# INTERNATIONAL.

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The monthly report of the Inspector of White Labour issued this week is edifying reading. It only needs to quote a few passages to shew the vanishing quantity of the gratitude of the employing class towards those who have risked life and a limb in its wars. With the capitalist the definition of gratitude as a lively sense of favours yet to come fits like a glove.

Only a small percentage of the unemployed apply to the White Labour Department; so that its figures are a thermometer of tendencies rather than of volumes. The figures for applicants for employment for January are: Johannesburg, 185; as against 68 in December: In Pretoria 180; as against 102 in December.

Some of the Inspector's remarks are naive and to the capitalist point.

"Overtime is common in this department, men working 14 and 15 hours per shift. Surely this is not doing the best that can be done for returned soldiers"! Of course not. "The best that can be done" is only dope for Rand Daily Mail consumption. This week a prominent member of the A. S. E. was sacked off the City Deep for refusing to work overtime while men want work. If they can't make a frontal attack on your scale of pay, they will try and cut off your leisure, and reduce you that way.

"Unemployment," says the Inspector, "will soon become a question of considerable magnitude and public concern." Still, all is grist to the capitalist mill, because later on we have the Inspector saying: "IT IS TO BE REGRET-TED THAT MORE CANNOT SEE THE ABSOLUTE AD-VANTAGE IT WOULD BE TO THEM AND FAMILIES IF THEY WERE TO SIGN ON FOR ACTIVE

SERVICE."

Now do you see how the Inspector holds his job. The employing class will tolerate any quantity of scolding against sections of employers, so long as a pill like that is given to the wage-slaves.

They bring the poor devils back here to starve, and then tell them: 'Don't you see the absolute advantage of you signing on to fight for us rather than do the other fellow out of his overtime? Wouldn't you, dear returned soldier, prefer to die of a bullet to dying of hunger. Come now! Be reasonable!

### The Mineworkers Negotiating.

The industrial excitement of last week has calmed down into negotiations between the Mineworkers and the Chamber of Mines. The proposal to bring in mediation and arbitration was wisely turned down, and the Miners Delegates elected to deal with the Masters face to face.

An incident reminiscent of the old days of Martial Law occurred on Sunday, when police detectives applied at the Delegates Meeting of Mineworkers with the intimation that if the Meyer and Charlton strike was under discussion

the police would have to be present. The Miners' Secretary informed them that if the police insisted on entering the meeting, the Delegates would go out and meet elsewhere. To this firm attitude the police yielded and left. Quite a detail this, but a foretaste of the bludgeon, that is always at hand for the behoof of the workers.

The Meyer and Charlton men returned to work pending negotiations. These negotiations include a 44 hour week, to which Forrester Brown rightly attaches much importance. The recent general strike in Australia secured an eight hours bank to bank with half an hour for meals FROM THE FIRST MAN, DOWN TO THE LAST MAN UP The argument of the Chamber of Mines that this affects the working hours of the great mass of the native workers, and therefore "impracticable," only shows, or should show, to the white mineworkers the extent to which their fortunes are bound up with those of all the rest of their fellow wage-slaves, though black and under sjambok rule.

From it all arises the supreme need for a Conference of all those who have the industrial movement in South Africa at heart, to dicuss the great and special problems that are facing the workers of the Rand and South Africa. Such a Conference is already being mooted, and it is hoped that the events of the last fortnight will give a spur to the

movement which is already afoot for bringing it about.

### The Carpenter's Journal Militant.

Since the appointment of A. G. Cameron, the Assistant General Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, to the editorship of that Society's monthly journal, it has acquired a distinctly more militant and workingclass flavour. Cameron represents the younger element. Chandler, the ex-editor, represented the old superannuation, Insurance Act craft unionists.

We are indebted to the December number of the Journal for a true account of the fate of the motion brought before the recent Trade Union Congress in England, proposing to hold an International Trade Union Congress at the same time and place as the meeting of the Peace Plenipotentiaries. The capitalist press gave the impression that it was absolutely turned down. This was not so. It was referred back. Here is the report of the Carpenters delegate on the matter.

At the end of the Parliamentary Committee's report, and following several letters from the American Federation of Labour, there occurred the following sentence:-

"The Committee recommend to the Congress that we co-operate in the holding of an International Trades Union Congress at the same time and place as the meeting of the Plenipotentiaries who will be arranging terms of peace."

This recommendation was passed unanimously by the Parliamentary Committee, but Mr. W. Thorne, M.P. (who at the meeting of the Committee raised no protest), now leapt to his feet, and raised quite a storm by his strong denunciation of this recommendation. Raillie McKerrell followed with anoth r bitter anti-German speech; George H. Roberts, M.P., joined in the protest about meeting Germans until they were purged of Kaiserdom.

All the delegates who spoke seemed to forget that the ambassadors and statesmen of Germany would be sitting with English, French, and Russian statesmen, and surely if those who arranged the war could meet, why not the victime? However, the paragraph was referred back by 1.486,000 for: 723,000 against. I am pleased to say that your delegates were with the minority, and believe that the majority will be Leartily sorry to be outside a great movement, and thus prolong bitterness and animosity between the working-classes of Germany and England.

Good old Carpenters' delegate! How is it that Carpenters have turned out such good revolutionaries since the year 1. A.D.

## The Inevitable Downfall of Capitalist Production.

· By J. M G.

A fundamental law of nature is that all things change, there is nothing stable; everything contains the germ which must ultimately lead to its dissolution, giving place to other forms.

Human Society is no exception to the rule, we see in the past how one phase of Society after another has grown up and has been replaced by others.

The history of humanity for the past 5,000 years is marked by well defined epochs. We can see a form of Barbarism, such as existed in the early Greek period, giving place to chattel slavery, which continued down to the break up of the Roman Empire: to be replaced by serfdom and villeinage under the Feudal system; this giving place at the end of the middle ages to a simple form of capitalism, which has gradually evolved into the complex and scientific methods of production and distribution of to-day. Yet, notwithstanding the evidence of the past, we have Rip Van Winkles who believe that our present form of society based on private ownership of property in the tools of production is going to exist for all in:

This ignorance permeates society.

All sections are blind and mentally befogged, so wrapp

petty interests that they cannot read the evidence that is standing out clear and distinct to those who wish to see. The handwriting is on the wall, and is written in unmistakable language, that society as formed to-day is doomed

In examining the modern form of society based on production of commodities for profit, we find the essential law of its nature is to continue producing in increasing volume. It is impossible to halt. To do so would spell bankruptcy. This increasing production year after year has led to nearly every part of the globe being opened up as markets. In the remotest and most savage corners of the earth is found the produce of the scientific machinery Modern Capital.

This development of the markets of the world has been very rapid, and has been accelerated by America, Germany and Japan becoming competitors against Britain.

The industrial development of

Russia, Spain, India and China has already begun; and a few years will see them producing practically all their requirements, thus closing their markets to those countries who have been supplying them.

This development has been rapid during the past 50 years, but will proceed with lightning rapidity during the years to come. The need of more and ever more markets, to dispose of the surplus commodities produced, is the fundamental basis for the continuity of the capitalist system of production for profit. This expansion, a law of the system, must go on. Yet though the world is large, there is a limit, and when that limit is reached, and when every available märket on the earth's surface is opened and supplied up to their requirements, then will come the Deluge, resulting in the greatest Industrial Crisis the world has ever seen. We have seen on a comparatively small scale these crises during the nineteenth century, but this crisis will lead to the bankruptcy of the system.

This necessarily sketchy statement of the historic development of Human Society and forecast of the downfall of our present capitalist system of production for profit has the solid bed-reck basis of the experience of the past applied to the present. It is not "all in the clouds," as our so-called intellectual awould-be leaders would have us believe; but has its roots firmly planted in the solid earth.

An intelligent understanding by the workers of the instability of human society, getting rid of the false teachings of the servile mountebanks, paid hirelings of the capitalist class, who have prostituted their intellect in its service, will enable the workers to grasp the evolutionary laws of development controlling all things animate and inanimate. The moment they grasp this fundamental principle they will have a clearer vision of the methods to adopt to combat the mighty forces of capital arrayed against them to-day. And when the inevitable collapse of our present system takes place,—and collapse it must before many years,—they will arise in their might and on the ruins of the capitalist system of production for profit, raise the superstructure of the Cooperative Commonwealth.

Have you subscribed to "The International,"

5s. per annum, post free, Box 4179,

Johannesburg.

# "The Poor Whites" and a Page of History.

TO MY FRIEND, HENRY K DUBB,
MINER.

My dear Henry,

You ask me for my opinions on the "poor white problem. Alright, you shall have them, because I believe you do like to hear a real opinion now and again. First of all I want you to get the proposition: It is that you are going to be a "poor white", Henry, as sure as your name is Henry K. Dubb, unless you listen for once to the voice crying in a wilderness of blind and carefully tended prejudice. I am going to prove the proposition. So don't get impatient.

First of all you know your head is full of three and fourpence a day, by-woner farmers, and a lot of rubbish like that -planted in your grey matter by the Labour leaders you think so much of.

But you may lay your shirt, Henry, that the GOVERNING POWER knows all about it, and likes to hear your Politician bringing up the hoary old perennial because it keeps you guessing. "Poor whites," Henry, are part of the game of God Capital, and their manufacture is by no means new, as I shall prove to you by a glance at another country's history, which has gone through the mill in the same manner that South Africa is doing to-day.

Compare the experience of America: Before the Civil War (1863) all menial and ago cultural labour in the South rn State was done by slave labour. An aristocratic caste of white men did the supervising and would have deemed it an insult if any one had ventured to suggest that the slaves kept them and not vice versa, or that they should do some work themselves.

Thus there was at that time two distinct classes, i. e.: Slaves and overseers. But between the two was a large body called "mean whites". Notice the similarity of terminology. "Mean" whites describes this class as accurately as "poor" whites describes the class we are at present considering. Now notice the similarity of conditions—similarity did I say: Sameness would have been the correct word to use.

A good description of the condition is given in the following extract taken from Bryce's "American Commonwealth:—

"The second order consists of those

who used to be called the "niean whites." While slavery lasted, these whites were, in the planting States, a wholly wretched, because economically superfluous, class. There was not room for them as labourers because the slaves did the work on the plantations. They had not the money to purchase land and machinery for themselves, nor the spirit to push their way in the towns, while the system of large slave-worked properties made ethe cultivation of small farms hopeless and the existence of a thriving free peasantry impossible. The planters disliked these whites and kept them off their estates as much as possible; the slaves despised them and called them "poor white trash."

Shiftless, ignorant, improvident, with no aims in the present nor hopes for the future, citizens in nothing but the possession of votes, they were a standing reproach to the system that produced them, and the most convincing proof of its economic as well as moral failure. Since the war they have begun to advance, slowly indeed yet surely, for they have set themselves to raise cotton and other crops for the market, and the growth of mining and manufacturing industries promises them work in the towns and a stimulus to its progress generally. Of public opinion among them there is as yet little question, for they usually follow the lead of the upper class, not more out of a deference to them than from aversion to the negroes."

Now could anything bear out more fully our own present situation in this country. That quotation, made without bias after a most careful study of the facts is quite sufficient to make the conclusion drawn from it obvious to the meanest intellect, that:

"Where the white man directs and the coloured does the work the relatively incapable white man is bound to be unable to maintain his position as an aristocrat in the economic world and must either merge with the coloured population or become a parasite upon the white community."

There you are, Henry; whether you like it or not seems that is exactly the position. What America went through in the slave period South Africa is going through to day, and all the mouthing about the "poor whites" won't alter the facts one little bit.

that the big coloured Industrial Army is coming in on the tide of their evolution, demanding that place in the sun to which every single human on this earth is rightfully entitled. The poor whites are up to their chin in the water and make no mistake, Henry, your puny breakwater—the colour bar—won't stop the tide.

Now, I've shown you the cause and effect. You ask me what is the remedy? There is only one. Palliatives, such as colour bars, segregation, three and fourpences, and the hundreds of others put out by the quacks are but

skin plasters to hide up the sores. Go to the real physician, International Socialism. Learn that you have to accept the native wage slave on EQUAL TERMS AND FORCE THE BOSS to do the same. Teach your coloured (and cheap) competitor that he has a clear right to the full product of his labour. In season and out of season teach him reasoning discontent, and make him and yourself realise that you have a right to own the tools, that is, the machinery, that you can use and the boss cannot.

That's the remedy. Sooner or pater you will be forced to seize it. The boss is alive to the facts, and the "poor whites," are a living testimony to the sure thing that you are going to get down to their level unless you get busy now and realise that there is only one working class in the whole wide world.

Yours Fraternally.

SEN YAH.

## Printers Assistants fight to Victory.

Last week we finished up our notes on the Printers' Assistants Strike with the hint that all was settled except guarantees against vicitimization. However, that was a leek that the Master Printers, and Hortor's manager especially, would not swallow. They were bent on victimizing nine or ten of the initiators of the strike.

The result was that on Saturday the strike kept spreading to other firms. The point to note is that the whole of the Conciliation Board's decision was conceded. Nevertheless batches of young girls came out from Adlington's and other firms up till. Monday morning; when a meeting was held to take a ballot on the question of accepting the Masters' terms or insisting on the safeguard for the ten members. An overwhelming majority decided in favour of standing by the ten Hortor boys and girls who were down for viefimization. In fact only one vote was recorded for capitulation. The Typos made no move to come out in support of their comrades in the shops, but made arrangements for financial support. The spirit of the young women who form about half the membership was splendid, their solidarity a brilliant example to the whole Labour movement.

On Tuesday morning they got their reward. The Master Printers gave in on the victimization point, in return for a postponement to June of bringing the Board's scale into operation. A guarantee of six months work to all the strikers was given from that date; and work was resumed on Wednesday in good spirits. Mr. Ivan Walker, the General Secretary of the Typos, was in close touch with advice and support throughout.

There are not words strong enough in our vocabulary to stigmatise kak the action of the Master Printers. Here we are, stuffed up by the Mail and the Star and all the rest of the Employers Press with tosh about Conciliation. Arbitration, Collective Bargaining, the iniquity of strikes and the rest. Here is a Union submitting its plaint to a legally constituted Board of Conciliation, on which representatives of Employers' opinion are in the majority, and still they go back on their own decisions, and resort to filthy victimization methods against workers and young women at that (what price fighting for the honour of Belgian women—hypocrites!) who insist on legal decisions being carried out. Let the workers learn from this that all Conciliation Boards are nothing more than Boards for prevarication and delay to enable the employer to prepare for the worst.

Nevertheless, the spirit of the Printers' Assistants is what the workingclass movement needs. The lower grades of semi- and unskilled workers are the salvation of Labour. But the hesitation of the Typos in face of such an issue as was raised by the Assistants, and in face of the help which the Assistants have given the Typos in the past, spells the passing away of the highly skilled, favoured craftsman and his Unions, just as all things pass away that cannot, dare not, raise a hand to protect anything except its own clique privileges.

#### Wilfrid Harrison Again Up.

Comrade Wilfrid Harrison is again before the Court at Capetown for alleged seditious statements. The precise charge is not clear, more of it next week.

The following Labour Town Councillors have subscribed to a petition calling a special meeting of the Johannesburg Town Council, "to discuss the manner in which the Council can best assist in obtaining recruits from the Municipal employers". Mark these Labourite Economic conscriptionists: Scott, Dingwall and Gow.

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### The Class War on the Rand.

#### Forrester Brown declares the Native a fellow-worker.

The Miners' Delegates sat from morn till eve on Sunday, with an interval to attend the funeral of Jack Devenish, the Miners Organiser. In the evening, while the Mineworkers Delegates were discussing the question of strike or no strike, the League meeting, at which Comrade Forrester Brown, the Miners Secretary, was advertized to speak on "Strike Issues," was kept going with a crowded audience in the Council Hall. Comrade Bunting had held the fort on the Town Hall front to a large and attentive audience; and Conrades Andew Watson in the chair, and A. B. Dunbar, kept the meeting inside in happy vein until Forrester Brown was able to come from the Delegates Meeting to give his address.

Comrade Brown dealt chiefly with the native mine-workers in their relation to the strike issue. He said that the present outburst was the result of an insidious process of encroachment on the status of the workers of the Rand. The contract system lent itself admirably to continued encroachment on the standard of living without the miners being aware of it. During the last eighteen months there had been a reduction of 2000 in the number of white employees on the mines. There had been a reduction in white wages of £669,000 from July 1914. Mad they paid its equivalent to the coloured men who had taken the places of the white workers? No! The native and coloured-wages on the Rand had only increased by £5000. Still, the workers had been content to go along without a protest, in spite of the fact that £11,000,000 was paid in dividends last year, and nearly three quarter of a million pounds reduction in wages. By shirking they were leaving it to the downtrodden native to fight for what the white workers ought to fight to-day.

The Mineworkers Union, although far from being what he should like to see it, was a Union with great possibilities. Their ultimate demand should be for the control of industries, but meantime they had to gradually educate the workers, fight for increase of pay; and above all, a 44 hour week.

Coming to the strike against nonunion labour on the Meyer and
Charlton mine, Comrade Brown said
they should fight the things we detest
most in the enemy. He said it was
wrong to exercise compulsion on these
two non-union men. It was wrong to
conscript these men into the union.
If Jan Smuts forced him to go and
shoot his fellow men, he would hold
up both hands to be shot himself
rather than do it. (Applause.) They
had to apply that to the Union. They
had to resort to education and propaganda.

had to protect the world-wide movement. There were sections of the workers that required their protection. If they were not going to accept the coloured worker at this time, they

would be knocked back for a generation. He wished the coloured man the same pay for the same work. People born in this country had an inborn prejudice against the native. Kaffir will always be a Kaffir they said. The colonial had always been taught to look upon the native as a thing to be despised, instead of as a human being. They had to fight against that. It was their duty to bring him up to the level humanity intended him to be. There were 13 native and coloured children born to every one white. In 10 years there would be such a vast majority that they would be established in every sphere of society. "You will then have the civilized community driven out because you kept him down. But the native is going to come up. Just as they cannot keep back the waves of the ocean can the white worker never keep down the native." This was the greatest question that any public man can face in South Africa. Responsible men who ought to know better were deliberately shirking the question, shirking their duty to warn the people of the country from their present methods.

Forester Brown said that at present the rules of the Mine Workers Union kept out the native. He had no doubt about their ability to organise the native. Eventually they would be forced to organise him. The greatest difficulty was not with the natives but to get the white worker to co-operate with the native. The speaker referred to the refusal of his Union to receive a deputation from the coloured men; and expressed his keen regret thereat.

The meeting, which was enthusiastic and educative, ended with the Red Flag. Sales of "International."

and pamphlets good.

#### JACK DEVENISH.

Jack Devenish, the Miners organiser, succumbed to the fell disease last week. Almost up to the last day he was in harness. He was a devoted servant of the workers' cause as he saw it. Although a supporter of the war at the beginning, he latterly secmed to have given up the problem, and confined himself solely to the industrial organisation of his class. His remains were carried to rest on Sunday by a large gathering, in which could be seen a good sprinkling of Internationals. Comrade Forrester Brown, the Mineworkers' Secretary, after the religious service gave a parting address in beautifully chosen words, and the Ked Flag was sung over the grave of another working class warrior.

Keep going with those names and addresses of likely readers. Swell the list of readers. Now is the time to double the circulation. Remember it depends on you. Send name and addresses only, when you cannot get the subs. We'll do the rest.

CORRESPONDENCE. East London, Pretoria and Kimberley comrades bear with delays, Secretary wants to write as soon as pressure is eased a bit.

#### LEAGUE NOTES.

JOHANNESBURG.

At the monthly business meeting on the 1st instant, it was decided democratic fashion to the office of Chairman, leaving only W. J. C. Gibson, 238 Smit. Street, Wanderers, as Secretary and S. P. Bunting, 104 Commissioner Street as Treasurer The Treasurer appeals to members to assist him in collecting subscriptions. He will be pleased to receive the same at any of the Johannesburg meetings or if left at No. 6, Trades Hall, or paid at his office, 104, Commissioner Street, or preserably if sent by post at any time.

The special meeting of the Branch was held last night to consider the Provincial elections problem and also the celebration of May Day, 1917.

The suspension of Thursday meetings for the summer months will be continued for the present except on the first Thursday in each month, at which members who have not received their membership tickets for the current year are requested to attend and receive same.

This Sunday, the 18th. J. P. Anderson will speak at the open air meeting outside the Town Hall at 7.20 p.m. on the coming struggle. The speaker afterwards at the Trades Hall meeting at 8. p. m. will be C. B. Tyler.

The Women Comrades have arranged another Cinderella Dance to be held at Professor West's Academy on Wednesday, February 28th. Tickets 2/6. Roll up all friends of the movement.

SUNDAY SCHOOL PICNIC. The child-ren of the Johannesburg Socialist Sunday School had a joyful picnic at the Zoo Lake last Sunday. A merry time was passed at that delightful spot.

When an army goes to war it takes along with it its field hospitals and ambulance corps. These things are necessary to an army, but, however necessary they may be, no General would be so stupid as to say that the field hospitals and ambulance corps the non-combatant section—are the principal parts of a FIGHTING organisation. But when we come to the so called "great army of labour," we find that most of its time is taken up with that sort of thing. Go to any trade union branch meeting, and you will find the workers spending their time discussing the Insurance Act, sick benefits, superannuation, and so on all parts of the non-combatant section In fact they are so busy picking up the. dead and wounded that they have no time to do any fighting. The trade union has become a glorified industrial ambulance corps, instead of a fighting force. C.W. CHRISTIE in the Glasgow "Socialist."

The Dairy business known as Slatter's Dairy carried on at Melrose Home Farm by W. Cooke and W. Slatter has been changed by the said W. Cooke retiring therefrom and being replaced therein by Harry Gunning as from 1st. February 1917.

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