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No. 4, TRADES HALL, RISSIK STREET, JOHANNESBURG. P.O. Box 4179.

No. 359. FRIDAY, MARCH 30, 1923. PRICE THREEPENCE.

A Change Over.

It is stated that the Mediterranean will shortly be the cruising ground of the premier British Fleet, which clearly indicates who is considered the potential enemy of the British ruling class. The Mediterranean Fleet is directed against France and possibly Russia, and so in a few years friends become foes, and vice versa, in this mad world.

* * *

Swank.

Senator Peter Whiteside seems to have a positive thirst for figures, and has extracted some interesting information from the Minister of Finance as to the cost to the Union of Ministers' houses and furniture and the South African "fleet," the General Botha. The latter little luxury has cost to date the neat little sum of £30,800, mainly in order that a few sons of the idle rich may swagger about in gold braid and buttons.

* * *

Marie and Mosquitoes.

Miss Marie Corelli says that Lord Carnarvon is not suffering from mosquito bite as stated, but that the dead Pharaoh has had his revenge by poisoning him for disturbing his tomb. She says she possesses a rare book which indicates the fate of such persons. Surely Marie might have warned his lordship.

* * *

Labour in Luxury.

The Countess of Warwick has handed over her mansion, Easton Lodge, standing in acres of park land, to Mr. R. Macdonald on behalf of the Labour Party Executive. It is stated that it is to be used for summer schools, educational meetings, international conferences, and a week-end resting place for labour M.P.'s. Chiefly the latter, in all probability!

* * *

Condescending.

The Marquess of Douglas and Clydesdale beat a miner named Henderson in the preliminary round of the Scottish Amateur Middleweight Championship after a gruelling three rounds.—Press report.

How condescending! Wonder what he gave the miner to lose?

* * *

Let Sleeping Dogs Lie.

The Minister for Justice has refused to lay on the table of the House of Assembly the papers referring to the case of brutally ill-using and chaining up a native girl, for which a farmer of Utrecht was fined the paltry sum of £10.

The whole crowd hangs together, Henry, for fear they should hang separately.

* * *

"Coming Events ——"

"The S.A.L.P. is starting open-air propaganda in Johannesburg."—News item.

They have shown officially no activity during the past twelve months, when the workers' lives and liberties were at stake. There must be something much more important pending.

Is it an election?

* * *

Amusing.

Colonel Reitz, the Minister for Lands, a full-blooded Dutchman, warns the English section of the population that there is a very great danger of an anti-English Dutch-speaking Government in South Africa.

If there is so much in the nationality cry as the interested ones claim, surely this should have no terrors for the gallant Colonel.

* * *

Democratic!

At a meeting of railwaymen held in Capetown to discuss the recent attack on Mr. Moore, the Secretary of N.U.R.A.H.S., Mr. Alexander, M.L.A., is reported to have said that "we are living in a country ruled by democratic methods."

That is the first we have heard about it. We are about as democratic as the slave states of ancient Greece, Carthage, and Rome.

Mr. Moore, at the same meeting, discussing the question of recognition of the Union, said in effect that if the railway workers had a large solid organisation recognition would come as a matter of course. Which is what we have always contended.

* * *

Hypocrites.

The Dutch Reformed Church opposes the opening of a new bioscope in Vrededorp. The Rev. L. E. Brandt said children were tempted to steal the money to see these shows, and the Rev. Mr. Postma claimed that the bio. was against Christian institutions, and proved it by quotations from the bible.

The bioscopes of Johannesburg are certainly not very elevating institutions, but the parsons know perfectly well that the cause of youthful and other depravity in Vrededorp and elsewhere is to be sought in the conditions under which thousands of [illegible] women and children are forced to exist as a result of the accursed capitalist system which these [illegible] and reverend gentlemen are paid to—and do

Class-Conscious.

We understand that the Benoni solicitors have refused to act for the Benoni comrades and to sue the management of the Hotel Cecil for damages arising out of its refusal to carry out the contract to let the hall to the Benoni Branch on March 10th.

After their behaviour over Comrade T. Chapman's case, this is not surprising, but the matter will not be allowed to rest there, of which we will notify our readers in due course.

* * *

Russian Papers.

We are led to believe that literature which is suspected of coming from Russia is being destroyed by the Union postal authorities. We are not aware that there is at present any censorship in South Africa, but it would appear that the Communists are considered outside the law, and can be dealt with in any way that a prejudiced bureaucrat desires. This is also being made the subject of investigation.

Meanwhile, comrades who have hitherto looked forward to reading the Russian newspapers will understand the reason of their disappointment, and not blame this office.

* * *

Frau Wagner's Poverty.

Among the innumerable victims of poverty in Germany is Frau Cosima Wagner, widow of the famous composer, who is reported to be in great need.

This is how capitalism rewards ability, Henry.

Does It Pay?

An interesting sequel to the strike of members of the Witwatersrand Tailors' Association at Ben Pickles and Co.'s workshops, last November, was heard in the Magistrate's Civil Court last week, when Maurice Appelbaum, a machiner, sued the above firm for breach of contract. Appelbaum was one of the men who were employed to break the strike, and he, together with several others, as an inducement to scab, were given agreements for twelve months. With the termination of the strike, most of the scabs were fired—Appelbaum being one of them—his agreement notwithstanding. The firm called evidence in Court to prove that their action was legally justified on the ground of the complainant's INCOMPETENCE. Needless to say, judgment was given against Appelbaum.

D'ye see the point, Henry? Competent enough whilst acting as a blackleg—afterwards the scrap heap. The breaking of this agreement is, however, but one of many examples of bourgeois honour—likewise the Court's decision, and should show the workers that, apart from the moral repugnance of scabbing, IT DON'T PAY!

* * *

The Real Rulers.

The French Ambassador, speaking at the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, said "The industrial magnates are the real masters of Germany." Yet Germany has the most completely democratic and republican constitution: twenty-six million persons voting at the last elections.

Educational Anomalies.

The enormous discrepancy between the money spent on elementary education—which is about all the workers' children get—and the higher grade schools was brought out by Mr. R. Hicks, President of the Transvaal Teachers' Association, which held its nineteenth annual conference at Pretoria this week.

He pointed out that in 1921 the cost per pupil per annum in primary schools was £13 15s. 10d. for vocational schools £52 5s., and high schools £33 12s. 7d. These figures indicate that the higher educational facilities which mainly benefit the children of the middle class, is provided at a cost out of all proportion to the expenditure devoted to the children of the poor.

This, of course, refers to the running expenses of the schools. When the cost of housing the favoured children who are qualifying for the job of bossing up the workers the anomaly becomes the more glaring. In one case it cost £45,000 to house 300 high school pupils, or £143 per pupil. The programme of building in 1921 works out at £132 per pupil. On the other hand, to accommodate 5,295 primary pupils £184,779 was spent, or only £35 per pupil. There is no need to comment on these figures, they speak for themselves, and eloquently indicate the manner in which the national revenue is diverted into the pockets of those who least require it.

CRIME.

In the course of the same speech Mr. Hicks made the statement that "coincident with the abnormal growth of educational institutions there had been an alarming growth of juvenile crime," and gave as the reason for this the difficulty of finding employment, which is very true; but when he suggests a remedy he, like all bourgeois thinkers, contradicts himself. He suggests that as a remedy for juvenile crime, the result of unemployment, the children should be kept longer at school, but failed to explain how this would provide more opportunities of earning a living when they eventually left.

Will these people never learn that although every child passed through the high schools and took degrees at the university that they would still be competing for jobs as miners, typists, shop assistants, mechanics, etc., and that whether they leave school at 13 or 21 makes no difference to the requirements of the capitalists who control industry, who do not hire a worker because he is a B.A. or M.A., but only because he believes that a profit can be made out of his labour.

Real education is a good thing, but the education that is most valuable to the worker to-day, and which will most rapidly remove his disabilities is that knowledge which will give him correct views of the principles underlying capitalist society and the quickest way of substituting for them other principles and motives more conducive to the well-being of all who perform useful service.

* * *

The System.

A man near Durban was given notice to leave his job, and realising the futility of looking for another he killed his wife, son and daughter, set fire to his house, and then cut his own throat. He probably saved them and himself years of mental and physical agony.

* * *

Hate Your Neighbour.

At the Congress of the Nationalist Women of the Transvaal, the Rev. Dr. van Broekhuizen predicted a sombre future as regards the native population. "They required wisdom so that their children . . . could be led up against the black giant." "Their children must be ARMED against the black danger."

This from a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus.

* * *

Senile Decay.

In the period of senile decay which capitalism has entered upon all pretence seems to be flung to the winds. The high-sounding phrases such as Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, Rights of Small Nations, etc., have ceased to be used as a cloak behind which the most atrocious deeds are done. To-day, naked, brutal and unashamed the bestiality and sordidness of the system stands revealed. The latest example is the attempt of France to bully Switzerland, which has hitherto been considered the last word in democratic institutions.

The Swiss Government, it appears, agreed to abolish certain free zones in 1921 at the request of France, but the Swiss people have the right to decide by referendum on important questions. The arrangement mentioned above was voted on by the Swiss people in February this year, and turned down by an overwhelming majority, and in spite of that fact Republican France claims that the people's will should be over-ruled, and that the wishes of France should be given effect to.

So much for respect for democracy when it stands in the way of capitalist interests.

THE right to Revolution is, in the last analysis, the only real "historic right" upon which all modern states rest without exception.

FREDERICK ENGELS.

An Expensive Labour M.P.

Mr. J. Hodge, M.P., the man who betrayed the miners during the great coal strike in 1921, and who just lately refused to co-operate with the Red Trade Unions in an attempt to stop the invasion of the Ruhr Valley by French capitalists, has been a pretty expensive luxury for the British workers. The Iron and Steel Trades Federation has paid since 1918 £4,546 for election expenses to this man, and has now given notice that this subsidy will be withdrawn from the Gorton (Manchester) Trades and Labour Council because the Council has dared to invite nominations from local bodies other than the Federation.

There is plenty of money for labour of the RIGHT sort, it seems.

* * *

Merry England.

The following stories of working class suffering will explain why "desperation" strikes are occurring in England and Wales just now. In Durham, says the "Workers' Weekly," the old-established custom of giving rent allowance or free cottages to coal miners is being abolished, and applicants for jobs are told that they can only be started on condition that they voluntarily forego these "privileges." A Durham miner writes that men go to the pit very often with bread and water only, and one man for a week's work, after deductions had been made for pick sharpening, unemployment levy, etc., received the magnificent sum of 14s. He had a wife and three children. In contrast to this an Abertillery miner with 33s., out of which he had to pay 14s. rent, seems affluent; but as the cost of living is still over 70 per cent. above pre-war figures, this net sum of 19s. left his family crying for bread two days after pay day.

May Day.

A meeting of representatives of trade unions and other labour organisations was held on Wednesday to discuss ways and means of celebrating May Day this year. It was decided to ask the unions to take the opinion of their members on the question of stopping work on May 1st, either for the whole or part of the day. We understand that the B.W.I.U. members will take the day off, that the A.E.U. is taking the feeling of its members on the subject, and that other unions will take action. Meanwhile, Communists everywhere should take the lead in pushing forward the fight for the return of May Day as a public holiday.

In every country millions of workers will rest from toil and demonstrate their solidarity with the international proletariat, and Communists in South Africa will not allow the day to pass unmarked. Since 1902 the annual demand has been for May 1st as a workers' holiday. The general stoppage of 1920 resulted in the South African master class making a virtue of necessity and proclaiming May 1st a public holiday. The workers, however, only enjoyed it for one year, and then came the capitalist offensive, the strike of 1922, and martial law. The victors ruthlessly dictated their terms, and Dingaan's Day and May Day were taken from the meagre list of workers' holidays.

The matter must not be allowed to rest there. Each first of May must be celebrated with increasing enthusiasm and numbers, until once again the workers gain in organisation and solidarity the strength to retake what they have lost.

The Communist Party will hold the annual social in the Town Hall on the eve of May Day, April 30, and will do all in their power to make the demonstration on the first as big and successful as in former years.

Members in the trade and industrial unions, push the matter in your branches and get the rank and file interested.

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God Save "the" Industry.

"The" Industry! With bated breath these words are whispered by those who hope to enter into the Chamber of Mines heaven of big dividends or fat jobs. The President of the Chamber of Mines, Mr. H. O. Buckle, the hero of the Rand strike and its bloody suppression, has given his annual address, and the whole press of South Africa will be engaged for the next few days in prostrating itself before this marvel of literary perfection and financial and political wisdom. The great man, of course, starts off with a tribute to the wisdom which, at a cost of some hundreds of lives and untold misery and suffering on the part of thousands of workers and their dependants, has reduced working costs on the mines from 24s. 11d. to 20s. 6d. per ton milled, which he hints is not the limit ultimately aimed at, but which it is hoped to bring down to something in the neighbourhood of 17s. per ton.

Miners and mine workers need not be told what that statement means to them. Mr. Buckle confesses that with 3,500 less white workers than were employed before the strike an increased tonnage has been obtained, and at the same time tries to prove by a reference to the accident rate that "the results obtained have not been due to any undue pressure of work." One can imagine the feelings (and words) of the underground worker when he reads this statement. Referring to wages, he gives the average for Europeans as £31 4s. 8d. This figure, of course includes all contract workers and the highly paid salaried officials which the industry retains as a white guard in times of industrial disturbance. The earnings of the actual producer and wage worker would give a very different result. The claim for a 30 per cent. increase in the wages of skilled mechanics is brushed aside with the remark, "Such a demand cannot of course be granted."

An article by one of capitalism's tame professors is then quoted to prove that the profits of the mines are quite moderate, being "only" 6.2 per cent. during the 15 years ending December, 1921. Figures can, of course, be made to prove anything, and it would be interesting to know the extent to which the capital has been watered in order to reach this (comparatively) moderate figure. Mr. Buckle hastens, however, to assure investors that "there is every hope of better results in the future." This assurance is, of course, gratifying to the investor, but ominous to the mine workers, for only out of their increased exploitation can this extra toll be levied; and that these economies will be made increasingly at the expense of the white workers is indicated by the statement that the cost per shift of native labour has RISEN from 3.9 to 5.35 pence.

The review then passes on to the vexed question of miners' phthisis compensation, and the usual elaborate attempt is made to show that the Witwatersrand gold mines have now become health resorts, and the statement is made that the Chamber of Mines "will naturally endeavour to inspire some reason and moderation in dealing with this question of phthisis," which, being translated into plain English, means that the already meagre compensation paid to the men who not only give their labour but their lives to enrich the mine magnates, is to be reduced, and they and their dependants are to be placed in a still worse position than that in which they now find themselves by means of a Phthisis Compensation Bill to be introduced this session. It is stated that the cost of phthisis insurance is £800,000 per annum, and the threat is made that the shareholders in the mines may make it hot at the next parliamentary elections for those M.L.A.'s who advocate reasonable compensation for the phthisis victims. The threat should not have much weight with the politicians referred to, as workers even now are much more numerous than shareholders, and the latter have not hitherto been in the habit of supporting or voting for labour men.

In the earlier part of the report Mr. Buckle does not hesitate to sneer at the "mere" politician, but in discussing the Transvaal Provincial Council and its employers' tax he lets himself go, and dubs it "that mischievous and superfluous body." Everything, it seems, is mischievous and superfluous which runs counter to the interests and desires of "the" industry. In the "Star" Mr. Buckle is reported to have said that the banks charged the mining companies the enormous sum of five million pounds for exchange during the year under review. This is obviously an error, and probably should read £500,000, which is a sufficiently high figure, and is a further example of the way the parasitic institutions of capitalism levy toll at every stage of the movement of commodities from the point of production to consumption.

The general effect of the report is that of a pæan of victory over the workers by the Chamber of Mines. To the victor the spoils is the motto, and whilst gloating over the reduced labour force and its intensified exploitation it is clearly indicated that the screw will be more tightly applied in the coming year. Working costs are to be brought down still lower. Miners' phthisis compensation is to be whittled down, and the lives of the workers made to approximate to those of slaves in the interest of the gold bugs by triumphant and soulless capitalism. There is, of course, a limit beyond which it is dangerous to push the workers, but the Chamber of Mines, judging by the tone of its chairman's remarks, feels confident that it has not yet been reached. Confident in the solid backing of the forces of the capitalist state, and still further encouraged by the disorganised state of the workers and the timidity and ignorance of some of the labour officials, and the open treachery of others, the capitalists of South Africa feel firmly fixed in the saddle.

Time will show how far they are right, but nothing is more certain than that, sooner or later, the workers who are being goaded beyond endurance will revolt, and it is interesting to remember that up to 1922 the attacks by the South African workers on their tormentors have been progressively more determined and formidable. 1907, 1913-14, 1922. These dates and what they stand for on the Rand are ominous. When the next milestone on the road to the emancipation of labour will be reached is still on the knees of the gods, but that the workers will permanently sit down to the tyranny of the Rand magnates and their pocket government is unthinkable. Meanwhile the need of the moment is to strengthen the labour organisations and clarify the minds of the workers of the poison of patriotism, religion, and false economics dope with which their masters seek to drug them.

Political Morality.

Reviewing the life of George, fourth Earl of Aberdeen, the "Mail" deplores the loss of the lofty honour and integrity of the Victorian statesmen and the degeneracy of politics in the present day. It is not proven that the politicians and statesmen of sixty or seventy years ago were such paragons as they are sometimes painted, but it is certainly amusing to read in the leading columns of a capitalist paper to-day a column of lament over the degeneracy of present-day politics and politicians.

If there is one agency more than another which is responsible for the corruption of political morality to-day it is the prostitute press here and elsewhere. The vile propaganda during the war period which flooded all belligerent countries and poisoned the minds of millions, and which still persistently misrepresents the actions and motives of the noblest and most self-acrificing members of the human race, is mainly carried on by the corrupt capitalist owned daily press.

The revelations made by Upton Sinclair shed a lurid light on the corrupt and unscrupulous methods of American journalism, and the history of the Northcliffe press in Britain and other great newspaper combines during the war and since, prove conclusively that the methods of American journalism are not peculiar to that country. Politicians are notoriously made and unmade by the press at the dictation of the interests which own and control it from time to time. Was it not the press which boomed that prince of cynical scoundrels, Bottomley, and made him the oracle of the unthinking workers during the war, and which as ruthlessly smashed him when he had served their turn?

Here in South Africa the most unctuous flattery is served out to those politicians, no matter what their political labels, who are willing to serve the interests of the gang which has South Africa by the throat, and, on the other hand, nothing is too mean and contemptible for the kept press to stoop to in order to discredit and hound down the opponents of big business. For months past a persistent campaign of misrepresentation, insinuation, and veiled incitement to violence against Communists has been indulged in by the South African press, whilst the biggest enemies of the workers are lauded to the skies. These hirelings of Capitalism then prate about political morality and bemoan the departure of the good old days.

The fact is that politics, journalism, art, science, and every institution which should be of benefit to mankind is polluted and corrupted by the monstrous system of society under which the few live luxurious lives and the millions exist in hopelessness and misery. The only remedy is to abolish it and substitute a co-operative commonwealth of workers, which proposal is resisted, ridiculed, and its advocates persecuted by the very propaganda agency which turns up the whites of its eyes at the corruption of politicians.

The Paris Commune.

In commenting on the events on the Rand during last March, the greater happenings of March, 1871, in Paris are brought vividly to mind. On March 18th the workers of Paris prevented the government from carrying off the 250 cannon of the city, and the national guard and proletarian battalions took possession of the city, and M. Thiers and the Government fled. The Commune of Paris was proclaimed on March 26. The city was held and well governed by the workers for two months. The Government troops attacked Paris on April 2nd, and the last of the Communards surrendered on May 29th. The workers were butchered to the number of twenty thousand and thirty-six thousand taken prisoners, of whom over a thousand died in prison, and the rest were thrown into the hulks or the hell of the convict settlement of New Caledonia.

It will be fitting to remember during the next few weeks the heroic sacrifice of our French comrades in the spring months of 1871, and to remember that their example and mistakes made possible the glorious workers' revolution in Russia forty-seven years after.

Supply and Demand.

Husbands are evidently getting scarce in Johannesburg, if we may judge by an incident in one of the courts the other day, when a man was claimed as her husband by a woman whom he said he had never set eyes on before

Notes by the Way.

Nowhere is the peculiar character of South African social phenomena better illustrated than in the radical divergence of views among its white capitalist class on its problems of the immediate future. Roughly, two main divisions of opinion are apparent in their camp to-day. On the one hand, there is the school of mineral mining interests—gold, coal, and diamonds—that regards South Africa as but a temporary home, and is not inclined to be anxious over "our" future. On the other hand are the industrial and commercial interests which regard the sub-continent as their fatherland and their permanent home. A brief glance at history will show that the decline of the pastoral and feudal era in this country began with the "rush" of oversea capital which commenced in the eighties of last century.

The defeat and extinction of the two Boer Republics in 1902 closed a definite epoch. And it was on the basis of the now securely safeguarded mineral mining that the building up of South African industry commenced. During the late war especially did this industry make enormous strides, reaching its zenith in the post-armistice boom. It was no wonder Smuts began to dream of a pan-African expansion that would unite capitalism from London to the Cape. With the slogan of "South Africa is on the threshold of industrialism," Smuts and the S.A.P. definitely launched out as the apostles of industrial imperialism, entailing a programme of immense annexationism which was to include Angola, Mozambique, the Belgian Congo, and the late German colonies.

* * *

In the meanwhile, however, the mining interests were engaged in a bitter struggle with their white workers, and although forced during the war years to accede to many demands they ultimately called a halt in December, 1921, issuing those famous ultimata. In March, 1922, the catastrophic defeat of the Rand workers took place, and having imposed their own terms of peace for a considerable time to come, the mining interests took stock of the position and of the extent of their victory.

In the "British South Africa Annual" for 1922, Sir Lionel Phillips estimates the maximum workable life of the Rand goldfields—"the backbone of South Africa"—as another thirty years. And when the industrial "backbone" is broken, what will happen—what is bound to happen? Even a child can see the inevitable consequences. Possessing no especially advantageous geographical position, lacking the elements of industrial England or America, or even the qualifications of agricultural Argentine, on what basis is this wonderful policy of "bold industrial expansion" to eventuate?

For the first time since Smuts, deceived by the appearance of subsidiary industrial enterprises drawing their support from the mining communities and artificially inflated during the war by the closing of oversea markets, began his policy of "encouraging industry" and predicting a "new industrial era," a capitalist voice has been raised in protest. In a recent article the editor of "The S.A. Mining and Engineering Journal"—a tame mouthpiece of the mining financiers—asked bluntly: "Has South Africa an industrial future?" This must have come as a rude shock to that great "dreamer" and "idealist," Smuts. Although he need expect no opposition of any kind from the mining capitalists in his efforts in "pioneering" new and vague industries to take the place of now dying mining industry, yet their dubiousness and aloofness from such efforts must sooner or later bring their effects. We may soon see a disillusioned and defeated imperialist and would-be industrialist prophet enter that stage of senile hallucination which is the death-bed companion of all capitalist "statesmen."

* * *

During the "Red Revolt" last year, a certain lieutenant was attached to the Durban Light Infantry, and "operated" with them on Brixton Ridge. Although (and perhaps because of) being on the editorial staff of the "Star," he soon became hopelessly drunk, and violently broke into the house of a Mr. Rossouw, at Brixton, brutally assaulting the occupiers. A complaint was lodged with his commanding officer, but no action was taken. Evidence of the above was subsequently given before the Martial Law Enquiry Commission, and even this whitewashing servant of a blood-bespattered Government had to report (page 35, par. 176) that "Mr. Rossouw was struck and insulted by an officer attached to the Durban Light Infantry, who probably was under the influence of liquor at the time." Yet a few months later the "Star" has the indescribable effrontery to state that "the King (of England) is the symbolical head of the Empire, and in his service do men become inspired and altogether god-like"!!! Surely the inspiration to be got from fighting for King and Empire is no higher than the "inspired" deeds of this D.L.I. officer at the house of Mr. Rossouw, and it is to be hoped that when next engaged in attacking proletarian "rebels" a timely rifle-butt will bring his godlike career to a fitting conclusion.

* * *

The one and only beneficent result to the working class from all the series of overwhelming disasters that have overtaken it since the commencement of the world-wide capitalist offensive at the beginning of 1921 is the reversion to frankness and open brutality on the part of its masters. Gone are Wilsonism, Whitleyism, and the hosts of other deceptions and frauds that, with the assistance of the traitors in its ranks, kept the working class prisoners in the meshes of capitalist promises and illusions. It is the truth, the ugly reality of capitalist exploitation, which is now coming to the surface, as witness the following by Mr. Owen Letcher, F.R.G.S., in the "Star": "All the world over industrialists are showing an increasing tendency to relegate this puzzling problem of what is the cost of living to the limbo of all the TEMPORARY MEASURES OF THE WAR, and to come back to reason and base wages on what an industry can bear." And yet Mr. Crawford and his "Herald" keep on ceaselessly bleating that had they been but listened to by the workers of the Rand they would have lost nothing.

But this frankness on the part of capitalism is only to be welcomed by all well-wishers of the working class. It is exactly this phase of reaction triumphant, this song of triumph of the exploiters, which will provide the workers with the psychology of revolution—no half-measures, but a fight to a victorious conclusion. When the clouds of reaction begin to lift, it will be seen that the old traitorous and imbecile "leaders" are without followers, and that a new working class has arisen from the ashes of the old—determined, clear-minded, and class-conscious, and bent on speeding the day of the final battle with their masters.

V. D.

News Item.

While strolling down the street I saw two youths,
both blithe and gay, eyeing a poster brave and bold;
and here is the gist of its story told:
"Young Man! This opportunity ain't here to stay! Grab its foretop while you may: Be a He-Man! See the world! Opportunity is now unfurled!"

A one-legged Buddy standing by, heard one lad's exultant cry: "That's the life for me, Bo! I'll see the world and be a Hero!" Then up spoke Buddy, quite intent, as though on some great mission bent: "Say, lads, take it from me! This is your great opportunity! The sunfish of the Dardanelles are grown so thin they are only shells! they have starved four years for lack of meat—which they had never learned to eat till Wilhelm taught 'em how. Then, too, there is many a hill and glen that needs the ashes of young men to help grow the grain to put Europe on its feet again, 'cause there ain't no fertiliser from Pole to Pole or in the air, from Constantinople to Mussel Shoals, that's equal to a Doughboy's jowls. See this leg (that I don't wear!) it's somewhere—over there—growing seeds to boost the needs of World Democracy. For John Bull needs the Black Sea trade, and the Baltic, too, by gee! and Sam has got to help, or John won't pay, you see. That's what all this fuss is for, that's why we may go to war—to help J.B. so he can pay the dough he borrowed yesterday. The Dardanelles is John's by right, the heathen Turk just wants to fight and keep the whole world in a stew. This is your chance lads—it's up to you. Come, lad! ooze along! don't let the daisies grow so long beneath those feet and pure and sweet, as a mother used to know. For John Bull needs the Black Sea trade—and must have it, don'tcher know—and smoke this in your pipe, lads—Wall Street needs the dough! Then, when Mars has had his fling, if there is back or leg or wing that can be found, we'll bring it home, and do a war dance 'round your bier, you, Great Unknown."

"But this isn't news," I hear you muse; well, that's a sin!—string up your wires and "listen in."

—"St. Louis Labour."

"God Save the King" in these times too often means God save my pension and my place; God give my sisters an allowance of the privy purse—make me clerk of the irons, let me survey the meltings, let me live upon the fruits of other men's industry and fatten upon the plunder of the people.

The Krupp Concession.

By E. (Moscow).

On January 16th the Council of People's Commissaries confirmed the amended contract made with the firm of Friedrich Krupp. The contract is one of the most important concessions granted by the Soviet Government.

The Russian Government grants 25,000 desyatines of land to the firm, in the Saalsk district, in the Don Province, for purposes of carrying on rational agricultural activities without exhausting the fertility of the soil.

The concessionaire has no right to sub-lease the conceded ground, or any part of it, without the consent of the government.

The amount of the proceeds to be delivered up to the State is 17.5 per cent. of the total proceeds of the crops, delivered free on rail to the nearest railway station. The government reserves the right to purchase the remainder of the harvest, at the prices ruling on the Rotterdam corn exchange, the difference in freight and other costs being deducted.

With the exception of the product tax and the cartage tax, the concessionaire engages to pay all other general taxes.

The concessionaire submits to all decrees and regulations of the Russian Government, INCLUDING THOSE OF THE CODE OF LABOUR LAWS.

The concessionaire pays the full customs dues, except for those goods which he imports under the control of the government, according to the general economic plan, for the needs of his enterprise.

After the expiration of the term of the contract, the concessionaire is bound to hand over the whole undertaking, in perfect running order, to the government, with all proper equipment, based on the average amount and quality of the equipment between the twelfth and eighteenth years of the contract.

The government has the right to repurchase the undertaking after the expiration of twelve years from the time when the contract comes into force.

All undertakings are subject to the superintendence of the government inspection.

The original concessionary contract with the firm of Krupp was signed in March, 1922, and was to come into force on April 1, 1922; Krupp, however, delayed execution on various grounds, and later in the year resumed negotiations which ended in the signing of the slightly amended contract summarised above.

The Union of Socialist Soviet Republics.

THE FIRST UNION CONGRESS.

The capitalist press of the world has either ignored or given little prominence to one of the most important steps taken by Soviet Russia since the Revolution. We take the following from "Russian Information and Review," London:

The first Congress of Soviets of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics met in Moscow on December 30, 1922. There were present delegates with voting power—from the R.S.F.S.R., 1,217; from the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic, 354; from the Transcaucasian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic, 373; from the White Russian Socialist Soviet Republic, 23. After speeches by Stalin, Frunze, and others, the Congress unanimously agreed to adopt the draft Declaration of Union and to instruct the plenipotentiary delegations of the constituent republics at the Congress to sign the draft Treaty of Union; the Declaration and Treaty to be then submitted for the revision of the separate republics, and the necessary corrections having been made, to be ratified at the first ordinary session of the Union Central Executive Committee. The final texts of the Declaration and Treaty are to be submitted to the Second Union Congress of Soviets for final ratification.

To commemorate the foundation of the Union, the Congress decided to found in Moscow a Palace of Union and a Central Institute of Agricultural Science, with branches of the latter in the various uniting republics. It was also decided to add December 30 to the existing public holidays.

The Congress elected the Union Central Executive Committee, consisting of 371 members 270 from the R.S.F.S.R., sixty-eight from the Ukrainian S.S.R., twenty-six from the Transcaucasian S.F.S.R., and seven from the White Russian S.S.R.—and 138 substitute members.

The texts of the draft Declaration and Treaty of Union, as signed by the plenipotentiary delegations, are given below.

DECLARATION OF UNION.

Since the formation of the Soviet Republics the world has been divided into two camps—the capitalist and the Socialist.

In the capitalist camp reigns national hostility and inequality, colonial slavery, chauvinism, national suppression, pogroms, and imperialist brutality.

Here in the Socialist camp, is to be found mutual confidence and peace, national freedom and equality, and the tranquil community and fraternal co-operation of peoples. The attempt of the capitalist world through long decades to settle the problem of nationalities by the joint methods of the free development of peoples and the exploitation of man by man, has proved to be fruitless. On the contrary, the skein of nationalist contradictions is becoming more and more entangled, and threatens to overwhelm capitalism itself. The bourgeoisie have proved incapable of bringing about the co-operation of nations.

Only in the camp of the Soviets, and under the proletarian dictatorship round which is rallied the majority of the population, has it been found possible to root out national persecution, to create conditions for mutual trust, and to lay the foundations of fraternal co-operation. Thanks solely to this fact were the Soviet Republics able to beat off the internal and external attacks of world imperialism, to bring the civil war to a successful conclusion, to render their existence safe and sure, and to proceed to the work of peaceful economic construction.

But the years of war were not without their heritage. The ruined fields and idle factories, the breakdown of production and the exhaustion of economic resources which follow from the war, render the isolated efforts of the separate Republics towards economic reconstruction inadequate. The revival of the economic life of the country has proved impossible as long as the Republics lead a divided existence.

Furthermore, the unsettled state of international relations and the danger of new attacks render imperative the creation of a common front by the Soviet Republics against a capitalist encirclement.

Finally, the very structure of the Soviet power, which is international in its class character, urges the working masses of the Soviet Republics along the path of union into one Socialist family.

All these considerations imperatively demand the union of the Soviet Republics into a single State, powerful enough to ensure internal economic prosperity, security from foreign attacks, and the free development of her peoples according to their nationality.

The will of the peoples of the Soviet Republics, expressed in the recent Congresses of their Soviets, which unanimously adopted the decision to create a Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, is a reliable guarantee that the Union is a voluntary union of equal peoples, that entry into the Union is open to all Socialist Soviet Republics, either already in existence or to be formed in the future, that the new united State is a fitting consummation to the peaceful Communism and fraternal co-operation of peoples begun in October, 1917, that it will form a firm bulwark against world capitalism, and will be a decided step towards the union of the workers of all countries into a World Socialist Soviet Republic.

Declaring this to the whole world, and affirming the unshakable foundations of the Soviet power as expressed in the constitutions of the Socialist Soviet Republics in whose name we are empowered to act, we, the delegates of these Republics, acting within the scope of the powers conferred upon us, resolve to put our signatures to the Treaty for the creation of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics.

THE TREATY OF UNION.

The Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic (R.S.F.S.R.), the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic (U.S.S.R.), the White Russian Socialist Soviet Republic (W.R.S.S.R.), and the Transcaucasian Socialist Federal Soviet Republics (Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia), hereby conclude a treaty for their union into a single united State, the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, on the following basis:

1. The competence of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, exercised by its supreme organs, shall include:

(i.) Representation of the Union in international relations.

(ii.) Alteration of the frontiers of the Union.

(iii.) Conclusion of treaties for the acceptance of new republics into the Union.

(iv.) Declaration of war and conclusion of peace.

(v.) Floating of foreign State loans.

(vi.) Ratification of international treaties.

(vii.) Establishment of regulations for internal and external trade.

(viii.) Establishment of the general plan, and regulation, of the national economy of the Union, and the conclusion of concessionary agreements.

(ix.) Regulation of transport and posts and telegraphs.

(x.) Organisation of armed forces of the Union.

(xi.) Ratification of the Union State budget; establishment of currency and credit systems, and of taxation systems for the Union, the Republics, and the localities.

(xii.) Establishment of the general principles of land distribution and exploitation, and of the exploitation of the mineral wealth, forests, and waterways throughout the whole territory of the Union.

(xiii.) Union legislation on migration and settlement.

(xiv.) Establishment of the principles of court structure and procedure, and also civil and criminal legislation for the Union.

(xv.) Fundamental labour legislation.

(xvi.) Establishment of general principles of national education.

(xvii.) Adoption of general measures of national health protection.

(xviii.) Establishment of systems of weights and measures.

(xix.) Organisation of Union statistics.

(xx.) General legislation as to the civil rights of foreigners.

(xxi.) General amnesty regulations.

(xxii.) Veto of any decisions of Soviet Congresses, Central Executive Committees, and Councils of People's Commissaries of the republics of the Union, which infringe the Treaty of Union.

THE UNION CONGRESS OF SOVIETS.

2. The supreme authority of the Union shall be the Congress of Soviets of the Union, and, between the congresses, the Union Central Executive Committee.

3. The Union Congress of Soviets shall be composed of representatives of the town Soviets in the proportion of one delegate for every 25,000 electors, and of representatives of the provincial Congresses of Soviets on the basis of one delegate for every 125,000 inhabitants.

4. The delegates to the Union Congress of Soviets shall be elected at the provincial Congresses of Soviets.

5. Ordinary Union Soviet Congresses shall be summoned by the Union Central Executive Committee once a year; extraordinary Congresses shall be summoned by the Union Central Executive Committee either upon its own initiative or upon the demand of at least two of the constituent republics.

THE UNION CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

6. The Union Congress of Soviets elects the Central Executive Committee, consisting of representatives of the united republics, in proportion to the population of each, to the total number of 371 members.

7. Ordinary sessions of the Union Central Executive Committee shall be held three times a year; extraordinary sessions shall be summoned by resolution of the Presidium of the Union Central Executive Committee or upon the demand of the Union Council of People's Commissaries or of the Central Executive Committee of one of the constituent republics.

8. The Union Congresses of Soviets and sessions of the Central Executive Committee shall meet in the capitals of the constituent republics in turn, in an order to be established by the Presidium of the Union Central Executive Committee.

9. The Union Ceneral Executive Committee shall elect a Presidium, which shall be the supreme authority in the Union in the intervals between the sessions of the Union Central Executive Committee.

10. The Presidium of the Union Central Executive Committee shall consist of 19 members, four of whom, one for each of the republics, shall be appointed by the Union Central Executive Committee as its chairmen.

THE UNION COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARIES.

11. The Executive organ of the Union Central Executive Committee shall be the Union Council of People's Commissaries, consisting of:

The Chairman of the Union Council of People's Commissaries.

The Vice-Chairmen of the Union Council of People's Commissaries.

The People's Commissary for Foreign Affairs.

The People's Commissary for War (and Marine).

The People's Commissary for Foreign Trade.

The People's Commissary for Transport.

The People's Commissary for Posts and Telegraphs

The People's Commissary for Workers' and Peasants' Inspection.

The People's Commissary for Labour.

The People's Commissary for Food.

The People's Commissary for Finance.

The Chairman of the Supreme Economic Council.

GENERAL PROVISIONS.

12. For the purposes of ratifying revolutionary legislation on the territory of the Union, and for coordinating the activities of the united republics in the struggle against counter-revolution, there shall be established in the Union Central Executive Committee a Supreme Court, with the functions of a supreme body for court control, and in the Council of People's Commissaries a section of the State Political Department, the chairman of which shall participate in the Union Council of People's Commissaries in an advisory capacity.

13. The decrees and orders of the Union Council of People's Commissaries shall be binding upon all the united republics, and shall be carried out throughout the territory of the Union.

14. The decrees and orders of the Union Central Executive Committee and Council of People's Commissaries shall be printed in the languages of the united republics (Russian, Ukrainian, White Russian, Georgian, Armenian, and Turkish).

15. The Central Executive Committees of the united republics may lodge protests against the decrees and orders of the Union Council of People's Commissaries with the Presidium of the Union Executive Committee, but must not suspend their execution.

16. The decrees and orders of the Union Council of People's Commissaries may be set aside only by the Union Central Executive Committee and its Presidium. The acts of the Councils of People's Commissaries of the individual republics may be set aside by the Union Central Executive Committee, its Presidium, and the Union Council of People's Commissaries.

17. The execution of Orders issued by the People's Commissaries of the Union may be suspended by the Central Executive Committees of the united republics, or their presidia, only when they do not correspond with the decisions of the Union Council of People's Commissaries or Central Executive Committee. In such cases the Central Executive Committee of the united republic, or its Presidium, shall immediately inform the Union Council of People's Commissaries and the appropriate Union People's Commissary.

18. The Council of People's Commissaries of each of the united republic shall consist of:

The Chairman.

The Vice-Chairman.

The Chairman of the Supreme Economic Council.

The People's Commissary for Agriculture.

The People's Commissary for Food.

The People's Commissary for Finance.

The People's Commissary for Labour.

The People's Commissary for Home Affairs.

The People's Commissary for Justice,

The People's Commissary for Workers' and Peasants' Inspection.

The People's Commissary for Education.

The People's Commissary for Health.

The People's Commissary for Social Welfare.

The People's Commissary for Nationalities.

and, in a consultative capacity, the representatives of the Union Commissariats for Foreign Affairs, War, Foreign Trade, Transport, and Post and Telegraphs.

19. The Supreme Economic Council and the People's Commissariats for Food, Finance, Labour, and Workers' and Peasant' Inspection of the united republic shall be immediately subordinated to the Central Executive Committees and the Councils of People's Commissaries of the united republics, but shall be guided by the instructions of the appropriate Union People's Commissaries.

20. The republics entering into the Union shall have their own budgets, which shall form an integral part of the general Union budget, and shall be approved by the Union Central Executive Committee. The revenue and expenditure sides of the budgets of the republics shall be drawn up by the Union Central Executive Committee. The list of revenues, and the amount of each, forming part of the budgets of the united republics, shall be determined by the Union Central Executive Committee.

21. A uniform civilian status shall apply to all citizens of the united republics.

22. The Union shall have its own flag, coat of arms, and State seal.

23. The capital of the Union shall be Moscow.

24. The united republics shall modify their constitutions as required by the present treaty.

25. The Union Congress of Soviets is the only competent body for the ratification of, alteration or addition to, the Treaty of Union.

26. Each of the united republics retains its full liberty to leave the Union if it so desires.

Moscow, December 30, 1922.

Alice In Wonderland.

Truly the ways of Cape Communism get "curiouser and curiouser," to quote my namesake in Lewis Carroll's book, and I feel as much in "Wonderland" as she was, for on this much debated "working platform" I am unable, like some of our extremists, to trace the eagle to the sky, or like him, gaze unblinking at the sun. Neither, on the other hand, do I yearn to parade Adderley Street flourishing a flat-iron in the stocking, calling on women workers to unite as they have nothing to lose but their jobs. Then again, I do not favour dragging the Communist banner through the mire of petty reforms that we may embrace the workers on their own level, which reaches no higher than their stomachs. It seems to me as futile to attempt to unite with the workers as workers as it would be to take the sin out of business. We might as well blot out the whole word.

The working class (I was nearly omitting the two first letters from class) have always FOLLOWED, and will continue to do so as long as the bunch of carrots is held before them, but do the Communists aspire to nothing greater than to head the mob holding the carrots? Would they not be better employed in getting the thinkers of the world to unite in creating new conditions instead of trying to improve the old?

Last, but not least, of my wonders is at the curious treatment meted out to would-be new members of the Party; for instance, when an interested listener at our Sunday meetings (urged by one of our eloquent speakers to "join the only cause that matters") comes to the business meeting full of enthusiasm to join. He is subjected to the tortures of the inquisition, as it were, and if we carry on our policy of fear of spies, and horror of adverse press reports, to such extremes it will be easier for the proverbial camel to enter the needle's eye than for the would-be convert (who cannot give a verbatim report of his past life on request, or credentials from Lenin) to join this movement whose great aim is freedom. Will some far-seeing comrade kindly explain these anomalies to

A. HARRISON, Capetown.

Civil War.

The news from Germany, tainted as it probably is, seems to indicate that the Government is in some danger, both from the right and the left. The so-called democratic regime sits very unsteadily between the two stools of communism and monarchism, and the eyes of both the capitalist and labour world are turned to that tortured people anxiously awaiting the next move. It seems clear that the Government cannot permanently hold its position without coming to an understanding with one side or the other. In previous crises it has first used the workers to defeat the junkers, and when out of danger has turned on its deliverers, but this policy cannot be repeated indefinitely.

The German Communist Party is the most powerful and the best organised outside that of Russia, and the desperation of the workers resulting from the action of the French Government and their own capitalists may result in definite action at any time. The Spartacus rising and the premature risings in Saxony and the Ruhr have taught our German comrades not to be stampeded, and we have confidence that when they do decide to move it will not be before they are convinced that they have a good chance of succeeding.

Our Last Open Space.

There is nothing more disgraceful to the Johannesburg municipal authorities and the voters than the way the open squares and parks of this town have been destroyed. Marshall Square has become the abode of mammon's temples, protected by the guardians of private property, the police and C.I.D. Plein Square is a hideous nightmare of tin shanties and neglect. Von Brandis Square has been built over in the most planless manner conceivable. Milner Park has been handed over to fat beasts, both biped and quadruped. The Market Square is to be completely abolished when the proposed library is built on it, and now the sole remaining open space is coveted by certain sports clubs, who desire to make it a second Wanderers Ground.

We hope some remnants of a civic consciousness will cause the people of Johannesburg, if not the sordid crowd who rule this town, to call a halt to the sordidness and vandalism for which Johannesburg is notorious, and retain Union Ground as an open space. Undoubtedly it could be made more attractive than it is at present, and that should be a matter for the experts. The lay-out suggested by Sir E. Lutyens would result in a great improvement to the locality, but may be criticised on the ground that some place for big demonstrations is needed now the Market Square is gone.

There should, however, be no difficulty in satisfying both the aesthetic taste of the citizens and also the demand for a large open space for big assemblies of people, whether on May Day or other occasions. The Labour Party is pledged to preserve and improve the open spaces for the people, but we have seen very little effort in that direction. From the other side one, of course, expects very little.

It is natural that, if the laws are made and enforced by capitalists, they will be against the best interests of the worker.

* * *

The mine owners don't take the coal out of the earth; they merely take the profits out of the labour of those who do.

* * *

The fact that we speak of "the working classes" indicates that there are other classes who do not work. And the condemnation of our "civilisation" consists in this—that the classes who do not work get most of the wealth which work produces.

An Open Letter.

By S. P. BUNTING.

DELEGATE TO THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL, 1922.

Dear Comrades,

The attitude of some members to the accepted Communtern Policy on such matters as immediate or partial demands and, I gather, the United Front, as revealed at recent branch meetings I have attended, prompts me to try my hand at arguing them into accord with that policy. My excuse for presuming to write this letter is that a somewhat similar attitude was taken up by a few delegates to the Moscow Congress, and was, I think, as the result of the debates, successfully smoothed out; and I am now trying to reproduce the spirit of these debates.

"At one time," said Zinoviev in his report on the year's work, "it was essential to secure a rallying point for a genuine liberating movement of the working class, and this could only be done by the creation of a Communist Party . . . by splitting the old Social Democratic parties. . . . But our main problem now concerns the winning over of the majority of the workers. . . . That is why we have adopted the tactics of the United Front . . . i.e., not an electoral alliance, nor an organisatory union with the Social Democrats, but . . . the leading of the working masses in the daily class war. . . . For the very reason that we wish to fight on behalf of the proletarian revolution, we must participate in every strike, must go in advance of the working class and must fight on behalf of every partial demand. We are revolutionists . . . , we are opposed to reformism, but we are not opposed to anything that may improve the lot of the working class. We know quite well that in the extant conditions of capitalism the possibilities for such improvement are extremely restricted, we know that nothing but the revolution will secure a real uplifting of the workers; but we also know that we shall never be able to organise the workers unless we fight on behalf of their partial demands."

And in reply to those who say, "We have no time for this: we must reserve all our energies for propaganda in favour of the revolution," Zinoviev said: "He who feels for the working class, he who is not satisfied with a subjective attitude towards the masses, but on the contrary understands something about the lives of the workers and who has laboured in their ranks will reject such childishness"—or, to quote Lenin's phrase, such "infantile sickness"—for Lenin was dealing with similar tendencies. Similarly Bordiga, of the Italian party, said: "To organise the chaotic discontent into something capable of a revolutionary struggle is the great task." "The proper proletarian tactics," said Bukharin, "need not be either Right or Left; all it has to do is to adapt itself to the concrete conditions of the proletariat of the respective countries."

It is precisely on such grounds that the comrades I am arguing with have in the past opposed war, supported strikes, carried on free speech campaigns, attacked the Government about Bullhoek, clamoured for an amnesty for strike prisoners, and so on—all immediate or partial demands. We know, for instance, that war cannot be abolished except by abolishing capitalism; yet we preach war on war. We know that the white workers' insistence on wage standards at white rates cannot in the long run prevail against cheap labour competition under capitalism, yet we backed up their fight. When the Russian soldiers, peasant and workers in 1917 demanded peace and bread, did Lenin and Trotsky say to them, "Bread? Peace? Pish, tush, a miserable reformist demand! We are out for nothing less than the revolution"? No; they said, "We are with you, peace and bread you shall have"—and to-day they have both.

It is precisely because such demands, being perfectly proper demands in themselves, lead to the revolution, and in the present state of capitalism can, except to a trifling extent, only be realised by revolution (for once political power is captured the work of the dictatorship at once resolves itself into making reforms) that we identify ourselves with them. Not merely because by that means we are enabled to show the futility of reformism; that barren debating triumph no longer satisfies Communists; but because they are in themselves, in the circumstances, revolutionary demands. The class struggle in fact consists, it may almost be said, in the presentation of these demands by the workers and their refusal by the capitalists. After all, it is to gain these very demands that the revolution is wanted; for what is the revolution for if not to gain the things that the working class now lacks?

The fault of Reformism is not that it too supports these demands, but that it pretends to be able to satisfy them without revolution, claiming to be able "to mature Socialism in the lap of capitalism," and thus dissipating energy on trying to get reforms without it; nay, in modern times this has come to mean that its chief energy is an active and passionate opposition to the revolution, wholly in the interests of the other side. But it is grotesque to deduce from that error and that treachery that it is counter-revolutionary to support such demands or even to satisfy them under capitalism if a chance occurs. We are not here to say to the workers: "We forbid you to have bread prior to the revolution." The Communist Manifesto speaks with obvious approval of the securing of a ten hours' day in England, and in its last chapter it says: "The Communists fight for the attainment of the immediate and momentary aims and interests of the working class, but in the movement of the present they also defend the future of that movement." Exactly. And the chapter goes on to mention several cases of united front for particular objects, not only with labour but with bourgeois parties such as Nationalists, etc. The charge against the Second International, and here against the S.A. Labour Party, is not its support of daily demands, but the fact that in effect, in any crisis, being anti-revolutionary, it nearly always comes down on the side of the bourgeoisie and betrays the workers, until to-day, as Zinoviev says, "it is the main prop of the bourgeoisie." If the Labour Party carried out its professions it would be unobjectionable, if insufficient. The Communist Party, with revolution as its prime aim, certainly endeavours to emphasise and intensify the struggle as such, the demands themselves, rather than any supposed remedies. It stimulates the thirst of the workers rather than offers them salt water drinks, as it were, to quench it. But if it happens on some fresh water it will of course give it, capitalism or no capitalism. The point may be put in this way: The Labour Party cannot really push these demands, because it is not revolutionary: the Communist Party can just because it is revolutionary.

The alternative to this real support of daily demands is, especially in times of crisis, not merely to ignore them or stand aloof from them, but to oppose them, in other words to support the other side—that is what it comes to—which I gather is more or less what some of those I am addressing actually did in connection with the Rand strike of last year. CAN THEY NOT SEE THAT THAT IS COMING DANGEROUSLY NEAR TO PLAYING TRAITOR TO THE WORKING CLASS, a crime far more unforgivable in Communists than even in the Labour Party?

This being so, there is nothing in the suggestion that you are deceiving the workers by supporting their demands. "Of course," said Domsky of Poland, a Leftist, at the Congress, "We must have slogans, either partial or ultimate, in which we believe ourselves and for which we are ready to fight." That is, we believe in them because they are actually what the working class wants, and rightly wants; and if so, we cannot at the same time profess to disbelieve in them on the mere ground that they are reforms. Nevertheless, as Radek said (although he was speaking of the special slogan of a "Workers' Government," but his words apply generally), we have, and quite properly, to "lead the masses into the fight on the basis of their own illusions." No amount of mere propaganda, but only hard experience, will teach them that nowadays they cannot as a rule get even a sixpenny rise without a revolution unless as a bribe at the expense of other workers. Com. Andrews' letter suggesting that the miners would never learn except by bitter experience the insecurity of relying on the colour bar, which has been quoted by the Martial Law Commission as double-faced because Com. Andrews at the same time supported the miners' strike, was written in this spirit. The point is one which the Commission would naturally fail to understand.

Experience it must be. Mere preaching the revolution or Communist ideals, even mere warnings that reforms are unattainable under the present system, cut no ice; they notoriously fail to convince. Even to support the workers' demands of course does not at once enable them to understand you. But it is a necessary introduction. If we do not take up their daily demands we shall not get their support for the revolution. Fred Cetyiwe, who was a prominent and faithful member of the native study class, developing into the "Industrial Workers of Africa," in connection with which he and I and others were arrested in 1918, told Com. Dryburgh and me the other day that he realised that merely to preach the principles of Socialism to the native workers was ineffective. "Take an interest in our sufferings," he said, "and then, and not before, we shall listen to what you have to say." He had caught the essence of the Communtern spirit—or rather he showed that the Communtern had caught the true working class spirit. The mass of the workers are apathetic. We must penetrate their apathy to pull them out of it. We must make use of every spark of class feeling we can find in them to turn it to clear-sighted class-consciousness. We must get into them, not drily appeal as "absentees," from outside, to them to join us.

It is simply reformist to suggest that the old-fashioned propaganda methods of thirty years ago are sufficient to-day in face of a greatly intensified capitalist offensive. Soap boxes and street-corner crowds are all very well—and they are highly "constitutional" methods, by the way—but additional serious, intense and daring methods of propaganda, as well as more organisation of followers, and especially "permeation" of existing workers' organisations, are required to-day if the interest and confidence of the majority are to be won, and they are to be prepared for seizing power. The United Front is one of these methods: that is, not to pretend to labour leaders that we are with them, but to concentrate from time to time on some demand of the masses and enlist general support for it. And the opposition of "Labour" to the United Front shows that they fear it as a weapon, for it hurts them, not us—it strengthens us. Mere bragging that we are revolutionists does not bring us any nearer effecting the revolution. It is a question of working people up, preparing the offensive, providing a rallying point for the apathetic, getting the workers' confidence, and preventing them from invertebrately supporting the S.A.L.P. or even the S.A.P.—for majorities have proved to be very hard to win over to our side. This does not involve endorsing their misconceptions, still less joining their false political parties; it is simply a question of "penetration." If there is any danger of this becoming, in the case of individuals, "absorption," it is the business of the party to prevent that from happening.

It was owing to this necessity of learning by experience that Lenin advised the British Communist Party to support the Labour Party's rise to power. On similar grounds the Communtern urges its sections to put representatives into Parliament, just as the Bolsheviks went into the Duma, and later, under Kerensky, cried "All power to the Soviets," though the Soviets were then still Menshevik. It is experience, it is the course of events, not preaching, or "pointing out" or verbal grave-digging of capitalism, that brings on the revolution. Similarly, national liberation movements of subject or colonial peoples, though bourgeois and often reactionary, are supported by Communists not only because of their weakening effect on imperialism, but also because only a nationalist success convinces the masses of the futility of Nationalism.

To hold aloof from daily demands is to reduce the movement to a contentless abstraction like the "Thing In Itself" of some old-fashioned English philosophers. "Strip a thing of all its qualities as being mere adventitious attributes," they said, "and contemplate only the pure entity"; the result being—nonentity, something quite fleshless and meaningless, like Struwwel Peter who wouldn't eat his dinner, and became a mere set of straight lines. As for the view that the Social Revolution is not the work of the working class at all, I find myself unable even to argue with it.

Let us not be so presumptuous as to despise the experience of that greatest of Communist Parties, the Russian, which has an elaborate programme, including transition demands, just as the Soviet Government has, quite properly, had to bow to the demands of the peasantry in order to win them over. The German party, too, is constantly concentrating on such demands, and endeavouring to form a United Front on them, e.g., in the case of the Trade Unions' twelve demands which it recently fell to the Party to hold the trade unions themselves to.

Above all, of course, is the combined wisdom of the Communtern itself, based on the experience not of one or two countries only, but of all the countries represented at its congresses. This matter of interim demands was the subject of a special representation from Lenin, Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Bukharin at the Congress, which eventually resolved, after much discussion, unanimously as follows, inter alia:

"All the national sections of the Communist International, which are as yet without a national programme must at once take in hand the elaboration of such a programme which must be submitted to the E.C.C.I. . . . for endorsement by the next Congress.

"The necessity of the struggle for the transition demands must be emphasised in the programmes of the national sections, with the reservation that such demands are dependent on the concrete conditions of time and place.

"The theoretic basis for all transition and partial demands must be definitely laid down in the general programme, the Fourth Congress strongly condemning all attempts to represent the inclusion on the transition demands into the programme as opportunism, and also all attempts to gloss over or to replace the basic revolutionary task by partial demands.

"The basic historic types of the transition demands of the national sections must be clearly embodied in the general programme, due account being taken of the basic differences in the economic and political structure of the various countries, e.g., Great Britain on the one hand, India on the other."

Hence it is almost incumbent on our party to accept this view as a matter of discipline; and Communtern discipline becomes a more important matter every year, every month. It was noticeable how at the Congress one party after another would say: "Yes, the United Front, etc., is all very well for other parties, but not for us"; but no one else ever agreed with them, not even those who made the same claim about their own country, each thought his own country exceptional, but all the rest normal; and the result was that the Congress turns them all down and exempted nobody.

It has been said: "Oh, yes, Crawford used to talk that way, about reaching the workers by taking up their immediate demands, and look where he has landed." The answer is that Crawford has become a crook, and has not only glossed over or replaced the basic revolutionary task by partial demands, but now opposes even these demands in the interest of the enemy. The Communist Party cannot proceed as if it consisted of crooks, and even if it tended to do so, its discipline, its prestige should suffice to prevent it from breeding Crawfords. After all, we are not individuals each following his own sweet will; we are members one of another, and are kept straight by the whole movement. It is because of that necessarily solidarity in our party that the danger of maintaining opposition groups in a branch, which may largely paralyse its work, must be so strenuously resisted.

Let us drop the bigotry which dates from older days, when the Socialist movement was more of a debating society, and consequently bred splits, left and right wings, and so on. The Communist International is leaving all that behind. The age of splits, said Zinoviev at the Congress, is almost over, and I think that at future congresses even less will be heard of Leftit and Rightist than I heard at the Fourth Congress, which was little enough. It was chiefly the small and ineffective parties out of touch with the masses, like that of America, that emphasised divisions of this kind. In the Russian Party, for instance, I saw no trace of it; it is simply a fable of the enemy press. To-day the Communtern is an engine, a conquering force. It is not based on the mere ratiocinations of utopians, often not belonging to the working class and sometimes therefore liable, owing to their business exigencies, to be actually biassed against it, so much so that they are even heard to say: "Don't go with the masses, or they will drag you into the gutter"! It is based on the inevitable and irresistible revolutionary movement of those very masses. It is a power which is determined to win the world in our day. It should be our privilege, not to stand on a Capetown dunghill and crow that we know better, but to march in solidarity with it to win the world victory we all desiderate.

Yours fraternally,

S. P. BUNTING.

AN OPEN LETTER—Continued.

P.S.—Just because the Party must go right into the masses it must keep its own quality of membership up to the highest possible mark. It is there that "purity" is necessary. Our members must be, to the last man, "unspotted from the world." This again was not so necessary in the old debating society days, but it is vital now. Beware of admitting Crawfords or Atkinsons. Let our propaganda go into the market place, but let our propagandists, that is every one of our members, be all the more for that reason above suspicion, known and tried trustworthy men. The propaganda is for all to hear; the party business and tactics may at any time be, as those of our enemies are, highly confidential. We can afford to take no risks. We are a camp; we cannot chance having traitors in it. Membership should, as in Russia, be an honour to be coveted, yet also a position of trust, of danger, of self-sacrifice at which cowards should flinch. If it were doubtful before, the lesson of the Rand strike, which was honeycombed and controlled by spies and provocateurs, should convince us now of the necessity of knowing our comrades, the necessity of "quality in a Communist Party."

S. P. B.

COMMUNIST PARTY NOTES.

JOHANNESBURG BRANCH.

Dates of meetings: April 12th and 26th, May 10th and 24th, June 7th and 21st.

All subscriptions are now due, and can be paid to Assist. Treasurer at 4, Trades Hall, before the annual meeting.

* * *

SPRINGS.

The first public meeting under the auspices of the reorganised Springs Branch was held last Sunday, in the Lyric Bioscope, Springs. Comrade T. Allen, the Mayor of Springs, presided, and Comrade W. H. Andrews, General Secretary of the Party, gave an address on the aims and objects of the Communists. There was a good audience, and the general feeling was that a series of similar meetings should be held during the winter months.

* * *

MAY DAY SOCIAL.

Tickets for the Grand Social to be held in the Town Hall on Monday, 30th April, are on sale at 4, Trades Hall, 2s. 6d. each. The next meeting of the General May Day Committee will be held in the General Office on Sunday, April 8th, at 3 p.m.

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CAPETOWN.

Branch meeting every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at 166, Longmarket Street. Syllabus of lectures:

April 5—"The Theory of Exchange." I. Shack.
" 12—"Capitalism in Fiction." H. Pereira.
" 19—"Trade Unionism, Syndicalism, and Communism." J. Pick.
" 26—"Socialism and the Press." D. L. Dryburgh.

May 3—Musical Evening.
" 10—"The Federation of Trades and Their Wages Bill." W. Green.
" 17—"Women and Socialism." I. Schack.

Adult Choir meets Mondays at 8 p.m.

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Comrade Mrs. Bourke.

News has reached this office that Comrade Mrs. Bourke has safely arrived in Sydney, and has made the acquaintance of the local Communists. She sends her love to all comrades.

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