclusively the varying material forces by which it is formed. Since the prevailing ethical conceptions of the present time are shaped by the material conditions of capitalist society and in the interest of capitalist society, the proletariat, therefore, should recognize the fact, and decline to be guided by moral scruples superimposed upon them by their masters. Proletarian economic welfare, not bourgeois interests, must be the basis of proletarian Ethics.

This proposition can be proved by a consideration of the process of animal and human evolution. We see that Nature has laid down the inexorable law that whatever is good for the species is right, whatever is bad for the species is wrong. The most ideal of all virtues, mother-love—a love so forgetful of self that the

mother will die for her child—is a direct result of the necessity for species-perpetuity. Species-welfare, then—not the Egoism of Anarchists nor the Altruism of Religionists—is the broad basis for a sane ethical philosophy; and species welfare, of course, means the sum of the material factors working for the interests of the race.

Now it happens that the human race is divided into classes whose interests are diametrically opposed to each other. No reconciliation of these classes is possible. We must side either with the Bourgeoisie or with the Proletariat. But no species can secure the highest welfare so long as it is divided into warring groups; and to side with the Bourgeoisie means the perpetuation of classes, since Capitalism cannot exist without a class to exploit. On the other hand, to side with the Proletariat means the final abolition of classes and with the advent of a classless society comes the only possible basis for complete species welfare.

The highest morality, therefore, is uncompromising adherence to proletarian interests. Species-welfare becomes for us proletarian-welfare. We have "high ideals," to be sure—but we recognize that the Ideal must be based on the Real. Our principles, being true, are naturally shocking to the enemies of the Proletariat, but let them be comforted by the reflection that there are worse shocks awaiting them.

Long Live Our Celebrated Socialist Unity

DISCUSSION of revolutionary labor tactics has become the order of the day. From Victor Berger in The Milwaukee Leader to The Industrial Union News, from petty bourgeoisie social reformer to Boston Left Winger, November Bolsheviks and all, there has been a veritable deluge of journalistic opinion of more or less importance. The different elements seem more concerned with capturing the leadership of the new movement that is expected to develop from out the general turmoil than with the issues that are really involved.

The Revolutionary Age publishes two articles of interest and importance in the issue of April nineteenth—one by Harold Lord Varney for the I. W. W. criticizing the S. P. of A. Left Wing theory and practice: the other being the paper's reply to it. Tho it is manifestly impossible to lay down a complete position in so little space, both articles go far toward clearing up misunderstanding that may exist in both groups. In our opinion The Boston Left Wingers and the I. W. W. spokesmen are not as far apart as the respective articles might lead one to think. Much as we admire Comrade Varney's coolness in trying to "steal" the Russian revolution, we must find fault with his decided originality in the matter of history. The statement that "the I. W. W. had preached Bolshevism while the Bolsheviks themselves were groping" is refreshing to say the least. Varney does not display a very complete knowledge of the Socialist movement in Russia.

We do not agree with him that the rapidly augmenting dissension among the various revolutionary elements is necessarily a question of "men" rather than "principles". We contend that the divisions are inevitable and can be traced to more fundamental differences than jealousies of leadership. It is directly traceable to the past neglect of sound socialist educa-

tion in this country, either among the party membership, or the labor movement as a whole. This is at the same time the shame and weakness of the S. P. of A. Had our party expended even one-half its funds and energies in spreading the truth about Socialism, we would not now be in so well nigh hopeless a muddled condition.

Varney is evidently a man with a humorous twist to his mind. The picture he draws of the I. W. W. "island of ideological truth" to which the Wobblies had long since swum is without a poetic parallel in the literature of the American working class. The sympathetic reader sees grouped before him the clever I. W. W. already quite dry and scanning the tempestuous seas while awaiting the approach of the tardy ones. At last a cheer breaks out among those nearest the shore, "there they come. I can see Lenin's bald head—there's Trotsky; Tchitcherin's nearly all in. By George, he'd have gone down had not Big Bill stretched out the strong hand of anti-parliamentarism just in the nick of time. We are all half mad with triumph—the Russian contingent has arrived. The final link in I. W. W. theory has been forged at last." ! ! ! ! !

Without questioning the quality of his Art, comrade Varney will have to furnish more convincing material than that to capture the revolution for the Wobblies. Lenin and his associates had devoted their entire energies for years to the study and propagation of what is familiarly known as Scientific Socialism. Even now they lose no opportunity to insist that they are undiluted Marxians. That the goal to be attained was the capture of the powers of government was known to them as it is to all well informed Socialists. It is relatively unimportant, at this time, how we shall gain possession of the State in this country, but to get it is the first goal—for the power of coercion is as

essential to the proletariat during the transitional period as it has been to any ruling class of the past. As long as the governmental power lies in the hands of our economic masters, they can maintain their mastery and all our Utopian plans for the social organization of industry remain so many scraps of paper. This was understood long before the Bolsheviks were ever heard of or the I. W. W. either (see *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*.) The Russian revolution has demonstrated the correctness of that doctrine almost to the very letter. The Bourgeois State has been developed to function as the guardian of capitalistic interests. Obviously, it is unfitted to serve in the interest of the Proletariat, therefore its capitalistic nature must be abolished, and its character changed so that it shall function in the interest of the working class alone. Why must there be a working class State at all? For two reasons—first, the governmental power of the State is necessary to the working class in order to prevent the counter-revolutionary activities of the bourgeoisie and to enforce its own decrees. Secondly, it must function as the social organizer of industry until the completion of the social revolution leaves no further work for it to do. Further, the very nature of working class government (proletarian dictatorship)—in accomplishing social reorganization, eliminates all class division and the necessity for guarding class interests. As the capitalists themselves become workers there remain no elements to suppress and as the reorganization of society becomes perfected, the proletarian State with nothing to do gradually falls out of use.

Only after the conquest of political power by the workers is the social organization of industry possible. Engels points the way in the book mentioned above—*Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*. The government of classes is displaced by the administration of things and the State disappears. Comrade Varney is not entirely correct in his statement that Bolshevism scrapped the State and proclaimed itself Industrialist! The Bourgeois State was scrapped but the institution of the State was retained in a new form—the proletarian form—working class rulership with all other elements excluded, as long as they remained dangerous to the workers. We do not believe that Varney wished to misrepresent the historical fact—we are of the opinion that he wholly misunderstands the nature of the State. That is not so surprising considering that he adheres to the belief in its unimportance. In fact, the phenomenon of anti-political action can only be explained on the basis of ignorance of Social Science.

We do not wish to be classed with the “knockers” of the I. W. W. who, too often, are merely denouncers of the organization for no other purpose than to make themselves respectable in the eyes of the “liberal minded.” We recognize and value the great service the I. W. W. has performed in arousing class consciousness among the workers in America. Ours is a criticism, not of its sentiments, but of the unsoundness of its doctrines and tactics. Though we cannot accomplish the social revolution until the workers understand their class position, still could we somehow make them class conscious overnight, our task would be half done. The revolution can never be won on class consciousness alone. We must build up a firm foundation of understanding. To expect

spontaneous intelligent action from the American proletariat in its present abysmal state of ignorance of modern society is the absurd dream of the idealist who relies upon “heart” instead of head. Socialists do not expect such a marvel, nor yet do we think that every worker in the country must understand socialism thoroughly to make the revolution a success, but we DO contend that there must be enough understanding ones to influence the action of their fellow workers into the correct channels. A militant, rebellious proletariat that is only conscious that something is out of joint but does not know what it is, what is to be done or how to do it, is as easily led into the ditch as a somnolent one.

It is contended that the semi-articulate masses will turn to the socialist movement when all else has failed. This may be very true but what good will it do them if we are ourselves incapable of directing the forces of social organization?

We recognize that the great task before the socialist movement today is the preparation of the working class for the social revolution. And in this labor of preparation the first and most important work is the spreading of the literature and study of scientific socialism everywhere. If we do not bestir ourselves, onrushing industrial evolution will precipitate the final collapse of capitalism before we are prepared for it.

Our general criticism of the I. W. W. and the Left Wing is that the emphasis is mainly placed upon the Form of organization rather than the quality of its membership. It does not matter to what form the workers adhere. If their purpose is not revolutionary, their belonging to some particular type of organization will not make it so. Those who attempt to organize Soviets in America fail to take into consideration the peculiar Russian conditions that this form of organization was designed to meet. There is no harm in organizing Workers' and Soldiers' Councils as long as they are not regarded as the great touchstone of proletarian success. It is assumed that there is some mysterious revolutionary power inherent in the Soviet form itself, but Trotsky himself points out that its significance lay in the ability to rapidly reflect the changes of sentiment of the masses from day to day. When the Bolsheviks were loudest in shouting “All power to the Soviets” they had no faith in them as they were constituted, and said so. They counted upon education and the logic of events to change the opinion of the masses. Hence it has no significance here as long as the sentiment of the masses is not revolutionary. A Soviet in America under present conditions is not an imitation of the Russian institution—but a caricature.

Every Marxian knows and recognizes that before you can have a successful proletarian revolution the material conditions must be present. The sentiment of the masses must be changed from passive endurance of capitalism to a desire for socialism. A political party—provided it adheres to an uncompromising attitude—is the best instrument to accomplish this. Our work must lie in educating the workers to a knowledge of their class position and organizing them for the first step—the conquest of political power.