

THE WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT

For International Socialism.

Vol. V.—No. 42

SATURDAY, JANUARY 11th, 1919

Price Twopence.

BETWEEN OURSELVES. By L. A. Motler.

PRINTING RUSSIAN TRAM TICKETS.

When you want to know something about a thing, Henry, it is just as well to see, so to speak, from which barrel the beer comes if you are at all doubtful about it. For instance, if you want to read up all about football, you do not begin by taking in the local parish magazine. Likewise, if you want to know the price of shabbages (controlled) you do not apply at the nearest chemist's. Now, you will probably write me to tell you something you don't know. Good! Let us take the price of tram tickets in Russia. Firstly, I will draw your attention to the one appended herewith:—



This is an actual tram-ticket for use in Archangel. It is being printed in large numbers in London at the present moment. The fact is obvious that the Allies are in control of the tram in Archangel and the question naturally arises. What are they doing there?

That will be answered presently, and meantime I will draw your attention, Henry, to another item. It is from *The Star* (December 30th, 1918):—

"The week-end casualty lists give the following figures: Officers, dead 7; men, dead 643, wounded missing, 1,475—total 2,125."

Now the war is as good as over; there is no fighting to speak of; but two days before the new year, and sixty days after the signing of the armistice, out comes a "week end casualty list." And on the day previous, the Admiralty issued a bulletin to the effect that a British warship reports having captured two Bolshevik destroyers. Is that the price of getting tram-ticket orders?

And what are the Allies doing in Russia? Apparently, getting orders for tram tickets at the point of the bayonet. This is not a mere supposition. The facts speak for themselves, Henry, as plain as the nose on your face. And you still have lingering doubts, well—

As I said at the beginning of this article, when you want to know about football, don't ask a greengrocer. When you want to know about Russia come to *THE DREADNOUGHT* offices and get facts.

I have here before me—and I am sorry the manifesto is just a trifle too long to reproduce fully—a sheet of paper headed, 'Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic,' and with the following question in big type:

WHY HAVE YOU COME TO MURMANSK?
It is signed by Lenin and Tchitcherine and comes red-hot from the Bolshevik Press in Moscow. It has been distributed to the English-speaking troops on the Murmansk coast, and several copies have reached England; and does the daily press print it? I should smile.

The daily press is not so green: in fact, it is usually yellow, except when it is in a blue funk; and it changes colour so often I might dub it the Chameleon Press. And this press would not let me read in its columns as follows:—

"The Murman railway is in no danger either from the Germans or Finns. If you look at a map you will see that the railways and roads from the west of Finland end hundreds of miles short of the Murman railway. If the Finns approach our border they must traverse hundreds of miles of marshy forest land... Neither can the Germans threaten our railway. If the Germans want to attack the Murman railway, they must first take Petrograd and march through our country hundreds of miles."

Lenin is also careful to explain that Russia is not at war with Germany and they cannot advance on Petrograd without declaring war on Russia. The Allies, apparently, can do without that trifling formality, and once having got into Murmansk, keep it a dark secret why they are there or else tell brazen lies about it.

Brazen lies? On December 19th recently past, Lord Milner declared that "our troops went to Russia not to meddle with Russia's internal affairs." In his manifesto Lenin says:—

"Your Government is interfering in our internal affairs. It has established its own control in the district you occupy. It has cut off our telegraphic communication with outside. It is attempting to seduce our citizens into fighting against us. At the same time your Government shot four members of our local Soviet. Your Government denies that it did so, but we have positive proof that it did."

So now you know how to get tram-ticket orders. Now you know what it means "not to impose any particular form of government on Russia." Now you know why, although the war is as good as over, we still have casualty lists.

If an American army came to South Wales and said it was there to defend the coal-mines from the Germans, you would smile. The miners would probably tell the Americans that the best place for them was Home and Mother. But when it comes to Allied troops occupying the Murman railway, the Baku oilfields, the Siberian wheat districts, ah, well!

It is none of our business, eh, Henry? Lenin says further:—

"For the first time in history the working people have got control of their country. The workers of all countries are striving to achieve this object. We in Russia have succeeded. We have thrown off the rule of the Tsar, of landlords, and of capitalists. But we still have tremendous difficulties to overcome. We cannot build a new society in a day. We desire to be left alone."

Good, Henry, distinctly good. He desires to be left alone, so come and let's have one before closing time.

"Comrades! Englishmen!"
Chin-chin, Henry.
"You who pride yourselves on your love of liberty!"

Same to you, old man.
"Comrades! Descendants of the great Chartist! You who have always expressed sympathy with the Russian Revolution—are you going to assist in crushing the first effort of working people to free themselves from their sweaters and exploiters?"

Henry, I should worry.

AGENTS WANTED FOR THE WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT.—Are you a regular reader of the paper? Do you sell it at the meetings of your organisation? Introduce it to your workshop.



VICTORY.

WORKERS' AND SOLDIERS' COUNCIL IN FRANCE.

In May, as Longuet reported at a recent Inter-Allied Socialist and Labour Conference in London, great strikes occurred in France, the demands of the workers being that French war aims should be re-stated, and Wilson's fourteen points endorsed by the French Government. At St. Etienne the workers went further and proclaimed a Workers' and Soldiers' Council. The military were called out and hundreds of men and women were arrested. Between 30 and 40 of the prisoners are still in gaol. A fortnight ago a mass meeting addressed by Jean Longuet was held outside the gaol. Mr. Paul Hanna of America tells us that this was a most remarkable demonstration. Mr. Hanna throws further light on the demonstration to welcome Wilson which the Socialists desired to arrange, but afterwards abandoned when Clemenceau said they must first ask President Wilson's permission as reported in the Press. Mr. Hanna explains that the reason the Socialists refused Clemenceau's suggestion was that they thought it would put Wilson in the position of asking them to arrange a demonstration. When Wilson and his party arrived, however, and Longuet went to present an address to Wilson, Admiral Grayson asked him on the President's behalf when the Socialist demonstration would take place. Longuet explained that it would not take place; but the Socialists afterwards organised another demonstration in conjunction with the Society for Mutilated Soldiers. The mutilated soldiers, blind, legless, armless, went from door to door collecting their mutilated comrades. Then, some 3,000 of them assembled at the Arc de Triomphe, a similar company at the Place de la Concorde and Rue Royale and another at the Opera. After the President had passed down the Champs the cripples formed in procession and marched with red flags from the Arc de Triomphe, picking up the other companies on their way. They were joined by many American soldiers and civilians of all sorts. As they passed the offices of the Royalist newspaper, the *Action Francaise*, the Royalists assailed them with abuse, accosting the blind and the limbed soldiers as "spies," "German agents," and "tools of the enemy." The pitiful procession made no response, but the crowds assembled on the pavements cheered it as it passed by.

THE WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT

EDITOR: SYLVIA PANKHURST. Published by the Workers' Socialist Federation. Telephone: EAST 1787.

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REVOLUTION AND THE HOUSING QUESTION.

Poverty and decay, grim comrades, are rife in Poplar. Children grow warped and stunted there; adults die off before their time.

The East India Dock Road is dismal. The long, blank wall of the dock over which, between and above the bulky warehouses, the masts of ships peep here and there.

But this, as it were, is the front door into Poplar. Away from this main road are meaner, dingier streets, where the wronged people live herded together in the hideous dilapidation of old, neglected buildings, darkened by soot, bug-ridden, structurally only fit to be inhabited by sewer rats, and yet high rents are charged for them.

The side streets running from the High Street are as densely populated as a rabbit warren. The little, two-storied houses in Street, owned by a worthy Borough Councillor, vie with each other in their decay.

The light of poverty is everywhere. Here and there cheap little cotton flags, the Union Jack and the colours of the Allies, are hung from a window or on a clothes line across the street, to welcome some returning soldier.

In the High Street shop after shop stands empty, literally falling to pieces for lack of small repairs and hastened to their end by small repairs and hastened to their end by ragged children who, finding their way in—no bolts and locks deter them—tear away the woodwork from the floors, skirtings, and window frames and take it home to mother when she lacks the wherewithal to make a fire, or build for themselves fires in the street—their playground.

One woman rises from her knees, putting aside her pail and scrubbing brush. She has two children and is expecting a third. She works all day at Morton's biscuit and preserving factory, because her husband's wage is too small to maintain her household, and coming home at night, she cooks, and cleans, and washes, and mends.

At the end of Poplar High Street one passes the Penny Fields in the Chinese quarter. The street—look pinched and cold. But coming into China Town, one has passed from the direct of day to something brighter. The Chinese have cleaned up the old, tumble-down property they occupy. Their shops are arranged with quiet elegance. Little furniture, and a, perhaps unaccountable, facility for the picturesque. In the fish shops hangs a wonderful dried flying-fish that seems to have flown straight out of a fairy tale.

The Buildings have got a bad name. "I don't know why, we are all clean here!" the other women chime in. Moreover, the agent who collects the rents does not furnish the tenants with a rent-book, and working people cannot get houses unless they can produce a rent-book showing that they can produce a rent-book, and he promises I shall have him for a rent-book, and he promises I shall have him for a rent-book.

One woman shows us that her husband has stripped the torn, dirty paper from the lower part of the walls, painted them a dark, bright green, and finished off the edge of the wallpaper with a border pattern. Widows and women whose husbands are away (even soldiers' wives) are not much favoured as tenants. A family is preferred in which there is a handy man who will keep the property in repair without cost to the landlord, titting new locks, mending broken woodwork, and doorsteps with cement sinks, heartlistones, and middle-aged woman twelves of order.

A small, closed-in court you may discover Hanbury Buildings. One mounts to the dwellings by a narrow stone staircase, and at the top of the first steep flight one is confronted by the open doors of three W.C.s, all of which are out of order. To the left of these is a small wash-house, with a water-tap and copper for boiling clothes; to the left is a narrow, dark passage where, by feeling with one's hands, one discovers the doors of the two-roomed apartments in which the tenants are living.

Marvellous that women who have lived for years in these wretched tenements should still retain a genuine enthusiasm for home-making, still grasp at any chance to beautify their rooms, still toil, even when excessively tired by outside labour, to keep their High Street, is a narrow doorway leading to a little alley in which is a row of cottages. "I thought these houses were condemned," someone says to an old woman standing on the first doorstep. "Oh, no," she says eagerly, "they're all right. Oh, mine's beautiful!" She is afraid that if her cottages were condemned she would never get another. She knows that again and again where slum property has been demolished, no provision has been made for the evicted tenants.

In busy Chrip Street, where anxious women hurry to and fro from shop to shop, comes a woman looking a shade more worn and anxious than the rest. Beside her is a child with skin the old ivory, delicately rose tinted, dark Eastern eyes bright as a bird's, but curiously set in shape to Western sight, and contrasting with these, soft, brown, English curls. "A little China girl with an English mother," someone says.

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REVOLUTION AND THE HOUSING QUESTION continued.

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Table with 4 columns: Room count, s. d., s. d. 1 room .. 2 3 to 6 0, 2 rooms .. 4 6 to 8 6, 3 rooms .. 6 0 to 11 6, 4 rooms .. 7 0 to 13 0, 5 rooms .. 10 6 to 14 0, 6 rooms .. 12 6 to 13 0

Why are dwellings built by the L.C.C. and the municipal authorities so highly rented and why must they be great barracks, the most lately built of which is always the highest?

When the London County Council finds that, on the one hand, it has several applicants who can only afford to pay for a two-roomed flat, and, on the other hand, it has a three-roomed flat for which no applicant can afford to pay, it takes the anti-social course of sealing up one of the rooms in order that it cannot be used, and then it lets the flat for the price of two rooms.

It may be that the husband and wife who rent that flat with its sealed-up room, have four children, one of whom is nearly 5 years' old. In a short time the child has a birthday, and the parents, who are unable to pay for the extra room, are obliged to leave, as they have now passed the L.C.C. overcrowding limit.

One of the election cries of the Lloyd George Coalition was Housing Reform, but with what insurmountable obstacles are those tinkering reformers faced who are unprepared to abolish the Capitalist system.

The London County Council has built some hideous, barrack dwellings, many, many stories high, without lifts, and with long, steep flights of steps, up which tired mothers must climb, carrying both babies and parcels. No gardens are attached to these dwellings; only paved yards, enclosed by high, ugly buildings. Uncomfortable as they are, the rents of the L.C.C. dwellings are so high that the manual labourer with a large family cannot afford to live in them.

In giving evidence before the National Arbitration Commission in 1916, Mr. Berry, Assistant Housing Manager to the L.C.C., explained that the L.C.C. only allows two adults per room to occupy its tenements; children under 5 years not being counted, and children under 10 years counted as half an adult. That standard permits what ought to be considered gross overcrowding; it means that two adults and three or four children will often be found living in a single room.

Workers' Socialist Federation. H. DEVINE. Will Lecture on "Ireland and the Present Political Crisis." Chair—SYLVIA PANKHURST. On Friday, 24th January, 1919, at 8 p.m., at Caxton Hall, Caxton Street, Westminster. (1 min. St. James' Park and Victoria St.) Discussion invited. Come and bring your friends. Admission free.

said that if the Pensions Ministry use of the machinery already available might be reason in the Bill, the meantime out of right it had to claim more innovations. The Bill was read a second time. Mr. Bonar Law said that Mr. Bonar Law's statement.

JOHN MACLEAN. We now learn on good authority that since last July John Maclean has been on hunger strike and undergoing forcible feeding. Is this country to be the last in granting reprieves. Germany has shown the way by freeing Karl Liebknecht, whose popularity has been increased enormously by the unjust treatment meted out to him. When we are going to have our political prisoners released? All sections of the community should protest against this.

LEANEY'S LTD. WHOLESALE NEWSAGENTS. City Agent for the Workers' Dreadnought. 9 and 10, ST. E. AVENUE. (Late City Future Press)

WORKERS' SOCIALIST FEDERATION.

For Revolutionary International Socialism, the ending of Capitalism and Parliaments, and the substitution of a World Federation of Workers' Industrial Republics.

LONDON MEETINGS.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 10th. Tower Hill.—12 (noon), Miss Price. SATURDAY, JANUARY 11th. Great Push in S.E. District for a People's Peace and Socialism.—Meet at the Clock Tower, Lewisham, at 3 P.M., and at Camberwell Lane at 6.30 P.M. Speakers: Mrs. Cole, Miss Price, and Mrs. Walker. SUNDAY, JANUARY 12th.—Osborn Street.—11.45 A.M., Ex-Inspector John Syme. Pinnerbury Park.—3 P.M., Miss Price. TUESDAY, JANUARY 14th. White Cross Street.—12 (noon), Miss Price. FRIDAY, JANUARY 17th. Queen's Crescent, Kentish Town.—5.30 P.M., Miss Price. SATURDAY, JANUARY 18th. Great Push in Tottenham. INDOOR. SUNDAY, JANUARY 19th. 20, Railway Street (Poplar W.S.F.)—7 P.M., Mr. Edmunds, "Possibilities of our Age." Chair: Mrs. Cressall. Discussion. MONDAY, JANUARY 13th. 44, Malden Road, Kentish Town (St. Pancras W.S.F.)—2.30 P.M., Business Meeting. FRIDAY, JANUARY 17th. 400, Old Ford Road.—8 P.M., General Meeting, London Section.

OTHER ORGANISATIONS.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 12th. Kingsley Hall, Botolph Road, Bow, 8.15 P.M.—Muriel Lester, "Unity." TUESDAY, JANUARY 14th. Walthamstow League of Rights for S.S., William Morris Hall, Somers Road.—2.30 P.M. Miss Horsfall.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 19th. The Communist Club, 8 P.M.—Mrs. Bridges Adams, "Education." West End Women's International Finance Committee, 3 P.M., 26, Soho Square. Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, "Hands off Russia Meeting," 7.30 p.m.

Before evacuating Pskoff the Germans handed over the administration to a committee of capitalists and bourgeois intellectuals, who immediately formed a White Guard to "preserve order."

SAVE YOUR WASTE PAPER FOR 'THE WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT.'—The capitalist rags will help to print it. We will send you a sack if you apply to us for it. Send a postcard to the Manager, 152, Fleet Street, when you have a sack full.

THE LEAGUE OF RIGHTS FOR SOLDIERS AND SAILORS WIVES AND RELATIVES.—Full particulars from Miss Gilbertson, 400, Old Ford Road, E.3.

INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS EDUCATION

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"He who has the School has the Future."

Price Sixpence. Usual terms to branches.

THE WORKERS' SOCIALIST FEDERATION, 400 OLD FORD ROAD, BOW, E.3.

THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA.

This is not a subject one can write about with enthusiasm. There is no movement to speak of; certainly no sign of activity among Socialist or Labour women. In fact we have gone back. Prior to the war we had the Women's Labour Leagues apparently firmly established on the Rand, but they have gone the way of every Labour organisation that is not founded on the principles of Socialism and have become mere "Gift and Comfort Committees." The real reason for the backwardness of the Women's Movement out here is, of course, the presence of an enormous supply of cheap native labour. Women have not, to any great extent, entered into the Labour market and any slight restlessness that has been shown by a few is but the reflex of the movement elsewhere. Such activity as there is, is confined almost entirely to middle class dilettantes, who, like your aristocrat munition makers, are ever looking for new sensations to amuse and vary their empty existences. So they make a great to-do (spasmodically) about the Franchise, demanding that it be granted to women on the same terms "as it is or may be granted to men." Different franchise laws prevail in the separate Provinces, so their demands are elastic and accommodating, ranging from Adult Suffrage in the Transvaal and barring colour, to a property qualification in the Cape, including coloured persons. The Backvelder, however, will have none of it, and quotes the Bible to prove that "women's sphere is the home." We have, however, the municipal vote, and of course it has made not the slightest difference to women generally—the women councillors voting class every time. For the School Board we are not permitted to vote, but, curiously enough, we may become members. Here again, Labour men and women are neglected or indifferent, and the only women returned to those Boards are those whose aim it is to perpetuate the Capitalist system of education combined with a due and humble reverence for the Flag, the King and the Church.

Such is briefly the situation here—we are somewhat in advance of the Patagonians, but a long way behind the Eskimos. There are signs, however, that we must travel the long trail before emancipation is achieved. Prohibition of many imports has created the need for factories and already women are engaged in cardboard box-making, and in shirt and hat and cap-making. The leather and tanning factories are making arrangements to start girls, aged 16, as learners, and there is a demand for similar labour in the newly started starch factories. The women and girls who are entering such trades are mostly

poor Dutch, who have migrated from the land to the big towns. They are woefully ignorant, and easy of exploitation, and there is no women's organisation to help or guide them. You will, perhaps, enquire what I have written that there is little to interest your readers in the movement here—in time there may be, but at present we are merely entering on the stages that you have long past. This, however, is a country of surprises and we may suddenly emerge. One does not get a clear perspective in war time. CHRIS. BARNETT.

CLYNES AND THE HERALD.

Mr. Clynes is annoyed with The Herald because it has advocated a general strike to secure a new election. When a general strike comes we hope it will be for something much more important than an election—for instance, to bring the Allied armies out of Russia and Germany and to establish the Soviets in Britain.

HENDERSON AND A CAPITAL TAX.

Mr. Arthur Henderson has been debating with Mr. Henry Bell the question of a levy on capital. Mr. Bell instances the cases of A, unmarried, who has had a good time and spent the whole of his £1,000 a year income, and B, who has saved half his £1,000 a year income to provide for his old age and start his children in life. Mr. Bell protests that it is unjust to impose a tax on B from which A, because of his extravagance, is exempt. Mr. Henderson replies: "What the Labour Party proposes to do is to reduce this penalty on thrift. The capital levy will enable the income-tax to be reduced probably to its pre-war rate, so that B, whilst paying his tiny quota to the capital levy, will be spared the considerable annual payment that he now has to make as income-tax on his £10,000 of investments. The thrifty B will, under the Labour Party's proposals, be left in enjoyment of a larger net income than he now has."

Mr. Henderson's explanation seems very much like a conjuring trick! How can it be that a levy on capital will both pay for the war and at the same time present those who pay the tax with larger incomes? But surely it is not the duty of the Labour Party to worry about such minor matters. Surely its business is to level up the conditions of the people whose incomes are not one-tenth or one-twentieth of £1,000 a year to the £1,000 a year standard of comfort! A "tiny" tax on capital as a panacea of social ills is the sort of silly mirage that the Labour Party ought not to be running after. Why does it not go for Socialism?

JOHN MACLEAN.

We now learn on good authority that since last July John Maclean has been on hunger strike and undergoing forcible feeding. Is this country to be the last in granting reprieves. Germany has shown the way by freeing Karl Liebknecht, whose popularity has been increased enormously by the unjust treatment meted out to him. When are we going to have our political prisoners reprieved? All sections of the community should protest against

MISCELLANEOUS ADVERTISEMENTS

FAMILY LIMITATION DOCTRINE. Post free, Ltd.—Malthusian League, 48, Broadway, Westminster.

Mrs. Litvinoff 11, Bigwood Road, N.W.4, requires TWO FURNISHED ROOMS for herself and two babies; London or suburbs.

VOTE FOR THE CHILDREN'S BIRTHRIGHT.—15s. a week to every child in our midst as promptly welcomed citizens till they reach the age of 21 years, and £1 a week for everyone at 60. MacKenzie-Kennedy Advertisers.

SOCIALISTS OF CROYDON, Your First New Year's Resolution for 1919 should be to send 2/- (2d. stamps) for 24 weeks prepaid subscription to Croydon's Own Socialist Weekly, THE EPISTLE OFFICES, 112 Woodville Road, Thornton Heath.

EDWARD SOERMUS, the "Russian Violinist" has several open dates, "week nights," in January and February. No Sundays available. March dates all booked. Free from April 1st onwards. Apply to Harry Morris, 10 Fairview Terrace, Merthyr.

THE ORPHEUM CINEMATOGRAPH THEATRE CROYDON.

Good Films. Good Music. Comfortably Heated. Clean. Well Ventilated.

LILLIAN SCOTT TROT, Managing Director. (Hon. Member D.W.R. & G.L. Union). Tel. Croydon 1887.

LEANEY'S LTD., WHOLESALE NEWSAGENTS.

City Agent for The Workers' Dreadnought, 9 and 10, ST. BRIDE'S AVENUE, E.C.4. (Late City and Suburban Publishing Co.)

FOREIGN COMMERCIAL POLICY IN NEW RUSSIA.

(continued from page 1186).

capital, which does not regulate its activities according to public needs, but according to the speculative possibilities of profit. The systematisation of foreign commerce ought to be effected from the outlook of the entire organisation of the economic life of the country.

7. The "nationalisation" of foreign commerce signifies that the import of commodities from abroad ought to correspond with real popular needs, as determined by the Department of Economy. This signifies that payment for imports must be made by this Department, and that opportunity for profit-making on the part of private capital shall be reduced to a minimum.

8. As regards the occupied territories or the independent states which formerly constituted part of the Russian economic system, commercial policy is based upon the common interests of all. A customs' union is a vital necessity for the interested parties. A desirable solution of this question will facilitate the transition to production under peace conditions alike in Russia, Poland, the Ukraine, and the Baltic provinces. As a sequel to suitable treaties there should ensue direct exchange of commodities, with both independent and occupied territories, on condition that the imported commodities really go to the population.

9. To bring about the nationalisation of foreign commerce we must have recourse to available methods (State, public, and private). A fundamental principle must be a State monopoly of purchase. To prevent smuggling there must be created a controlling office which will perform its functions in association with the Central Purchasing Office. Private capitalist undertakings must be nationalised in degrees.

10. Foreign concerns, including those hitherto in the hands of the War Office, are transferred to the Council for Foreign Commerce. The following problems will require special treatment: (a) prices; (b) tonnage; (c) marine insurance; (d) warehousing; (e) commercial credit; (f) customs.

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