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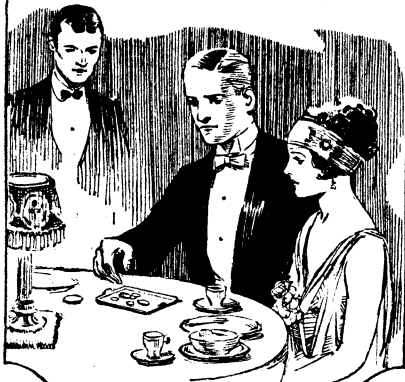
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**NO ORDERS TAKEN AFTER JUNE 1st**



## May Day Song

By Michael Gold

**FOLLOW** the drum, follow the drum to-day.  
Miner, drop pick; student, fling  
book away.

**Mother**, no cares; lover and child, no play.

**Worker**, leave wheels; farmer, leave corn  
and hay,

**And follow** the drum,

**Follow** the drum,

**Follow** the loud, the future's great drum  
to-day.

**Fly** the red flag, flaunt our flag to the sky.  
**See** the May sun, laughing at winter's sigh,  
**Flowers** must grow, ten thousand years  
must die.

**Spring** rules the world, not old slavery's lie,

**So fly** the red flag,

**Flaunt** the red flag,

**Fling** the red flag, the spring's bright flag  
to the sky.

**Sing** the new song, the gay song  
at the foe.

**Labor** is spring, war and winter must go.

**On wild** May Day, when freedom's  
trumpets blow,

**We own** the world, let the rich  
robbers know.

**We'll sing** the gay song,

**Shout** the bold song,

**Thunder** the song, Labor's spring song  
at the foe.

*Drawing by Fred Ellis*



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# THE LIBERATOR

Vol. No. 5 [Serial No. 74]

May, 1924

## The Story of May Day

By Robert Minor

**"We carry Death out of the village,  
We bring Summer into the village."**

*Old Bohemian folk-song of May Day.*

**B**ACK into the shadowy centuries before man made written records of his doings one must grope for the origin of May Day.

From the remotest times, it seems, there have been two seasons of the year whose mysteries profoundly touched the human mind, and which were, therefore, made the principal seasons for religious ceremonial, or times of festival. Historians mention that in the five hundred and sixteenth year after the founding of Rome, ceremonies were held on the first of May to prevent blasting and barrenness of trees and fruits.

Frazer, in "The Golden Bough," writes that these festivals are frequently associated "with one or other of the agricultural seasons, especially with the time of sowing or of harvest. Now, of all these periods of license the one which is best known and which in modern language has given its name to the rest, is the Saturnalia. This famous festival fell in December, the last month of the Roman year, and was popularly supposed to commemorate the merry reign of Saturn, the god of sowing and husbandry. . . . His reign was the fabled Golden Age . . . Slavery and private property were alike unknown: all men had all things in common. At last the good god, the kindly king, vanished suddenly; but his memory was cherished to distant ages. . . .

"But no feature of the festival is more remarkable, nothing in it seems to have struck the ancients themselves more than the license granted to slaves at this time. The distinction between the free and the servile classes was temporarily abolished. The slave might rail at his master, intoxicate himself like his betters, sit down at table with them, and not even a word of reproof would be administered to him for conduct which at any other season might have been punished with stripes, imprisonment, or death. Nay, more, masters actually changed places with their slaves and waited on them at table; and not till the serf had done eating and drinking was the board cleared and dinner set for his master. So far was this inversion of ranks carried, that each household became for a time a mimic republic in which the high offices were discharged by the slaves, who gave their orders and laid down the law as if they were indeed vested with all the dignity of the consulship, the praetorship, and the bench."

And throughout the folk-lore of these customs we find running like a red thread the eternal suggestion of the downfall of the ruler and the reversal of the social order, in parallel to the process of death and renewed life in Nature. There is a persistent note of the killing of the king, both in the Roman mid-winter Saturnalia, after which the mock king must kill himself on the altar of the god Saturn, and in the May Day festival where occurred the mimic beheading of a king who symbolized the dying winter season.

The practical identity of spirit and purpose of the May Day season with the mid-winter Saturnalia is shown by William Howitt, who on May 2, 1846, wrote of May Day: "But we have traces of it as it existed among the Saxons, whose barons at this time going to their Wittenagemote, or assembly of Wise Men, left their peasantry to a sort of Saturnalia, in which they chose a king, who chose his queen. He wore an oaken wreath; and together they gave laws to the rustic sports, during those sweet days of freedom. . . . That man as man again ascended above and judged kings. Certainly it is that here **the people**, if they saw cause, **deposed or punished their governors, their barons, and kings.** 'It was one of the most ancient customs,' says Brand, 'which has by repetition been from year to year perpetuated.'"

Charles Dickens wrote of May Day:

"In the nebulous days of those dread, mysterious despots, the Druids, the first of May was a national festival for the Celts of Britain and Gaul; while the Teuton worshippers of Thor kindled fresh fires in honor of Ostara, goddess of Spring, and their long processions wound, by torchlight, up the hills, singing and invoking her protection against the Jotans, the powers of darkness and malignant evil."\*

"The Druidical epoch of May Day solemnities may be regarded as expiring Anno Domini one hundred and seventy-seven. The Druids practised their rites with great pomp and exactness in Britain till the reign of King Lucius, when Christianity was embraced by that sovereign and other princes of the island. Being deprived of the counte-

\*Throughout I attribute to Dickens unsigned articles published in "Household Words," the magazine conducted by him from 1850, and its successor "All the Year Round" which was also "conducted by Charles Dickens." Other sources: William Howitt, "The People's Journal," 1842, the "Every Day Book," Vol. 1., Frazer's "The Golden Bough," "Out of the Past," by R. W. Postgate, and "Thirty Years of Labor," by T. V. Powderly.  
R. M.

nance of the civil government, they disappeared at the date referred to, though a semblance of their ceremonies and sacrifices were long afterwards clung to by the mass of the people, and were at last only got rid of, as distinct religious observances, either by being incorporated with ceremonies sanctioned by the Christian Church, or by being winked at, if they were not at variance with its doctrine and rules."

Brand, in his *Popular Antiquities* says: "After the Conquest, the May games were continued as a national festivity, and archery meetings appear to have taken the place of the ancient open-air courts. But the most interesting circumstance, connected with them, as the years roll on, is their evident association with the first successful struggle for English freedom, when the confederated barons wrested the Great Charter from the worthless John."

"Towards the close of the fifteenth century," says Dickens, "May Day observances became greatly altered in character. They were then, in a great measure, merged into the popular honours enthusiastically paid to the famous outlaw, Robin Hood."

But, says Dickens, "That Mayday, even in the sixteenth century, was regarded with some apprehension by the ruling powers, is evident from what occurred upon what is known as Evil Mayday in 1517." The events of "Evil Mayday" of 1517 are given in an old book:

"The 28th day of April, 1517, divers yong-men of the citie picked quarrels with certaine **strangers**, as they passed along the streets: some they smote and buffeted, and some they threw in the channell: for which, the lord maior sent some of the Englishmen to prison, as Stephen Studley, Skinner, Stevenson, Bets and other.

"Then suddenly rose a secret rumour, and no man could tell how it began, that on May-day next following, the citie would slay all the aliens: insomuch that divers strangers fled out of the citie.

"This rumour came to the knowledge of the kings councell: whereupon the lord cardinall sent for the maior, and other of the councell of the citie. . . But the prentices resisted the alderman, taking the young-man from him, and cryed prentices, prentices, clubs, clubs; then out at every doore came clubs and other weapons, so that the alderman was forced to flight. Then more people arose out of every quarter, and forth came serving-men, watermen, courtiers, and other, so that by eleven of the clocke, there were in Cheape, 6 or 7 hundred, and out of Pauls churchyard came about 300. From all places they gathered together, and brake up the Counter, took out the prisoners, which had been committed thither by the lord maior, for hurting the strangers; also they went to Newgate, and tooke out Studley and Bets, committed thither for the like cause. The maior and sheriffes were present, and made proclamation in the kings name, but nothing was obeyed. . . . Sir Roger Cholmeley, Lievtenant of the Tower, during the time of this business, shot off certaine peeces of ordnance against the city, but did no great hurt. . . . A commission of oyer and determiner was directed to the duke of Norfolk, and other lords, for punishment of this insurrection. . . . The duke of Norfolk entered the city with one thousand three hundred men, and the prisoners were brought through the streets tyed in

ropes, some men, some lads but of thirteen or fourteene yeeres old, to the number of 278 persons. That day Iohn Lincolne and divers other were indicted, and the next day thirteen were adjudged to be drawne, hanged, and quartered: for execution whereof ten payre of gallowes were set up in divers places of the city."

And so the pagan holiday persisted, preserved in the great mysterious heart of the people, more perhaps by the annual rising of the spring sap than by any arbitrary tradition of the calendar. . . . Every springtime there came an issue between the master and "prentices and serving-men, watermen and other." May Day became an issue between the Puritan and the Church. May Day was destined to become an issue between Cromwellism and the King. And now it became an issue for those harbingers of Capitalism—the Puritan ministers. For the pious Phillip Stubbes, in his "Anatomie of Abuses," published in 1583, complained:

"Against May, Whitsonday, or other time, all the yung men and maides, olde men and wives, run gadding over night to the woods, groves, hils, and mountains, where they spend all the night in plesant pastimes; and in the morning they return, bringing with them birch and branches of trees, to deck their assemblies withall. And no mervaile, for there is a great Lord present amongst them, as superintendent and Lord over their pastimes and sportes, namely, Sathan, prince of hel. But the chiefest jewel they bring from thence is their May-pole, which they bring home with great veneration, as thus. They have twentie or fortie yoke of oxen, every oxe having a sweet nose-gay of flouers placed on the tip of his hornes, and these oxen drawe home this May-pole (this stinkyng ydol, rather), which is covered all over with floures and hearbs, bound round about with strings, from the top to the botome, and sometime painted with variable colours, . . . And then fall they to daunce about it, like as the heathen people did at the dedication of the Idols, whereof this is a perfect pattern, or rather the thing itself. I have heard it credibly reported (and that viva voce) by men of great gravitie and reputation, that of fortie, threescore, or a hundred maides going to the wood over night, there have scaresly the third part of them returned home againe undefiled."

In 1660 Thomas Hall, a parish minister, published a pamphlet (quoted two centuries later by Charles Dickens) in which he said:

"Flora, hold up thye hand! Thou art here indicted by the name of Flora, of the city of Rome, in the county of Babylon, for that thoue, contrary to the peace of her sovereign lord, his crown and dignity, hast brought in a pack of practical fanatics; viz., ignorants, atheists, papists, drunkards, swearers, swash-bucklers, maid-marrions, morrice-dancers, maskers, mummers, Maypole stealers, health-drinkers, gamesters, lewd men, light women, contemners of magistrates, affronters of ministers, rebellious to masters, and disobedient to parents."

"But," wrote William Howitt in the *People's Magazine* of May 2, 1842, "in came Puritanism, and down went all old festivities and pageants. In April, 1644, there was an ordinance of the two houses of Parliament, for taking all and singular May-poles. The people kicked, even in the days of Cromwell and the commonwealth, at this ordinance.



At the Restoration, there was an attempt to restore also May-day to its ancient jollity, but all in vain, it never recovered the prostrating stroke of puritanism. . . . The spirit and the necessities of the present times is, 'Work, work, work!' . . . . Whichever way we turn a giant-monster meets us, and startles us out of our dreams of poetry. We call this an enlightened age. In what is it enlightened? With all our light and knowledge can any man tell us, even on this question of May-day, how the people, as one universal people, could turn out for a single day and enjoy themselves? No! the mills want us, the shops want us, the banks and railroads want us. We want our daily bread, and Mammon wants his. He opens all his thousand mouths of gaping smithies, workshops and offices, to swallow us up."

#### The Sailors on May Day

As the original celebration was of a period or "May-tide" rather than of a definite day, it may or may not have been by an accidental coincidence of dates that the great Nore mutiny of 1797 in the British navy began on April 17 and that the first of May, 1797, found a movement of sailors' delegates sent from the fleet at Spithead to the mutinous ships at Nore. On the twelfth of May, 1797, all ships of the British fleet at Nore hoisted the red flag, elected their own "admiral" (remember the May Day custom of electing a mock king) in the most deadly earnest, established their own discipline under committees of sailors' delegates, were joined by a large portion of the entire British navy, and for many days held London at their mercy.

And, anyway, it was again a clear event of May Day when on May 1, 1824, the British sailors went on a mad tear to the scandal and fear of their masters.

#### The Modern May Day

But the story of the final adoption of the first of May as International Labor Day is bound up with the great Eight Hour movement which swept through Europe and America from the time of the American Civil War up to the Great Upheaval of 1884-6. The first regular convention of the International Workingmen's Association in 1864 put the proposition that "the limitation of the work-day is the first step in the direction of the emancipation of the working class," and specified the eight-hour day as an objective. In 1866 the National Labor Union raised the demand for the eight-hour day, and later the Industrial Brotherhood took up the issue. In 1878 the Knights of Labor made the eight-hour day a slogan.

The Baltimore organization of the Knights of Labor proposed that May 1, 1884, be made the day for beginning the fight for the eight-hour day, though the proposal was not accepted by the parent body. Curiously, the leaders of the Knights of Labor, so often credited with being revolutionary, were opposed to the general strike for the eight-hour day, and opposed to May First because of its historical association with the spirit of rebellion. Terrence V. Powderly, Grand Master Workman of the order, was interpreting the slogan "An injury to one is an injury to all" by inserting parentheses as follows: "An injury to one (employer) is an injury to all (his employes)"—and was in the midst of a bitter fight against "those who parade the streets waving red and black flags." Powderly squelched all sentiment for the fixing of May 1 as a date for the

eight-hour fight, which would have implied a general strike. Instead, he arranged that all members of the order should simultaneously write letters to the newspapers on Washington's Birthday (February 22), 1885. After the letter-writing campaign was over Powderly pronounced it a great success in "creating a healthy public opinion," for "manufacturers began to discuss the question and study its possibilities."

Then, curiously enough, the constituency of the American Federation of Labor took the definite step that made May First echo through the world as the international labor day of the revolutionary proletariat. At the 1885 Convention of the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada (predecessor of the American Federation of Labor), a motion was made by the Furniture Workers' Union that May 1, 1886, should be the day on which to put the eight-hour system in operation. There may be some justification for Mr. Samuel Gompers' claim that the American celebration of May Day had its origin in the influence of foreign-born immigrants; for the resolution which sanctified May Day was supported by a young immigrant Jewish cigar maker whose name was Samuel Gompers. Mr. Gompers supported the resolution with a strengthening amendment adding to its effectiveness, and the motion was carried.

So aptly adjusted to the temper of the masses of the workers was this proposal, that it swept America like a storm. Essentially the eight-hour day war-cry was an **organization** slogan. It proved to be exactly the slogan for a hybrid mixture of political party and general union such as the Knights of Labor. And so, paradoxically, the slogan of a general strike on May 1 for the eight-hour day, was by popular fancy made the slogan of the Knights of Labor. Grand Master Workman Powderly was frightened by the floods of hundreds of thousands of new members that began pouring into the organization. He issued a secret circular to the Knights of Labor, repudiating the call for May 1, declaring that "neither employer nor employee are educated to the needs and necessities for the short hour plan." Of course, in the implied general strike, rather than the time chosen, lay the essence of what frightened Powderly, but Powderly showed plainly that he regarded the date of May First as having ominous significance.

Never before had a popular slogan gripped the hearts of American toilers as did the eight-hour call. Popular fancy persistently forced the glory upon the Knights of Labor in spite of all the heads of that organization could do, and its membership leaped in a few months from about 100,000 to three-quarters of a million members. But withal, it was only a slogan. The leaders didn't accept it. There was no organization ready and willing to take the impact of the action.

May 1, 1886, was destined to be hallowed with blood; and this blood, it was, that forever fixed May Day in the revolutionary workers' calendar. On May 3, in Chicago, four striking workers were murdered by the police. On May 4 the mounted police charged upon the peaceful protest meeting, the bomb was thrown that killed many policemen—and then the long reign of terror, the prison suicide of Lingg and the hanging of four other martyrs of the eight-hour movement.

May, 1886, was a time that tried men's hearts. Joseph Dietzgen, socialist (communist, we'd say today), the friend whom Marx called "unser Philosoph," volunteered to take the place of the arrested Anarchist editors of the Chicagoer Arbeiter-Zeitung. But it is not all a story of heroism. While the terror was at its height, and after sentence of death had been passed upon Lingg, Parsons, Fischer, Engel, Spies, Fielden and Schwab, the Knights of Labor came into its annual convention at Richmond, Va. Delegate James E. Quinn from New York offered the resolution:

**That this General Assembly regards with sorrow the intended execution of seven workmen in Chicago, and appeals for mercy in behalf of the condemned.**

Grand Master Workman Powderly left the chair in order to oppose this resolution with a speech in which he said:

"Instead of owing them sympathy we owe them a debt of hatred for their unwarrantable interference at a time when labor had all it could do to weather the storm which had been precipitated upon it by men who apparently did not look very far into the future when naming the first of May as the date on which to put in operation a plan which, from its very nature, must revolutionize the industrial affairs of the country."

But the First of May as the classic date of the eight-hour-day fight, was not to be killed so easily. For in the 1888 convention of the American Federation of Labor the eight-hour-day committee reported a recommendation:

"... That the incoming executive council shall arrange upon Washington's birthday, 1889, simultaneous mass-meetings in all cities of the country, such meetings to be addressed by speakers appointed by authority of the Executive Council, and that on Independence Day, July 4, the same action under the control of the Executive Council shall be pursued, and that on Labor Day, 1889, a like action be again taken, to be followed upon the succeeding Washington's birthday, 1890, by another series of grand simultaneous mass meetings... (But) Your committee was unable to agree upon selecting a fixed date for the practical enforcement..."

And then the convention of the American Federation of Labor by a large majority vote added **May First** as the date on which to enforce the plan.

It was not an accident that May First, the **holiday**, was added to the holidays, Washington's birthday and July 4, as the culminating date for a new demonstration. The convention voted down three contrary proposals: a motion to make the date June first, an amendment to refer to the executive council, and an amendment to confine the plan to the building trades. The convention of the A. F. of L. voted in effect for a general strike on May First because of the day's historic associations.

The next year, 1889, the Second International was founded; and in its first international congress it selected the first day of May of each year to come as a day on which there were to be labor demonstrations in all countries in behalf of the eight-hour-day.

Thus it came about that Charles Dickens, who made himself the veritable "historian of May Day," felt obliged to write on April 29, 1893:

"Compared with the Mayday of the poets, and with that depicted by the annalists of ancient sports and customs, the Mayday of our present era shows a curious contrast. 'Preparations for Mayday,' which formed the headline of paragraphs in the daily papers of last year, have no connection with maypoles, garlands, morris dancers, or festive milkmaids. The preparations are in the way of **massing troops and police about the chief public resorts of the capital cities of the Continent.** We even read of a Spanish squadron of an ironclad and three cruisers, as ordered to the scene of apprehended disturbances. For, last year, as Mayday fell on a Sunday, the conjunction was deemed ominous of danger to public security."

And in these days of Bolshevism, "prince of hel," the ancient Pagan holiday grows to mightier significance. The procession of "prentices, serving-men, watermen, courtiers, and other" has swollen to a mighty torrent that pours through the world's cities on our international holiday.

A mighty Red Army marches in May Day processions, and the little red rag, once furtively clutched under the coat for momentary and desperate flaunting under the clubs of police, has become a great, proud banner borne by the freed millions of the sovietized world-mutineers, and saluted unwillingly, fearfully, in temporary truce, by the masters of the non-Russian earth.

"We carry Death out of the village,  
We bring Summer into the village"—

And the Revolution of which May Day is the heyday, is gathering momentum. I pick up a magazine for April, 1924. It is a frank organ of the biggest and most reactionary of the bourgeois reaction. On its cover are printed the titles of the six most prominent articles:

"The 'Nordic' Race; the Claim to Superiority Denied."

"American Labor Party in the Making."

"U. S. Bans Latin-American Rebellions."

"The Rise of Ramsay MacDonald."

"Changes Among American Socialists."

"Rykov the Successor of Lenin."

Each of these items has something to do with the decay of an institution sacred to the editors of that magazine.

But there is no other news. All news is news of the Revolution. In the past few months the political dome of the Capitol at Washington has fallen in, and in the halls below, now opened to the cold political rains of the future, we hear the voice of another King John—an American King John—quarreling with his Parliament. Coolidge is telling his "barons" of the senate that "instead of a government we have a government of lawlessness;" and the barons—the "progressive" senators—have so far lost their sense of class relations in this country as to consider it natural to have a private millionaire pay for the processes of government.

All this is the news of the decay, the break-down—the demoralization of current social forms—the news of contradictions for the solution of which there is no machinery in our social forms.

All news is the news of the Revolution—impending.

"We carry Death out of the world,  
We bring Summer into the world."

# The Storm is Coming

By Max Bedacht

**D**ARK clouds are piling up on the political horizon of the United States. Unusual political currents puzzle many of the political weather forecasters. All agree that something disagreeable might happen; few are willing to specify the nature of the coming event. But occasional gusts of wind herald a coming storm.

Political life in the United States has been heretofore such a quiet and simple affair. True, there were two parties, and tugs-of-war between the two. But for the ruling strata in the United States the sun was always shining. An occasional change of label on the sun from democratic to republican, or from republican to democrat, meant nothing to them.

This was indeed a phenomenon. A whole people drawn into the stream of political activity and yet, no struggle; the waves of the political seas not whipped into fury by the many divergent political interests of a whole people exercising its prerogative as its own sovereign. At the bottom of this phenomenon lies the fact that this people does not know its interest; that its sovereignty is a cruel deception. The sovereign individual of a sovereign people must be educated to a clear understanding of his political interests. If he is not his sovereignty is a joke. But the educational method of democracy to make good citizens was the method of Frederick William I., a Prussian king. That old autocrat would beat a tattoo on the back of every burgher he could lay his hands on. And while he was thus engaged he hissed into the ear of his maltreated subject: "Just wait, I'll teach you yet to love me." This method may make "good" citizens in the sense that it makes them obedient and subservient. But to whom should a citizen be subservient in a democracy where he is made to believe that he is his own political master?

To anyone misled into a belief in democracy this educational method surely deserves condemnation. But the masters under a democracy are practical people and lose no thought on abstractions. This method does make good citizens; not sovereign ones, but good marionettes in a sham democracy. Thus, in spite of all the divergent political interests of the people, all the political life of the United States was quiet and simple; a see-saw with two specimens from a zoological garden on either end of it. Whenever the G. O. P. Elephant went up, the Democratic Jackass came down. Whenever the Jackass ascended, down came the pachyderm. And for the rest all remained as it was.

But now, all of a sudden, this status quo is threatened and will become a thing of the past.

The class struggle is essentially a political struggle. In its economic manifestation the masses of workers do not necessarily have to recognize class divisions—they may be engaged in the class struggle, they may strike against capitalists, and yet not be aware of the presence of a class struggle. But in its clearly political manifestations the class struggle presupposes some degree of class consciousness on the side of the workers. This necessary degree of

class consciousness was lacking with the American worker heretofore. But now this consciousness begins to grow as a natural fruit of experience.

Thus the idea of a labor party is born. First only raised as a cry of hope by some clear sighted individuals and groups of workers, it develops into a movement and finally crystallizes into a real labor party. A tendency yesterday, gusts of a new political wind today, a veritable storm tomorrow. "It is not a storm yet," soothingly declare some; "it never will be a storm," others predict. Some, however, have suffered already from the new current and their Cassandra calls disturb the peace of the old guard that dies but never surrenders. Still, when unexpected and unusual winds prevent the ship of a Minnesota governor from landing in the desired harbor of the senate in Washington it is time, even for those so used to plodding in the old political rut, to sit up and take notice.

Do the communists really all understand the significance of this development? Do they understand their task? Are they ready for action?

The road from the complete political inactivity of the American proletariat to revolutionary mass action is a long one. Many milestones must be passed on this road. One of these milestones is a class party of the workers and exploited farmers. This makes clear the duty of the communist. Though not seeing in the labor party the final object, still the communist sees in it one of the stages of development of class struggle.

The non political attitude of the American workers is seriously shaken. And this shakeup is a mass phenomenon.

"Moscow influence" cry the hundred-percenters. But what are the facts? A capitalist class that grows in insolence, if not in strength, in its insatiable hunger for more profit and still more profit constantly attacking and deteriorating the standards of life of the workers. Every move of this class is a challenge to the workers to defend their very chance to live. The workers accept this challenge, are forced to accept it. They organize. They strike. Off come their coats for battle. In these battles they face their bosses, individuals or corporations. Stripped for action the workers rush at their antagonists. The clenched fist of their organized strength prepares for the punch that should bring victory. But invariably that punch is intercepted. A mysterious figure, claiming to be Uncle Sam, interferes and declares in a grave voice: "Mr. Workman, you cannot, you must not fight your government." Behind this stately figure are lined up judges waving paper injunctions, policemen swinging more substantial clubs, state cossacks armed to the teeth, state and federal troops, jailers, lawmakers, labor boards, in short every conceivable instrument of power of government.

At first the workers are bewildered. They protest their innocence. They did not intend to fight their government. They are confused, put on their coats and give up the fight. But conditions force them into new strug-

gles with their bosses. Again "Uncle Sam" steps in. Gradually the workers wake up. "How is it," they ask, "that every time we have a quarrel with our boss that fellow 'Uncle Sam' butts in? Who is he, anyhow; why is he always found on the side of our bosses? If he is what he claims to be, our government, why can he never be found on our side? Evidently this is not our government. It is the government of our bosses. To make it our government we must enter the field of politics not merely as citizens, but as workers." Thus we see how in the fertile soil of the class struggle at home the idea of a class labor party germinates. Experience is the most persistent agitator for it. And neither prison walls nor gallows will silence that agitator. That is why there can be no doubt that the labor party clouds on the political horizon of American capitalism are bound to burst sooner or later in a veritable storm. That is why the communist orientation reckons with a political revolutionization of the mind of the working masses of the United States, although at present the political mind of the American proletariat may still be practically dormant.

But the communists not only interpret and analyze history—their prime object is to make history. Therefore it becomes their paramount duty to help in the development of existing tendencies, to take the initiative for the organizational crystallization of the tendency, in short, to help in the creation of a labor party. The needs of the class struggle gradually qualify the workers to exercise their "democratic privileges" and thus undermine democracy. This is inevitable because democracy is only an outward form of class rule. The application of conscious political class action by the masses of the workers destroys this outward form and proclaims the class struggle in the political field. It is obvious that there is a shorter step from conscious political class action by the proletariat to revolutionary action than there is from a working class piously worshipping at the shrine of democracy as mere citizens to a working class representing its class interests through a class party.

It is idle to point out the lack of direct revolutionary quality of a mere labor party. We work for a labor party not because it is revolutionary, but because we are revolutionary. We work for a labor party because it is one of the necessary relay stations which the working class will have to pass on its road from political inactivity to revolutionary action. The labor party is the Rubicon which the working class must cross to carry the class war on to the political field. The logic and experiences of that war itself will then supply us with further instruments for the development of revolutionary action on the battle fields of that war.

The development of and for a labor party are both complicated and facilitated by a general revolutionization of the political life in the United States. It is facilitated by a general political unrest which feeds on disclosures of unfathomable corruption. It is complicated by the threatened and existing divisions in the ranks of the political army of capitalism. Corruption is one of the methods which allow the capitalist dictatorship to parade as a democracy. The disclosure of some of the corruption is the outgrowth of the division within the political army of capitalism.

With seemingly inexhaustible riches in the form of natural resources to fatten on, young capitalism developed rapidly and with little internal friction in the United States. But after capitalism had absorbed at least the control over these riches friction was inevitable. Finance capital wrestles with industrial capital for control over the industries and for the lion's share in the profits. The capital controlling the basic industries is exerting pressure upon the capital invested in the manufacture of finished products. This pressure is most painful and most unwelcome; painful because it is based on a control of the needed raw materials; unwelcome because it curtails profits. The small tradesman and storekeeper sees the tentacles of retail-monopolies rob him of his life blood. These economic battles find their expression in political demands of these divers groups, demands that are directed in each case against one or all of the other groups, but in no case against capitalism itself.

Then there are the farmers. The produce exchange controls and holds down the market prices of their products. The railroads make it impossible for the farmers to market these products themselves. The manufacturers of machinery and other necessities of the farm charge exorbitant prices. Finance capital holds over the heads of the farmer the Damocles' sword of the mortgage. And the town merchant is the political tool and ally of one or of the other or all the economic enemies of the farmer. This untenable economic position of the farmer expresses itself in a political revolt. But an independent political movement of the farmers is doomed to failure. The economic position of the farmers in a highly developed country robs them of all the prerequisites of a politically dominant class. No economic division between farmers and non-farmers is possible. The farmers have to bow to the general division made by the social forces of modern days; exploiters and exploited. The farmer will find that he does not belong to a class of farmers, but that some of the farmers belong to the class of the exploiters, and the overwhelming number of them, the working farmers, as a rule, belong to the class of the exploited.

These antagonisms growing out of the diversity of interests of these different economic groups are sharpening because further developments aggravate their causes. Thus the political demands growing out of these differences become more insistent and lead to independent political tendencies, tendencies that are not and cannot be recognized by the existing political parties. These tendencies drive toward the formation of a new, a third party which will be formed by these interests and therefore recognize their demands. The formation of a third party will not finally satisfy all of these interests. The destruction of the two-party system in the United States by the formation of a third party will not end there but will lead to a multi-party system, representing many different interests, forming occasional coalitions on the basis of momentary expediency.

With this, however, we are not concerned here. We are concerned with the third-party tendency. This third-party tendency must not be confused with the labor-party tendency. Although developing and growing simultaneously, they are two distinct tendencies. But although in origin as well as in the final aim these two tendencies are in

opposition to each other, yet, at present, they are closely interlocked. To disentangle them is the foremost duty of the communists.

The existing third-party tendency has up to this time found its only programmatic expression in the platform of Senator La Follette. Government ownership and management of railroads and coal mines are the outstanding features of that program. This program has so enthused the socialists that their leader, Morris Hillquit, could declare in an interview that La Follette has always been very near to them. If that is the opinion of socialists, why could La Follette not lead a labor party, for which, without doubt, socialism even of the kind of Mr. Hillquit will be too radical?

The demand for government ownership and control of mines and railroads grows out of the pain caused the manufacturers of finished products by the control of raw product through the capital that controls the basic industries. They reason this way: Let the government own the means of supply and transportation of raw products, and let us control the government. Ownership of the basic industries by the state, control of the state by the lesser groups of capitalists. The working masses are not interested in such a program. The demand of the workers for government ownership and control of the basic industries is coupled with their determination to gain control of the government. Only a government controlled by the workers can turn the ownership and control of the basic industries into a beneficial institution for the workers. The third-party tendency will press to the foreground the demand of government ownership of the basic industries; the labor-party tendency must press to the foreground the demand of workers' control of the state. These two tendencies are diametrically opposed to each other.

This demand for government control of basic industries is also important to the **farmers**. They too, see in government control of railroads a desirable aim. But they, too, must learn to understand that government control means nothing if that government is not in turn controlled by them. But the farmers must seek a political alliance for the conquest of this control. They cannot find this alliance with the petty bourgeoisie in a third party, because this petty bourgeoisie are the town merchants, the town bankers, the small manufacturers, whose economic domination they are today forced to resent and fight against. The economic foe cannot be a political ally. The only solution for the farmer is an alliance with the workers. Together with the workers, under the workers' leadership, a grand alliance of producers, they must fight for control of the government, and, at the same time, for control of big industries by this government. This grand alliance of producers will be, must be a class farmer-labor party of workers and exploited farmers.

Such a party is in the making. The clouds on the political horizon of the United States grow thicker and darker. From a mere tendency a short while ago there grew the Federated Farmer-Labor Party, the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Federation, the labor parties of Montana, of North Dakota, of Buffalo, and many others. And all these local growths are dominated by the one great thought: to unite their forces, to weld together what there is of conscious political strength of the workers and ex-



Maurice Becker  
**"Rah! Rah! We'll go to war  
 To fill your oil tanks full once more."**

ploited farmers and to build a united class farmer-labor party.

The June 17 convention in St. Paul is the next step on the road to the realization of this goal. The June 17 convention stands for the grand alliance of producers, the unification of the political forces of the workers, the exploited urban masses, and the working farmers, the exploited rural masses. The June 17 convention stands for government control by the workers and farmers. And whatever such a government sees fit to control in turn, will be decided by the workers and farmers themselves.

The June 17 convention is a historic event of the first magnitude in the development of a revolutionary class struggle in the United States. It is destined to bring a first serious breach in a united front between exploited and exploiter, and sets up the principle of a united front of all the exploited against the exploiters.

The task of the formation of a class party of workers and exploited farmers will not be finally solved on June 17. The task of disentangling the intertwined movements for a class farmer-labor party and a third party will not then be finally accomplished. But June 17 will build a substantial foundation for the class farmer-labor party. And June 17 will create the political-chemical substance that will gradually clarify the issue and block the attempt of the petty bourgeoisie to make the workers and the farmers the tail of their political kite so that they may gain control of the basic industries by giving that control to a government controlled by them.

June 17 is the day on which the united forces of progressive American workers and exploited farmers unite in the attempt to create a political storm which is destined to sweep from the earth the political domination of a class whose control of the economic machinery of society causes the bones of our children, the health of our parents, the happiness of our class to be ground into profit, more profit, and still more profit. June 17 will raise the standard of the exploited. And written on this standard there will be the slogan: Let those govern who work and produce!



*Maurice Becker*

**“Rah! Rah! We’ll go to war  
To fill your oil tanks full once more.”**



*Maurice Becker*

**“Rah! Rah! We’ll go to war  
To fill your oil tanks full once more.”**

# "Dear" Government

By Scott Nearing

**"The great majority of peasants in all capitalist countries where the peasant class does exist are oppressed by the government and long for its overthrow, in the hope of a 'cheap' Government."**

—*The State and Revolution, Lenin. Ch. 3, Sect. 2.*

**"D**EAR" government is the high cost of carrying an expensive leisure class, with its accompanying bureaucracy, army, navy, police, and the like. American farmers (peasants) have found the cost of government comparatively low in the past. Within ten years it has mounted skyward with dizzying speed.

First of all, there is the direct cost, in the form of taxes. Then come the fixed charges—rent, interest, and other forms of property income.

Governmental expenditures have risen more rapidly than any other large item during the past decade. The costs of running the federal government, for example, were more than three times as high in 1923 as they were in 1913. The costs of the state governments were about three times as high in 1923 as they were in 1913. City government costs over the same period, more than doubled. There is no need to go into the detail of these vast increases in public expenditure. It is sufficient to note that practically one sixth of the whole income of the American people now goes for the upkeep of government.

This means very little to the high salaried and the high waged, who are not forced to go hungry or to lose their homes because of the increasing burden of taxation, but to millions of American farmers the increased pressure is threatening the loss of home, farm, and the savings of a lifetime of labor.

The secretary of agriculture recently handed to the president a report on the "wheat situation." Among other things, this report shows that in the Kansas wheat belt taxes are two and one half times the pre-war level; that in South Dakota there has been practically the same increase, while in certain Washington counties, the taxes per acre were thirty-five cents in 1914 and \$1.18 in 1921. The Department of Agriculture estimates that, in property taxes alone, the farmers paid \$532,000,000 in 1921 and \$797,000,000 in 1922.

Another item enters into the financial burden of the farmers. They must borrow money to buy fertilizer, machinery, seed and so on. Beside these current borrowings the census of 1920 showed that thirty-seven out of every hundred farms were mortgaged. The percent mortgaged is much higher where the land is more expensive. Thus it is 38% in Illinois, 45% in Kansas, and 54% in Iowa. The total volume of these mortgages is placed at \$7,857,000,000, while the personal and collateral bank loans to farmers are about \$3,869,000,000.

The combined cost to the farmer of carrying taxes, mortgages and short term loans in 1922 is placed at \$1,749,000,000, or about ten percent of the market value of all farm produce for that year. For those farms that carried mortgages, it is estimated that fully 40% of the gross market value of the farm products went to meet interest payments and taxes.

These costs of an expensive ruling class, the farmer meets directly. There is another charge which he also must meet, though it comes to him indirectly, in the form of increased freight rates, higher priced fertilizer and more costly machinery. The total volume of interest and dividend payments from bonds and stocks was almost exactly twice as high in 1923 as it was in 1913. For 1923 it was about \$3,500,000,000. Like the interest on mortgages and the rent on houses, these interest and dividend payments on bonds and stocks entitle those who receive them to live upon the labor of their fellows without returning any corresponding service. They are a first-class ticket of leisure.

Farm failures record the pressure that the farmers are feeling under this growing burden. The secretary of agriculture reports that in the wheat belt (fifteen states) ten percent of all farmers lost their farms between 1920 and 1922, and that, in addition, nearly a fifth of the farmers in these states were bankrupt, but were permitted to retain their farms through the leniency of creditors. In the Mountain States, the percentage of farmers who went bankrupt during these same years is placed at 20%.

Slowly but surely the ownership of the farms is passing into the hands of investors (bankers and money lenders) who are concerned, not in the maintenance of production, but in the payment of interest on notes and mortgages. As the pressure increases, the number of tenant farmers continues to grow. In 1880, the first year in which the facts were published there were 1,024,000 tenants; in 1900, there were 2,024,000; in 1920, there were 2,455,000. The percent of tenants, during these years rose from twenty-five percent to thirty-eight percent. So that, in 1920, nearly two fifths of all of the farms in the United States were farmed by tenants. The percent of tenant farming varies greatly. In New England it is less than ten percent. In the Middle Atlantic States it is 21%. But in the West North Central States it is 34%, and in the West South Central States, 53%. In Illinois, it is 43%; in Iowa, 42%, and in South Dakota, 35%.

The American farmers hold a vast economic prize. The total value of farm property was estimated at \$77,924,000,000 in 1920. Already, bankers and other money lenders have secured a good grip on this property, and as the years pass, they will strengthen their hold.

They might presumably be crude enough to take the land by general evictions, as the British ruling class took the peasants' land and the common land by general enclosure acts toward the end of the Middle Ages. But there is an easier and a simpler way,—to heap up the fixed charges—interest and taxes—to keep a firm hold on the cost of machinery and fertilizer, and to wait. Just as surely as the spring melts into the summer will the average farmer, despite his most desperate struggles, be forced to surrender his title and become a tenant, a farm laborer or a city mechanic. The dice are loaded; the cards are stacked; the game is fixed. **The farmer cannot win.** Under the present economic system there can be no "cheap government" because the governors are intent on driving the farmers into bankruptcy, and they hold in their hand all the agencies that will enable them to do it.



# Karl Marx: The Revolutionist

By Max Shachtman

A TALE used to go the rounds about Marx's first introduction to the Italian workers by way of his writings. He was envisaged as a stately old fellow, pacific in deportment and thought, and having the features and beard of an elderly Christ. When it was later discovered that Marx was swarthy, smoked the most atrocious cigars, that he was an overthrower of governments and a more or less unscrupulous politician; when other such details, great and small, were learned, the Italians were dismayed. Gone was their Marx!

However apocryphal this legend may be, it stands as an example of the wilful and unconscious misrepresentation of Marx and his work which has been carried on in the last fifty years by those who professed to be his ardent disciples or his avowed enemies. Out of Marx the brilliant analyst of politics and economy was created the habitue of the British Museum who drew up a dull book of statistics and of exploded plagiarisms; the revolutionary communist was relegated to the mean position of one who, as Spargo wrote, "belongs with the great evolutionists of the nineteenth century," and one whose thought "it is quite true, at times, harked back to the crude Utopian notion of a sudden and violent revolution." This rush to effeminize Marx gained in momentum with the years until there were left but few intellectual gnomes that had not taken a hand at explaining, interpreting, apologizing for, disproving or improving on the dead and helpless Marx.

But although Marx himself was helpless and ignorant of the deeds of his traducers, the system of thought, knowledge and action which we know as Marxism stood as a constant reproach and rebuttal to them. The more they butted their pens against the stone wall the more casualties there were to list. While today Marx's theories are being molded into deeds, while his ideas are the ideas and the fear of increasing and diversified millions, his opponents and detractors are forgotten. Mallock died obscurely in England a year or so ago; Boehm-Bawerk and his marginal utilitarians are confined to the realm of universities where no one expects any better; Jean Jaures is a tender memory among the French masses, a memory enhanced by his unfortunate and spectacular assassination; and the others? Seligman, Simkhovitch, Jevons of the sun-spots, Struve, Oppenheimer, Bernstein and the rest of the champions of the moment?—they are names of varying unimportance.

Marxism, the philosophic system which was erected by Marx, is the lever for the overthrow of the most pernicious social system in history, and the guide to the building up of the communist society.

Marx's economic theories are found in his scorching reply to Proudhon, in the Critique of Political Economy, in the Communist Manifesto and in Das Kapital. His plans and method of carrying out the proletarian revolution were developed in the period between the Communist Manifesto and the aftermath of the Paris Commune.

In general, Marx had laid down the economic basis

for social change: The development of the capitalist mode of production brings with it the centralization of the control of wealth in the hands of a diminishing number of capitalists and on the other hand the pauperization of the workers. The composition of capital increases in its constant factor, causing the intensification of the rate of exploitation. Capital finds itself unable to absorb its surplus and the resultant misery, unemployment and war force the militant and machine-organized proletariat to rebel. "Centralization of the means of production and the socialization of labor at last reach a point where they become incompatible with their capitalist integument. This integument is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated."

But when Marx wrote this he had already assumed a working class not only blindly unified by the machine but also organized into a solidified, centralized political party which was conscious of its tasks and mission. Such a party he attempted to create when he became active in the Communist League, the program of which, the Communist Manifesto, he wrote with Engels, and in the more successful attempt in 1864 when the International Workingmen's Association was founded. In the inaugural speech, Marx said: "One element of success is possessed by the workers—their great numbers. But the mass can only bring their pressure to bear when an organization has gathered them together and given them an intelligent lead." And he later wrote to Engels (1867) that "in the next revolution, which is perhaps nearer than it seems, we . . . have this powerful machinery in our hands."

And it was in their hands! Marx used it to cripple the absurd theories and fantastic brotherhoods of Bakunin. Marx had dissented from the action of some French members of the International who had travelled from London to Paris "in order to do foolish things. . . overthrow the Provisional Government and set up a Commune de Paris," but when the Paris Commune was established Marx supported it superbly and attempted to give it direction. He sent regularly notes of instruction for the carrying out of various details of the work. On March 20 the General Council of the International (read: Marx) wrote to Paris: "In face of the difficulties that impede the departure of citizens Assi and Mortier for Lyons, we delegate citizen Landeck to Marseilles and Lyons with full powers." April 9: "Henceforth let the Republicans act, and do not compromise yourselves." And "we await results to give you our instructions." These are enough to show Marx's belief in a centralized international organization, the mold into which he tried to pour the International Workingmen's Association.

The fall of the Commune led Marx to reaffirm, more clearly than in 1847, his adherence to the dictatorship of the proletariat as the imperative transition period between the old and the new societies. This he did in his post-Commune address to the General Council of the International, three years later in his criticism of the German



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party program (Gotha) and in various letter and documents. Further, he anticipated the Bolsheviks so far as to say that in the event of a middle-class revolution, the workers must set up against the new government "a revolutionary workers' government, either in the form of local committees, communal councils, or workers' clubs or workers' committees, so that the democratic, middle-class government not only immediately loses its support amongst the working classes, but from the commencement finds itself supervised and threatened by a jurisdiction, behind which stands the entire mass of the working class. . . . The arming of the whole proletariat must be carried out at once. . . the workers employed in State service must arm and organize in a special corps, with a chief chosen by themselves, or form a part of the Proletarian Guard."\*

Marx as the greatest political economist in history is acknowledged. The same Marx, but the Marx that formulated the tactics of the working class for the periods before and during and after the proletarian revolution, the

Marx that advocated revolutionary violence, that insisted on the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form or proletarian councils and supported by the proletarian army, Marx the revolutionist, is clouded by the pacific aura arising from the burning incense of his biographers, Spargo, the elder Liebknecht, Loria and the others who were neither called nor chosen.

The Russian working class revolution and the Communist International recovered Marx from the angelic robes in which his Boswells had embalmed him. The revolutionary spirit of Marx pervades every word and deed of the communist movement today, not because of Marx the individual, but because of Marx and his works as the historical expression and representative of the modern proletariat rising to power. Marxism is not dead; nor is it an historical subject for study and controversy. It lives today and blooms with the life and growth of the Communist International, with the approaching victory of the world's proletariat.

\* Address to the Communist League.



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Maurice Becker



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# What Are We Doing to Honduras?

By Bertram D. Wolfe

“SPUTTER, sputter, sputter!” The two giant antennae on the armored warship Milwaukee are spitting out lies about Honduras. “Slobber, slobber, slobber!” Secretary of State Hughes is gushing about the friendly relations between the United States and Latin-America. “Pup, pup, pup, pup-pup!” Yankee machine guns are spewing lead in the streets of Tegucigalpa to protect American lives and property. And the man on the streets in New York or Chicago says: “What is our government up to now? What the hell are our troops doing in Honduras?”

“Our troops are protecting American lives and property. Our troops are defending the American legation from drunken soldiers. Our troops are taking off of the shoulders of the Honduras government the worries of policing their capital city where the soldiers have gotten out of hand and are drunk, where anarchy prevails. Our troops are preventing the English, French, Italian and Chinese governments from intervening. Our troops are not in Honduras at all.” What are we up to in Honduras?

In January, Hughes was saying anent Obregon and De La Huerta, “We will permit no more revolutions in Latin-America.” On February 1, the legal presidential term of General Lopez Gutierrez came to an end in Honduras. There were three candidates to succeed him and none of them had gotten the majority required by the Honduran constitution. To make matters worse, elements desiring either dictatorship or intervention—which I cannot say—were preventing a quorum in the Honduran congress.

General Lopez Gutierrez continued himself in office, called a constitutional assembly and prepared to reform the constitution so that a new president could be elected constitutionally. On February 6, Hughes recognized him as the de facto government. On February 6, candidate Tiburcio Carias declared himself in rebellion and received the adherence of Candidate Ferrera.

Hughes was still saying smilingly to whom it might concern that the United States would permit no revolutions in Latin-America—but the smile faded on his face and became a frozen grimace as he saw the chance to use the revolutionary Carias, financed by American interests. Let us see what he did to the de facto government whose legality he had recognized the same day the revolt broke out.

## The Marines Go First

Within a half month there was one battleship on the Atlantic side and another on the Pacific side of this tiny country which two battleships can almost cut from sea to sea with their fire. The Rochester which had butted freely into the electoral question was backed by the armored cruiser Milwaukee which steamed into Amapala. On March 1, a destroyer was ordered to sail from Jamaica to Puerto Cortes. About the same time the battleship Denver arrived there, this ship being under no less than a rear-admiral, Dayton.

Then the game of landing-parties began for the “see-the-world-and-learn-a-trade” boys. The Consulate in the Port of La Ceiba discovered that it needed “protection.” Thirty-five were landed March 1. On March 3, it was reported that there were seventy marines there, and that they were protecting the consulate in a fight between “bandits” and the federal, legal government. On the 4th of March, Franklin Morales, “our” minister plenipotentiary and representative of “our” interests in this “interesting” country, reported that shots had been exchanged between our troops and the federals, and that the latter had abandoned the port, after burning a couple blocks of American business buildings. He also announced that the Port was then peacefully occupied, not by “bandits” but by the rebel troops. (The Liberator should offer the prize of a year’s subscription to the reader who can guess what happened to the bandits.)

The next day the Denver steamed to Tela and on the 13th the rebels had gained the Port of Tela, against preceded by an American landing party.

On March 4, Franklin Morales valiantly opposed the collecting of an advance on taxes in the capital, Tegucigalpa. He reported that the capital was about to fall within a day or two and asked that a detachment of marines be sent overland from Amapala where the Milwaukee was anchored, a distance of 100 miles, obliging the troops to pass through the rebel army lines. At the same time he offered to intervene and to arbitrate to avoid a battle for Tegucigalpa. On the 7th it was announced that the capital had surrendered peacefully thanks to his good offices, but he counted the chickens before the shells began to crack for the capital is still in federal hands at this writing.

The heroic overland march began on the seventeenth with 167 marines and nine officers under Commandant Casey undertaking to pass through the rebel lines (with their joyous permission) to “protect the American legation” in the capital. On the same day the Associated Press announced (I quote the heads of a Mexico City Associated Press paper, English section):

## TEGUCIGALPA IN UPROAR

Rebels Loot and Burn;  
Fire at U. S. Legation  
As Disorder Rules Supreme

The Honduran government responded with the following:

“The U. S. is the only responsible party for the ‘anarchy’ in which Honduras is engulfed. . . . The events that are occurring in our country prove that the White House does not hesitate to unchain anarchy in any country when its governors fail to lend themselves as instruments to the American colossus. . . .”

### "The First to Go"—But the Last to Leave

On March 20 the Honduras Federal Government notified Franklin Morales that it would "accept no responsibility for what might occur" if the marines remained in the capital, and demanded that they return to their battleship. Morales valiantly replied (our representatives in Latin-America are always valiant, not to say impudent) "that the disembarking of the forces was necessary and that would remain in Honduras until the authorities were capable of giving adequate protection to American interests. . . .and that he would accept no responsibility for what might happen if the detachment were attacked." (Associated Press March 20). And the Department of State with its usual facility for calling black white announced: "It is not intervention, but protection of our interests." The next day, with its characteristic brazen hypocrisy the same department announced: "The relations between Latin-America and the United States were never more cordial than they are at this moment."

### Tegucigalpa Gets the Falling Sickness.

The reader must remember that the capital of Honduras had already "peacefully surrendered" on the 7th. Commandant Casey announced again that it would fall within twenty-four hours on March 24, using the wireless of the cruiser Milwaukee for the purpose. Capt. Anderson of the same ship flashed the fact that the whole army had deserted the de facto government and that only the capital was in federal hands. The close connection between the official diplomatic lie factory and the unofficial Associated Press lie factory is revealed in the A. P. dispatch of the same day:

"Commandant Casey also transmitted by radio, making use of the cruiser Milwaukee, authentic reports prepared by the representative of the Associated Press, which the de facto government did not permit to be transmitted from Tegucigalpa."

The dispatch in question reported battles in the city, street fighting, and falling of the north, the south, the east, the west and the center of the country into rebel hands.

On March 25, Morales telegraphed that the city was falling. On March 27, there was a new president who was to convoke new elections and a constituent assembly. The old government de facto had passed into history.

On March 29, Morales reported that there was still some fighting but "demoralization was beginning to spread through the Federal troops (which several days earlier had already joined the rebels) so that it was not doubtful that at any moment the rebels would attain a complete victory."

### Tegucigalpa Falls—Like Petrograd

But General Arias, leader of the government forces, fell "like Kelly did" to use a homely and apt by-word. On April 1, the news leaked through that the federals not only continued to hold the capital but also many other parts of the country and that the rest of the country was slowly mobilizing in the rear of General Ferrera, rebel leader, and were likely to attack him from behind. An April 1 dispatch from San Salvador reveals Ferrera defeated from in front and compelled to abandon three lines of trenches. Also on April 1, the New York Times, which

must have its little April fool joke, announced that the rebels had taken Tegucigalpa.

But why go on. The rebels will eventually take the little capital with the big name, not because the people of Honduras want it but because U. S. Ambassador Morales wants it, because Commandant Casey wants it, because Secretary Hughes wants it, because the Morgan Associated Press wants it, because, in a word, "We" want it.

What the Associated Press says is so has a habit of becoming so later on, except where a Communist Party and a Red Army figure in the case. "We" always have plenty of money to make things as "We" want them to be in Latin-America. There's the canal to protect. There's oil in central America. There's the Yankee edition of Berlin-to-Bagdad and Cape-to-Cairo—the 10,000-mile New York-to-Buenos Aires Railroad to complete. There's \$4,000,000,000 in investments to protect. There's all Latin-America to grab. Verily; "the relations of Latin-America with the United States were never more cordial than at the present moment."

To promote this cordiality we never hesitate at such a little thing as the making of a revolution or the landing of a party of marines or the dispatching of a baby fleet. When Central America was about to unite its five little republics into the United States of Central America, we manufactured a revolution in Guatemala and that ended that little dream. Our modern Persian juggernaut has rolled across the modern Corinthian Peninsula of Central America and Bolivia, Peru, Colombia and Brazil are now in its hands. Its advance will only end with the land's end at Tierra del Fuego, or with the end of the mighty American empire.

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# The Crusade Against the Foreign-Born

By Alexander Bittelman

THE peculiar and significant feature of all the restrictive immigration bills now before Congress is that they merely aim at excluding a certain type of immigrants, which is an entirely different matter from restricting immigration in general. The latter is not what the masters of the American government want. They do want immigrants, but only of a certain kind. And our lawmakers in Washington are obligingly coming to the rescue.

Another feature of some of these bills, and perhaps the most vicious, is the attempt to place virtually in the position of criminals all the foreign-born workers of the United States. Most of the anti-immigration bills so far submitted to Congress carry provisions which, when ratified, would mean nothing less than a strict and merciless police supervision over the doings and the very lives of millions of immigrant workers employed in American industries.

The purpose is obvious. By classifying, sifting, selecting and excluding from admission into the United States so-called undesirables, a virtual cordon will be established against all prospective immigrants that are infected with unionism, anti-capitalism and a will to fight in the cause of labor. Only from this angle can we explain the provision in the Johnson bill passed by the House of Representatives that the "quota" of immigrants to be admitted annually from each country is to be determined on the basis of the United States Census of 1890.

A simple device. The census of 1890 happens to show a comparatively smaller number of residents in the United States born in the countries of southern and eastern Europe. If we compute the "quota" on the basis of the census of 1890, we get a comparatively small number of immigrants to be admitted annually from these countries, which means, less Italians, less Russians, less Poles, less Roumanians and less workers of all the other countries that are located in the "turbulent" sections of the European continent.

So, there you are. We restrict immigration from the countries of southern and eastern Europe, because, beware, the workingman coming to our shores from those sections may join a labor union, may prove a brave fighter for higher wages and shorter hours, may also fight for a Labor Party and—God save us!—may even become a Communist. Naturally, this cannot be permitted, not if the American capitalists can help it. Hence, the deluge of anti-immigration bills engulfing the noble seat of our federal legislative bodies.

The purpose is clear. It is to save—not America—but the capitalists of America from the troublesome and annoying kind of labor immigrants that may desire to come here from abroad and settle in our midst. This purpose is not always kept concealed. Once in a while one of the sworn defenders of our institutions (read: capitalism) would explode and tell us something about the "inside dope" of the new crusade against the working class of America. And then we learn that:

"According to the Secretary of Labor the immigration figures indicate that the workers who have been able to secure admission under our laws are not the kind the employer says he needs (our emphasis). But we do know this: that among those who have entered our country are immigrants whose mental, moral, and physical make-up constitute a menace to the political, economic and social life of the republic."

Plain enough, isn't it? The situation is not satisfactory because the employers are not getting the kind of labor they want. This, according to the Secretary of Labor, whose "competent" opinion was made known to the world by Representative Vestal of Indiana in a debate on the Johnson bill in the House of Representatives on April 8th.

This worthy spokesman of the "people" of Indiana, who seems to know very well what the employers want but is hardly interested in what labor wants, is even more outspoken. In the same debate he gave vent to something like this:

"There is no reasonable objection in compelling aliens to register once a year. . . We know that individuals in this country are preaching the cause of Soviet Russia. We know that individuals on trial for plots to overthrow the government have not hesitated to preach the gospel of Communism rather than the stability and prosperity of American representative government."

No reasonable objection, indeed, to compel aliens to register once a year; photograph them, finger-print them, hold over their heads the constant threat of deportation, and drive the fear of God into their hearts so that they will respect and venerate the stability and prosperity of Teapot Dome representative government.

Fine scheme! Excellent scheme! Only it wouldn't work very well. Not always, anyway. American labor is bound to realize, despite even Sam Gompers, that the very existence of the labor movement is being threatened by this new crusade against immigration of a kind and against foreign born workers.

Let these bills become law. And what will happen? The courage and fighting ability of the foreign-born workers is bound to give way—temporarily at least—under the terrific weight of these proposed persecutions. Trade unions will be weakened. Strikes more easily broken and defeated. The open shop will march in triumphantly and will take possession, brutally and unscrupulously, of everything that the American worker succeeded in wresting from the greedy hand of his exploiters.

More than that. The native American worker will stand completely isolated. Yes, and separated from all



Robert Minor

U.S. JAPANESE-EXCLUSION LINE

Robert Minor

“Keep the Flag Waving, Charley!”



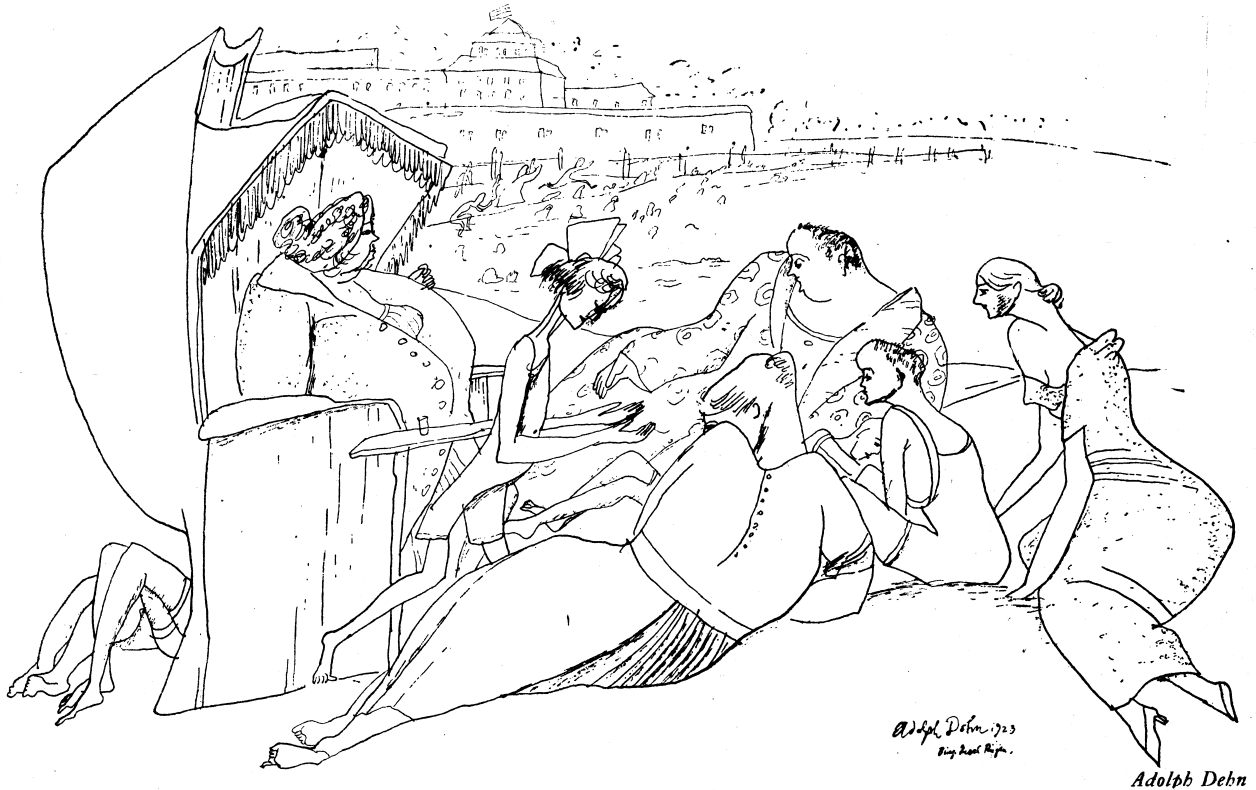


Robert Minor

U.S. JAPANESE-EXCLUSION LINE

Robert Minor

"Keep the Flag Waving, Charley!"



Aristocracy at the Beach

friends and all supporters. If these vicious bills are made law and put into effect this is what's bound to happen. The resistance of the foreign-born workers against the employers will decrease considerably. These workers will dare much less than they do now. And the native American worker will then have to meet the full brunt of the capitalist attack almost single-handed.

Surprising, how old man Sam can't see any of these things coming. He has such a long vision, hasn't he? He could see, for instance, that recognition of Soviet Russia by the United States government would mean the ruination of America. He can also see that independent political action and the formation of a farmer-labor party would mean the end of the American Federation of Labor. He sees many things but not this: that the pernicious campaign against foreign-born workers is aimed directly at the American labor movement.

Sam Gompers favors the Johnson bill. He has even appealed to all affiliated unions of the A. F. of L. to support this bill. Why? Is it because this bill, if it becomes law, will enable the American capitalists better to fight the American workers?

Just examine it.

Section 23 reads: "In any proceeding under the immigration laws the burden of proving the right of any individual to enter or remain in the United States shall, as between him and the United States, be upon such individual." This section means that we place into the hands of government officials (read: servants of capital) un-

limited powers in deciding what kind of immigrant may or may not enter or reside in the United States.

Section 4e provides for the admission of skilled labor on a non-"quota" basis. And it says: "The question of the necessity of importing such skilled labor in any particular instance shall be determined by the Secretary (of Labor) upon the written application of any person interested."

Now, persons interested in the importation of labor are employers of labor or their agents. These employers will apply to the Secretary of Labor for permission to import skilled labor, and the Secretary will render his decision. And what will that be? Whatever the employers may need "in any particular instance." Can his decision be anything else?

And yet, Sam Gompers finds it possible to support the Johnson bill. Is he blind, indifferent, or both? Or is he a quite sharp-sighted agent of the employers?

It may be well to emphasize again that the prime requisite for the success of the American labor movement is a strong bond of unity and solidarity between the workers of this country—native and foreign born. Once this bond is weakened or destroyed, the American working class will find itself completely at the mercy of its masters. The Johnson bill and all the other measures against certain kinds of immigrants and against the foreign-born desire nothing else but the destruction of this bond of unity between the native-born and foreign-born American worker. No struggle, therefore, is wasted in the effort to prevent this from happening.

# The Life and Work of Lenin

By Karl Radek

(Concluded from *April Liberator*)

## Lenin as the Founder of the Communist International

**E**VEN during the period of his first sojourn in western Europe, prior to his exile, Lenin began to study with great interest the labor movements of western Europe which he had formerly known merely through books and periodicals and which he was now able to study in actual practice. He often told of the impression made on him by the Swiss and French workers' meetings; how his new observations contradicted the pictures which he had created in his own imagination, while in Russia, regarding the European labor movement. But the great realist did not for one moment surrender himself to skepticism, but sought the revolutionary essence of the West-European labor movement in its daily tasks. Lenin did not come into close contact with the labor movement and its leaders in Germany, Switzerland, France and England until 1901, when upon his return from exile he took part with Martov, Axelrod and Plekhanov in the publication of the "Iskra." The "Iskra" became the fighting organ not only of the Russian Social-Democracy but of international socialism. The time of its publication coincided with the climax of the conflict between the revolutionary and revisionist tendencies of international socialism. The practical problems of the West-European labor movement were analyzed in the "Iskra," for the most part by Plekhanov. Lenin directed his attention mainly to the theoretical side of this problem, but at the same time studied carefully the development of the labor movement. He visited workers' meetings in Munich, listened attentively not only to the speeches of socialist orators at meetings in Hyde Park, London, but also to the speeches of the advocates of various religious sects, which found a lively response among the working masses of England.

It became quite clear to Lenin, from the first active appearance of Bernstein, that revisionism represented the expression of the interests of the labor aristocracy and labor bureaucracy. This Lenin now saw demonstrated through the different types in the labor movement. At the International congresses at Amsterdam and Stuttgart he observed the leading organizations of the Second International and undoubtedly felt himself quite alone. The debates at the Stuttgart Congress on colonial policy, and on the struggle against the danger of war, showed Lenin the road pursued by the leaders of reformism. The articles which he wrote on the sessions of the International Bureau after the first revolution, were already saturated with profound hatred for all these Van Kal's, Traelstras and Brantings.

At that time the International itself was not yet broken up, but Lenin was aware that it contained enemies of the working class, and the entire worthy company of the Second International, from the open revisionists down to Kautsky whom Lenin had met in 1901 in Munich, and in whom at best he recognized a man with his head in the clouds. The theoretician of Polish Marxism, Comrade

Warski, pointed out very cleverly in his article on the lessons of the Bolshevik anniversary, that while the entire left wing of the Second International, including its better men, represented the opposition to reformism in the Second International, it was Lenin alone who became the initiator of the Third. Suffice it to read in "Enlightenment" Lenin's short review of a book written by the German Trade Union leader, Karl Legien, about his visit to America, to recognize that on one except Lenin wrote about this honorable company in this manner.

The disagreements between revisionism and radical Marxism, at that time headed by Karl Kautsky, were merely differences in the interpretation of Marxian doctrine. In reality, in daily practice, these two tendencies agreed pretty well with one another, and upon this fact rested the unity of the Second International. The congress met for some years without giving rise to any serious conflicts. Usually their work resulted in the acceptance of some common resolution. In actual practice the so-called radical Marxists did not even propose a revolutionary preparedness of the masses by means of clear and decided revolutionary agitation. In 1910 in Germany a split in the ranks of the so-called orthodox Marxists was noticed. It was a split on practical grounds, on grounds of action. The so-called left radical section and the so-called center, with Kautsky at the head, were formed. The division took place on the questions of the fight against imperialism and of mass strikes. At first it appeared to Lenin, that we, the left radicals, had incorrectly formulated our attitude to imperialism but were absolutely right on the question of a general strike. While Martov's article against Rosa Luxemburg appeared in Kautsky's organ, Lenin published in the Russian Central Organ the article of Pannekoek in defence of the position of the left radicals and morally supported the left.

## The War Breaks Out.

The dark day of August 4th came. Lenin, exiled in the Carpathian mountains, received the news of the complete treachery of the German and International Social-Democracy. For a moment he doubted the news, thinking it perhaps a trick of the international bourgeoisie, as a war manoeuvre; but soon he was convinced of the tragic reality and, having left Austria for Switzerland, immediately took up his fighting position. I had an opportunity to talk to Lenin as early as the end of 1914, when his position had already been expressed in the historical manifesto of the Central Committee of the Party and in a few numbers of the "Social Democrat." I shall always remember the profound impression my conversation with Lenin made on me. I had come from Germany to establish communications with revolutionary groups of other countries. In Germany we unconditionally rejected the position of the Social-Democratic majority from the first day of the war. We rejected the defence of the Fatherland in an imperialistic war. We clashed in the struggle with Kautsky and Haase, who did not go beyond the confines of timid opposition to



Viennese Street Scene

Adolph Dehn

social patriotic leadership in the party and differed from this only in that they yearned for peace. In our propaganda conducted in the censored press as well as in the hektographed leaflets, we advanced the project of revolutionary war against war. But my conversations with Lenin meant to me, and through me to my German comrades, an abrupt move to the left. The first problem Lenin put to me was the prospect of a split in the German Social-Democracy. This question was like a dagger in my heart and in the hearts of my comrades. We had spoken thousands of times of reformism as a policy of the labor aristocracy, but in spite of it cherished the hope that after the first patriotic outbreak the entire German party would turn to the left. The fact that Karl Liebknecht did not vote openly against war on August 4, may be explained thus: that he had hoped that under government persecution, the entire party would break away from the government and the defence of the imperialistic Fatherland. Lenin put the question directly; what is the actual policy of the Second International? Is it an error, or a betrayal of the interests of the working class? I began to explain to him that we stood at the parting roads of two epochs: the epoch of the peaceful development of socialism within the limits of democracy, and the epoch of storm and stress, that it was not merely a question of the disloyalty of the leader but of the attitude of the masses, who unable to find sufficient force to oppose war subordinated themselves to the policy of the bourgeoisie; and that the hardships arising because of this policy would force the masses to break away from the bourgeoisie and to enter upon the path of revolutionary war. Lenin interrupted me by saying: "It is an historicism that all of this is explained by the change of epochs; but

can the leaders of reformism, who had even before the war systematically led the proletariat into the camp of the bourgeoisie, and who at the outbreak of war went over to this camp openly,—can they now become the champions of a revolutionary policy?" I answered that I did not believe it possible. "Then," declared Lenin: "the reformist leaders, survivors of an outgrown epoch, must be cast aside. If we actually wish to facilitate the transition of the working class to the policy of war against war and war against reformism, we must break with the reformist leaders and with all who are not honestly fighting against them. Now the problem of when to break off, how properly to organize and prepare for this split, is a problem of tactics, but to strive toward this break is the fundamental duty of every proletarian revolutionist." Lenin insisted upon the keenest form of ideological war against the social patriots; he insisted upon the absolute necessity of an open declaration of the treachery committed, especially the treachery of these leaders. He repeated these words many times when we worked together later; when drawing up resolutions he always attacked on the basis of this political definition, considering it the index of revolutionary sincerity and logic, and of the will to break away from the Social-Democracy.

With the same sharpness Lenin presented the problem of opposing the Slogan of Civil Peace with the Slogan of Civil War. Since the time of our polemics with Kautsky, we German left radicals had become accustomed to advance the less clearly-formulated slogan: "mass action." The indefiniteness of this slogan corresponded to the embryonic state of the revolutionary movement in Germany in 1911-1912, when we regarded the demonstration of the Berlin workers in the Tiergarten at the time of the struggle for



Viennese Street Scene

Adolph Dehn

universal suffrage in the Russian Diet as the beginning of the revolutionary struggle of the German workers. Lenin pointed out, that although this slogan might be suitable for the purpose of opposing mass actions to the parliamentary combinations of the leaders of the German Social-Democracy in pre-war times, it became absolutely unsuitable in times of blood and iron, in time of war. "If," he said, "the discontent with the war should increase, even the centrists will be able to organize a mass movement in order to exert pressure upon the government and force it to end the war by a peaceful agreement. If our aim, the aim of exchanging the imperialist war for a revolution is not to become merely a useless wish, but a goal for which we really want to work, the slogan of civil war must be definitely and clearly advanced." He was greatly pleased when in his letter to the Zimmerwald Conference Liebknecht used the words: "against civil peace—for civil war." This was proof to Lenin that in essentials Liebknecht was in agreement with us.

The split in the Second International as a means of forming the revolutionary movement of the proletariat, the civil war as a means to victory over imperialist war—these were two fundamental ideals which Lenin had endeavored to impress on the minds of the advanced revolutionary elements in every country with which he had contact. Despite the fact that Lenin had even then insisted definitely and clearly upon the later Communist International, he nevertheless went to the Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences called by the anti-war militarist Social-Democratic organizations. He well understood that it was necessary first to awaken the minds of the workers by forming blocs with the centrist tendencies, to shake the unity of Social Democracy, and to gather together considerable sections of the working masses, in order not to be satisfied with propaganda alone, but to begin the actual struggle.

Not only did he follow attentively all the documents produced in the course of the struggle of the various tendencies. This, by the way, he did without sparing any pains. It is sufficient to state that he read the pamphlet of the Dutch Marxist Horter regarding the war from the first page to the last with the help of a dictionary, without knowing a word of the Dutch language. He also followed most attentively every minute symptom of revolutionary self-activity among the masses, endeavoring to ascertain the degree of political development already attained. When in Berne, Switzerland, from an old comrade who since the nineties had stood at the extreme left wing of the German Social-Democracy, but who was absolutely ignorant on questions of principle, Lenin obtained literally a complete picture of the movement. I remember the astonishment of this Social-Democrat, when Lenin gave him no rest, until he had told him what the working men and women shouted at the demonstrations. "They shouted the usual things!" the Social-Democrat replied. But Lenin insisted: "Still, you must tell me, just what did they shout?"—until he obtained from the man the necessary information. He followed with the greatest attention all details in the European and American press in order to discover the trend of feeling of the masses, which the political articles, strictly reviewed by the war censors, no longer expressed. The great revolutionary leader sought even in foreign countries this

intimate relation with the working masses which alone made it possible to find the keynote of the movement. He spent whole evenings in saloons in order to discern the real foundation of the movement, in talk with the Swiss workers, who were by no means the best products of revolutionary thought. When the comrades at that time leading the left wing of the Swiss labor movement were shaky and hesitant, he insisted that every one of us seek contact with at least small groups of the workers, upon whom alone he relied.

As early as 1916 when we had gathered small groups of adherents in different countries, and in the ranks of the Zimmerwald bloc had created the so-called Zimmerwald Left, Vladimir Ilyich insisted that we begin drawing up the program of the future revolutionary International.

Out of this preliminary work of his, his book "The State and Revolution" appeared later. As early as 1916 he advocated the idea of the State-Commune, which at first was no more intelligible to us than the famous April thesis of Lenin was to our Russian comrades. All of us had read Marx's book about the Paris Commune many times, but we had overlooked the new idea it contained, the idea of the State-Commune, and Lenin had with great difficulty made clear to us his own point of view. It was very characteristic of him as a tactician that the experience of 1905 had even then caused him to point out to us the possible role of the Soviets as the organs of the State-Commune. But at the time of the February revolution, Lenin having only vague information regarding the actual situation in Russia, in reply to a question of comrades Pyatakoff and Kollontay, departing for Russia and asking for directions, he said: "No confidence in the provisional government. The constitutional assembly is nonsense. The Petrograd and Moscow Dumas must be taken possession of." In the struggle for the State-Commune, Lenin sought the aid of organs closely related to the daily life of the masses, without concerning himself greatly as to the names of the organs.

One of the results of his program work of this period is his attitude toward the question of self-determination of peoples. Before the war Lenin advanced this problem from its Russian aspect, as a means of freeing the Russian proletariat from the influence of Great Russian Chauvinism, and as a means of winning the good will of the masses of non-Russian peoples in Russia, in whom he hoped to find the ally for the struggle against Czarism. During the war he approached this problem on its international aspect. Rosa Luxemburg's pamphlet on the bankruptcy of the German Social-Democrats, in which she generally disputed the possibility of liberation by means of wars of national emancipation in the period of imperialism, induced Lenin to advance the question of self-determination anew. With unprecedented tactical flexibility, though rejecting decisively the so-called defence of country for imperialistic governments suffering from the West-European narrowness of horizon he pointed out to us, that if the period of national wars has passed in Western Europe, it has not yet passed in Southwestern Europe, it has not passed for the national minorities in Russia, nor in the colonies in Asia. Lenin had not devoted himself to a concrete study of the colonial movements before the war; in these problems many of us knew ten times as much as he, and he strove most conscientiously to collect the necessary concrete mate-

rial through books and discussions. But he turned this material against us, and in the question of the self-determination of peoples, combatted the position of Kautsky, for whom this slogan became the weapon of pacifism and a solution of the Alsace Lorraine problem. With the severe criticism he directed against my thesis on the question of self-determination of peoples, he taught us the significance of this problem, as the dynamic force against imperialism. The cunning centrist philosophers, like Hilferding and his ilk strove to prove to the European proletariat that Lenin advanced the colonial and national problems at the second congress of the Communist International in the interest of the government. But Lenin led a bitter war against Gorter, Pannekoek, Bucharin, Pyatakov and myself in this question, while still a persecuted emigre in Switzerland. This question had for him the same significance as the winning over of the peasants on an international scale as an ally for the world proletariat. Without alliance with the revolution of the young enslaved peoples of the East and of the colonies, the victory of the International proletariat was impossible. This Lenin taught us as early as 1916.

From the very beginning of the February Revolution, Lenin strove to destroy the bloc with the centrists for the liquidation of the Zimmerwald Union. He considered that the Russian Revolution, raising the question of revolution in all belligerent countries, would give to us communists a mass force and thrust all the irresolute elements of the centrists into the camp of the traitors. He did not permit us to sign the manifesto of the Zimmerwald Commission regarding the Russian Revolution, for he saw that our signatures along side of Martov's, might confuse the Russian workers and would interfere with the struggle against Tscheidze and the Mensheviks. This split did not take place during 1917 for we strove to make use of the Zimmerwald Bureau to induce the Independent Socialists in Germany to take up the struggle against German imperialism; the Spartacus Union had not yet separated from the Independents. After the seizure of power in October, 1917 the Zimmerwald Union practically died. The struggle of the Russian working class proved to be the chief means of awakening the world proletariat. The whole year of 1918 was devoted to the preparation of the constitutional congress of the Communist International.

This congress, which took place in 1919, at the moment of the opening of the struggle with Denikin and Kolchak, created nothing new in principle. It was based upon the ideological activity of the Bolsheviks in the Zimmerwald Left, in the preceding years of the War. Its decision, the Manifesto, and above all Lenin's thesis on dictatorship and democracy, laid the foundation for the future work of the Communist International. At the time of the October Revolution, many reading the decrees on peace and on the land, thought that these documents would share the fate of proclamations which are never executed. In the most critical moments of the Russian Revolution, when the news was received of Kolchak's movements towards the Volga and of the defeat of the young Red Army in the South, the decisions of the first Communist International were issued; and not only many of the West-European Communists but also many of us, members of the Russian Communist Party, working illegally in the West



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asked ourselves whether these documents were not the legacy of the Russian Revolution which was in deadly danger. The executive of the Communist International, cut off by the blockade from the West-European Labor movement, could have very little practical influence on its movements, could give very little aid to the West-European workers. They independently paved the way for themselves, learned to solve their own problems, and not until 1920, with the victory of the Red Army over Denikin and Kolchak, did the daily activities of the Russian Communist International begin. And now Lenin rose at the head of the International labor movement, as its practical leader, as its good genius, helping the young Communist movement to understand its first steps and to find its future way.

Lenin wrote three important documents for the second congress of the Communist International. Delegates coming from all over the world found translations of Lenin's pamphlet "Leftism—The Infantile Disorder of Communism." They were acquainted with Lenin's "The State and Revolution," like a torch lighting the way to their great goal—the dictatorship of the Proletariat. His pamphlet on Leftism lighted the way of the young communist parties which had thought that in one leap they could seize the enemy by the throat, that the revolutionary wave would bring them straight to their goal. Lenin taught the young communist parties, refusing any compromise in the revolutionary strife, to consider the experience of the Russian Revolution. He pointed out to them that in order to attain the dictatorship of the proletariat it was first necessary to win over the majority of the working class. He

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pointed out that in order to win over the majority of the working class every means supplied to the more advanced workers by the very bourgeois democracy which they intended to overthrow, must be utilized. He pointed out to them that if the way to the barricades should lead through the Parliament, the idea of Communism must be preached to the working masses from even this dunghill. He pointed to the mass organization of the proletariat, to the trade unions which must be snatched out of the hands of the yellow leaders by unwearying efforts. He pointed out that the revolutionary minority cannot decline to compromise, if this compromise might facilitate the winning over of the majority. It is difficult to cover in a few words the contents of this memorable work of the great leader. We must say that nine-tenths of the leaders of the Communist International have not even yet fully mastered this pamphlet. This little pamphlet contains the quintessence of the entire philosophy of bolshevism, its strategy and tactics, and many years of victory and defeat will pass before we shall be able to say that these ideas of Lenin have really become part of the flesh and blood of the leaders of the Communist International. The more one reads this pamphlet, the more new ideas and finer shades of thought one finds. Suffice it to say that after two years of application of the united front tactics, only last year did I discover that this had been already developed in the pamphlet, though I had completely forgotten this when for the first time I applied these tactics in 1921 to the famous "Open Letter" to the Social-Democratic parties and the trade unions. The inexhaustible lessons either developed in or contained between the lines of this treatise about the class-war will have for our strategy no less value than Clausevitz's book "Of War" had for military strategy. The difficulty of applying these lessons is the impossibility of learning the strategy of the proletariat by means of propaganda, by discussions on the struggle of the Russian proletariat. The daily experience of the Communist parties the world over constantly changes the form in which the fundamental problems arise, and the independent activity of mind of every Communist party is essential if it is to rise to the level of revolutionary strategy of our greatest revolutionary leader.

The second document offered by Lenin at the second Congress, was his first draft of conditions of admission to the Communist International. These theses have been ridiculed, many protests were levelled against them; but when we read them, when we inquire which of these parties comprising the Communist International has already learned to fulfill even one tenth part of these conditions, we see their great political significance. If Lenin's book "The State and Revolution" showed us the goal of the Communist movement or, speaking more precisely, its first great stage of the journey; if this pamphlet on leftism shows the whole difficult path of the struggle for dictatorship—these theses of Lenin present the problem of what the Communist party should become. It does not pay to pass any new resolutions without first verifying how far these theses have been fulfilled. These theses are a test, a measuring rod of the degree of development of the Communist International from the social democratic left parties into real Communist parties.

The third of Lenin's documents was his draft of the theses on the colonial question. Even these have not yet permeated the flesh and blood of either the proletarian Communist parties of the West, whose hundreds of millions the bourgeoisie still holds in its savage claws, nor the minds of our young Communist parties of the East. The work of the English, French and Dutch comrades in the colonies is met by the most tremendous difficulties not only through the police of the imperialist governments, but also by the lack of preparation of our comrades for work among colonial masses of an unbelievably low cultural level. Our comrades in the colonies very often err on the side of left Communism. Raised on the literature advocating the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, they are learning with great difficulty to associate the struggle for the unification of the young proletariat and the artisans of China, Corea, Persia, India and Egypt against the foreign and the native bourgeoisie, with the attempt to support the national emancipation movement of the young native bourgeoisie against the foreign capitalist bourgeoisie oppressing them. Decades will pass before it will be possible in practice to combine the national liberating struggle of the colonial peoples with the proletarian revolution in Europe and America. But one thing is now clear: Lenin's genius has shown the way to the international proletariat. In the person and teachings of Lenin a unifying center for the struggling masses of the world was created for the first time in the history of the class struggle. For the first time we are beginning to find our way out of the impasse in which the European proletariat had remained, and to find the path of a real world movement. The book of our Hindu comrade Roy about India gave us the first test of Lenin's teaching in a concrete example. The struggle carried on by the newspaper edited by Roy gives the first test of the periodical application of Lenin's teachings, and we say, that this test proves how far and how keenly our leader could see. At the time of the Hamburg Congress of the Second International, the Hamburg social democratic newspapers printed a poem of welcome to the Congress. The poet appealed to the Chinese Coolie working in the rice fields, to the Negro toiling in the cotton fields of America, to the Negroes mining for gold, and called them under the liberating banner of the International. But these were vain words. This same Second International is now celebrating a great victory. Its leader, Ramsay MacDonald organized the first labor government. But whom did he appoint to the ministry over the affairs of three hundred million oppressed Hindus? Sir Sidney Olivier, an official of the old colonial office, the Governor of Jamaica. This colonial official is an experienced defender of the interests of the owners of the sugar plantations in Jamaica. Will he now call the Hindu workers of his majesty, the King of England, under the banner of the Second International or will this perhaps be done by Lord Chelmsford, formerly the Viceroy of India, who was appointed the first Lord of the Admiralty by the grace of Ramsay MacDonald, the leader of the Second International? Only the Communist International can organize the colonial workers, and the merit of Lenin, in showing us this road, will remain memorable in history to the international working class and to humanity.

The third congress of the Communist International saw Lenin still at his battle post. The wave of revolution of 1918-19 had disappeared. The German communist party, having become the mass party of the proletariat, marking neither the change of the situation nor that the attack of capital had already begun, permitted itself to be deceived, and rushed armed into battle with not even the sympathy of the majority of the toiling masses behind them. We all understood the party's error, we all rejected the theses of the German Central Committee, which developed the theory of attack at the moment of political retreat. But we, the immediate workers of the Communist International, knowing that the Party Central formed of the old leaders of the Spartacan movement and the best leaders of the former Independent party, was the only possible center of the German Communist movement, wished to teach our German brother party the lessons resulting from their defeat as kindly as possible. Lenin forced us to change our theses five times; he forced us to say brutally to the German Communists and the Communists the world over: "First win over the majority of the proletariat, and only then may you face the task of seizing power." Lenin saved the Communist party, and with the same determination supported the united front tactics which met violent resistance within the ranks of the Communists—and not only the ranks of the West-European Communists. With extraordinary sensitiveness he pointed out the fundamental differences between the conditions in Russia in 1917, and the conditions under which the West-European Communists had to fight. He well understood that in dealing with proletarian mass organizations that had accumulated through a period of fifty years, and controlled by the yellow leaders, very complicated and very persevering work was essential. A series of compromises is necessary, very difficult for communists, but unfortunately essential for winning over the majority of the proletariat. Overburdened with government work, having no time to follow up the details of the developments in the west, Lenin possessed some peculiar sense which enabled him to grasp the essential differences in the situation of every country, and the problems of every Communist Party.

At the fourth Congress of the Communist International, having just recovered from the first attack of his illness which took him away from us, Lenin reported the situation in Russia. The Congress received him with the deepest joy, and with great sorrow saw the difficulty with which their beloved leader chose his words in order to express his clear ideas in a foreign language. Before delivering his report, Lenin, with a wink inquired; "But what shall I say when asked of the immediate prospects of the world-Revolution?" and immediately answered himself; "I shall tell them that when the communists behave more sensibly the prospects will improve." Lenin gave directions on the method of war against war to the Russian trade union delegates departing for the Hague Conference of the Trade Unions. This last advice of Lenin to the international proletariat represents a sample of his extraordinary realism. He announced that those who promise in spite of the lessons of the imperialist war, to bring about a general strike in case of a new outbreak are either fools or de-

ceivers. If we can not prevent the imperialist war, the masses will be drawn into the war and we too will have to go to war and work for the revolution in the ranks of the imperialist armies. The task is to prevent, with every possible effort, an outbreak of war. And Lenin developed anew, point by point, the plan of daily revolutionary work against the danger of war.

A year of work in the Communist International has passed without Lenin. This year brought us two great defeats; in Bulgaria and in Germany. We must learn the lessons of these defeats alone, without Lenin. The revolutionary wave has not risen as yet, as we expected in the summer of this year. And if it does not rise next year, we shall have to analyze a whole series of complicated problems. We shall have to organize the masses during the period of reaction and the offensive of capital and combine their daily struggle with the preparation for the future struggle for dictatorship. We have forty-two parties. Every one of these exists under different circumstances. It is extraordinarily difficult to consider all the peculiarities of these conditions and despite the differences to carry on united Communist work. But we possess Lenin's legacy, an inexhaustible source of his thoughts and his methods, tested in thousands of attacks and retreats. We shall learn from Lenin's works. Just as in Marx it is not the results, not the concrete solutions that are most valuable, but the method of solution, the approach of the greatest of proletarian revolutionaries to the problems.

The Communist International and the Russian proletariat has suffered the greatest loss. If ever the words were true that death takes away the body only, they certainly are true in the case. Therefore the Communist International will shed no tears over Lenin's grave, but will undertake with renewed energy the mastery of whatever is immortal in Lenin's teaching, and with Lenin's sword in hand will be victorious.

Our beloved comrade is no more; the Communist International will solve its problems with the collective thought of all the Communist parties.

Lenin's banner and Lenin's teaching arm the Communist International for the entire epoch still dividing us from the victory of the proletarian world revolution.

## LENIN

**S**HADOW plodding over fields  
 Of sun-stained wheat,  
 Deeper shadow  
 Lurching through thunder-clouds  
 Of mill smoke,  
 Immense and silent  
 Like a mountain marching  
 From sea to sea—  
 O heavy and sure,  
 Leaning on your great plow  
 That rides the sky—  
 Tear forever the dark strength  
 Of unsown lands!

MacKnight Black.

# Literature and the Machine Age

By Floyd Dell

## IX.

MEANWHILE, we whose hopes for womankind found scope in their political and industrial program, saw those hopes gradually merge into our general political and social program for mankind at large. So far as there were special woman's problems, they must be solved, it seemed to us, not otherwise than by the efforts of women themselves. But on the whole, as it appeared more and more to us, their problems were the same as everybody else's: and the woman's revolt took its place in our imagination as a part of the industrial revolution. They were oppressed; so was mankind at large. And our thoughts became centered in practical efforts, in politics and economics, for the relief of the world-wide misery produced by capitalism.

### A Step at a Time

Our plans for such relief were usually, at first, of the timidest sort. We had lost the power of conceiving Change in large terms. There had been one appeal to us, one attempt to stimulate our imaginations to such a conception, in the form of a book by Edward Bellamy, called "Looking Backward." This book influenced us where others, such as Ignatius Donnelly's "Caesar's Column" had failed. That was because Donnelly had pictured Revolution in such romantic and absurd terms. What! violent revolution and bloody counter-revolution, with an accompaniment of famine and massacre! No—such things could not happen. We were too civilized.

Of course we could not take that sort of thing seriously. It made an amusing "thriller," but we knew that such a revolution was impossible. Bellamy's book was different. It showed a reign of universal peace and order, in which all the friction of present-day competition had been eliminated by a gigantic combination of industrial processes under the rule of the State; a regime of cleanliness, efficiency and common-sense, in which machines did the dirty work, and everybody was enlightened, useful and happy...

This classic of scientific utopianism had provoked the sketching of a different kind of Utopia by William Morris in his "News From Nowhere"—a quasi-medieval Utopia, with a healthy amount of dirt, disorder and adventure, and with machinery thrown on the scrap-heap. But, so far as we were concerned, it was not the excessive orderliness and mechanical efficiency of this vision of Bellamy's which made it fail to convince us. It was not that we did not think such a state of affairs desirable, but rather that we could not think such a state of affairs possible. It was too good to be true.

It was a beautiful dream—and we had lost the power to believe in dreams.

Therefore it was the milder programs of political and social reform which first won our adherence. We put our trust in a variety of political expedients under the auspices of new or old parties, and gave an impetus to a series of political pilgrimages, under such leaders as Henry George and Bryan; and as the sum-total of our efforts, we fur-

nished needy politicians with a new kind of political capital—which they proceeded to over-capitalize and boom until the whole reform-business burst in the grand debacle of Rooseveltian "Progressivism." In the economic field we went in for arbitration, profit-sharing, and municipal ownership. In the social field, we went in for organized charity, and social settlement work.

There is a barrier of secret chagrin to be overcome before some of us can travel back in memory to the days when, gloriously confident, we did settlement work or dabbled in "Charity." It was not one of us, it was someone whose mind was filled with thoughts of the more unquestioning and pitying benevolences of the middle ages who made up that rhyme about "organized charity, scrimped and iced, in the name of a cautious, statistical Christ." And it was not because it had so much statistics, as because the statistics added up wrong, that we first began to doubt its value. Was not poverty being created faster than it could possibly be ministered to? And who were we, to undertake the management of others' lives for them? Must the poor, having been robbed of everything else, surrender the direction of their most private affairs to agencies paid by the people who had robbed them? Was charity an insult added to the injury of poverty? So "the poor" were apparently convinced, at any rate...

### "Let the Nation Own the Trusts"

It was a great moment, for such of us as persevered until we reach such a point, when we ceased to believe in puny mitigations of the struggle between the classes—when we saw that struggle as the very essence of contemporary life, and indeed in one form or another as the essence of all human history. We were the better prepared to accept this view by the teachings of Darwinism; it met with the unconscious approval of minds nourished upon modern science, that such a struggle, with all its cruelty and chaos, should be the origin of a fitter scheme of things. We had only to realize that the working class stood as the protagonist of the Future, and cast in our lot emotionally with its hosts.

It was a wonderful moment for those of us who made that decision: a moment in which we saw the working class, triumphant over the defenders of capitalism, inaugurating a free and happy commonwealth... But, though there were other wonderful moments for one who had thus become a Socialist, there was never another of just this sort. This particular glory, the glory of the ultimate vision, was to fade away, and leave us very much in the light of common day.

It was, we thought, in the light of common day that we preferred to work. The only question was, what could we do? If we were already engaged in the class struggle, we could use our consciousness of that struggle to direct its crude motions; or at least, we could try. But the trade unions had their own vision of their goal; and despite their temporary fighting moods, it was a sedate and respectable

vision. They were shocked at ours. They did not want to overthrow capitalism; they wanted lace curtains and a piano in their homes.

Well, we could not quarrel with that. We agreed well enough with Shelley's practical definition of freedom, which began:

"For the laborer, thou art bread  
And a comely table spread,  
From his daily labor come,  
In a neat and happy home."

Freedom, of course, was also all of the other things set forth by Shelley—justice, and wisdom, and peace, and brotherly love. But it was higher wages and shorter hours first of all. And if the unions were getting these things, and afraid as yet to think about getting anything more, the best thing was perhaps to let them go ahead in their own way. Clearly, they did not want our advice. But they knew where we were to be found when the time came that they did want our wisdom, as necessarily they would.

We were all the while being unconsciously controlled by our quasi-Darwinian idea that evolution required aeons of time. We did not dare to think of making a quick job of it. This was before the day of the I. W. W. and direct action, which, by the way, received their original impetus from other sources than the Socialist movement. We accepted the tempo of the American Federation of Labor as the tempo of industrial change. We adjusted ourselves to the status quo.

We had our own political organization, free from such trammels of political habitude. But the philosophy which underlay our movement forbade us to believe that the Great Change was to be effected by a sweeping conversion of men's minds, or that the gradual conversion in which we were assisting was any other than the reflection of an economic process. We were bringing this process and its effects into the general consciousness. But it was the Process itself which was really to be trusted to realize our desires.

We were economic determinists. And with many of us, this determinism amounted to fatalism. Capitalism **must** produce Socialism. We had seen the elaborate syllogism which proved it. We congratulated each other upon our superior knowledge of the trend of events, and sat about as though we were waiting for the denouement, when we could say, "I told you so!"

But of course we knew pretty certainly that it was not coming about in our own lifetime. Capitalism must first develop to its utmost limits. There was some room left for such development. Karl Marx had predicted the Trusts, and they had come. Now the Super-Trusts were growing up. That, undoubtedly, was the last stage of capitalism. We watched the development of these enterprises with a jealous parental eye. They were, in a sense, our Trusts; Rockefeller and Morgan might not know it, but they were! When some people proposed to "bust the Trusts," we would have been anxious, had we not been amused. Of course, the Trusts could not be busted—but if they could, what a foolish thing to do! It would only delay the coming of Socialism by just that much. Since they were here, they were inevitable, and if Rockefeller and Morgan had not created them, somebody else would have had to. We were satisfied with the way they were

doing it—including even the atrocities with which their agents accentuated the bitterness of the class struggle; and we were willing to keep them on the job.

In one severely practical form, we did indulge our Utopian instincts. We saw that the Trusts and the Nation were becoming—exactly as we had predicted—more and more identical. But this identity manifested itself in the free use of the militia and the courts by the Trusts as weapons against their employees—and against us. We did not like this, in spite of the fact that it was a part of the Latest Stage of Capitalism. So we did not rest content with the fact that the Trusts owned the Nation. We said, "Let the Nation Own the Trusts."

Our original vision of a free and happy Commonwealth had dwindled to a picture of a highly-organized and benevolently-administered State Trust. We saw in the nationalization of industries, and the old-age pensions and factory legislation of various countries, the type of achievement possible to the organized working class: achievements doubtless destined to culminate in the expropriation of the Last Capitalist, in the form of a payment to him by the State of some Final Dividend. And in the impressive parliamentary representation of the Socialist party in some of those countries—particularly Germany—we saw not only a model for our own efforts, but a guarantee of the peaceful realization of our revolutionary program...

But, at about this time, some of us began to see things differently. What was there, in this program of ours, to get excited about? Why not leave such things to the Reformers? If we really wanted that kind of progress, we could get it more quickly by ceasing to embarrass our respectable friends with our assistance.

But did we really want it? State Capitalism now loomed as the final and worst intrenchment of the forces of the enemy. You could strike against a private employer—you couldn't do even that against the State. The private employer could send troops against you; but the State could put you into uniform, and send you to work under military orders... We had thought to capture the State; would it not be better to destroy it?... And all at once, for such of us as I describe, the sarcasm of our Anarchist friends—and enemies—began to have meaning for us.

## Grass

**T**HE grass grows far from asphalt streets;  
It seeks the hill on which it meets  
The splendid ardor of the sky.  
It trembles as the breezes fly.

The grass grows far from iron mills:  
It loves the banks of little rills;  
It speaks in whispers and in nods  
Communing with its youthful gods.

And I must leave the quiet grass  
To toil where earth is boxed in level gray  
And dry tomorrow creeps upon today  
Like a tight sky of sparkless glass.

N. Bryllion Fagin.

# REVIEWS

## Behold This Writer!

*"Behold this Dreamer!"* By Fulton Oursler. The Macaulay Company, New York.

SEVERAL months ago some person unknown sent me a novel, which became part of a pile on the top of my desk. It looked especially unpromising—publishers obscure, author unheard-of, a cheap, chromo-like, love-dovey picture on the jacket, a somewhat sentimental-sounding title. My mail is burdened with stuff in the form of print, things published by the author, or at the author's expense, and they send them to me with pitiful, yearning inscriptions, and I dip into them, and it is a discouraging aspect of the world. So it was by mere accident that I picked up the novel called "Behold This Dreamer!" by Fulton Oursler. I got from it a sensation which can only come a limited number of times to one man; for it is not so often that an authentic writer makes his appearance.

I have had my share of those thrills. Away back in the beginning, I stumbled on "The Time Machine" by H. G. Wells; again, I made a wonderful find, "The Island Pharisees," by John Galsworthy. And there was "Youth," by Joseph Conrad; and several magazine poems by a wild lad named Harry Kemp; and some weird drawings and verses, sent me by a youngster named Vachel Lindsay. There was "Esther Waters" and "Sister Carrie;" recently there came "Weeds," by a former secretary of mine, Mrs. Edith Summers Kelley; and now this new novel, "Behold This Dreamer!" by Fulton Oursler.

The story starts in Baltimore. I was born and raised there, so I can appreciate the perfectly heavenly satire on the Baltimore "boost." Charley Turner is the son-in-law of a great brush manufacturer, whose trade name is "Strictly Stricker." This part of the story is like "Babbitt," but swifter and more gay. Like "Babbitt," it boils over into caricature here and there, but we forgive the mishap. Charley doesn't fit as a brush salesman or a husband, and there is danger of a divorce and a scandal, so the Strickers trap him into a "private sanitarium"—that is, a lunatic asylum. We prepare ourselves for horrors; and instead we run into the most charming fantasy. It appears that in Baltimore all the business people are outside, and the private sanitariums are reserved for those who have imaginations. In this particular place there is "the mob," whom Charley barely sees; and then there are "the intellectuals," who admit him to their midst—four altogether delightful and humane old gentlemen, who are guilty of the crime of being different from the business men of Baltimore. These help Charley to develop his genius; and when he is ready to conquer the world as a great painter, they help him to escape.

So Charley goes to New York—"the Rocky Island of Dreams," as Mr. Oursler calls it. He is offered fame and fortune to sell his genius; he meets the great literary and artistic prostitutes of the metropolis—"behind the red cord," in the exclusive restaurant which they frequent—and he brings them to his feet and spurns them. Also he meets the girl of his dreams, who is a more honest sort

of prostitute, the mother of a crippled child and the Aphrodite of a Broadway music-hall review. All this is the old stuff of melodrama; but then, what is the difference between melodrama and real drama, except that genius puts the breath of life into it? There have been masters who wrote melodrama, not merely in their first novels, but in all their novels, to the very last. Consider Victor Hugo, for example!

This book has its crudities; but for a first novel, they are so few that it seems unfair to mention them. Compared with what a first novel ought to be allowed to be, this is a masterpiece. It has narrative skill, penetration into the insides of the human soul, delicious wit, shriveling irony, integrity of spirit—but above all it has revolutionary force. I don't mean that Mr. Oursler is a Socialist or a Communist or anything of the political or economic sort; there is practically nothing of that in his story. I mean that he looks at our cheap and degraded and snivelling civilization, and he tramples through it like a rhinoceros. Gertrude Atherton, in "Black Oxen," tried to satirize our super-civilized and cynical young literary snobs, "the sophisticates," as she called them, the kept critics and columnists of the metropolitan press; they enjoyed it—but they won't enjoy Mr. Oursler. He leaves them in the state of a doll-shop after a cyclone.

I had a bully time with this novel; and now I pay my debt of gratitude to the author, I turn out with a big bass-drum to pound for him—thump, thump, thump!

Upton Sinclair.

## A Bridge to Chaos

*"Germany, France and England."* By Maximilian Harden. Brentano's, New York.

THE treaty of Versailles and its fulfillment—or non-fulfillment by Germany is the theme of this book. The volume is remarkable in that it lacks any system and coherence. An incessant stream of prattle and chatter, in many places utterly without any apparent connection. Even in places where it approaches brilliancy it merely sticks to the surface of things. Often witty, sometimes sarcastic, but always shallow—that characterizes the book. Maximilian Harden is written all over the book. Harden has not gotten rid entirely of his former self, the actor Witkowski, an old fashioned actor, always pathetic; but even the most heartrending pathos only covers shallow platitudes clothed in a nice language.

One cannot withhold one's sympathy from the author if one follows him through agonies caused him by the hypocrisies and the deceptions of the Social-Democratic and the Independent Socialist parties. But one hates to have one's blood stirred up and not have a suitable channel supplied to lead the irritation to a satisfactory release. And here is the greatest shortcoming of the book. The author has no remedy. All the positive program he can develop is expressed in the somewhat mystic sentence that: "The Versailles treaty is a pontoon bridge, not the shore of the land of plenty; a means, not an end; it heats up the purgatory out of which, to God's joy, the sinner, purified by repentance, may climb into the Eden of the League of Nations."

That sentence is Harden again, with all his self-satisfied pathos, but without any political insight or program.

In this book Harden repeats a performance of former days. As an ardent admirer, yes, as a literary coolie of the "blood and iron man" Bismarck he helped him to a rather belated revenge against the camarilla of the megalomaniac who then ruled Germany. Harden opened the Augean stable of the "Liebenberger Tafelrunde" for public inspection. But he neither proposed nor did anything to clean it. In this present volume he performs the same half service. The book may be read with pleasure, but surely not with much profit.

Max Bedacht.

## A Magic Mirror

"Looking at Life." By Floyd Dell. Alfred A. Knopf, New York

WE have a family quarrel with Floyd Dell, because there is not anywhere in this latest of his books a line to tell that the altogether delightful and stimulating essays gathered in it appeared first in *The Liberator* or its predecessor *The Masses*. Like many an unrespectable parent *The Liberator* is deprived of the greatest right and pleasure of parenthood, that of shining in the reflected glory of its child! But boast it can, and boast it will, that these keen and beautiful criticisms of books, plays and people first appeared in its pages. The titles alone make it impossible to put this book aside unread—"Mona Lisa and the Wheelbarrow," "Talking in Bed," "Gaily the Engineer,"—who could resist such a programme? Shaw, Whittier, Housman, Wells, Vachel Lindsay, Sandburg, Sherwood Anderson, James Weldon Johnson, these are only a few of the figures discussed, and he approaches none of them as they have ever been approached before. All sorts of strange and tender and fresh-hearted aspects of life catch the eye of Floyd Dell. He is still the child he tells us, in "Dolls and Abraham Lincoln," he once was, deeply and seriously absorbed in the amazing, incredible strangeness of the life about him; he is always looking at the pictures in the big book, and wondering about them and asking "why?" Any amusing fancy will set him off on a course of inquiry that may end in a Soviet Government or the Mountains of the Moon. No one else can dress the essential seriousness of his thought in such outlandish and becoming costumes of fantasy as he. No one else can flick as light a lash of mockery, that has yet never left a welt on its victims. These comments were first published not so long ago, perhaps, but in these few years a great many things have happened, and the comments are as valid now as then. I hope that Floyd Dell will go on writing such criticism of the many-colored life that spins around him. L. G.

## An Irrelevant Saint

"Sermon on the Sea." By Mahatma Gandhi, Universal Publishing Co., Chicago. "Gandhi the Apostle." By Haridas T. Muzumdar, Universal Publishing Co., Chicago.

AN apostle who preaches non-resistance and non-violence and in time of war becomes a recruiting agent for the government of His Majesty, the Emperor of India, an apostle who finds that his message of passive resistance and non-co-operation leads directly to the use of force and violence and each time that non-violent resistance, because

it is successful, provokes violence, immediately recedes from his position and compromises with the enemy by abandoning even passive resistance. This is the Gandhi presented to us in his writings and by his biographer, Muzumdar.

Writes Gandhi, "If India adopted the doctrine of love as an active part of her religion and introduced it in her politics, Swaraj (one's own rule) would descend upon India from heaven." But in place of India's independence descending from heaven all that came down from the celestial sphere was force and violence. To the occidental mind Gandhi's arguments in the "Sermon on the Sea" are very naive and unconvincing. The railroads are to go, the factories are to be abolished, the hospitals, too, and then heaven will descend upon the earth again. All the facts of the experience of the human race say the reverse, heaven does not come until the material basis of heaven has been created and in creating this basis the railroads and factories play a great part.

One can understand the source of Gandhi's passive resistance doctrine. When the might of Rome ruled Palestine an apostle arose who preached "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's" and something about turning the other cheek. The British Empire rules India today with the might of machine guns and bombing planes; hence pacifism is again glorified as the road to heaven. The road of force against force, violence against violence may be an unpleasant road to travel but all the evidence from the history of mankind goes to prove that it has been and is the only road. One may admire the stoic qualities of non-resister, but there is something more inspiring in the revolutionary fighter who meets his enemy with the latter's own weapons and subdues him.

A much over-rated apostle is the feeling with which one leaves these books.

C. E. Ruthenberg.

## Once Over

"Haunch, Paunch and Jewel." An Anonymous Autobiography. Boni and Liveright, New York.

MEYER, a New York East side Jew started in bitter poverty with a determination to get the good things of life. He succeeded and in this book he has told just how he did it. The brains of a hooligan gang (he always avoided work or fighting), runner for a shyster, waiter and then manager of a tough dive in Hell's Kitchen, finally a fee splitting lawyer himself. His political machine contained pimps, judges, sluggers—"monkey abortions" he dubbed them. He seduced all the girls available and took Gretel home as a concubine, to the horror of his old fashioned mother. When he tired of them he married them to his friends. The madam of his favorite resort told him that a political rival had had two children out. He cinched the story and clubbed his way to a judgeship with it. His ambition soared—a governorship? a matrimonial alliance?—but Gretel wrecked his dream castle by the same threat of exposure and scandal and forced him to wed her. Heigho! He has attained everything, wealth, power, honor—and it is all Dead Sea fruit. He had aspired to be a "notable ancestor," and he and Gretel have a poodle dog and a Persian cat.

It's a splendid book. The mordant irony and cynical frankness with which he describes the psychology and the conduct of the bourgeois are as delightful as the poetry and passion of the love chapters. The characters are far more vivid than many we meet daily. **G. McL.**

"Husbands and Lovers." By Franz Molnar. Boni and Liveright, New York.

OF the policy of bitter fatalism Franz Molnar is the perfect advocate, and in his latest book, "Husbands and Lovers," his theories are to be found in crystallized form. The eleven short dialogues which make up the book, each dealing with some phase of the sex-tangle, are pictures of life whose harsh cynicism is unrelieved by any touch of lightness. The outstanding thing about "Lillom" was not its cynicism—although that, too, was there—but its colorfulness of scene and its vividness of characterization. The cynicism of "Fashions for Men" and of "The Swan" was lightened by delicious comedy. Of this "Husbands and Lovers" has nothing. Its satire is a weapon of sharpest edge, wielded with a single purpose. If there is laughter in these pages, it is the laughter of irony. It is used only as another synonym to express a stinging resentment. A minor exception must be made of the fifth dialogue, "Seven O'Clock in the Evening," which is a concession to weak sentimentalism. **Elsa Bloch.**

"A Simple Story." By Charles Louis Philippe. Alfred A. Knopf, N. Y.

THE translation, by Agnes Kendrick Gray, of the story of an old French working man, going blind and used up and thrown on the scrap-heap. A poignant and beautifully told story, unusually well translated, and illustrated with very fine woodcuts by Franz Masereel.

"Yea and Nay." A Series of Debates. Brentano's, New York.

THE impressive list of names presented in this book raises one's hopes. What may have been stimulating with the aid of speech and personality, is for the most part only tepidly interesting in cold print. H. G. Wells on the teaching of History and G. K. Chesterton on modern journalism are well worth reading, but the rest, with the possible exception of Edith Sitwell on modern poetry and Rebecca West on the "Sex Novel," are scarcely to be taken seriously. **L. G.**

"Middle of the Road." By Philip Gibbs. Geo. H. Doran Co., N. Y.

THE prize for the very mildest of "liberalism" must be awarded Philip Gibbs. He trumpets his hate of and inflexible opposition to war—and then hastens to proclaim that once war is declared all citizens must unite to support it. He virulently abuses all anti-patriotic groups, Russian, French—or anti-imperialist Irish! His amazement that the Germans deny the myth of a "guilty nation" is naive.

Under the mask of sympathy he lies freely about Soviet Russia, the typical cheap lies of a cheap hack—for example, that the communists habitually steal food. The heart of the book is a vivid hundred-page description of the 1921 famine and the moral is clearly pointed: "Slaves! Beware! Do not rebel!" His remedy is delightful—let Russia repudiate her revolution and throw herself on the mercy of England and America.

His servility to a noble, even an ousted Czarist noble, is typical of an English snob. Again and again he dwells on the culture, honor, refinement and nobility of character that an aristocracy develops "only after centuries of selection." In obedience to this iron code the splendid young heroine refrains (for a few days) from adultery. Her husband, a mere commoner, appreciates too highly the honor of being cuckolded by a sprig of the nobility to be able to slay him. I suspect this "hero," servile, snobbish and ignorant, is Philip Gibbs' idealization of himself. **G. McL.**

"These Are The Facts." Published by the General Defense Committee, 1001 West Madison St., Chicago, Ill.

A PAMPHLET revealing that in the State of Washington eight workmen have been sent to prison for terms of from twenty-five to forty years for the "crime" of defending their union hall from a mob of lumber trust henchmen and American Legionnaires on Armistice Day, 1919. The same mob members had twice previously attacked the Lumber Workers' Union Hall at Centralia, Washington, had beaten union men and wrecked their office. Again they came, with prominently displayed ropes and guns. But this time, when they broke down the door of the hall, its rightful defenders opened fire. A mob member died and a framed-up trial sent eight union men to prison, where they still remain. But the Legion has mobbed no more halls in the Northwest. The pamphlet is free but its circulation depends on contributions.

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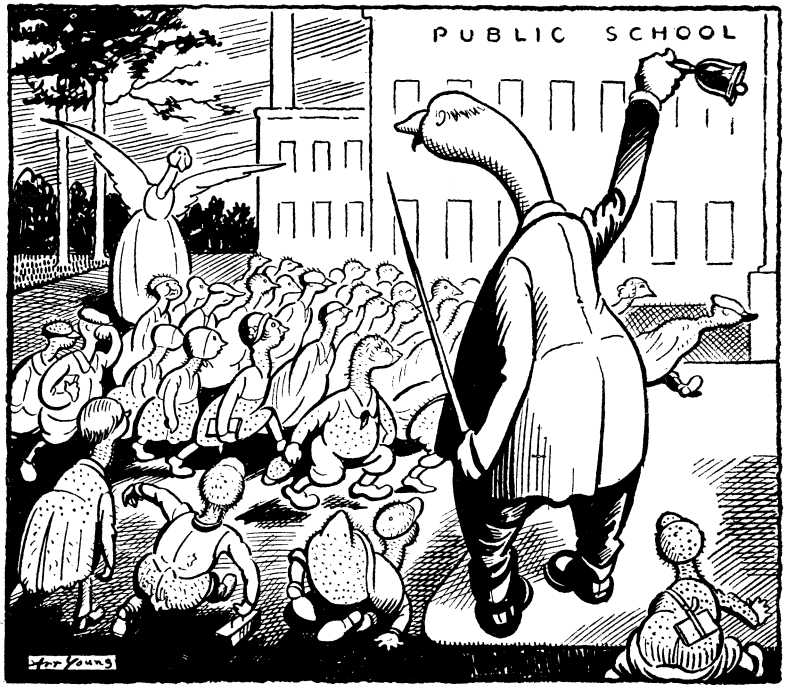
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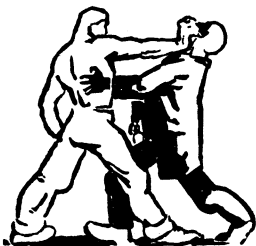
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