

KNOWLEDGE MUST PRECEDE ALL INTELLIGENT ACTION

ORGANISE

THE WORKER

EDUCATE

THE ORGAN OF WORKERS' COMMITTEES SCOTLAND

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Funeral of General Nikolayev in Petrograd.

The Red General, formerly a Tsarist General, was hanged by the Whites in Yamburg.

General Nikolayev, who, during the capture of Yamburg, was hanged by the Whites, was solemnly buried on October 5th, by Red Petrograd. He, formerly a general in the army of the Tsar, was, according to the papers in Petrograd, one of the first to enter the command of the Red Army, and took over the command of the Xth Division. The hangmen of the White Army could not forgive him for that, and he fell as the first victim of the White Terror in Yamburg. The Soviet of Petrograd sent two representatives to call for the body in Yamburg. Eye-witnesses report that after Yamburg was taken, General Nikolayev was the first one to be hanged. "They are murdering me, but the idea of the Communists cannot be murdered," were his last words.

The whole of the Red Army participated in the funeral, October 5th. All troop detachments and organisations of the city assembled with standards and bands at the War Commissariat, where the coffin stood, covered with beautiful wreaths in the decorated room. The coffin was carried out amid the firing of salutes and the singing of revolutionary songs. Zinoviev made a short farewell speech. "To-day," he said, "we bury the fallen hero Nikolayev. In this for us so heavy and dangerous time, he gave his knowledge, his his power, and finally his life in defence of the cause of labour. He was a general from the old time, but this did not prevent him from entering the Red Army as a leader and defender of the Socialist Republic. His enemies hated him for this. It even seemed that the bullet was too good for him, and they killed him, this old fighter, with a rope.

"He died as a hero. He seriously believed in the cause that he defended.

"The landowners and lackeys of the old time sought him to enter the ranks on their side, and promised him great advantages, but he rejected their offers and preferred this heroic death.

"His act will not be forgotten. His name will shine as a star to coming generations. Our whole army and republic uncovers its head in his memory. His memory will shine for ever. Let us follow in his steps. May every fighter in our army be willing to follow his example, and may there be many men like him amongst us.

"Praised be he, who gave his energy and his life for the cause of the workers and the peasants. Long live our Red Army and our victory."

The Red hero was buried, according to the wishes of his family, in a small obscure workers' cemetery—that belonging to a china factory—and thousands of Red soldiers and citizens accompanied him to his last resting-place.

Thus Soviet Russia honours the officers and generals who serve and fight for the great cause of Socialism and the proletariat.

TO ONE WHO DIED IN SIBERIA.

Icicles weep from the rough-hewn walls, whence gleams

The flickering light from a lonely lamp that shines

On the death-pale face with the mournful, harrowed lines

Of a youth made too soon old. So pale he seems.

The glistening snows outside are the likeness of him.

He coughs, and the quivering icicles shake on the wall

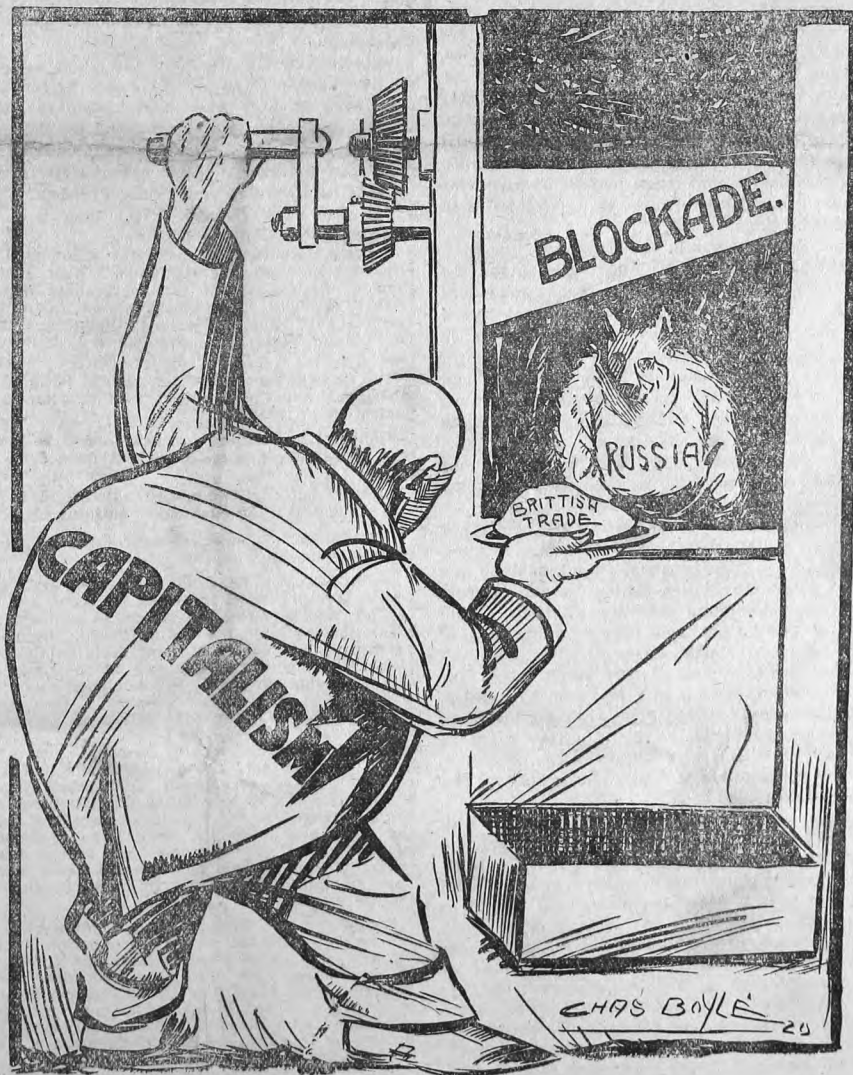
On which the light throws shades funereal—
Ghost shapes that mock and jeer with gestures grim.

In the dark the clear snow stretches without end,
An arid waste, a world of lifeless things
Save overhead where ominous eagles go.

The flickering light is done. . . Shrieking descend

Those cruel vampires of the sky, with slow,
Solitary, measured sweep of coal-black wings.

V. R.



Report of the National Conference of Shop Stewards and Workers' Committees.

Held on January 10th and 11th, 1920, at the International Socialist Club Hall, London.

Chairman—ARTHUR MACMANUS.

Comrades Marston, Kealey, Driver, and Bruce were elected on the Standing Orders Committee.

CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS.

Fellow Delegates,—In welcoming you to this Conference I think it would be pertinent if I passed some comment and observation upon the general social and industrial situation in this country, and the relation of the S.S. and W.C. movement to that situation.

This Conference is unique in that we meet for the first time as a definite movement under other than actual war conditions. This in itself is a good thing, if for nothing else than it compels us to apply ourselves to problems which are not artificial, and to overcome difficulties which have their roots in the heart of our social system.

War conditions saw our coming into being as a separate and distinct section of the general working class movement, and to a great extent these conditions tended to emphasise our operation in particular industries, with the result that a false impression of our being purely an engineering body has got abroad.

The nature of our birth and growth no doubt determined and was responsible for our concentration in particular industries, and the pereminent given by war conditions to the engineering industry created a constant repetition of encroachments into working conditions which we were compelled to resist, and hence the one-sided nature of our progress.

No one, I am sure, for a moment dreamt of our confining our activities to particular industries, and that we did so to any extent was due to the struggle being incessantly waged in one industry demanding the full extent of our concentration. At every one of our Conferences the class character of our outlook was proclaimed, and the absence of any extensive connection outside of particular industries was a matter more to be deplored than for gratification.

Time, however, was in our favour, and the passing of the actual war conditions re-arranged the focus of the class struggle, and certain industries crept into the background while others loomed into importance. Capitalism had to operate on its own feet, and for the first time in this country we have a Conference of Shop Stewards and Workers Committees, deliberating upon the real permanent problems of Capitalism, and searching for a specific remedy and way out.

This fact demonstrates new features of our work and scope, and also imposes new obligations upon us as a workshop movement.

A perusal of the agenda before you will show a marked and distinct change from any of our previous agendas. Previously most of our time has been taken up in considering actual internal organisation, devoting ourselves primarily to the task of finding out just exactly what lines of organisation we should pursue.

This time our organisation seems taken for granted, as nothing has been sent in on the matter. But instead you will find items outlining the scope and character of the policy which the organisation should pursue, with also questions of extending our ranks to include approximate bodies. That is all to the good.

Again, you will find items such as those with reference to Russia, Ireland, America, and the Third International, which suggest that the boundary of our obligations has been extended, and that we have international obligations as well as national ones. This to my mind is what really reflects the difference between our meeting in war and peace conditions. With the war ended we have found them to be part of the general system of Capitalism. We have learned that to eliminate those evils we must get to their roots in Capitalism, and it is here we find sympathy and fraternal kinship with the working class of Russia.

They have gone to the roots, and have found a

way out, and what is of even greater interest is that they found the way out to be by means of just such Committees as we are building up in this country. They call them Soviets, we call them Workers' Councils. By examining Russian conditions we find an added obligation placed on our shoulders, that of not only shaping our organisation to end the present system of Capitalism, but also of adapting our organisation to maintain a better system in its place.

The dual responsibility is a great one, and a noble one, but neither too great nor too noble for a body of working men and women who have faith and courage to accept it.

It required a Revolution in Russia to unseat the Capitalist from the saddle, and it will require one in this country to accomplish the same task.

That is what we must organise for, in the hope of being ready to seize on any passing opportunity which may present itself, in order to convert it into a Revolutionary situation. I don't think anyone here will object to our association with the Third International, but lest there may be any one who may feel inclined to turn against the Moscow International in favour of association with the Second, I would remind them that that means affiliation with the policy of the present German Majority Government, with Noske and Schiedman, and condones the murder of those two worthy Socialists, whose anniversary we celebrate this week, Karl Leibnicht and Rosa Luxemburg. That is no way out for the working class, but only a lead further into the meshes. Let the spectre of that great crime tend to balance any hasty judgment, and I am sure we will be unanimously for the Third International and the downfall of world-wide Capitalism.

With reference to the great and important work we have had to do in the past, and the reflection that even greater and more important work yet remains to be done, I commend the delegates to their task, and hope their deliberations will place our movement still another step forward towards the crowning end—Social Freedom.

The Secretary (George Peet) then read the Minutes of N.A.C. meetings.

Reports were received from the following Committees:—London Central Council, West London Council, Erith, Crayford, Slough, Graham White's, Derby, Sheffield, Scottish Workers' Committee, South Wales Miners' Unofficial Committee, Barnboro' Main Miners, Barrow and the Ex-Service-men, etc.

The Secretary then reported on the state of the movement, and the need for more systematic organisation in the future.

Financial statement read. (This will be issued to the Committee in balance sheet form after the audit.)

Agreed that the Conference adjourn at 9 p.m. and resume at 10.30 on Sunday morning.

D. RAMSAY (London Central Council) moved the following resolution:—

NATIONALISATION (Mines, Railways, etc.). "This Conference while urging the rank and file of the working-class movement to support the miners or any other body of workers in their fight against the employing classes, declares that the Nationalisation of any industry which leaves the Capitalist class in power will not emancipate the workers, and calls on the organised Labour movement to strive for the confiscation of the mines, railways, and other means of production and distribution in the interests of Labour. Therefore this Conference declares that all schemes of joint control whether embodied in the Sankey Report, Whitley Report, or any other Capitalist scheme, are detrimental to the best interests of the working class, and urges the workers to re-organise themselves for the purpose of independently taking control of the industrial and social machinery of the State in the interests of the exploited masses."

Furthermore:—"For the purpose of control of the forces of production and distribution by the workers this Conference declares the Soviet or Workers Committee form of organisation is the best, and urges the Trade Unions in every locality to confer with and assist the Shop Stewards or Workers' Committees to bring into being as swiftly as possible the full development of such organisation."

In supporting the Resolution he pointed out the danger of the employers attempting to buy the

allegiance of the workers in "key" industries by granting certain of their demands, which would fall far short of that demanded by the workers as a whole. There was a possibility of Nationalisation and joint control schemes being inaugurated, thus allaying for a time the agitation of the miners and railwaymen. No settlement of this description which came short of complete Socialisation of all industries under the control of the workers should be accepted by any section. Absolute solidarity was necessary if victory was to be won. Whitleyism was one of the methods adopted by the employers to divide the workers and obscure the class struggle, and should therefore be opposed. The experience of Russian workers went to show that the Soviet system was the best form of organisation for the overthrow of the present system and maintaining it afterwards. The Workers' Committee movement was built on Soviet lines. It had proved its worth during the rough and tumble of the war, and would continue to prove its worth till the final conflict was settled between the shirkers and the workers.

G. HARDY (American I.W.W.) asked that the words "of the State" be deleted from paragraph 2 of the Resolution, as it might lead to confusion as to the use which could be made of the machinery of Capitalism.

THE MOVER agreed to the alteration. The N.A.C. were perfectly clear on the position that the machinery of Capitalism must be swept away and that of the workers put in its place. After some further discussion the Resolution was carried unanimously with the alteration referred to above.

SECOND DAY CONFERENCE.

A Resolution was moved that a full report of the Conference be compiled and sent to the delegates.

P. H. KEALY (West London Committee) moved the following Resolution:—

"This Conference demands and urges all organised Labour to press for a six-hour day, five days per week, or such a curtailment of hours as shall effect the absorption of all the unemployed in every industry."

"This Conference demands a minimum wage of £1 per day for all workers, this minimum to be advanced proportionate to the advance in the cost of living from the basis of Government returns, 1st December, 1919."

Speaking to the Resolution, he pointed out that it was a practical proposition which was advocated even by such men as Lord Leverhulme. It was not put forward as a revolutionary proposal. It was subject for immediate propaganda, and an agitation along this line would help to bring the workers together.

J. TANNER (West London Committee) formally seconded the motion.

PRITCHARD (South Wales Miners) said that their experience showed that a reduction in hours did not necessarily mean less unemployment. He would rather advocate abolition of piecework, and he had come empowered to propose as an addendum "That the Conference urges all workers to strive for the complete abolition of piecework and all similar systems of working." He also thought that they should be asking for at least thirty shillings a day.

HAMON (United Vehicle Workers) supported the Resolution. He knew that so far as their members were concerned it would mean taking on more men.

THE CHAIRMAN asked the mover of the Resolution whether he would accept the addendum. This was agreed to, and the Resolution with addendum was carried unanimously.

The N.A.C. put forward the following Resolution:—

"This Conference joins with the T.U. Congress in its condemnation of conscription for military service for the support of Capitalism, and demands the complete discharge of all conscripts and the immediate removal of the Conscript Act from the Statute Book."

J. MARSTON (Police Union) seconded. He instanced how the military spirit was being bred in the minds of children in schools, cadet corps, etc. This was deliberately done so as to make them pliable tools in the hands of the master class when they became older. We must destroy militarism or militarism would destroy us. Resolution carried.

RESOLUTION TO RUSSIA:—

"This Conference sends greetings to the Russian Soviet Republic, and enthusiastically welcomes the splendid constructive work for Communism accomplished by the Soviets. It congratulates the Red Army on its magnificent fight against militant Capitalism, and declares its solidarity with

the Russian Soviet Republic and all the workers of the world struggling against international Capitalism."

"This Conference deplores the long toleration by the British workers of the attack which the Capitalist forces of the world are making on Soviet Russia. It now urges the Trade Unionists to instruct the delegates to the next T.U. Congress to declare for a general strike to force the Government to stop all forms of intervention whether by land or air forces or the Navy, by the financing of adventurers or by the use of the League of Nations or conquered or weaker States, and to immediately re-open commercial relations and establish peace with Soviet Russia on the basis of no annexations, no indemnities, and the right to self-determination of all nationalities."

Moved by the N.A.C. and seconded by T. DINGLEY (Slough) and carried unanimously without discussion.

THE CHAIRMAN (on behalf of the N.A.C.) moved that:—

"This Conference instructs the N.A.C. of the S.S. and W.C. to declare its solidarity with the Third International and affiliate thereto."

BISKE (West London Committee) seconded.

J. T. MURPHY (Assistant Secretary, N.A.C.) explained all that this resolution entailed. It meant that the Workers' Committee movement would be obliged to do all in their power to assist Red Russia. It was not enough to merely pass a resolution without being prepared to accept all the responsibilities of being attached to the movement for world revolution.

GIBBEN (South Wales Miners) said that his organisation had been affiliated to the Third International for some time now. He considered their main responsibility was to bring about a similar state of affairs in this country as in Russia. It merely meant that we must continue to work for the revolution, and thus do the best possible to draw away the attack of International Capital on Soviet Russia.

J. TANNER suggested an addendum, "That it be left to the N.A.C. to appoint a delegate or delegates to send to the Third International." It was essential that we be represented at the Third International direct.

THE RESOLUTION was carried and the ADDENDUM then put.

J. TANNER, supporting the Addendum, said that the matter was urgent. He suggested that the delegates present go back to their committees, and get a grant towards cost of sending a delegate or delegates, such sums to be forwarded to the N.A.C.

DAVIES (B.W.I.U.) said that all organisations would want to know approximately the cost of sending delegates. An estimate should be got out and organisations should be asked to contribute a proportionate share.

V. HALL (Raleigh Works Committee) pointed out the advisability of all agreeing on sending a representative so that there would be no doubt about his really representing the movement. They knew what the Capitalist press would say. No man, according to them, was representative who voiced revolutionary opinions. The Addendum was carried.

RESOLUTION ON IRELAND:—"That this Conference of workers of Great Britain sends greetings to our comrades in Ireland, wishes them a speedy victory in their fight for self-determination and complete freedom from British Imperialism and International Capitalism." Formally moved and seconded.

CAPTAIN WHITE (fraternal delegate) spoke on the Resolution, said that he did not claim to be speaking for any Irish organisation. What he said might even be repudiated by Sinn Féin. He thought the Resolution savoured of "revolutionary" rather than revolutionary socialism. In the case of Russia a general strike had been threatened. Could not the same be done for Ireland? It might be contended that the cases were not parallel, but Ireland was in the main out for Socialism. He suggested that a number of Parliamentary candidates be put forward pledged against taking the oath of allegiance to the King. This would enlist the sympathies of the Sinn Féin movement, and would have a great moral effect on subject races and weaken Imperial power in India and elsewhere. Resolution carried.

THE CHAIRMAN spoke on the financial position, and

GIBBEN (South Wales) moved, "That this Conference desires to reaffirm its policy, and define its relationship to the Trade Union movement." Seconded by Comrade Tanner.

Supporting the Resolution, Comrade GIBBEN said that he considered it their definite duty to bring about as far as possible an intensification of the struggle between the workers organised in Unions and the employers organised in theirs. In South Wales they had 150,000 workers prepared to use their organisation to smash the employers as soon as the opportunity arrived. It was their duty to do their best to reform the structure of Trade Unionism.

J. TANNER (West London Committee) in seconding said that the Conference should set

down the real basis for the movement to travel on in the future. Trade Unionism was a fact in England. It was the duty of the Shop Stewards' movement to break down the craft spirit. This could be done inside the Unions.

D. RAMSAY, on behalf of the N.A.C., explained at length the position of the Shop Stewards' movement in relation to the official Unions. So far as that was concerned, there was no need to change the policy of the movement, which had always stood for working inside the Trade Union movement.

PRITCHARD (South Wales) and KEALEY (West London) spoke on the subject and the necessity of clearing up misconceptions on the question. After some further remarks by delegates, the discussion was closed so far as policy was concerned.

THE SECRETARY, in recommending that a monthly report be sent to the N.A.C., stressed the importance of this being done, as it was the only means of keeping in touch with the affiliated committees throughout the country. A Resolution to this effect was unanimously carried.

G. NICHOLSON (National Union of Ex-service-men) hoped that they would remember the possibilities of keeping in touch with a movement such as he represented. In time of revolution they would play their part. He thought that it would be possible to raise a considerable sum for the N.A.C., but it must be used for practical revolutionary purposes.

J. T. MURPHY moved the following Resolution:—

Proposals for the affiliation of organisations approximating to industrial departments of the Workers' Committees. Resolution:—"The decision be left to the local committees, who shall examine the relationship of the branch to the industrial unit and maintain the principle that delegates shall come from the working industrial group."

Supporting the Resolution, Comrade MURPHY gave many instances to show that the movement must take into consideration special circumstances in certain industries which would make it unnecessary to alter their structure before affiliating to the Workers' Committee movement. The Licensed Vehicle Workers and Co-operative Employees were typical of others that might be linked up without alteration of structure.

F. W. JOHNSON (U. Vehicle Workers) supported the Resolution. He hoped that some method would be devised which would bring all organisations similar to his own into touch so that they could take united action if occasion arose.

G. HAMMOND (U. Vehicle Workers) suggested that the S.S. and W. Committees should contribute articles to Trade Union journals, showing the advantages of combination.

G. NICHOLSON (Nat. Union of Ex-service-men) supported the Resolution, and put forward a case for the inclusion of Ex-service-men's Unions. Ex-servicemen were thoroughly disgusted with conditions as they are, and would be an important factor in the fight against Capitalism.

T. DINGLEY (Slough) hoped that the N.A.C. would secure the affiliation of ex-servicemen. In his shop they were staunch supporters of the Shop Stewards' movement.

Carried unanimously.

J. T. MURPHY, speaking on Clause No. 8 on the agenda, "Tactics to be pursued in the event of a strike of such dimensions as, e.g., the railway strike," said that it was unfortunate that at a time like that, when a crisis had arrived involving one of the most important and numerous sections of the organised workers, that they had not had the necessary machinery to harness the situation and extend the strike. It was crises such as this which, if properly handled led to revolutionary movements being set afoot. We should never again be in a position of impotence when such opportunities arrived. He appealed to the delegates to consider the question seriously.

A discussion followed, and it was finally agreed that the N.A.C. be instructed to devise ways and means of communicating with all important centres in the event of the ordinary communications being cut off.

ELECTION AND DUTIES OF NATIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL.

A discussion was entered into as to the qualifications necessary for members of N.A.C. J. TANNER mover as a broad proposition that as far as possible members should be drawn from the workshops. The question then arose regarding those Shop Stewards who have had to suffer victimisation as a result of their activities. Most of the old N.A.C. were in that position, and it was recognised that if such men were debarred from the N.A.C. it would limit the choice of those best fitted by their experience, and who could render valuable assistance to the movement. Having this in view, the Conference agreed that victimised Shop Stewards were eligible, but, so that they would be subject to recall at any time, the move-

ment thought fit, the bodies nominating such members should have the right to call for their resignation if need arose. The following were elected: A. Macmanus, President; G. Peet, Secretary; J. T. Murphy, Assistant Secretary; T. Kime, Treasurer; T. Dingley, D. Ramsay, N. Watkins, P. H. Kealey, and W. Gallagher.

J. MARSTON (Police and Prison Officials' Union) then moved the following:—"This Conference emphatically protests against the action of the Government in attempting to suppress a legitimate workers' organisation such as the National Union of Police and Prison Officers."

It considers that the Police Act, 1919, is part of a sinister scheme to militarise the police forces and to ultimately destroy all working-class organisations.

It therefore demands the repeal of the Police Act, 1919, and the re-instatement of the Police and Prison Officers dismissed by arbitrary officials of the Government, and now recommends that the Shop Stewards and Workers' Committees throughout the country do at once take such steps as will result in collective and simultaneous action of such a nature as to compel the Government to accede to this legitimate demand."

J. TANNER (West London Committee) formally moved, on behalf of his Committee, the following Resolution:—"That this Conference decides to link up with the American I.W.W. and instructs the N.A.C. to take steps to bring this about."

GEORGE HARDY (American I.W.W.) was invited to speak on the Resolution. He said that the Executive body of the American I.W.W. were acquainted with the work being done by the Shop Stewards in Britain. They realised that industrial organisation in this country was a different problem to that which they had in the States. There in America vast numbers of the workers were unorganised and therefore had no vested interests in craft unions. This meant that no artificial barriers were in the way of the workers realising the advantages of organisation along industrial lines. He had listened with interest to the debates on the various resolutions before the Conference, and was glad to find that both in spirit and in fact the Shop Stewards were working for class solidarity. At the present moment the I.W.W. were being persecuted by the powers that be in America. Many of their members and officials were in jail for the principles they upheld. At a moment like this a message from the British rank and file movement inviting the linking up of the organisations would be accepted as proof that the misrepresentations of the Capitalist press were having the opposite effect to that which they intended. On behalf of the organisation, he welcomed the resolution, and hoped that it would be passed.

The resolution was unanimously carried, and the Secretary instructed to get into communication with the American I.W.W.

P. H. KEALEY (W. London Committee) moved: "That this Conference recommends the Shop Stewards and Workers' Committees to set up economic classes for women interested in the movement and also for the children." Supporting the resolution, he pointed out that whereas the men were kept in touch with the movement through the workshop committees, there were many women who would welcome classes of this description, and who would be helpful to the movement generally when they had got a grasp of the position. The need for education for the children was obvious. They were the hope of the future.

Carried unanimously.

The Conference then adjourned.

RANK AND FILE CONVENTION.

Called by the National Administrative Council of Shop Stewards and Workers' Committees, Scottish Workers' Committee, Central London Council of Shop Stewards and Workers' Committees, and South Wales Unofficial Reform Committee. To be held at the Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, W.C., on Thursday and Friday, 19th and 20th February. All Workers' Committees, Trades Union Branches, Trades Councils, Socialist Societies and their Branches are invited to send Delegates. Object—To declare rank and file policy in regard to Russia and the class war. If your Society has not yet received an Agenda and invitation to the Convention, write to the Secretary, M. F. HEBBES, 10 Tudor Street, London, E.C.4.

NOTICE.

The usual General Meeting of Social Committee Delegates will be held in the Good Templars' Hall, Ingram Street, at 3.30, on Saturday, 14th February. Committee are urged to see to it that their Delegates are present. Business important.

J. M. M.



February 14, 1920.

All communications to be sent to the Editor, National Council's Offices, 31 North Frederick Street, Glasgow.

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"The Worker."

By W. GALLACHER.

Some time ago an announcement was made in the "Worker" that we were contemplating issuing an appeal for funds to start a "Worker" Press. We have now decided to get busy raising the money. Who is going to help? For five years the Clyde Workers' Committee has taken its place in the van of the working class movement, and has borne its full share in every conflict waged against Capitalism.

The ferocious brutality of the boss class and their lick-spittle, twaddling politicians and pressmen is in itself sufficient testimony to the effectiveness of the work done by the C.W.C. Labour Cabinet Ministers have joined in the chorus of condemnation. Every fakir and fraud in the country has shrieked in wild protest against us, because we preach the gospel of an assertive, all-powerful working class that would do the things that require to be done instead of waiting and praying for others to do them.

You want the land. Well, take the land!

You want the industries. Take the industries!

Ask and ye shall not receive. Take and the world is your own. That's what the present possessors did. They drove men, women, and children on to the roads to starve. Drove them into the sea. Sweated, tortured, murdered them. They had no sentiment, no morality; they had power and used it ruthlessly. The pages of history are writ large with the blood and tears of the workers. Slave, serf, and wage-worker each in turn has paid a fearful price to satisfy the greed and vanity of a rotten aristocracy.

But now that we grow strong as they grow relatively weaker, these same spoilers of the working class appeal to us to respect the constitution. Their constitution. The constitution that says they shall own all the land and the industries of the country, while we, the toiling masses, shall own nothing but our power to labour. Respect that constitution, they say, and all will be well. Undoubtedly it will for them. But we are sick to death of them and their constitution too. Let us put an end forever to the tragic farce that has made mockery of the hopes of so many millions generation after generation. Let us end it by boldly stepping forward and taking possession of that which is our own. Ah, but, some one will say, there's the policeman and the soldier; they will be used against us. Well, the policeman isn't self-supporting, neither is the soldier. The bosses pay them and keep them with the wealth they extort from the worker. Stop working for the boss and he can't pay the police. Stop working for the boss and he can't feed the army. Stop working for the boss and the whole Capitalist system totters down in ruin. That's our gospel. When Capitalism has got the final blow, then we can start building up the new system with the Red Flag of Socialism waving over our labours.

If you are willing to support us in this propaganda, then subscribe to our Press Fund. Sheets will be issued within the next few days, and we want every interested worker to make himself responsible for getting an unlimited number of subscribers. Other methods of raising money will be adopted and dealt with in the "Worker" in due course. But apart from these we want to get shareholders. We want at least 500 shareholders who will subscribe a pound each. It's a good paper, and well worth being a shareholder in. As an eight-page paper it's done some real good propaganda. Come in along with us and make it sixteen pages and we'll have the Revolution here in next to no time.

CIGARETTE PAPERS

By JOHN S. CLARKE

I am aware that many object to the severity of my language, the coarseness of my invective, and the precipitancy of my measures, but is there not cause for severity? I will be as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice.—William Lloyd Garrison.

PROFESSOR GOODE'S MEETING.

Professor Goode delivered his lecture last Friday at St. Mungo Hall under very trying circumstances. Candidly we felt sorry for him. The chairman (we don't know who he was) committed the unpardonable blunder of talking too long. A chairman's function is, to quote an authority, "to stand up, to speak up, and to shut up." The chairman on this occasion evidenced an inability to do this, which called forth the very righteous wrath of citizen P. Quinlan who, when approached by one of the stewards, temporarily imagined himself back in the prize-ring ready to distribute "tin ears" to all comers. There were no casualties. However, the worthy lecturer eventually opened out by describing himself not as a "diehard" but as a man who intended to live hard and fight hard, which evoked applause. A graphic description then followed of the history and mechanism of the Soviet form of Government; the profound difficulties that had to be overcome by the Commissars, and an eulogistic account of the life and work of many of these tremendous spirits with whom Mr Goode was on intimate terms. The portions of the lecture which dealt with the transport work, its virtual extinction at the Revolution and subsequent resurrection under frightful difficulties, and the educational labours of the benign idealist Lunacharsky, were by far the most interesting. Vivid were the impressions one received of the men who are, not slowly, but rapidly building up the glorious fabric of a free Russia upon what Mr Goode described as the "ruins" of the hellish dung-heap "which was Russia under the Czar. Crying babies, the clamp, clamp of hobnailed boots and other uncanny interruptions prevented the audience hearing a considerable part of the address.

One cannot help being regretful, moreover, that some members of the audience brutally exhibited an impatience to hear Sean M'Loughlin, by feet stamping and yelling out his name, whilst the first lecturer was speaking. At such a meeting, for such a purpose, this was caddish to say the least of it. The Glasgow audience, indoors and out, is usually one of the best mannered audiences to be found anywhere, but Professor Goode was unfortunate enough to get a crowd, one portion of which had turned up not to listen to him at all but to hear the other speaker. It was decidedly a tactical error on the part of the organisers of the meeting to have two speakers. At all, and M'Loughlin himself understood this and, we know, sympathised.

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ANOTHER NIGHT'S SLEEP LOST!

Southampton, 6th February, 1920.

To John S. Clarke.

Sir,—I have noted your filthy and criminal libels. Rest assured you will shortly have the chance of answering for them.

"Alex. Gordon."

Who's going to be the first shareholder in the "Worker" Press? Send in your name to our Secretary, G. M. Messer. When we have sufficient names we can call a meeting and arrange for the best method of paying in the share money and the purchase of the Press.

Don't fail us now that we call on you to stand in and bear your share in the revolutionary fight against Capitalism.

Every one can do a little, and every little helps.

It is your fight we are engaged in. The fight that is being waged by the workers in every land.

Let the Clyde men prove themselves worthy of their name by building up a Press that will "Hammer Hell" out of Capitalism, and give the Revolutionary Socialists an opportunity of bringing in the new Heaven on earth, where the children of toil may share in the sunshine of life, and the dark days of poverty and neglect will be known no more.

THE WAR CRIMINALS.

It will be worth while, as indicated in these columns some weeks ago, to keep an eye on the trial of "war criminals" farce. Great events have often had the feeblest actions for their main-spring, and if there is any division in Germany on this question one cannot tell to what upheaval it might lead. On this side, there appears to be little interest in the matter. The growing price of butter and the falling rate of exchange are topics exciting more discussion than who murdered Nurse Cavell? or who sunk the Lusitania? Not one of the "criminals" named in the charge sheet we notice has the black, dismal, ghoulish record of Winston Churchill. Not one of the indictments against the Germans can compare with the hideous crime of the Dardanelles expedition.

Moreover, it was practically only a few days ago that our sanctimonious press told us in thunderous headlines that the world was re-born—with the first meeting of the League of Nations' representatives. The great war had truly ended war for all time. There was every facility for an immediate movement towards disarmament, said Grey. Peace, justice, humanity, progress, fellowship and love had triumphed at last.

And now comes the Shriek of Nations for—revenge. Revenge which is the one black vice which totally neutralises all the other virtues. What hellish cant. What stinking pretence.

The editor of the "Nation" succinctly pointed out how the common people rise superior to their gilt-edged leaders in matters of common humanity.

"The slayers of Miss Cavell are to be arraigned at the bar of their enemies, in contempt of her dying plea to her countrymen to rise above the passion of patriotism. But Miss Cavell was exceptional. Not at all; the mass of people live by forgetting their rancours and leaving the wretched logomachy of revenge to the men who trade on it. Look at the story which the papers tell this week of the rescue of the German ship which, setting sail from New York, and about to founder with all hands, was rescued, at their imminent risk, by the captain of the "Manchester Merchant" and his crew. This man's ship had been shelled and torpedoed during the war. I don't suppose he had a moment's hesitation in putting his life at the service of his enemies. And I think I know that if I had the chance on the day of judgment of standing by his side, or by that of any War Cabinet, which of the two comradeships I would choose."

It is the same everywhere. Compare the rule of the people under Bela Kun in Hungary with the bloodthirsty, revengeful tyranny that country is undergoing now. The bourgeoisie have no pity, no morality, no religion. They have not the sense of justice common to savages.

From "Chambers' Encyclopedia" in the article on Zulus we extract:—

"A noticeable feature in their nature is that when a fight is definitely over (bitterly and bravely as it is usually fought) no passions appear to remain nor are feelings of revenge harboured against each other."

And yet there is to be a "great new missionary revival."

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SCENTING TROUBLE.

The resignation of Hang-the-Kaiser G. N. Barnes has been followed by that of Beau Brummel Roberts, who once "ornamented" the Labour Party if he was never any use to it. In France the old Tiger has been kicked out and it threatened with all sorts of frightfulness if he persists in taking his trip round the world. Clemenceau, Wilson, and Lloyd George—the trinity of a dying system—have all "shot their bolt," and are preparing for the end. And how they love one another. Clemenceau is credited with having called Davy "a little rogue," and his reputation for bluntness received an accession of strength during the "Peace" negotiations, when the "Tiger" was decidedly on the prowl for the last pound of teutonic flesh. In Mr Wilson Harris's new book on the Peace Congress there are lots of the

"Tiger's" amiable utterances anent his two great brothers-in-peace, Wilson and Lloyd George:—

"The worst of President Wilson is that he talks like Jesus Christ and acts like Lloyd George." That gibe is attributed to an English M.P. Clemenceau is alleged to have said: "Fourteen points is a lot for the President to insist on; God Almighty Himself was content with Ten." In reply to a critic, Clemenceau is supposed to have retorted: "What can I do, sitting there between Jesus Christ and Napoleon?" Napoleon, of course, being Lloyd George. Then there is Clemenceau's remark that "he liked talking to Colonel House, because he was so practical; the President talked like Jesus Christ."

These constituted "the Big Three," and, as we have said already, two of them have received the dull thud. What about the third—Davy?

In the "Times" last Saturday the following paragraph appeared:—

"The London correspondent of 'The Glasgow Herald' doubts the authenticity of the story which credits the Prime Minister with having remarked to a friend within the last few days that if the pending bye-elections — Ashton, Wrekin, and Paisley—went against the Government, he would advise an immediate dissolution of Parliament 'in order to fight it out.'"

It is said that there are no preparations that would give the smallest support to the suggestion."

Agreed! David has unquestionably the brass-est of brass faces, but it is indeed doubtful that he will voluntarily seek a general election. When the general does come off, we are inclined to believe that the wily wizard will "do a bunk."

What about this from last issue of "Common-sense"?—

"We may be on the eve of sensational developments in home politics. Mr Lloyd George is credited now with the intention of retiring, in order to relieve himself of thickening embarrassments. He may take a long tour abroad. Anyhow, the Irish Government is likely to be altered. Mr Macpherson may go, and Sir William Sutherland is supposed to be ready for the adventure. Altogether the Coalition Government seems to be approaching the rocks."

And then for a "Labour Government"—and the Lord have pity on Labour.

THE RED ARMY.

Elsewhere we give a description of the funeral of General Nikolaev, taken from "Soviet Russia." There are many such heroes in the Red Army. Last week's issue of the weekly "Manchester Guardian" contained a long article from a special correspondent at Reval. Dealing with the Red Army, he points out that so completely has the new spirit gripped the Russian people that even the old Tsarist Generals, whose loyalty to the Bolshevik Government would have been "unthinkable" two years ago, are as zealous in performing their duties now as the most ardent Socialist patriot in the ranks:—

"The Whites say that the Reds compel officers of the old regime to serve in their armies under threat of all manner of horrible penalties. The first obvious deduction from these allegations is that indeed officers of the old army are serving in the army of the revolution. Of course they are, and, for the most part, they are serving loyally. Here and there one will desert, believing that the Whites will win. But, for the most part, they do not desert, even in the darkest and seemingly most hopeless moment of the struggle, as when Denikin was at Orel and Yudenitch at the gates of Petrograd."

The correspondent later on tells the following touching story of the death of the one-time Tsarist General, Stankevitch:—

"An ambitious soldier needs no compulsion to serve his country in an army which offers such speedy recognition. And 'compulsion' will not explain the readiness of Generals Nikolaev and Stankevitch to die hard rather than desert the army in which they had fought. General Nikolaev was executed by the Whites on the Petrograd front. The case of General Stankevitch is a still more striking illustration of the fact that patriotism and nationalism in Russia now stand shoulder to shoulder with the Revolution. I am told that earlier in the Revolution he was actually a member of an anti-revolutionary organisation. He was an old general of the Imperial Army, then a commander in the Red Army. He was captured by

Denikin, but refused to go over to the Whites. He was hanged, and it is alleged that a red star was branded on his breast. When the Red Army recovered Orel peasants who had witnessed the execution pointed out his grave, and told how when the executioner prepared to put the noose round the old man's neck, General Stankevitch took it from him and said, 'I have served in the Red Army, and if I am condemned to die I am well able to adjust the noose myself.' He was sixty-two years old at the time of his death. His body was exhumed, and has recently been buried in the Red Square in Moscow with fullest honours as a hero of the Revolution."

A BACK NUMBER.

A set o' dull conceited hashers
Confuse their brains in college classes;
They gang in stirks and come out asses
Plain truth to speak.

—Burns.

I've a human fellow-feeling
For the rough unpolished gem
From the mine of rebel manhood:
(Praps because I'm one of them).
I can tolerate most humans
Wearing pants or petticoat,
From the silent plodding scholar
To the ultra-giddy goat.

But, God forgive me, there's a type
Of thing I feel inclined to swipe
Across the earhole every time
Misfortune bids me view it—
The comrade of the coloured spat,
An "intellectual" gutter-brat
Who reads a tract or two and knows
"Precisely how to do it."

A bumptious, loud-mouthed, braying ass,
Who's squirmed into the "middle" class,
And treats a solid working man
With patronising manner!
A prig whose self-sufficient skull
Is swollen with conceit, and full
Of ganglionic excrement
That isn't worth a tanner.

A know-all, knowing nothing, he
With supercilious mockery,
Employs whatever Nature gave
His head in lieu of brains,
To twist, distort, to tear and rend
The truths he cannot comprehend
Till no one else can, whilst he thinks
He's soothing Labour pains.

A "revolutionary" — dude
(Whose wisdom stock is platitude
And formulae old borrowed from
Some "has been" at the trade).
Professing hatred for the snob,
Yet snob himself. (And at the job
Puts Satan when rebuking sin
Completely in the shade.)

A socio-economic quack
Whose mental make-up takes us back
To days when tribesmen "wandered" with
Their patriarchal Daddy.
Intent on curing social ills
With blackguard physic, bluster pills—
Yet hasn't wits enough to cure
An Aberdonian haddie.

A type that surely God forgot
To drown—when Captain Noah got
The wire that Earth would soon be in
A state of liquidation.
A type that thinks 'tis wisdom's pith
When what it's really troubled with—
Is an expanded cranium due
To mental constipation.

A type, of epidermis thick,
A sight to make an ostrich sick,
A camel yawn, a weasel weep,
Or a chimpanzee declare—
It is a long lost brother ape
That simulated human shape,
And passes muster in a crowd
By combing back its hair.

A good anecdote is told of a certain bishop who was ordered by his physician to spend the winter in Algiers. The bishop said he had too many engagements.

"Well," said the specialist, "it means either Algiers or Heaven."

"Oh, in that case," said the bishop, "I'll go to Algiers."

On one occasion Father Healey was asked what kind of a congregation he had at Bray. He replied: "Perfectly ideal; the poor keep all the fasts, and the rich observe all the feasts."

A speaker at a political meeting in Manchester was reported to have said: "We owe much to the Jews," when a sympathetic voice from the back of the hall shouted, "We do!"

"I searched the prisoner and found nothing on him; it was afterwards handed back to him," said a policeman on giving evidence at Tottenham Police Court; at least so says the "London Evening News."

Scottish Workers' Committees

A LANTERN LECTURE

Entitled

The Great French Revolution

will be delivered by

JOHN S. CLARKE

St. Andrew's Hall,
on Monday, 23rd February

Music.

See Special Handbills

"Tommy, the River Liffey flows into Dublin Bay. That is its mouth. Now where is its source" asked the teacher.

"At the other end, ma'am."

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PEASANT COMMUNES.

Progress of Communism in the Russian Villages.

By E. YAROSLAVSKY.

It was about six o'clock in the evening when we arrived at "Red Town," the name given by the workers to the agricultural community of organised workers to the agricultural community of organised labour which is situated about five miles from Kalonga, within the domain of Prince Galitzine.

This domain had been somewhat neglected, it was easily seen that it had not had the attention of any gardener for a couple of years, but there did not exist "the abomination of desolation" that I expected to find. We passed three young Communist girls, simply clad in khaki skirts and blouses, not at the same time without a touch of coquetry about them.

"Where is the Commune?" I asked them. My ignorance made one of them laugh, and one of them replied haughtily, "Well! The Commune's everywhere around you."

They went to find the President of the Communal Soviet-Comrade Ratiouk, a man with sharp features, energetic and sunburnt. He approached us with a limp. "I hurt my leg through my inexperience," he said, "in trying to help my comrades to get rid of the lime which had fallen on the floors while the walls of the houses were being whitened. But the lime burnt my leg, and I cannot now get it cured."

This simple speech gave us at once an idea of the organisation of labour in the Commune. Here was the President of the Communal Soviet (a sort of administrator of the Commune) who cleaned the floors with his Comrades to give a clear and pleasant aspect to the dining-room. At the gates of the drive are lions and the arms of Galitzine are on the facade. The first flat has been converted into a little theatre with a small stage. Simple benches serve as seats. The rooms have retained their old furniture; there is no trace of disorder. In one of them, the family portraits of Galitzine have been carefully collected ready to be sent to the museums. If the Communists had not taken possession of all the wealth it certainly would have disappeared.

On the ground floor, the inlaid wood has been torn up. The President of the Soviet said to me, "As soon as the work in the fields left us some leisure we set ourselves to work here. I have already obtained blocks for the floor, and we will come and relay the pattern, and whiten the walls with lime. Then all the Commune will come and live here, and we will do everything ourselves." The tone in which he said that showed it was not a question of empty words.

The Commune had only been formed recently and embraced several families. Many of its members were refugees from western provinces, well acquainted with the method of work applied here. When they commenced to organise the commune, everything was in a state of chaos. About a score of cows could hardly drag themselves along for want of forage and did not give more than a quart to a quart-and-a-half of milk. To-day these cows, fine and healthy, graze on the outskirts of the forest and give each an average of ten to fifteen quarts per day.

At the outset the villagers were somewhat hostile and scornful. They used to say, "You have a fine house, plenty of land, a rich forest, cows, sheeps, pigs and geese? How are you going to work and keep all that up? You will eat in turn all your cattle and your farm yard for nourishment during the winter, and when the spring comes you will go away..." But the spring came and the prophecy of the peasants did not mature. The Commune did not disappear. On the contrary, it gained in strength and in development.

When Easter arrived the best way to celebrate these days was discussed, and it was finally decided to work all together and store the wood.

I asked if the comrades did not complain sometimes. Was the work not too hard? They needed rest, leisure, distractions, amusements?

"But we have distractions whenever that is possible. Nobody complained of working on Easter, a piece of work urgently required. Everyone understood that it had to be done immediately. There are about sixteen Communists among us; the others sympathise with our ideas."

I then recollected what comrade Mitrofanoff had related to me on the subject of another organisation, where, seeing the work making such progress, the peasants of the neighbourhood murmured amongst themselves that the Devil himself must be helping these Communists.

Whether the Devil helped or not, the enterprise developed favourably. One extensive field was sown with oats, beans, and beetroot; they also sowed a hundred pounds of buckwheat. But the finest result was obtained with potatoes. The Agricultural Service had promised to send seed, but they were unable to keep their promise. The sowing period was reaching its end, and the 400 carts of seed promised by the Kalonga Government were not arriving. As if they had foreseen this miscalculation, the Communists had saved on their own ration, and they had thus been able to gather more than a hundred pounds of potatoes for seed.

And here they are, returning to the field that they had just ploughed, so happy and glad. Comrade Ratiouk introduced me. One of the members of the Council showed me with sadness about an acre of rye sown last Autumn by the steward of Prince Galitzine, and said: "We can do better than that, our rye will have a different appearance!" And it was enough, in fact, to look at their work, and hear these young lads and lasses singing merrily to understand that they would till and manure the earth, turn and return the soil, and do everything with great enthusiasm which was necessary to obtain a good harvest.

In the kitchen garden work went its fullest. They were just plantin onions. They had a system of drains which was not quite in order; it would be necessary to repair it, but there is no one at the moment to do the work. The greater part of the agricultural machines are out of order, many are broken, but they have every hope of being in a position to repair them soon. As soon as the sowing is finished, they will attack the greenhouses, where the pear and plum trees are in full bloom. Nothing will be left to chance. Everything must give its maximum.

The women are leaving us to go and milk the cows. The stables, washed with plenty of water, are in a perfect state of cleanliness. The quantity of milk that every cow gives is weighed and noted, in order to follow the effects of the improvements carried out. The Commune can, from now, every day send three roads of milk to the town. And there will soon be a colony of infants to whom the Commune will be able to furnish the necessary milk.

"It's dinner hour," said a comrade. We strolled towards the Communal dining-room. Our attention was drawn by a comrade of tall stature, with bare feet; it was the woodman. He had formerly studied science; destiny had brought him to the Commune; now he was thinking about installing beehives on the edge of a little wood of limetrees.

The table of the dining-room, simple and clean, was ready for the dinner. We ate salad with radish, and milk, curdy with cream, with bread. The children took their meal with us. What a new big family, fine and happy, this Commune was!

By now it was time to leave. Comrade Ratiouk spoke to us, while going along, of the educative work of the Commune, and told us how the peasants had completely modified their attitude towards it. He and his Comrades had every hope this year of being able to cover the working expenses. From the wool of their sheep they hope, later, to weave their clothes, and their ambition is to make up themselves all they require. They all live there in friendship, each

doing the work which the council of the Commune assigns to him, after examination and discussion in full assembly. When mobilisation was decided on the Commune furnished immediately the members required for the Eastern Front.

We traversed the village in the direction of Kalonga, in the middle of the silence of the night. And in the silence, we heard our driver—a peasant—say to himself with conviction: "He must indeed be a fool who would refuse to go and live in such a Commune."

An old day labourer, Oginsky, is at the head of that Commune or workers, and conducts the business very well.

The organiser of another Commune in the "TROTSKY VOLOST" is no less original, Comrade Dolgoff.

Dolgoff is an old village carpenter, who was a sailor during the war. With several comrades he created a workers' Commune, which was later called "The Organisation." It deserves its title, for it has organised in one group the villagers of the district. At Kalonga and in the district of Kalonga all the streets, squares, "volosts" and villages have been re-baptised. Near Kalonga, one finds Bebel and Rosa Luxembourg "volosts." The Trotsky "volost" near Kalonga is considered one of the best organised.

Comrade Mitrofanoff, in discussing the return of the Communes and the Soviet domains, had reason in saying that they could not hope to recover all the expenses during the first year. The only thing that they hoped for was to get Nature well organised, to assure a regular development in the following years, and to be able to keep the domains in good condition.

This last task "The Organisation" has already accomplished. Towards the end of 1917, the Janovsky domain, which was occupied by it, had only relatively a small value. During the war and Revolution it had been almost deserted. Its proprietor, as if he had anticipated what was going to happen, had not done any repairs. The greenhouses were destroyed, the fences were rotten, the court muddy and dirty.

When the Communists installed themselves on this domain, they found themselves in possession of a good estate, of a rich forest, and of a garden so completely neglected that the first indispensable thing was to dig it up. The buildings were intact, the cattle rare, but agricultural implements sufficiently numerous. There were amongst the Communists several families. The principle of Communal life is strictly observed, but no misunderstanding arises therefrom among the Communists with or without family. The tilling and the sowing is done in cimon.

When, side by side with these fields and model meadows, one sees the meagre furrows of the neighbouring peasants, one feels the conviction that "The Organisation" will triumph. One fine day, in one or two years perhaps, the peasants will meet, and in their turn will set up a Commune. They will group their strips of earth into a single field which they will work together. "The Organisation" will do what it can to hasten this result. There is the lesson of fact, the difference in aspect of the cultivation, which speaks eloquently in favour of the Communists and, in the meetings, the latter discuss with the peasants the organisation of the new society. Already the victory is with us. For, although a minority only of the peasants may yet have formed Communes by themselves, the peasants on the whole have ceased to be hostile to us. The Communes have never deprived them of anything; on the contrary, they give them many things.

The peasants willingly organise co-operatives. A certain number among them are purely fictitious, for, once the re-division of the seed is made, each of the peasants commences sowing and cultivating his own ground. But this is not always the case, and they have already established many solid co-operatives.

We are only at the inception of an immense work of reconstruction. We must observe, reflect, study in all their details all the problems, then we will master definitely the instinct of property, and build a new life on a Communal basis.

Trans. by A. W.

CORRESPONDENCE.

(To the Editor of "Worker.")

Sir,—I read with some interest an article in the "Worker" of Saturday, 7th, by J. R. C. re the strike of girls at Kerr & Co.'s Restaurant. I agree he gives a very true picture of the boss class methods with the assistance of the Trades Unions to crush the workers, but hasn't 90 per cent. of the fights lost by the workers been brought about in the same way?

J. R. C. appeals to the rank and file of the Trades Unions to come and assist the girls by mass pickets outside the restaurants, and so help them to win. Is J. R. C. really serious when he makes the suggestion, or does he forget "Bloody Friday?" I can assure him those Trades Unionists who were out for a 40 hours' week don't.

If J. R. C. thinks mass pickets would help to win a strike, why doesn't he recommend the people who would make the picket to fetch their own batons with them as a protection in case of attack? Surely we have learned a lesson of the imbecility of striving for our rights in crowds with our hands empty, and nothing in our pockets but our pipes. If you don't believe me, ask Gallacher. But, remember when you do, that that's when Kerr and his class begin to get busy. They, as they always do, will ring up Churchill, and in less than no time we'll have soldiers and sailors, middle-class unions and cadets, machine guns and tanks and tin hats pouring in from all inlets to the city, and there they will be dumped down amongst us, conveyed by railwaymen who are good and true members of the N.U.R.. The soldiers at Maryhill will be run down by car or 'bus, the drivers of which are members of the M.E.A. or the United Vehicle Workers. The officers will come down in taxis driven by members of the Motor-men's Union who were recently on strike themselves. The grocers and butchers, electricians, engineers, and miners, and others, every one of them craft conscious, will assist the bosses in maintaining that monstrosity called law and order. So in my view Kerr & Co. will put up a good fight on their side.

I would respectfully suggest to J. R. C. to not press the mass picket question, as I can't think of it being a solution.

You are entitled to ask me, what do I suggest? Agitate! Educate! We have seen the results of this in other climes. I am one of those who believes that the literature dropped from Bolshevik aeroplanes in Russia was more responsible for the success of the Red Army than machine guns. I would assist J. R. C. to build aeroplanes. I would help with agitation, but I cannot take part in mass picket except under the conditions above named.

—Fraternally yours,

J. KELLY.

(To the Editor of "Worker.")

Dear Comrade,—Please allow me to make a few comments in reference to your article, viz., "Vote for Connolly!" I wish to state as chairman at that meeting held in the Palladium on 1st inst. that it was not a special meeting for Irishmen. That savours too much of exclusiveness and sectarianism for an organisation whose message must reach workers of all nationalities. For the edification of the many comrades who offered their services, and the many who were anxious to participate in a fight for Communism if Comrade Paul had accepted the Paisley Branch of the S.L.P.'s nomination, I would point out that this meeting was advertised solely for Comrade Sean M'Loughlin and not for W. Paul, as your report would indicate. As a matter of fact, the Paisley Branch knew nothing about Comrade Paul coming. As to the surprise that the heading of your report has evinced, I wish to say definitely that there need be no dubiety as to Comrade Paul's position at that meeting, as these were his words. Some alleged revolutionaries are surprised at such an exclamation at such a definite injunction and negation of the policy of the Labour candidate and his prototype, Mr Asquith. Further, that is the position of the Paisley Branch of the S.L.P., and Comrade Paul's position at that meeting merits the approbation of his Paisley comrades. In conclusion, let me say that widespread is the surprise

and disappointment on it being known that Comrade Paul was in Paisley to the working class who would have packed any hall to have heard him, the success of the meeting reported on both numerically, and from the able and spirited address and its ensuing discussion must be allotted to our Comrade Sean M'Loughlin.—Yours fraternally,

JOHN BROWN.

[The report was printed as received from Paisley. I happened to have been in Comrade Paul's company when the members of the Paisley Branch approached him to speak at this meeting. In these strenuous days, when men ought to be pursuing a disinterested fight and forgetting their paltry little selves, the apportioning of credit for the success of a meeting is a very small affair. The report was obviously sent in not to give prominence to an already prominent man like Paul, but to make more public the novel battle cry, "Vote for Connolly." Editor.]

Class-Conscious Study of English Literature.

By Valerian Roel.

Already, then, at the very commencement of our study of literature from the class-conscious view-point, we have found that we have replaced, for intrinsic value, Langlands for Chaucer, although the latter be the finer aesthetic artist and the one most valued by academic criticism.

Chaucer, however, as I have indicated above, toned in with the prevalent type of mind produced by that great European movement which, brought from Italy, is styled the Renaissance (or the Re-Birth). The Renaissance meant a re-birth of human individuality. The Middle Ages, whose final closure came with the work of Langland, were theoretically run through with Communist ideals—at least with a kind of Communism with a super-imposed aristocracy—much such a condition as existed in Russia previous to the Revolution. The Renaissance shattered those communal ideals and brought to the fore, not only the value of individuality in mind, in emotion and in expression, but also individuality in nations, the beginning of that modern civilisation which bred the atmosphere of the Great War. There were wars in the Middle Ages, but they were largely the wars of nobles and of Kings. Comparatively speaking, the working people had little to do with them. Patriotism was born with the Renaissance, and the Spanish wars of Elizabeth's reign stirred in the masses of the population an emotion of hatred and of love of country which was almost entirely absent in the hundred years' or other wars of the Middle Ages. The Renaissance in Italy, as elsewhere, produced the end of the feudal system, but it produced in its stead wage-slavery, the complete stagnation of all humanity in the principles of commerce and of money-making, with all their attendant evils. With the Renaissance came Machiavelli, with his cunning and his duplicity, and Machiavelli definitely wrought into a philosophy the inculcation of patriotism, the employment of duplicity and of diplomacy on the part of a governing minority, the use (there is no other word for it) of a people, for the purposes of a King or of a prime minister.

From the time of the Renaissance England's Empire grew. The Spanish power was destroyed in the defeat of the Armada; England's prowess on land was displayed in the unquitting battles of Marlborough, in the shattering of Napoleon's power in the Crimea, in South Africa, at Mons, and at the Somme. . . . Canada was definitely seized from the Red Indians and from the French: the Transvaal was taken from the Dutch: Australia was depopulated of its Aborigines: India was captured by force from its inhabitants. Gradually spread over the face of the globe like a red plague, that red tint which displays the limits of our Empire. And other nations followed suit. It was Britain's fear in the guilt of evil possessions, added to Germany's and Russia's greed for more, that precipitated the late war.

Thus recognising the prevailing tendencies of Renaissance philosophy and practice, it will be seen to be inevitable that the art of the time should partake of the same qualities, and have, therefore, a minor estimation in the eyes of the worker than it has in the eyes of the academic scholar. The Renaissance in Italy started in the 14th century and lasted till the beginning of the 17th. In England, save for Chaucer, who stands almost unique in his age, and who ante-dated Shakespeare by two centuries, it did not begin until about 1550 and closed towards the end of the 17th century. In Italy its most remarkable artistic triumph was in painting: in England it was in drama.

The drama of the Middle Ages, such as there has been, lay in religious or semi-religious productions styled miracles or mysteries, from their subject and treatment. These Miracles or Mysteries, although they were originally derived from the Mass-service of the Catholic Church, rapidly deviated from that, to assume Co-operative village characteristics. In the latest form known to us they were folk-pictures of the more dramatic scenes in the Bible, written by village workmen; often not without humour and pathos, played by artisans, scene by local carpenters and drapers, witnessed by the comrades and companions of those men. At Oberammergau on the Continent a literary form of this same mystery drama still survives and is witnessed every ten years yet, by a concourse of peasants, of tourists and of visitors. Probably, in the end, drama may move back to some such Communal style, sway from the highly-professional and exclusive type of dramatic production now prevalent. Trained acting is essential, but, without a doubt, the highly-trained professional acting necessary for the adequate production of so many modern works of dramatic art is not only superfluous, but positively baneful. The proletarian theatre will engage more and more the mass elements of the people. The peasantry and the artisans will pass from the auditorium (the space for spectators) to the stage, becoming creative artists instead of mere spectators, finding in their own endeavours a new fund of interest, of joy and of emotion.*

The typical modern theatre, as expressed in the plays of Ibsen and in the artificial attempts of Shaw, took its rise in the Renaissance. In it, mass emotions are unknown. The crowds of Shakespeare are not crowds. They are only one or two individuals, and of a vulgar type, by no means symbolising the whole of which they were presumably meant to be a part. Shakespeare's theatre is essentially the theatre of individualism. He is interested definitely in personal emotions. He accepts the prevalent conception of tragic types as being autocratic and courtly. He is interested in Macbeth solely as an individual soul, not at all in the tortured state of his nation.

*The recent endeavours to reform the structure of the theatre have a very direct bearing on the democratisation of the drama. In the Middle Ages the plays were performed on mere rude stages laid on trestles in the open market-place. In Shakespeare's time the theatres were round, but the stage jutted right out into the middle of the floor. In modern times has arisen what is known as the "picture-stage," in which the spectators are cut off entirely from the audience. A slight reversion to the earlier, and more primitive, stage seems likely.

A cranky impecunious doctor was travelling third class when a labourer got into the compartment at a wayside station and immediately lighted up his pipe. The tobacco was strong and the smoke got into the medical gentleman's eyes, nose, and throat. At length he could stand it no longer, so, touching the "son of toil" on the shoulder, he quietly remarked: "You will pardon me, but I am a medical man, and my twenty years' experience has taught me that all the bad cases of cancer of the tongue come from smoking bad tobacco." "Well," said the labourer, removing his pipe, and looking straight into the eyes of his newly made acquaintance. "My forty years' experience has taught me that all the bad cases of black eyes and bloody noses come from interfering with other people's business."

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF EX-SERVICE MEN

Ex-Service Men.

The International Union of Ex-Service Men held their first annual Congress on Saturday, 7th Feb., in the I.L.P. Rooms, 686 Argyle Street, a full report of which will appear in our next issue.

I have been requested to touch on the workings of the National Federation of D. and D. S. and S. in Bristol, and in doing so I wish it to be understood that all figures are given approximately. The Bristol Central Branch of the aforementioned organisation presented a financial statement last June, showing a balance in hand of £15. There was instituted a permanent series of street collections, paying the collectors a percentage of 25 per cent. of the collections. One man was appointed full time, and sometimes as many as four other collectors have been sent out on Fridays and Saturdays, but I am basing my calculations all through on an average of two collectors per week ends, and one full time. The week-end men have stated definitely that they have handed into the Federation £2 5s in clear cash. The full-time man has a wife and family to keep, and up to a fortnight before Christmas and nothing else coming in. I take it that his commission could not have been less than £2 10s per week, else he would never have kept the job, so he handed in an average of approximately £7. This makes an average of approximately £12 a week from street collections. Last year they had 1,565 new members joined, each paying an entrance fee of 1s besides contributions. They are supposed to have 3,000 members, giving them the benefit of two thousand bad paying members. There is still left an average weekly income from 1,000 at 3d (£12 10s), thus making a weekly income of £24 10s for five months. So that their balance at this period should read something like this, after giving them the benefit of £100 for bad debts:—

1,000 subscriptions at 3d per week for			
20 weeks	£250	0	0
1,565 new members' entrance fees at 1s	78	5	0
Proceeds of street collections, 20 weeks, approximately	240	0	0
Realised by concerts and dances, etc., about	50	0	0
Total	£618	5	0
Average for office expenses, £10 for			
20 weeks	£200	0	0
Clearing up all debts, if any	100	0	0
Rent, Insurance, etc.	50	0	0
	£350	0	0
Balance credit should be approximately	£268	5	0

It has been stated through the press that at a meeting of the executive of the L.W.P.C. Committee Association in Edinburgh that a sum of £10,000 had been sent to Scotland as the 'help' portion of the Canteen Fund. The money has been handed over to relieve men who are not receiving pensions. The funds are to be distributed by the local Pension Committees. Grants not to be over £5. Poor old Scotland, your share

is £10,000! A lot of good that will be, but what is worse the autocrats of the L.W.P.C. are to decide if you are a fit and proper person to receive help. Why, begging, aye, and even stealing, would be preferable to the insults applicants receive from the busybodies who compose these Local Committees.

Branch Reports.

Anderston and Central.—Usual weekly meeting, held in the I.L.P. Rooms, 686 Argyle Street, Comrade M'Culloch presiding. Delegates to Congress received final instructions as to whom to vote for. A discussion took place on the proposed action of the Pension Ministry, re home treatment and clinics. The matter of organisation was gone into, and it was agreed to remit the proposal for future consideration. Next meeting is a special one, and a large attendance is requested. Business—Congress Report.

Bowhill.—There is a great fight going on in this district. The Local War Pensions Committee don't work on the same lines as they do in Glasgow. The circular reg. No. M. S2/245/1 No. 204 seems to have been put in operation in Fifehire. The circular deals very harshly with disabled men. To the credit of the L.W.P.C. in Glasgow they have refused to put the circular in operation, but in Fifehire the L.W.P.C. are content to act as tools to the powers that be, and have not the guts to make a stand on behalf of the disabled men. The procedure adopted in Fifehire is as follows. A disabled man applying for treatment is sent to a medical referee. The medical referee makes a recommendation that the man requires treatment for a certain period. The man is then sent to Dundee to stand a Medical Board, who in almost every instance modifies the recommendation made by the medical referee. During the period of waiting the man is unfit for work, and in spite of the fact that the medical referee has certified that he is unfit for work no allowance is payable. He and his wife and family can beg, steal, or starve and go to the DEVIL if they damned well like, the powers that be are jack easy on the matter. The members of the International Union are not going to allow their members to be trampled under foot in this manner, and will fight to the bitter end. With that object in view the Regional Council are being asked to receive a deputation on the subject. The Ex-Service Men in Fife and elsewhere have only themselves to blame for this state of affairs. The remedy is organisation, and the only organisation that will fight their battle is the International Union. The Secretary of Bowhill Branch is Thos. Graham, 21-9th Street, Bowhill. Other parts of Fifehire and elsewhere are advised to get down to it, and get branches formed all over the country, and thus protect their own interest.

South Side.—Usual weekly meeting, held in the B.S.P. Rooms, 19 Morrison Street, S.S., on Monday last, at 7.30 p.m. Comrade Jack Shinwell was appointed President. Comrade Davidson was elected delegate to Congress. Arrangements were completed to push the sale of literature. The Nat. Secy. was present and addressed the members. Four new members were enrolled. Remember the Secy.'s address—65 Dale Street, S.S.

Maryhill.—The usual weekly meeting was held on Sunday, 1st February, in I.L.P. Halls, Wyndford Street, Maryhill. There was a fair turnout of members. Very important business meeting relating to Ex-Service Men widows and dependants were discussed. Our indoor demonstration, which is in capable hands, and Burgh Hall has been engaged. Date is not fixed, but due notice will be given. Arrangements for first annual dance are well in hand, and tickets can be had from J. Graham, Secy, 49 Seamore Street.

Milngavie.—Splendid meeting in I.L.P. Halls, Kersland Drive. Comrade Cox, Nat. Secy., with Comrade M'Gill was present. After the usual business was gone through, Comrade M'Gill spoke on Militarism. Questions were invited and answered satisfactory regarding the Town Council refusing the use of Town Hall. This was discussed at some length, and it was agreed to appoint three members along with the Nat. Secy. to wait on above body on Monday, 9th February, and to express to them the feelings of our members on this question.

Clydebank.—Large turnout of members at meeting held on Thursday in M'Kim's Restaurant, 103 Glasgow Road, Clydebank. Arrangements are completed for indoor demonstration, to be held on 26th February in Co-operative Hall. It is expected that every man and woman will do their duty and pack the hall. Every week adds new members, and we are assured before long we will be a power in Clydebank to be reckoned with. Meetings held every Thursday evening at 7.30. Secy, Jas. Hughes, 1 Canal Street, Clydebank.

Paisley.—Branch meeting held in B.S.P. Rooms, Cumberland Court, on Friday, 29th, Comrade Hall presiding. Very good work was done, and arrangements were made for outdoor propaganda during the election in Paisley. On Wednesday, 24th February, we had Comrade Jack Shinwell, South Side Branch, also the Nat. Secy., when the aims and objects of the International Union were placed before the people. A large number of questions were asked and answered satisfactory. Three new members joined. We are carrying on the good work, and Ex-Service Men can join by getting in touch with R. Hall, 17 Gauze Street, Paisley.

Bridgeton.—Organisation going well here. Unfortunately a few of our best and willing workers are laid aside with illness. We have been successful in having the sentences of ten years, which was imposed on two of our comrades, reduced to 18 months in each case. Their "crime" was "absent without leave." One is a married man with three children. Call any evening at 5 Marquis Street, Bridgeton, and be enrolled. We can find something for you to do.

Darvel.—We are progressing rapidly, and new members continue to come in. We intend to carry out on a large scale a vigorous propaganda during the summer months in this part of Ayrshire. We had the National Organiser here also. He took as his subject Bolshevism. If you want an organisation with a "punch" in it we ask you to fall in.

JAS. COX, Nat. Secy.

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