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THE PUBLIC POSTOFFICE RUN FOR PRIVATE PROFIT

Reasons Why the Postoffice Does Not "Pay" and Why it is Not a Socialist Institution—In Answer to a Boy's Letter

A YOUNG SOCIALIST'S LETTER

Dear Editor—I have been a reader of the Social Democratic Herald and other Socialist papers and I believe in Socialism. I am just 16 years of age and have been in quite a number of arguments. One of the main things that they always say to me is that the government is running in debt by running the postoffice. In one of my arguments I bet a man the cigars that the government wasn't running in debt because it runs the postoffice, so I thought I would write to you and see what you could tell me about it. If I win I shall give the cigars to my father.

Yours for Socialism,
Spring Valley, Ill.

GUSTY MALCOR.

My Dear Young Comrade.—The opponents of Socialism are very fond of calling attention to the fact that the postoffice department shows a deficit, and basing their opposition upon that fact. But all of them do not; the better informed among them know that a failure to balance accounts in any department of government under capitalism, is no argument at all against Socialism. The better informed know that, as a matter of fact, the postoffice is not run on Socialist principles; it is, in part only, a Socialist institution, but it is not run as Social Democrats would run it. We would run it on the principles of Socialism; it is now to a great extent run on the capitalist basis. The better informed of our opponents understand this, and Socialists themselves ought to understand it and not point to the postoffice as an example of true Socialism. It is nothing of the kind. You can readily understand this, and I hope your friend will, when I tell you that the government paid to private railroad companies in 1898 the immense sum of \$34,608,352 for mail service.

Of course you know that a Socialist government would do nothing like that. Call your friend's attention to the fact that the entire cost of running some of the fast mail trains on the principal railroads is paid by the government—that is, by the people—and besides that the people have to pay for riding on the trains. If your friend can see that as I do, he will see that the postoffice, instead of being a Socialist institution, is a concern to help private railroad companies fleece the people.

This is not Socialism, Gusty; is it? We may, with Socialists running the government, take certain definite steps towards Socialism, but Socialism we will not have so long as private individuals or companies have a chance to get rich from profits which the people must pay.

It is true that the postoffice shows a small deficit each year; it 1893 it was \$5,000,000. But the railroad companies are making much more than \$5,000,000 annual profits out of the department in excessive charges for service. Then all matter that goes into the mails from the government departments at Washington and elsewhere, as well as other matter sent out by private persons employed by the government, like senators and congressmen, goes free. This is an enormous item in itself. If this matter

was charged for the deficit would be wiped out. Those who consider the postoffice only as a business concern should be able to see that if it was properly managed it would be one of the best paying businesses in the country. The Social Democrats look at it from another standpoint; we are interested in it only as it gives useful service to all the people and affords the means of communicating intelligence among the people. From this standpoint it is among the best paying businesses we have.

But now let us look at the matter from another side: Suppose your friend was in business with another man in Spring Valley. Suppose they did a business of \$20,000 a year, and that under ordinary circumstances they made a profit of \$5,000. Then suppose that the circumstances under which the business was conducted were these: That your friend's partner, without consulting him, helped himself without charge to the goods in the store, paid high rates to have goods delivered to customers, and in other ways dealt (as railroads and the postoffice deal) unfairly with his partner and the public so that the profits of the business were wiped out and instead there was a loss of \$5,000. Would your friend say that the business did not pay? Or would he say that the business itself was all right, but it was badly managed and was used as a "graft" by his partner? Ask him.

Tell him that the private railroads are "grafters" on the postoffice to the extent of \$34,000,000 a year for service that could be had for \$20,000,000, thus saving \$14,000,000 or nearly three times as much as the deficit.

Tell him that the private railroads haul twice as many express cars as postal cars, and do it for \$9,000,000 less money every year.

Tell him that the government was in debt over a billion and eighty-seven million dollars on February 28, but not because it runs the postoffice.

And, finally, tell him that, after all, the postoffice, as managed now, is not Socialism; that under Socialism political postmasters would not be paid \$6,000 a year, while letter carriers wear their lives out tramping the streets of Chicago for \$50 a month. You are quite right, Gusty; the government is not in debt because it runs the postoffice, but because capitalists run the government.

The Editor.

ing on them moral and physical deterioration, breeding parasites for its own inglorious destruction?

The family, rightly organized, fosters the development of each member. Parents often learn when their children are grown that the child whom they thought dull has made an abler adult than the precocious one about whom their dreams circled. Socialism would foster each member of society in such fashion; thereby obtaining from each the best. For moral progress consists primarily in leveling up the standard of conduct toward mankind in general to something like the level commonly realized in the family and the immediate social circle. At present the standing paradox of the moral consciousness is the gap between what we may roughly call its personal and its impersonal dealings.—L. T. Hobhouse, Fellow Merton College, Oxford.

New Labor-Saving Loom

The new Perham loom of Lowell, Mass., is the latest labor-saving machine in the textile industry. This loom, unlike all others, has no gears, occupies a third less space, and is enabled to attain a speed of 50 to 100 per cent higher than the most rapid modern loom of today. At present the loom can be used only on plain or striped cloth. The introduction of this loom into a weaving room where there are at present employed 1,500 hands will displace 500 weavers, and yet increase the product of cloth in that room.

Along with this item we read that the wages of 650 hands in the Central Falls, R. I., will have been reduced 10 per cent.

Two Men With Different Views

Two men hold different views of government and what we call liberty. One of them is rich, the other is poor.

The rich man employs the poor man, paying him only a portion of the value he creates.

The poor man is just as intelligent, industrious and moral as the rich man, perhaps more so.

But the poor man is dependent on the rich man for the right to live.

The poor man has skill in his hands and convictions in his mind.

The rich man has property on his hands and contempt in his heart.

The poor man exercises the right to express his opinions.

The rich man suggests or orders silence on penalty of loss of work.

The poor man, believing himself free, refuses to abandon his opinions and the right to think, and is discharged.

Both these men are American citizens and both have "equal rights under the law."

Ragnar Redbeard says "Might is right," and it seems so. The "fittest to survive" is the ruffian.

What Has Capital Done?

Would there be any clothing without labor, or any houses, or ships, or railroads, or machines, without labor? Would there be any good for anybody without labor? Can capital produce pictures, write or print books, raise wheat or corn, make machines, build houses or ships, construct railroads, or cut and sew clothing? Has capital anywhere ever done any of these things? Do you know of a single mile of railroad in all the 180,000 miles, that capital has built? Ever seen a pair of socks that capital knitted or a horseshoe that capital forged? Do you think that all the capital in this world could produce this week's paper? If capital can do none of these things, and the doing of them is so essential to human comfort, why should it hog four-fifths of all that labor, joined to capital, produces? The answer is plain, and to understand the answer is to see the hopelessness of the wage slave's condition. Capital, under the present system, must appropriate the lion's share, that is, all the surplus value of labor it can, to preserve itself. Under this system it cannot do otherwise. Hence, Socialists declare for the abolition of the system, because of its monstrous injustice.

Growth in Material Wealth

The estimated increase of our wealth during the decade ending 1900 is put down at \$26,000,000,000. This makes the nation's known wealth \$91,000,000,000, or an average per capita of our population of \$1,195. The average increase in the ten years taken was \$337 per capita, and the estimated savings per capita in the country \$37.50. Compared with the wealth of Great Britain, ours is huge, or \$91,000,000,000 against \$50,000,000,000. Still, Great Britain's is bigger than our per capita of \$1,300 against \$1,195. The annual income of England's people is \$5,600,000,000. The annual savings are \$1,948,000,000; the annual average earnings in Great Britain are \$140, of which fully one-third is saved, making the increase of wealth per ten years \$19,000,000,000 vs. our \$26,000,000,000.

CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE WORKING CLASS

The Control of the Political Power is Necessary to Any Class Which Desires to Better its Economic Condition

By Rev. Charles H. Vail

The Socialist movement is proletarian in character and based upon the fact of the class struggle. It emphasizes the need of class consciousness on the part of the working class, for only as the laborers become conscious of their class interests will they unite to achieve their emancipation. Class consciousness means a consciousness of one's own interests as a member of a class, and knowledge of the fact that his interests can best be subserved by advancing the interests of the class to which he belongs. It also implies a knowledge of what those interests are and how they can best be subserved. When a laborer realizes that he can only permanently improve his condition by improving the condition of his class, and realizes what his class interests are and how they can be advanced, he is said to be class conscious. This class consciousness enables him to see that his interests and the interests of his class are diametrically opposed to that of the capitalist class. He also apprehends the historical fact that the ruling class has always been since the dawn of private property the class that owns the dominant factor of production. In feudal times it was the owner of the land, today it is the machine. Every step in the development of capitalism meant added economic power for the capitalist class, and political supremacy finally resulted from this growth of economic power. While this is true of the capitalist class, the class conscious laborer realizes that for him political supremacy cannot thus be secured for the reason that every step in the development of capitalism has meant his greater subjection. Yet with this loss of economic power, due to the development of modern industry, there has come the possibility of political supremacy through the growth of numbers. Upon the political field, the working class can become supreme. It overwhelmingly outnumbered the capitalists and its power is constantly increasing through the destruction of the middle class and the narrowing of the capitalist class.

It must be evident to all that the control of the political power is necessary to any class which desires to better its economic condition. For the working class to get control of this power there must be a united class-conscious movement. It is thus that Socialists, the world over, emphasize the necessity of class-conscious action upon the part of the working class.

The capitalist class is thoroughly class conscious. The capitalists perceive the course of action necessary to maintain their supremacy. They make and enforce laws which enable them to keep the working class in ignorance and subjection. They can always be relied upon to subserve their own interests.

The laborers, on the other hand, usually act in direct opposition to their interests. They support all the institutions and measures that suppress and exploit them, simply because they do not realize the opposition of class interests, and are not sufficiently informed to know that their interests are antagonistic to those of the master class. They have been accustomed to take their economic ideas ready-made at the hands of their employers. The capitalist class have seen to it that only such ideas were propagated among the workers as would result in the supremacy of capitalist class rule. Of course, as long as the workers look to their masters for guidance, they will be led as sheep to the shambles. It is to the interest of the ruling class to maintain its position, but to do this the workers must be kept in ignorance of the true situation, for if they remain in slavery it can only be by their own consent. This necessitates a wholesale deception. Were it not for this systematic perversion of the egoism of the subjected so that they do not see what pertain to their real interests, the system could not be maintained. The laboring class are constantly deceived as to what constitutes its real interests.

To this end the workers are taught certain fictions. They are made to believe that the interests of labor and capital are identical, that every man has an opportunity to become a capitalist, and if he does not he alone is to blame, that the present system and laws are sacred and must be retained at all hazards, that patriotism—the upholding of the capitalist state which sanctions private ownership of the instruments—is a special virtue, that workers should be meek and content with their present lot and look to the future world for reward for present suffering, that the workers

are impotent to help themselves—all benefits must come from above, etc. These are some of the doctrines which the capitalists assiduously teach. This they are able to teach, as they control the means of communication—the press, the platform and the pulpit. By this means they are enabled to impress these false conceptions upon the working class and thus keep them in subjection.

We cannot expect those who are enjoying these special privileges to willingly relinquish their advantage. It is but natural that they should strive to maintain this system that enables them to live in luxurious idleness off the labors of others. This injustice will only down at the bidding of the working class, whose interests are antagonistic to their oppressors. Thus a class struggle is inevitable between these two classes of opposite economic interests. When a laborer becomes class conscious he recognizes this struggle and takes his stand with the class of which he is a member. A recognition of this fact of class antagonism on the part of the whole working class and a united political class-conscious action would enable the working class to master the public powers and put an end to capitalist exploitation.

The social revolution must come through the united action of the working class. The mission of the Socialist is to prepare the working class for this revolution. He aims to dispel the capitalist fictions which hold the working class in willing subjection, to arouse them to a sense of their rights and to point out the way to their emancipation. This new gospel is spreading, like a forest fire, in all directions; its seed has fallen upon good soil and has taken root. Conditions are ripe for the social revolution. All over the land, and, in fact, the whole civilized world, the working class is organizing into class-conscious political bodies, having for their aim the mastery of the political powers to the end that the present competitive system may be supplanted by the Socialist commonwealth. This mighty movement has become international and worldwide, co-extensive with the domain of capitalism.

The sun of the co-operative commonwealth is beginning to redden the eastern horizon and already a streak of light here and there has pierced the sky, bringing promise of the gladsome day.

Socialism is the evangel of human brotherhood. It will realize the golden age of peace, justice and plenty on earth. All hail the kingdom of social justice, the co-operative commonwealth.

Charles H. Vail.

Truth From Kropotkin

The martyrdom of man which we call history, and all inventions, are based upon the work of men who have gone before; every man who makes a tool profits by the work of men who have lived before him, and their work should be for the benefit of all.

We hear constantly of overproduction. Is there such a thing in the world as overproduction? You may produce more than you want here; but in Russia, which is spoken of as the great wheat-producing country, wheat is taken out of the mouths of starving people. You may produce more coal than you need, but how many households in Europe are sitting shivering about fireless hearths! More cotton may be produced, more cotton may be made in England than the home people wear, but if the duds worn by children of working families there were replaced by fitting garments, not a particle of cotton goods would be exported.

In books we are told that it is kings who make war. Now it is not kings, but it is capitalists who make war. It was interested capitalists who made the war between Turkey and Greece—men who wanted to take possession of the resources of Crete and Thessaly.

In the old time one man produced one man's food. Go now to Manitoba and see one man in one day produce food enough for 100 men. One hundred men now in 100 days produce food enough for 10,000 men. We could produce everything required if we would agree to work three or four hours a day now and would devote ourselves to productive, not destructive processes.—Peter Kropotkin.

Zanardelli, the Italian entrusted by the king with the construction of a new cabinet, is a radical, a freethinker and an opponent of Rome. Should he succeed in his task lively times may be expected.

ETHICS OF SOCIALISM

Socialism contains the highest ideal to which the moral consciousness of man has yet attained. It demands that justice, equality, liberty and fraternity, ceasing to be abstract entities, shall enter into and direct the daily action of mankind. This insistence that the defined aspirations of the race shall mold our actions in the market place and not be left for moments of passive spiritual insight makes the supreme significance of Socialism. Man must live by bread; to obtain which he must today enter a field where his ideals are wantonly violated; where success is in proportion to one's power of wreaking injustice, of despoiling one's brother, of denying equality and of rendering liberty a meaningless word. Many Socialists, recognizing the imperative necessity of preparing an environment in which the moral consciousness of man may have symmetrical development and each component part such activity as is consistent with considerations of social welfare, have dwelt so insistently on the necessary reorganization of production and distribution that unphilosophic critics have had some justification for assuming that Socialism was but an empty crucible. Were this true, criticism would be a futile waste of mental activity.

A merely mechanical scheme for the reorganization of industry would contain all the evils zealously pointed out by the individualist: the reorganization of production and distribution is but the means to the Socialist end, the noblest development of the individual. Socialism will displace individualism not through superior mechanism alone, but because the "ethical end, which tries to comprehend human life on all sides," is by it more nearly realized. A me-

chanical unity is as much opposed to organic co-operation as is anarchy itself. The true conception of an organic society is one in which the best life of each man is, and is felt to be, bound up with the best life of his fellow-citizens. There is no greater or more common blunder than to treat natural selection as essentially an agent of progress. Whatever else progress may be, it at least involves a fuller and more many-sided life. But one of the commonest methods of maintaining yourself in the organic world is by reducing your wants, and therefore your capabilities, to a lower and lower level, so that you may live without the supplies which you have not strength, intelligence or energy to gain. The lower type underbids the higher, so to say, and the species degenerates. It is a circumstance too little noted, that whereas among all higher animals, man, the highest, is everywhere dominant beyond dispute; it is only low, miserable, degraded bacillus that wages war with him on equal terms, and in some places may be said almost to conquer and expel him. So great is the power of the deteriorated. Speaking generally, we may put it that natural selection is solely concerned with immediate success. You may possess qualities which, if you had time to work them out, would insure your lasting success and a place for your descendants above all competitors. But if, while laying your plans you are accidentally eaten up, your long-distance qualities, so to call them, will be of little avail, and your competitor, who has no brains, but a hard shell or quick legs, will survive and inherit your lands. What but this is individualism doing? Is it not, by pushing industrially un-

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Social Democratic Party Vote
1900 (PRESIDENTIAL) 97,024
1900 (S. L. P.) 34,191
TOTAL 131,215

Is a slave's life worth living? Patrick Henry said: "Give me liberty or give me death!"

In the great corporation of poverty there are millions of shareholders, and dividends, payable in wages, are daily declared.

"The truest wisdom," said Bonaparte, "is a resolute determination." It should be added, to do the right thing, in the right way, and at the right time.

If any one doubts that great prosperity under McKinley has come upon the country, he should make a note of the remarkable growth of the standing army.

It is well understood that the great combine of Bullion and Boodle is the divinity engaged in shaping the ends of the government of the United States and the civilization of the world.

The mint of dishonesty is where riches are coined. It is all gold and silver, bearing the motto, "In God we trust." There is another mint where poverty is coined, all copper, zinc, lead and tin, bearing the motto, "In capitalism we trust."

Splendor at the apex and squalor at the base fairly represent the architecture of our boasted civilization. The palace on the hill and the hut in the valley. Luxury on top, hunger at the bottom. Gilded wealth resting upon work and woe.

Capitalism operates a huge grindstone and is never more delighted than when it sees workingmen tumbling over each other to reach the revolving stone to have their noses reduced to regulation size. They vote for the grindstone every time.

As a test to determine whether our civilization is advancing or retrogressing, suppose you accept as a standard our elections. Fifty years ago elections were regarded fairly honest, while now they are denounced as universally corrupt.

There is no trouble about being on good terms with capitalism, provided always capitalism is permitted to make the terms. As long as labor in the division of the gain is willing passively to take the buzzard, while capitalism takes the turkey, the most amicable relations may exist.

Labor unions generally accept only skilled workers. What is to become of the unskilled? They need clothing, food and shelter. They have wives and children. They are subjected to cold and hunger and sickness. They, too, need sympathy and protection. Socialism, be it said to its glory, takes them all in.

Edward VII. has begun his reign by repeating the old-time twaddle about "my kingdom, my empire, my subjects, my army," etc. The British people seem to like such foolishness, and respond, "O king, live forever," when, in fact, there is no use under heaven why a king should live at all.

We boast of political liberty, but affirm that money out-votes the man. We boast of religious liberty, but at the same time declare that those who prey are more patient in shaping events than those who pray. It is possible that devolution instead of civilization has got the upper hand in political and religious liberty.

The hypocrite, like a base coin, gets on swimmingly until detected, but, unlike a base coin, he is often more serviceable after than before he was exposed and is often found in the employment of capitalism as a decoy and other

positions requiring his talents—and is seldom more conspicuous than when adjusting the terms for the settlement of a strike.

Illiteracy is a misfortune, a blot upon our civilization. The great state of Pennsylvania is supposed to be civilized, but it has in its anthracite coal regions 30,000 breaker boys who never go to school who are reared in ignorance. It is one of the wonders of the age that the great organization known as the United Mine Workers takes no steps to improve the condition of the breaker boys.

Nowadays great men are measured by the amount of money they can command. How much money had Jesus Christ at any time during all his years upon the earth? So far as the records show, not a farthing. Being called upon to pay tribute to the amount of 20.6d., he had to work a miracle. Catch a fish and take the amount required from its mouth.

Note the reptile. On one end it has its castanets in the other end its fangs. It rattles and bites, and yet an inscrutable divinity shaped its ends. Nevertheless, it is good policy to exterminate it. Capitalism rattles and bites, but no divinity shaped its ends, and Socialism proposes to rid the world of the thing.

There are a great many things happening nowadays that create unspeakable detestation and loathing, but nothing in the line of sneaking duplicity is more entitled to malediction than to see a labor leader (?)—God save the mark—arranging with the agents of capitalism for the subjugation of workingmen. It is the climax of treason.

Rottenness to the stinking point is found in millionaireism when a codfish uppertendom family has a daughter with an average number of blue ribbon points to trade off for a title of nobility. She is taken to Europe to be shown around like a prize heifer, and bids are received. The animal may be disposed of if the dowry is sufficiently inviting, provided it is paid, spot cash, in advance.

A moment's reflection will suffice to convince the most obtuse that poverty, hunger and dirt, an empty stomach and gnawing hunger, are not promotive of brain growth, soul expansion, noble aspirations nor solicitude about human welfare, the brotherhood of man or the fatherhood of God. If such things are desirable, Socialism is preparing the way for their coming by removing every hindering cause.

It is reported that, during the pageant in London incident to the funeral of Victoria, the mortal remains of the dead queen were trundled through the streets on a gun carriage, the coffin being placed immediately over the gun. We are at a loss in conjecturing why such a spectacle should have constituted a part of the pomp and circumstances of the parade, unless it was to impress beholders that England's empire and sway rests upon the gun.

We are told that in the onward march of progress and poverty civilization has taken the place of savagery. "War is hell!" exclaims Sherman. Savagery is hell by universal verdict. William McKinley is killing Filipinos because they demand freedom and independence, and the British are killing the Boers in South Africa for the same reason. In both instances the climax of savagery is reached, and in both instances Christian civilization (?) and savagery go hand in hand.

The prosperity of the country is so immense that an ever-increasing number of its shareholders can't endure the pressure and therefore commit suicide. In some cases their share is so large that they become insane. The wardens of penitentiaries report that, owing to the universal prosperity now prevailing, the applications for cells are taxing the capacity of the state's eleemosynary institutions to the utmost, and the courts are bothered in determining whether theft or theft is in the lead.

It is the opinion of some investigators of social problems that poor men drink intoxicants because their environments are productive of despair. This is, no doubt, true in some cases; indeed, in numerous cases, but in a majority of cases it is not true. If those who deal in intoxicating liquors had for patrons only those in the grasp of despair they would be forced to quit the business. Enforced idleness is bad. The robbery of workingmen of the money they earn is a colossal crime, but the habit of drinking intoxicating liquors is still more deplorable.

Some one has said: "The cities should take care of their unemployed." The cities of the United States have no means of taking care of anything except as it is supplied by taxation, and when those who have "pull" are provided for there is little, often nothing, left for any purpose whatever. If the employed and the unemployed would vote for municipal ownership of street car, water, gas and electric plants, the cities could do something in the way of taking care of the unemployed. Municipal ownership should be supported by

workingmen and men who are not working.

Money talks. As a talker it has the persuasiveness of a shot gun, and is conscienceless as a crocodile. It has had its say. Under the auspices of Socialism labor proposes to talk. Too long it has been silent and submissive. The wage slave of money, its hands have built for its master the palaces where it riots amidst luxuries which would have tested the powers of Aladdin's genii to the utmost. In its talk labor, with the directness of a thunder bolt, will inform money that the time has come for the enthronement and coronation of justice, and will add, in the language of Andrew Jackson, "By the Eternal, it must be done."

Teddy the Terrible, McKinley's running mate in the recent campaign, is a nimrod and no mistake. In his recent hunt in the canyons of Colorado he invaded the home of lions, lynxes, wildcats, wolves and coyotes. He killed twelve lions, four of which he dispatched with a knife, and one of which measured eight feet from the tip of its nose to the root of its tail, and weighed 227 pounds, the largest lion ever killed in Colorado. On the 4th of March Teddy will enter the capitol canyon in Washington, where he will be surrounded with lions, tigers, leopards, bears, coyotes, wolves, lynxes and other ravenous animals, all trained for the work of defending imperialism, and woe to the animal that offers any objection.

Some of the questions likely to be discussed at the next session of the American Federation of Labor are (1) Does the labor-saving machine own the laborer? (2) Ought not the laborer to own the labor-saving machine? (3) Is it possible for labor to own the labor-saving machine, except by co-operative effort? If so, by what means can the great boon be secured to the toiling masses who have been robbed of their tools by capitalism? Such questions reach the core of the troubles which labor is experiencing, and are arousing the best thought in the ranks of labor. Socialism is giving them merited prominence. It will be interesting to note the attitude of the American Federation of Labor.

Under present conditions to know what a workingman is sure of becomes an interesting question. It is admitted that he is not sure of work, however willing he may be to work. He is not sure of fair wages when he does work. He is not sure of sufficient food. He is not sure of decent clothing, or of a decent dwelling. He is sure of poverty and all the afflictions incident thereto, and he is sure of death at last. Socialism proposes to change the program and make workingmen sure of employment; sure of receiving all they earn; sure of good food and a plenty of it; sure of good clothing for themselves and families, and sure of a decent dwelling place—all of which is attainable; reasonable and just. Socialism does not propose to prevent sickness, except so far as the best possible conditions lessen the chances of disease; nor does it propose to do away with death; but it does propose, when the inevitable comes, that it shall not find the victim of the summons ready to welcome it because life is a calamity.

The Colossal Combine

The latest exploit of capitalism is seen in what is called the great steel combine, inaugurated by J. Pierpont Morgan and John D. Rockefeller—the most colossal aggregation of wealth under one management in the history of the world, the sum total aggregating three billion (\$3,000,000,000) dollars. It is a combination of land, mines, mills, ships, railroads, etc., which bewilders ordinary minds, and once perfected, and in operation will dominate commercial, financial, judicial and legislative affairs.

In the matter of land, the combine will control 290,500 acres, as follows: Gas lands, 98,000 acres; coal lands, 77,000 acres; coke lands, 50,000 acres; factory sites, 15,000 acres; ore lands, 40,000 acres; mineral lands, 7,500 acres; dock lands, 3,000 acres.

This vast combine will control railroads and command steamships. It will have ten limestone quarries and 16,600 coke ovens and 60 blast furnaces. It will operate 15 steel plants, complete, 5 rail mills, 3 billet mills, 5 steel mills and 9 miscellaneous steel mills; 3,000 wire and nail plants complete, 20 tube works complete, 20 tin plate works complete, 9 steel hoop plants complete, and 41 sheet steel works complete; also, 4 city water works, 130 gas wells and 3,000 gas pipe lines. It will give employment to 410,000 persons and 2,000,000 persons will be dependent upon it for subsistence.

This gigantic combination, or trust, will absolutely control the markets for all articles manufactured of steel and iron, from a tack to armor plate, or from a tea kettle to an engine.

The significant feature of the trust, and the one that interests labor, is the vast number of working men in its grasp and whose destiny it can shape and control.

If, as is stated, the investments in the trust amount to three billions, and a 6 per cent annual dividend is required, the

net profits must reach \$180,000,000 a year. The policy of trusts is to cut down expenses, which is accomplished in two ways. Small plants are closed and employes discharged, and if this does not satisfy rapacity, wages are reduced. If this policy does not characterize the business of the Morgan-Rockefeller trust, it will be because leopards have found a way to remove the spots from the hair of their hides, and it will be interesting to note the treatment of labor by the three-billion dollar trust.

The Theft of Cuba

To a Social Democrat the action of Congress on the Cuban question is not unexpected. For the sake of humanity, we declared war against Spain, and further resolved that Cuba was and of right ought to be free and independent. After severely thrashing old, decrepit Spain, we assumed military control over the island till the Cuban constitution should be adopted. This has been done, and Congress, instead of withdrawing our troops and wishing the Cubans good luck, gives them independence with a string to it.

They are not to make treaties with other countries without our consent (although they are free); all rights, and they are many, granted to American capitalists are to be ratified. It may well be asked, what moral right have we to give away the privileges of another country? We are to have the right to land troops to preserve peace—that claim is the thinnest disguise for a military occupation when some American capitalist considers his interest furthered thereby. Any little riot might be construed a menace to peace and serve as an excuse for the further enslavement of the people.

We are to have coaling stations at different parts of the island. Have we any in England or in any other country? It has been said that "Virtue is its own reward." If this country had an honest purpose in freeing Cuba, there would be no question about ratifying their constitution.

But the spirit of commercialism dominated the war with Spain, and it grew as we occupied Cuba. And now we feel that we must give Cuba independence, but we must work it out for ourselves.

The independence of this country could not have been accomplished without the aid of France, and we search in vain for a clause in our constitution giving the French any special rights. We must recognize the growth of commercialism and combat it with every weapon at our hands. Cuba will not be free, and if she does not accept our terms we will never withdraw our troops, and the Philippines will not stand alone as new martyrs to the competitive system.

The "Higher Law" and the "Irrepressible Conflict"

William H. Seward, confessedly one of the most, if not the most, astute and far-seeing politicians and statesmen the republican party or the country has produced, is the author of the phrases which gave him eminence, if not pre-eminence, among the great men of his time.

In the debate in the United States Senate upon the admission of California to the Union he promulgated what he called the "higher law," saying "there was a higher law than the Constitution which regulated the authority of Congress over the national domain—the law of God and the interests of humanity."

Again Mr. Seward, in 1858, declared "there was an irrepressible conflict between opposing and enduring forces," and that "the United States must become either entirely slave or entirely free." The declaration of Abraham Lincoln that the United States could not exist "half slave and half free" is but the corollary of Seward's irrepressible conflict idea.

When new conditions confront the people now words or phrases are coined to give them distinction or prominence, and the terse sentences, "higher law" and "irrepressible conflict" were eminently suited to conditions existing at the time Mr. Seward wove them into the political literature of the country, where they will remain forever.

Say what we will, sophisticate as we may, plead until our tongues are paralyzed about constitutions and statutes and their enforcement, there is still a higher law which once put in operation sweeps away all other law—the "law of God and the interests of humanity." To this law the Declaration of Independence appealed against the statutes of the British Parliament and the decrees of King George, and George Washington and his compatriots executed it. To this law the people of France appealed in their revolution, which Victor Hugo refers to as a "superb catastrophe"; and in 1861 the people appealed to this higher law and chattel slavery disappeared by its decree.

Confessedly conditions must be of the most aggravated character before this higher law is put in operation, as, for instance, the repeated and frequent occurrence of assaults by negroes upon white women, crimes so monstrous that the people in the South and in the North, regardless of constitutions and statutes, appeal to the higher law, the "law of God and humanity," and with the vengeance of a thunderbolt execute

the law. There is no delay, no parleying, no compromise. Governors may protest, troops may be ordered to stand guard, men may plead for the authority of courts and juries, but the people, viewing the mangled, outraged remains of the worse than beastly crime, will brook no delay. They appeal to the "higher law" and inflict the penalty.

What of it all? Palpably constitutions and statutes do not afford protection. Conditions grow worse instead of better, and the irrepressible conflict proceeds. There is little confidence in courts and that little is on the wane. They are no longer hedged about by a divinity supposed to protect kings. Verdicts are as often wrong as right. Worse still, there is a growing conviction that the rich control the judiciary of the country and that the poor have little or no chance for justice. That such views permeate the great body of the people there is no doubt.

The question arises, Is the country to become all millionaire or all pauper? The irrepressible conflict between capitalism and wage slavery was never fiercer than at present. Every strike is a miniature rebellion, a feeble effort to enthrone the "higher law, the law of God and humanity"—an evidence of unrest portending calamitous results.

Socialism is the only force in operation to solve the problem and avert disaster, and it will be well if the people listen to its teachings.

Admiral and Gunner

With the development of imperialism, snobbishness in the army and navy comes as one of its natural fruits. Human nature under a uniform in America differs in no essential respect from human nature uniformed and epauletted in Russia or France. There is quite as much contempt in the heart of the average American snob, in the government service and out of it, for the "common man" as in Europe.

This has seldom shown itself, however, so strikingly as in the case of Admiral Snob Sampson's attitude toward Gunner Morgan. The regret that those in power have over this incident is not because they do not share Sampson's estimate of the common man, but rather because Sampson's letter became public property.

This pensioner on the public, whom one is almost tempted now to believe, got away from Santiago to avoid the fight, is opposed to the promotion in the navy of common sailors, no matter what their other qualifications may be, who "have not had the social advantages that are a requisite for a commissioned officer!"

Of course, we Social Democrats believe that a navy's chief work is to retain wrong and injustice in places of power—a prop for capitalism; we think that with industry readjusted on the lines of Social Democracy armies and navies would become useless and obsolete and the world benefited thereby. But they are necessary adjuncts of capitalist production and exploitation. Property must be protected; to police property is the function of all the armies and navies of the world.

As to the Sampson-Morgan incident, while one can but entertain a contempt for the former, there is, after all, much force in what he says. Imagine, under a capitalistic and imperial government, a man behind the guns—a common man—aspiring to wear gold lace on his coat and epaulettes on his shoulders!

Think of a common jasper with hands hardened in the service of his country with an ambition to loaf in the cabin!

Dwell for a moment on the spectacle of a fellow who is "not a gentleman" eating and drinking from gold and silver bowls and plates on the flagship!

How would he look slipped and perfunctured in the Casino at Newport?

You see there are two sides to the matter, and while we common folk may get indignant at Sampson, it is just possible that the gunner who "wants" promotion has in him the making of another snob. At any rate, he is willing to live to kill, and whether he is promoted or not is no concern of ours. Our business is to do all in our power to rid the country and the world of a system that makes armies and navies necessary.

Without a Subsidy

"Yes," said the statesman with the kindly eye, but firmly set mouth, "I like to read about Noah and the Ark."

"What brought them to your attention?"

"Nothing in particular. I couldn't avoid being struck by the manner in which Noah and his sons went to work and carried the enterprise through without asking a penny's assistance from the government. But, of course, those were primitive days."—Washington Star.

Both the chambers of Denmark have passed the bill instituting vote by ballot. It is generally thought that this measure will increase the number of votes for Socialist candidates.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

J. W. Born, Secretary, Wisconsin.—In reply to your communication we will say that as soon as the financial condition of the party will permit, the "power" as well as the burdens now borne by resident members will be gladly resigned.

SOCIALISM IS SLAVERY THE THOUGHTLESS SAY

But Being Blind, as Well as Thoughtless, They are Not Able to See the Slavery About Them or the Every-day Proof of its Existence

You have been told by the ignorant who uphold the present devilization that Socialism is slavery and that the conditions under Socialism would be unbearable. Thoughtlessly, perhaps, you have believed this and dismissed Socialism from your mind. Very well; what have you to say about the slavery we now have? Here is an example of it: Four men, John Weersing, Harry Peters, John Raake and Harry Wisner, were employed by a Chicago liveryman who controls the cab privileges at the Northwestern depot. Last week they were discharged on the ground that they had embezzled small sums ranging from \$1.75 to \$3.00, the "evidence" being secured by a detective agency. The men immediately brought suits for wages they claim is due them, and which seems to have been the cause for their dismissal. Peters, one of the four, made this statement concerning the employer who would probably say that "Socialism is slavery":

"I made us sign a contract and work under the hardest rules I ever heard of. He makes us sign a paper, in which we have to do everything and he nothing. For \$25 a month and our board Harz keeps most of his cabmen at work from sixteen to twenty hours a day. If a man is late because of sickness or anything else it costs him 50 cents an hour; if he gets drunk it costs him \$10; if he smokes in the barn, \$1; if he fails to meet an engagement, or doesn't notify Harz three days in advance of his intention of quitting, it costs him \$10 more. The result is that, with so many rules, a driver is lucky if he doesn't owe Harz something at the end of each month."

After that, you should be able to get the laugh on the fellow who says that

Man's Struggle For Existence

In a social point of view, F. A. Lange (Die Arbeiterfrage, 1865), has added to the struggle for existence the "struggle for an advantageous position," the fundamental law of which, however, is the same as that of the struggle for existence, inasmuch as the germs of the capacity and inclination for advantageous position are scattered through the masses, but destined in the great majority to be aborted. Take away or diminish the pressure which the struggle for existence opposes to the aspiring powers, and forms and performances of an advantageous kind shoot up in unexpected abundance; while by an increased pressure the finest talents become aborted, and this with the heavy consciousness of abortion. It is nothing but a deeply-rooted error to suppose that every talent or genius will work its way under any circumstances. We forget especially in this to take into account the effect of higher position upon the development of the fundamental powers, and overestimate the performances of those who are accidentally highly placed in accordance with their value to the whole. This evil can only be operated against by lightening as much as possible the struggle for existence by means of such arrangements as will present space and the possibility of development to every aspiring talent, and prevent in future the weal of millions from being sacrificed to the glory of a few. In the greatest possible equalization of the means by which the struggle for existence is fought out by each individual, lies the problem of the whole future of the human race.—Prof. Ludwig Buechner, M. D.

Panicky Conditions in England

A special cablegram from London tells how the trade panic grows in England owing to the industrial rivalry of America. It says:

England's industrial panic at sight of the great invasion of American competition continues to grow, and now claims the attention of all classes. These include, at last, the most shortsighted of all classes in this country—the trades unionists. It has required the gigantic spectacle of the American steel combine to bring a dim realization to some of the labor leaders that their policy, perhaps, has something to do with the impending disaster to British industries.

One reads with astonishment this week an article by Keir Hardie, editor of the Labor Leader, in which the writer makes the vital admission that although wages in America are double that of the English workman, yet the cost of labor in making steel in the United States is only one-half the cost of the same in England. This admission is an exact equivalent to a confession that the British workman is either a loafer or does not know his business.

It is a desperate condition which will bring such a statement from a man of Hardie's prominence in labor councils, and it signifies also that trades unionists are beginning to understand at last that the British workmen must work for their wages or go to the wall. It will require a revolution in trades unions, however, before the reversal of the poli-

"Socialism is slavery!" Slavery is here now. Of this there is proof abundant, so that no man need be in doubt. Perhaps it will be just as well to give you a little more. There was a trial in a court down in South Carolina. In the process of taking evidence it was shown that an industrial system very much resembling slavery, carried on under the guise of so-called "labor contracts," exists in that state. Under this system men seeking employment are required to sign a contract of which the following are some of the provisions:

"I agree at all times to be subject to the orders and command of said landlord or his agents. He shall have a right to use such force as he or his agents may deem necessary to require me to remain on his farm and perform good and satisfactory services.

"He shall have the right to lock me up for safe-keeping.

"He shall have the right to work me under the rules and regulations of his farm.

"And if I should leave his farm or run away he shall have the right to offer and pay a reward of not exceeding \$25 for my capture and return, together with the expenses of same, which amount so advanced, together with any indebtedness I may owe at the expiration of above time, I agree to work out under all the rules and regulations of this contract at same wages as above.

"The said landlord shall have the right to transfer his interest in this contract to any other party, and I agree to continue to work for said assignee, same as for the original party of the first part."

Better shake yourself—rub your eyes and find out "whether we are drifting."

cy of a generation can be accomplished, and it can hardly be doubted also that the reform will be too late.

The closing of iron and steel works, which has already begun, will become general within a few months, and trade once lost will not be regained when America's great natural advantages are also in the opposite scale.

The press of all classes teems with comment and advice on the situation. Some of these comments are sensible, but most of them are absurd.

The Subsidy Grabbers

"An American abroad, says the Springfield Republican, a man of national reputation and expert knowledge in economic and tariff matters, writes in a personal letter:

"In your opposition to the ship subsidy bill you and other papers omit one very serious point. Frye and Hanna claim that wages of ship mechanics are 20 per cent higher in America. It has been proved over and over for thirty years (say twenty-five years) that the product of high-priced American labor is 50 per cent greater than the average of British labor in all trades. For instance, cotton weavers in Fall River are compared by protectionists with English weavers as earning say \$7 to \$5, but they never say that the American weaver works more hours in the week and tends double the number of looms. I saw this morning a comparison in the London Mall showing the greater efficiency of American labor in steel furnaces, and blaming the trades unions, which compel the masters to employ nearly twice the force on a furnace and much slower work. No doubt it will appear on analysis that the work in American ship-yards is 20 or 30 per cent more effective than in British yards, and consequently more profitable even at higher wages. The greater efficiency of American labor is fully shown by a state department report in Hayes' administration and again in Arthur's. It looks to me as if our country had fallen hopelessly under the control of subsidy grabbers and sordid protectionists."

Two Kinds of Asses

An ass standing beneath an apple tree longed for some of the fruit. He could not quite reach it, however. Finally, when about to give up in despair, he saw a boy approaching. The boy also wanted some apples, but failed, after repeated efforts, to climb the tree. At last a bright idea struck him. "Now," says he to the ass, "I will climb upon your back and from there I can easily reach the limbs, and I will throw down apples for you." The animal agreed, and soon the boy was snugly ensconced in the tree eating apples. The ass waited and waited, and finally asked the boy in the tree why he got no fruit. "Oh," replied the youth, "I find that it is impracticable."

Moral: The politician who rides into office on the backs of the voting asses will recognize this as a most valuable reply to constituents after election.

Professo: Albion W. Small of Chicago University says: "Socialism will be the dominant issue in American politics within four years."

A Greater Need

The Young People's Weekly prints a pathetic story of a poor, half-starved child, living in a city alley. Some one had given her a ticket to a free tea and entertainment.

She was wild with delight, and was running to tell her mother of her good fortune when she stumbled over a child crouched on the stairs, crying.

She asked what was the matter. The child said her mother had beaten her because she asked for some breakfast, and she was so hungry she could not help crying.

"Well," said the other child, placing the ticket in her hand, "take this, and get a good tea. I've had no breakfast, either, but my mother never beats me."

And she passed on, leaving the ticket in the hand of the astonished child.

Went Broke on Air

A banker at Desplaines, Ill., who was not getting rich fast enough, with other people's money, over the bank counter, went into an air-packing scheme. He had seen other men become fabulously wealthy packing pork and other things, and it occurred to him that if he could get a cinch on air, put a meter on it, perhaps, and pump it into the windpipes of the people at a profit, he could then take his place among the really great of the earth as one of the "fittest to survive." But for some reason the air would not pack to his satisfaction, and after spending thousands of dollars belonging to the simple-minded people who had entrusted it with him for safe-keeping, there was nothing left but free air in the bank—the money had gone and naught remained but wind. The bubble burst and the dear people go broke.

Connecticut Organizes

Sunday, Feb. 24, was red-letter day for the S. D. P. of Connecticut. A convention composed of Rockville and Hartford comrades was held in the afternoon at which a new state committee was elected. The officers are as follows: John Cahill, chairman; A. M. Dignam, vice-chairman; L. Herrup, secretary; P. Schaefer, treasurer; J. W. Brown, organizer.

An open meeting was held in the evening at Good Templars' hall. Comrade Wright delivered a lecture on "Social Conditions Under Capitalism." The seats were all taken before the speaker opened his address, and the telling manner in which Comrade Wright arraigned the present social and political hypocrisy and the generous applause of the audience bespeaks a future for Socialism in this city.

Branches 1 and 2 have joined forces for the purpose of carrying on a series of lectures which will be held every second and fourth Sunday of each month. Comrade Silvia Origo of Springfield, Mass., will deliver a lecture on Socialism in Good Templars' hall, 881 Main street, Sunday, March 10, to which we cordially invite the general public. J. W. Brown.

Interesting Notes From Wisconsin

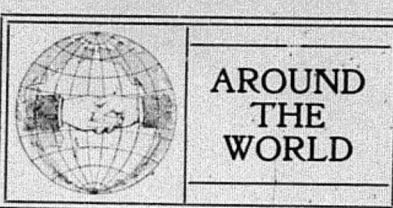
Nothing succeeds like success. Since the S. D. P. became an official party in this state it is acknowledged as a factor with which it is quite worth while to reckon. Proof of this is given by the Milwaukee Daily News, which has opened one of its columns for the use of the Social Democratic party. Thereupon, the editor of the Journal, not to be outdone, at once promised that if the News gave us one column, we should have two columns in the Journal. Now the managers of these papers have not been suddenly converted to Socialism, nor are they at all friendly to its principles. They only want subscribers, and know that there are enough Social Democrats in Milwaukee to make it desirable to interest them.

Just as soon as we become numerically strong in any locality, never fear but we shall be sufficiently noticed in the capitalistic press, although perhaps not always in the most flattering manner. We of this state intend to push the victory which was obtained at the polls last November and organize Wisconsin thoroughly. Our state organizer has recently reported three very promising new branches, which bid fair to become useful centers of Socialistic propaganda in their communities.

The personnel of these new branches is an interesting point. Up till now the party in Wisconsin has been composed pretty largely of members of trade unions, but now not only workmen, but professional and middle class men as well, are coming into the movement. Perhaps the recent formation of the giant trusts is beginning to alarm the farmers and business men, as well it may.

We hear of such fine results in the movement in Illinois, that we in Wisconsin are inclined to give our Illinois comrades a lively race. If Illinois has trebled the number of her branches in less than six months, Wisconsin intends—but no, we will not count our chickens before they are hatched. Only watch us, comrades, and see what we do. E. H. T.

Socialists of Holland hold a national convention at Easter to discuss the trade union situation and map out plans for the next election.



AROUND THE WORLD

In Schaffhausen, Switzerland, Socialists increased their seats to 10 out of 31 in municipal council election.

In Brinkum, Germany, the Socialists won in election. Also increased their number of seats in Braunschweig.

The Falls Cotton Mill of Norwich, Conn., reduced the wages of the operatives 10 per cent. Cause given: dull market.

The United States Cotton Company of Rhode Island notified its 650 "hands" of a 10 per cent reduction in their wages. Cause given: depression in the print cloth market.

The Socialists at Leghorn are trying to found there a Maison du Peuple (Casa del Popolo) like the Socialists in Belgium, and appear to be likely to succeed.

Chicago Federation of Labor adopted resolutions which will be forwarded to McKinley, denouncing Admiral Sampson as "one who disgraces the traditions and history of the uniform he wears."

Communal elections have been held in Saxony, and the Socialists have been successful in increasing their representation. They have representatives in 145 places, and 279 councillors have been elected.

Lectures are now being given at one of the institutions in Paris by Socialists on (1) The History of Socialism; (2) The Organization of Socialism in France and in Other Countries; (3) Economic Organization; (4) Social Legislation.

Great misery exists in the district of Puglia, and the mayors have decided to resign en masse if they do not obtain some help from the government, as they do not feel that they can be responsible for the maintenance of public order.

The belief that another anthracite coal strike will come is gaining ground. Operators show no disposition to go into conference March 12, but are stocking up thousands of tons of coal, while the men are thoroughly organizing their lines and preparing for a struggle.

Very great efforts are being made to carry on a Socialist propaganda in the country districts of Belgium, and with great difficulty several co-operative societies have been formed. The task is a very hard one, as the clerical party is strong in the agricultural districts.

A new welding process has been discovered by Dr. Goldschmidt, Essen, Germany. There is little cost and the work can be done with great rapidity.

Some of the southern cotton mills are closing to "curtail production," and the workers will soon be hungrily waiting for them to start.

United States consul at Robaix writes that in France new combination milling and bread-baking institutions are being established, and that everything is done by machinery from unloading the wheat until the loaves come out ready for the market. The bread is said to be the most nutritious ever produced.

There is a strike among the miners at Montceau, France, and troops have been sent there. So far there has been no bloodshed, and an urgent appeal has been addressed to the soldiers not to fire on the strikers. Bills have been posted, and so far the authorities have not interfered with the anti-militarist propaganda.

There are twenty-five states in the German empire, each of which has a local parliament. There are seventy-eight Socialist deputies in fifteen of these assemblies. There are eleven in Bavaria, five in Wurtemberg, seven in Baden, six in Hesse, etc. There are none in Prussia, but the system of election there is the most reactionary that ever existed; compared to it that of Austria is democratic.

On Saturday, February 16, the men employed at the coal and coke works at Cokeville, Pa. (a branch of the American Steel Hoop Company), were told there would be no more work for them after that day. Many of the men had settled down to a life-long slavery, and expecting the works would run forever had paid out their small savings to own a home. Now they have neither job nor home and are wondering (?) what this thing called freedom is.

The Portsmouth (England) town council is considering the question of establishing a municipal service of telephones, with the result that the National Telephone company has taken the alarm and has initiated strong opposition, even going so far as to send out reply post cards to all the electors asking them to sign a protest against municipal telephones. Naturally the municipalizers have also been aroused to action and the whole question is being very actively fought in the borough.

A fine meeting under auspices of Branches 10 and 48, Chicago, was held last Sunday afternoon at Merrick's Hall, Milwaukee avenue, with Comrades Hoyt, Westphal and Edwards as speakers. Three new members were added to Branch 48.

LOCAL BRANCHES

CALIFORNIA Liberty Branch, San Francisco, holds public meetings every Sunday and Wednesday evenings, commencing at 8. Admission free. Business meetings for members every Thursday evening. Membership, Social Democrat Herald free to each member, 25 cents per month. Apply to the secretary, John C. Wesley, 117 Turk street. Branch No. 3, Los Angeles, meets every Sunday afternoon at 2 o'clock, at Woodman's Hall, 125 1/2 Spring street. J. S. Bruner, 47 N. Hill street. Branch No. 12, San Francisco (German), holds business meeting first Sunday of each month, at 11 o'clock, p. m., at 117 Turk street. Agitation meeting on third Sunday evening, same place, to which public is invited. August F. Mayer, secretary, 140 Folk street.

COLORADO Branch No. 3, Goldfield, meets every Sunday at 7:30 p. m., at City Hall. Chas. Labamp, secretary.

CONNECTICUT The Connecticut State Committee meets the last Sunday of each month at 2 p. m., at P. Schaefer's, 1099 Main street, Hartford. Louis Schlar, secretary, 26 Spring street, Rockville. Branch No. 4, Rockville, meets first and third Thursdays at Turn Hall meeting room, Village street. Secretary, Richard Niederwieser, Box 76.

ILLINOIS Meetings of Chicago Central Committee held regularly second and fourth Wednesdays of each month at Dr. J. H. Greer's office, 32 Dearborn street. Branch No. 2 (Bohemian), Chicago, meets first and third Saturdays at 8 p. m., at Nagel's Hall, 533 Blue Island avenue. Branch No. 3 (Bohemian), Chicago, meets second and fourth Mondays at 8 p. m., in Dundee's place, 180 W. 18th place. Joseph Dunder, secretary. Branch No. 5, Chicago, meets second and fourth Sundays of each month at Prazak's Hall, corner Center avenue and 9th street. James Rehak, secretary, 315 Throop street. Branch No. 8 (Bohemian), Chicago, meets second and fourth Sundays at 9 a. m., at 202 Lincoln street. J. A. Ambroz, secretary, 100 W. Wood street. Branch No. 9, Chicago, meets at Uihorn's Hall, corner 63rd street and Center avenue, first and third Saturdays. Gus Larson, secretary, 624 Center avenue. Branch No. 10 (Czech), Chicago, meets every third Sunday in the month at Prazak's Hall, corner Michigan and 10th place. Camil Kabat, secretary, 137 Stanwood avenue. Branch No. 5 (German), Chicago, meets every other Saturday at 8 p. m., at A. Jankovsk's place, 81 W. 21st street, between Levee and Oakley. A. Giesler, secretary, 226 W. 20th street.

INDIANA Branch No. 6, Indianapolis, meets first Saturday evening and third Sunday afternoon of each month, Rehwins Hall, corner Market and Noble streets. Address all communications to the secretary of the State executive board, Thomas Cotton, 500 Warren avenue. IOWA Branch No. 2, Hiteam, meets every fourth Friday in the month at Opera House. James Baxter, chairman; Wm. Truman, secretary, Box 14.

KENTUCKY Branch No. 1, Newport, meets first Sunday afternoon at 2:30 p. m., and first Thursday evening at 8 p. m., and third Sunday afternoon, at Southfield Hall, northeast corner Seventh and Central avenue. Address A. L. Nagel, 29 W. Second street.

MASSACHUSETTS Branch No. 2, Holyoke, meets second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at Sprindale Turner Hall, Carl Schwabe, organizer, 24 Jackson street. Branch No. 25, Roxbury, meets at 24 Warren street, second and fourth Fridays of every month. Public invited.

MICHIGAN Branch No. 1, Battle Creek, meets second and fourth Sundays of each month at 8 p. m., at 10 W. Main street, in the International Congress Hall. All are cordially invited. L. C. Rogers, secretary.

MINNESOTA Branch 1, Red Lake Falls, meets every other Sunday in real estate office of Fred Gesswein, on Main street. A. Kingsbury, secretary.

MISSOURI Branch No. 3, St. Louis, meets second and fourth Mondays, at 8 p. m., at Haldermann's Hall, 300 South Seventh street.

MONTANA Branch No. 1, Butte, meets every Thursday at 8:30 p. m., Engineers' Hall, Owsley Block, G. Frankel, secretary, 71 E. Park street. Branch No. 2, Great Falls, meets first and third Sundays of each month at G. W. Wood's home, Chico, Mont.

NEW JERSEY Branch No. 1, Newark, secretary, Michael W. Schor, 57 Livingston street. Branch No. 3, Camden, meets every third Sunday of the month. For particulars address Paul Ebersing, 126 Kaulin's avenue. Branch No. 3, Jersey City, Newark, meets every third Saturday at International Hall, 7 Bedford street. Hans Hartwig, secretary, 7 Bedford street. Branch No. 6 (German), Paterson, meets first and third Mondays at 8 p. m., at Helvetia Hall, 34-36 Van Buren street. Karl Lindner, secretary, 220 Edmund street.

NEW YORK The City Central Agitation Committee of Greater New York meets every second Tuesday at 42 Grand street, Windsor Hall. East Side Branch, No. 1, meets every first and third Thursdays at 29 East Broadway. A. Guyer, secretary, 103 Suffolk street. Branch No. 3, Brooklyn, meets every Saturday at 8 p. m., at 54 Moore street. Visitors welcome. Comrade desiring to organize should communicate with Secretary, Sol. Prossman, 100 Boerum street. Branch No. 10, meets every Friday at 8 p. m., at 209 E. Broadway. Lectures and discussions. Public invited. Organizer, Joseph Williams, 36 Henry street.

OHIO Branch No. 4, Cincinnati, meets at Richellon Hall, southeast corner 7th and Plum streets, every Sunday at 2 p. m. Lectures and discussions. Public invited. Thos. McKernan, secretary, 42 Laurel street.

OREGON Branch No. 1, Portland, meets every Monday night at Washington Hotel, corner of 4th and Flinders streets. Everybody invited. T. C. Woodland, chairman; Mrs. N. E. Fortlieb, secretary.

PENNSYLVANIA Branch No. 1, Philadelphia, meets every Thursday, at 8 p. m., at 423 S. Third street. Ross Shohodkin, Treasurer, 51 Pine street. Branch No. 4, Gettysburg, meets every second and last Wednesdays of each month in K. of L. Hall, Chas. Kussel, chairman. L. H. Mogge, secretary, Ben. Coddington, treasurer. Branch No. 3, Philadelphia, meets first Friday of each month at executive meeting every Sunday morning, at S. D. P. Club Rooms, at 423 S. 3d street. Organizer, M. G. Ellis, 314 Reed street. Branch No. 10, Williamsport, meets every Sunday afternoon at 2 p. m., in Social Labor Hall, No. 21 E. 3d street. L. B. Smith, chairman; Jno. Lyon, secretary, 74 1/2 2d street. Public invited.

WISCONSIN Milwaukee Central Committee, S. D. P., meets second and fourth Mondays of the month at Brewers' Hall, southeast corner 14th and Chestnut streets. Branch No. 1, Milwaukee, meets at Kailer's Hall, 4th street, between State and Franklin, every second and fourth Thursdays of each month. Branch No. 2, Milwaukee, meets every second and fourth Saturdays in Gaetke's Hall, Concordia and Green Bay avenue. Frank Liebsch, secretary. Branch No. 3, Shiozook, meets every second Thursdays of each month at Gaetke's Hall, Concordia and Green Bay avenue. Secretary, Eugene E. Eichenberger, 750 N. 11th street. Branch No. 4, Milwaukee, meets every first and third Fridays each month at Moller's Hall, corner 23d and Broad streets. George Moerschel, secretary, 23 1/2 23d street. Branch No. 9, Milwaukee, meets every fourth Friday of the month at E. Sigel's Hall, southeast corner Orchard street and 9th avenue. O. Wild, secretary. Branch No. 12, Milwaukee, meets every first and third Thursdays of each month at Volkmann's Hall, 21st and Center streets, at 8 p. m. Secretary, C. Kasdorf, 929 23d street. Branch No. 20, Milwaukee, meets second and fourth Wednesdays of each month at 524 Clark street. Hermy Schneider, secretary, 22 1/2 3d street. Branch No. 29, Milwaukee, meets first and third Fridays of each month at Gaetke's Hall, Concordia and Green Bay avenue. J. Heller, Jr., 1122 Fourth street, secretary.

WEST VIRGINIA Branch No. 1, Wheeling, meets every third Sunday in the month at Trade and Labor Assembly Hall, 145 Market street. H. A. Leeds, organizer.

NEW BRANCHES
Illinois: 3
Iowa: 1
Kansas: 1
Utah: 1
Wisconsin: 2
Total: 8

THE HERALD FORUM

*Communications intended for this department must be brief, legibly written on one side of the paper only, and accompanied by the real name of the writer. No attention will be given to anonymous letters. The editor is not responsible for the views of contributors.

The Middle Class

Editor Social Democratic Herald: Referring to your article on the middle class, I do not for one moment think that the disappearance or non-disappearance of the middle class of vital importance, but I do think that we should in our platform declaration confine ourselves strictly to the truth. A man does not disappear so long as he is with us and can be counted, and the same with a class. Most Socialists, for at least fourteen years past, have declared over and over again, that the middle class was rapidly disappearing. The mercantile middle class numbered in 1870 492,499; in 1880 they had increased to 687,052, and in 1890 they increased to 1,192,931, an increase in those twenty years of over 142 per cent, while the population increased only 62.4 per cent, less than one-half as fast as the middle class. Again, that part of the professional class which belong to the middle class increased still more enormously during the same twenty years.

It is undoubtedly true that the middle class are not as prosperous as a few years back, but they are still with us as a middle class, and they prefer, even with a decreasing income, to continue as a middle class. The census of 1900, not yet reported, will show that the middle class have increased fully as fast as the population. At least, so I am informed by one of the most prominent census men.

F. G. R. Gordon. Manchester, N. H.

REPLY.

In the article to which Comrade Gordon refers, our position was that the vanishing economic power, or independence, of a class is a sign of economic dissolution. We said: "If the middle class fails to hold its own, in a purely economic sense, of course, then it is disappearing—as a class"; that this class "cannot lose ground and hold it, too"; that, as a matter of fact, it is becoming "economically impotent," and that, therefore, the middle class, as such, "an economic factor with diminishing power," is disappearing.

With this position our correspondent does not take issue directly. He says, however, that he does not think "the disappearance or non-disappearance of the middle class of vital importance." But that was the point raised by him in his first communication. It was considered a matter of sufficient importance for a notable book by Edward Bernstein, the German Social Democrat, and if, as our comrade's position would seem to suggest, the concentration of economic power in the control of a few can go on indefinitely and the middle class independents not be diminished, but largely increased, in the process, then, while the question may not be of "vital importance," it certainly becomes one of paramount interest to Social Democrats.

When Comrade Gordon says: "A man does not disappear so long as he is with us, and the same with a class," he must surely know that he is not touching the question at all. The question is not one relating to a man—as a man, but rather to his potency or impotency in the economic world, the industrial and commercial environment of men. So as to a class, it is not at all a matter of concern to the Social Democrat that any particular set of men "prefer to be counted" in this class or that; the sole question is one of their economic relation to industry and to business. Unless this is insisted upon, any discussion of the matter must prove entirely fruitless.

The Herald has never contended that the middle class is "rapidly" disappearing; still we are not sure that an exhaustive investigation from the economic standpoint, which alone could be a satisfactory to Socialists and which a government census misses, would not prove the point. What we have affirmed, and all the logic of capitalism compels its recognition, is that the continual absorption and reorganization of industry by a steadily diminishing number of the economically powerful being a fact, it necessarily follows as a converse proposition that the growing number of the economically powerless is a fact also, and that, therefore, the middle class is doomed.

Comrade Gordon gives us figures showing a large increase of the "middle class" in twenty years. Everybody ought to know that these figures include every peanut vender, huckster and "small merchant," driven by the relentless play of "trade" and the struggle to live into any venture, with meager capital or none, and that hundreds of thousands of men so engaged are living lives as precarious as those of ordinary, every-day wage slaves. On the other hand, it is a matter of almost common information that large commercial houses give employment to great numbers of those who were formerly well-to-do men of standing and resources in the middle class.

We Get What We Believe In

How happens it that we have a senate at Washington which dares to endow our president with more than monarchical power in the Philippines? It is because we ourselves have believed in force from the first. Not physical force, but that stress of circumstances which Americans have become past masters in creating. Here is the golden calf to make which we have thrown in all our jewels of gold. Now bow down!

Well, no; I think not even yet! Are we not about ready to understand what we make with our thoughts? There will be no co-operative commonwealth until it first exists in our hearts. And in our steps toward it we must believe in the inborn kindness of our brothers, in the face even of the morning paper. We must believe it, we must say it, we must repeat, we must insist. We get what we believe in; that, and no other. This way, "Ca Ira!" A. R. W.

Random Shots

Poverty may not be a crime, but the verdict in every case is hard labor for life, with only an occasional reprieve coming from the clemency of "charity." The plumed knights of the "dark ages" robbed people to endow monasteries. The modern knights of industry or commerce rob the people to found libraries and colleges. Our civilization is not so far behind, after all.

The law that "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread until thou returnest to the ground" is as unpopular among men as the prohibition law in Kansas. Legislatures are employed everywhere to relieve as many as possible from its operation by a grant of some sort of special privilege. * * * While Governor Yates is stumbling over himself to stop prize fighting in the state, the business men of Chicago are formulating a plan to revive the Olympian games of imperial Rome. Did you ever reflect how small a gnat one could strain at and how large a camel he could swallow?

The man who won one hundred and forty-seven thousand dollars last year horse racing stands today at the head of one of the largest Christian organizations on earth, "King Edward VII." Don't tell me, you blasted infidel, that the thief on the cross wasn't saved. One of the duties of the Taft commission off in the Philippines legislating for the Tagals was to separate church and state. The friars have had their turn preaching the "gospel" to the heathen and grown fat. Now it is the politicians' turn. Oh, the poor heathen!

By the time the Tagal learns it "pat" to pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," everything pertaining to earth will be taken from him except the air. Socialism would not treat him in this way, but would give him what he prayed for. G. W. Riley.

A Matter of Tactics

Dear Mr. Editor: We are up against a little problem of our own in "tactics" in this town, and as our branch was organized only three months ago and we are all young in Socialism, we would like to get the advice of some of the more experienced heads in the party.

What we want to know is whether it is the right thing for us to put up a full ticket of our own in the town election, under all circumstances? We had a lot of discussion over it in our branch, and at last decided not to put up one this spring anyhow, and try and find out before next town election comes around what was the best thing to do.

The whole discussion arose out of some of our fellows claiming that the case of a town was different from that of a city, because party lines are not drawn in a town election as they are in a city. You see, we live in a town of about 7,000 inhabitants, with about 2,000 qualified voters. The town affairs are run on democratic principles. Party politics don't enter into them at all. Nominations for the different offices are made in a citizens' caucus, which is attended by all qualified voters, irrespective of party. The man best fitted to fill the place is chosen, whether he is republican or democrat. Women, as well as men, attend these caucuses, and are frequently nominated for school committee. There is a very strong sentiment against bringing party politics into town affairs in any shape. The people claim that a republican will make just as good a fence viewer or tree warden as a democrat, and you can't convince them that a Socialist will do the job better than either, unless he happens to have superior qualifications, which unfortunately is not often the case with our members. Several of the town around here are large enough to become cities, but they prefer to remain towns and stick to the democracy of "town meeting," rather than to become cities and adopt party politics. It is the declared opinion that politics should have no more to do with the running of town affairs than they have for running the Society for Historical Research.

Those of our members who claim that our case is different from that of a city believe that we have a pretty good sample of pure democracy right here, and that we want more of it instead of less; that it is all right and necessary to draw party lines where the rest of the community does, and put up candidates for

the legislature and congress, etc., and that we will only injure our cause instead of helping it, by insisting on party lines where all the others have dropped them. They go on to argue that we can do more good by getting Socialist demands inserted in the town warrant, and in that way have them brought before the town meeting where we can work for their adoption and agitate for Socialism.

This is our main question, but there are one or two others. One of our members, who is a doctor, was offered the nomination for a place on the board of health, in which position he could, of course, have served the community acceptably. He declined, however, on the ground that he could only accept a Socialist nomination. Was he right in declining?

Another question is this: As we are not putting up our own ticket, should we keep out of the citizens' caucus? Should we refrain from exercising our rights as citizens in looking after the administration of town affairs, many of which vitally affect us?

Some of us believe that we should put up our own ticket every time, that we should accept no nomination but a Socialist one, and that we should draw the separating lines in every possible instance. I have tried to set out the position of others, however, so that you may see our dilemma from the standpoint of a quiet little town, where national parties and national politics cut precious little ice.

Hoping that some one will be kind enough to answer these questions through the columns of The Herald, I am, fraternally yours, J. M. B.

Notice to Chicago Branches

In the following wards in Chicago the Social Democratic Party has an official standing, based upon the vote of the party last November, and comrades need not circulate petitions for nominations of Aldermen, namely: Wards 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 22, 27, 28 and 33.

For particulars regarding placing of candidates on the ballot, address P. S. Brown, 126 Washington street.

New Jersey Resolution

The following resolution from Branch 1 of New Jersey appeared in The Herald in three disconnected paragraphs last week and is reprinted in order that it may be understood:

"Branch 1 of New Jersey in reporting its vote on the referendum sends the following resolution, which was adopted by a vote of 15 to 1:

"Whereas, According to the principles of democracy the work of nominating officers for the national executive board ought to be done direct by the rank and file instead of by delegates; therefore,

"Resolved, That we vote against the question, 'Shall the action of the convention in the selection of officers be ratified?'"

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Spravednost, the Social Democratic Bohemian weekly, is enlarged this week to eight pages.

Comrade W. F. Brown lectured at Rockville, Conn., and sustained his reputation as an earnest and well-informed worker.

The branch at Brazil, Ind., will give an entertainment and supper March 11, when a number of comrades from Terre Haute will be present.

Merrick's Hall, 1739 Milwaukee avenue, has been engaged by Branches 10 and 48, Chicago, as the center of regular propaganda meetings, which will be held every Sunday afternoon.

The Social Democrats of Milford, Mass., have adopted the preamble and several of the planks of the Chicago city platform for their municipal election and nominated Comrade John Wulf for selectman.

Last Saturday night (March 2) Comrades Seymour Stedman and Philip S. Brown held a meeting at Grossdale that roused the town. There was a large attendance and the greatest interest was manifested.

A convention will be held Saturday evening, March 9, at 8 o'clock, in Merrick's Hall, 1739 Milwaukee avenue, Chicago, to nominate a Social Democratic candidate for alderman from the Twenty-eighth ward. A full attendance of members is desired.

We will be obliged to miss it, but advise everybody who can to attend an entertainment and ball to be given by the Social Democratic party at North Side Turner Hall, Milwaukee, March 17. There is no doubt that a good time is in store for those who attend. A supper will be provided at 25 cents; admission after 6 o'clock, 25 cents.

The Missouri Socialist says: "Comrade William Mailly writes a long letter to the Citizen, taking issue with Comrade Hayes on the unity question. The letter contains some good, sound arguments as to why we should agree to the unity convention in spite of anything and everything. By all means let us not be guilty of one single act that can be converted into an excuse for preventing union of all Socialists."

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During the month of March Socialists throughout the world celebrate an event of great historical interest, the Paris Commune. We desire to call special attention to this connection to three important books with which Socialists should be familiar, and to make a SPECIAL OFFER on these books for the month of March only.

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Dues for quarter ending June 30 are payable on or before April 5. Secretaries will give the matter prompt attention and report as early as possible.

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