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The Mineworkers Trapped.

Last Sunday the Mineworkers Union accepted the offer of the Chamber of Mines "as a whole." The terms of this offer were given in our issue of a fortnight ago, when we pointed out the highly dangerous nature of some of the proposals, the acceptance of which was a prime condition of the offer. That a large number of the Mineworkers were aware of the danger is evidenced by the fact that the voting at the Delegates Meeting was 35 for, 35 against. Mr. Toomey, the President, a coal merchant who has not worked underground for years and who will not be in the least affected by the terms gave his casting vote to accept the offer.

A 481 hour week bank to bank, and 12/6 minimum wage, are the baits of the offer. But there are two sides to an agreement. The catch for the Chamber is the guarantee not to raise the question of hours again within five years, a Standing Conciliation Committee, and—the biggest catch of the lot,—The facility given to the union to get members' dues deducted from wages by the mine offices, just as boarding house charges are deducted.

The members who voted for the offer regard this "facility" as a victory. What childlike trust! It is the greatest victory for the employer, and the most dangerous proposal of the lot. We often hear Labour Leaders inveighing against the necessity of reading the history of the worldwide workingclass movement. Were those who take it upon themselves to advice the mine workers the most superficial students of workingclass history, they would have known the danger to the movement of a "facility" of this kind. "Facilities" they are indeed, 'facilitating' the workingclass along the inclined plane to destruction.

We will leave aside the task of adequately stigmatizing the action of a Union, by the casting vote of a coal merchant, submitting to the disgrace of amending its constitution at the instance of the Employers. In the meantime, what can be said of officials who, to save the trouble of organising the men, hand over the job to the Employers? What can be said of the stupidity which enters upon a fight, or pretends to, with the employing class, a class with which the workers have nothing in common, and entrusts its artillery into the care of the enemy? The Employers will now be in a position to rope in all the scabs on the mines, who need never see an organiser or attend a meeting, EXCEPT TO VOTE DOWN THE REAL MEMBERS IN A CRISIS. We have reason to believe that the bulk of the members are alive to this danger, but that the crass stupidity er worse of those elected to advise them has all but handed the Union over to the tender mercies of the Employers.

The working class is in sore need of men who are alive to all the sinister schemes of the employers, and have sufficient sense of their responsibilities to make an earnest study of the worldwide movement. For the vicissitudes through which Labour passes are the same in every age and

every clime. The Mineworkers Union is not yet lost, while it has a few class war fighters. But they will have to exercise every effort if they wish to save it from the blighting "privileges" and "facilities" of the employers. Keep the Managements at arm's length, or in the day of workingclass peril you will most surely rue it!



Potted Pamphlets.

BY S. P. B.

(It is intended to publish from time to time in "The International" short accounts of the principal propaganda pamphlets stocked by the League, printed lists of which can be obtained from the Head Office; not with the object of saving people the trouble of reading them, which can be done at a sitting in any case, but on the contrary, in order to stimulate interest in them and so inducing people to buy and read).

TWO PAGES FROM ROMAN HISTORY.

By Daniel de Leon, (48 pp: 6d.)

In part 1 of this work the position of the Plebs leader of Rome in the 5th century B. C. is compared with that of the modern Labour Leader. "Plebeian," like "Labour," really meant nothing more than "not aristocratic", or "not in society." Like the House of Lords agitation, the name masked the true basis of ruling class power, viz: not blue blood culture, or a smart set, but ownership of the means of production. The real ruling class of Rome rested on land monopoly and chattel slavery, increasing as the Empire increased.

The 'Plebeian' (or 'Labour') leader, masquerading as a representative of the humbler folk in a fight against the Parktown of his day, he not being a Parktonian himself, confused the proletarian's mind into thinking that its proper struggle was to gain for Plebs leaders equal political and social privileges with 'Parktown.' In due course these privileges were won, the plebeian, or Labour, electorate having become habituated to voting gaily for anything that called itself 'Plebeian' (or 'Labour'). The leaders entered Parliament, dined with patricians, held high office, feathered their own nest, talked socialist platitudes, 'settled' industrial disputes, secured 'recognition for the union,' introduced 'practical' reforms, and upheld patriotism and law and order with the best; while the Henry Dubbs, whom the leaders would still engagingly address as 'fellow workers,' on whose continued discontent their leadership depended, sank deeper than ever into misery and dependence.

Thus in effect the Plebeian Leader, by "lending a colour of Labour to Capitalism", was used to buttress the economic power of the ruling class, which could never have survived so long without him.

De Leon cites modern instances from England and America; but we in South Africa can cap these from our own country. In particular we may warn the natives how liable they will be to be similarly confused by "fakirs" when their participation in the class struggle begins.

Changing Human Nature.

BY J. M. G.

"Socialism is impossible, you will" have to change human nature," is a catch phrase thrown at advocates of Socialism even to-day by cock-sure individuals who are content to accept their ideas,—if they deserve to be called such, -- from their grandfathers; and have learned nothing from their surroundings. What man is to-day he has always been and always will be, is delivered by these individuals as the last word. These phrases and many like them are repeated day by day in the press to mislead the workers, who repeat them again parrot like. Yet the most cursory examination shows they are neither wise nor truthful, and are in opposition to the facts of the history of human Socity.

That present day society differs from the past forms of society is written large and legible on the pages of the past. Society being the product of mankind as social animals, their conceptions of life have changed, have been formed by social needs. These social needs have given rise to many varieties of human nature as typified by the changing codes of morals, religions and laws.

Man's nature in the past has been such as to accept a form of ethics that considered it no crime to knock his neighbour on the head, then cook and make a meal of him. It was quite in keeping with his nature to kill the aged as being a burden to society. To slay one's parents is the greatest crime amongst Europeans to-day. Yet the human nature of our ancestors saw nothing revolting in it. Human nature in Sumatra considers it a religious duty to get rid of one's progenitors: while certain tribes in Central Africa consider cannibalism as the moral -code.

It has not been against human nature to look upon human slavery as a moral form of society. Even Aristotle, the greatest thinker of antiquity, could not think of any better form of society. His human nature did not revolt against slavery.

To come down to modern times, we find it was quite in keeping with human nature, as represented by the planters of the Southern States of U.S.A., to hold slaves and endeavour to maintain that system in opposition

to the human nature of the people of the Northern States, who looked upon that type of slavery with holy horror.

We find human nature varying in all ages and in all countries as to Religion. Some of these natures have been so brutal, judged by our standard;—it has led to torture, intolerance, bigotry and the burning of unbelievers to the glory of God.

The human nature of the rising Capitalist Class at the close of the Eighteenth Century and the beginning of the Nineteenth Century could see no crime in accepting apprentices from the parish authorities in England, housing them in hovels not fit for pigs, feeding them on what can only be called offal, working them sixteen hours per day, and when some of these miserable wretches attempted to run away, subjecting them to most brutal treatment. Those suspected of desertion had irons riveted around their 1 ankles, with long links reaching up to the hips. Yes, this was the human nature of the Capitalist Class of those days, a nature that gave expression and was embodied in the laws of the times, and accepted by the Henry Dubbs of the day as the only and best possible form of human society.

The typical human nature of today will change just as it has changed in the past. The capitalist system at the basis of and determining this nature will not last for all time. It has had a beginning in time and will end in time. The conflicts and antagonisms are responsible for and is forming a higher ideal. A human nature is evolving that can see nothing but brutality and degradation in a system of society under which the greater portion of society are held in economic bondage by a comparatively people, who own the machinery, the tools of production, arrogating the right to say to the majority whether they shall use them or not.

This higher human nature has its roots firmly rooted in the economic structure of society. Its ideal is the emancipation of the workers, the abolition of classes. It is the only ideal evolved in history that looks beyond its own corporate ends. It is inspired by a passion of ideal justice for all, seeking not the transfer of privilege, but its abolition.

No, human nature is not stable. It is ever changing. As the material surroundings change and form a different ent environment from the old, so human nature is determined in the mass. It is the product of the form society takes, and mankind has had as many varieties of nature as there have been societies.

Amalgamation.

The Johannesburg Branch of the Building Workers Industrial Union was launched last Sunday morning. The greater part of the proceedings. wastaken up with discussion ou transfer of benefit funds from the amalgamating societies. April the 2nd was fixed as the day of enrolment of members. Andrew Watson presided, and C.B. Tyler acted as secretary. A Ballot is being taken of the Rand Branches of the Carpenters and Joiners. The Bricklayers, Plumbers and Painters have balloted in favour of linking up. Whatever the result of the ballots, the industrial unionist members declare their intention to link up with the new Union in any case.

"A Strong Liberal Party"

A friend sends us a clipping from the South African Review:

"Sir Charles Crewe, K. C. M. G.; Brigadier-General, ex-Chief Recruiting Officer for the Union, M. L.A., and Unionist representative for East London, has been delivering himself of patronising panegyrics on the Labour party. Possibly the latter will be grateful; more probably not. Reuter failed to put the Crewe oration over the wires, even in an at tenuated form, so we reproduce a portion of the output. "No class," he aaid, "had come out better during this war than the working class had. Take their infantry regiments, seventy per cent. at least were what are known as the working classes, and right well they had done. . . It was absolutely impossible to think for a moment that any one of them could go back and fight a political battle with men they had been fighting side by side with," And so on for halfan-hour, with plenty of praise for Colonel Creswell, Mr. Dan Dingwall and others. Then comes the climax— The Unionists must "take up" the Labour party and turn it into a strong Liberal party," established on Unionist principles and lines!" So now the Labour party knows the reward that is in store for them from the party of Profit-

Comment were superfluous, further than to say that the Unionists have carried out Colonel Crew's suggestion long ago. minus the adjective strong." Reuter evidently thought him a fool though for blowing the gaff like that.

Between rulers and ruled there exists as little community of interest as between the plantation owner and the slave.

WILLIAM LIEBKNECHT.

There is no BAD peace. There is no GOOD war.

New York Journal.

Notes on Natives. No. I.

BY S. G. RICH.

Among the careless assumptions of those who want to limit the labour movement to Europeans is the following:

'The native has a different skull from the European; hence he cannot be industrially his equal."

Wherein this alleged difference in skull prevents the natives from doing the same work as Europeans, we are not told. The facts of industrial life go far to disprove this so-called "fact." One need only visit Durban to see native shoemakers and carpenters' helpers doing the same work as Europeans, in the same way.

If "skull" were the test, we should have to draw distinctions between different European peoples. Yet the short-headed Armenian, the long-headed Pole, the broad-headed German, all work in the same factory, doing the same work, equally intelligently, for the same pay. In Constantinople, Jews with large, long heads and Armenians with small, round ones, are both keen petty traders.

Nor is thickness of skull any test. As well judge of the value of a safe's contents by the thickness of its walls! It is pure poppycock to say that a thick skull inhibits the brain's growth. Recent work in the study of the brain has disproven such "biology."

It is now indubitable that BRAINSIZE has NOTHING to do with intelligence, once the brain is above a certain minimum size. It is likewise certain that the shape or thickness of the skull does not affect the brain's growth incomplexity—i.e., in intelligence.

Let us not invent "biological facts" to excuse our remissness in reaching the natives.

What Makes All Doctrines Plain!

Premier Billy Hughes is again in the soup. He is charged by the Labour Party with attempting to bribe Senators. (There is a bare anti-conscription majority in the Commonwealth Senate). Mr. Watson says he was offered considerations for changing his mind. Billy Hughes says, "No, I was only appealing to his conscience." We dedicate to him the old rhyme:

What makes all doctrines plain and clear?

About two hundred pounds a year.

And that which was proved true before

Prove false again? Why, two hundred more!

The Trade Unionist.

"The Trade Unionist," a militant monthly of British labour, advocating Industrial Unionism and Shop Control. has been suppressed.

Not to be baulked, the comrades who organised its production have started another paper called "Solidarity." It is doing brave work, and thousands of copies seem to make their way into the workshop all over Britain. Here is the comment in its first issue on the suppression of "The Trade Unionist."

"At last we have attained to a definite issue; the powers that be have suppressed The Trade "Unionist. It will be common knowledge that the public prosecutor has seen fit to institute proceedings and to obtain a judgement against Comrade E.L. Pratt, the Editor, together with an ordered suspension of future issues of the "brave little paper." But it is our duty to point out that the action of the authorities was an expression of fear and not an act of justice.

Comrades Pratt and Watson were in direct touch with all centres of true Labour activity; and, seeing that Labour activity had during the latter part of November been forced to assume a defensive attitude to protect their interests against capitalism, the incompetents who were making such a hash of government feared the publicity that would have been given in the December issue of The Trade Unionist to the victories won by workers in different parts of the country by their "direct action" against foolishly directed authority. The arbitrary suspension of the paper, therefore, was an evidence of fear. The futility of the action is proved when we state that the responsive protest of workers all over the country is enthusiastic enough to encourage our comrades in the belief that their conduct has the full support of the rank and file."

Not satisfied with this, the powers that be have raided The Trade Unionist office: and. in the gentle manner peculiar to authority, turned it upside down and carted away all books, papers, stationery and other weapons of offence.

Steamships and railroads, those much-vaunted vehicles of civilization, not only carry guns, liquor and syphilis to barbarians, but they also bring the barbarians to us, and with them their barbarians.

KAUTSKY.

Workers of the World Uniting.

A Grand Meeting last Sunday.

Last Sunday's protest meeting of whites and natives in the Trades Hall was declared one of the best and most enthusiastic League meetings yet held. There was a packed house in both floor and gallery of the Council Hall. A large sprinkling of natives turned up in response to the press advert inviting all "irrespective of race, colour or creed; with a solid block of whites in full sympathy with the object of the meeting, namely to protest against the Native Affairs Administration Bill. It was gratifying to see how easily the whole audience caught up the spirit of forgetting for the time being that there was such a thing as colour. Comrade D. Ivon Jones presided, and put the meeting in possession of the salient facts of the agitation against the Bill, emphasising the International point of view. Saul Msane, the veteran leader of the Rand natives, opened up, and remained on the platform throughout the proceedings as the chief speaker of the evening. Amongst his opening words , he said, "I hail you as the conquerors of colour prejudicé." His speech, which was deliberately and clearly given in lucid sentences, was a comparison of the "equality before the law" tradition introduced into native administration by the "Liberal England" of the early days, with the narrow slaveholding notions of the Dutch voortrekker and his Church.

Comrade Bunting followed him with a short statement on the legal details of the Bill, insisting on the government by proclamation aspect, and the provisions practically forcing all natives to be servants of the whites giving complete dictatorship to the Native Affairs Department,

Then came Horatio 'Mbelle, one of the Rand's young educated natives whose outlook is distinctly nearer to that of the landless industrial. His statement of the offending clauses, and criticism of them in simple direct language, made a good impression.

After that came questions and discussions. Saul Msane was bombard-with them from all parts of the house. The white section seemed athirst for information, and the jovial replies of Mr. Msane put the whole meeting in good humour.

At one stage of the discussion the meeting was in danger of being sidetracked by a breeze caused by breezy Bill Hosken, who came to support. but could not refrain from digs at the "self laudation" of the League, (the chairman having pointed out that the events of the week had proved that the working class movement was the only defence of the Natives in a crisis). In reply to a dispute from the same quarter, R. C. Kapan produced the "Constitution and Kules" of a native Trace Union, started on the Rand, but suppressed. Space forbids a detailed report of other interesting incidents. The chairman put to the meeting the following resolution, which was carried unanimously.

"This meeting of whites and natives held at the Trades Hall, Johannesburg, protests against the Native Affairs Administration Bill now before Parliament, as designed to accelerate the manufacture of cheap servile labour and to keep down the native more than ever in the position of a serf, and would further warn Parliament that the passing of this Bill in the teeth of determined opposition on the part of the natives forebodes grave danger to the peace of South Africa."

The meeting closed with the Red Flag, the three verses of which were sung with a lustiness not heard for many a day.

FROM THE NATIVE STAND-POINT.

BY HORATIO BUD-'MBELLE.

The meeting held on Sunday 11th instant in the Trades Hall to protest against the Native Affairs Administration Bill proved highly successful from all considerations. From the natives' standpoint, the meeting was a revelation of sincere sympathy on the part of the members of the International Socialist League. Further, it encouraged the natives in their struggles that after all, even in Johannesburg, there are white men morally bold enough to come out publicly to grapple with the detestable colour bar which is responsible for so much of the trouble between the two races. The natives present were impressed by the remarkably courageous step to combat race prejudice even against enormous odds. The meeting signifies agreat change that is bound to come sooner or later.

But the task before us is stupendous in that our Parliament, supposed to be the highest seat of clear and ighteous consoience, has been besmirched and filled with selfish gas, clothed to suit the European populace, with its popular and misleading ideal of a white South Africa. The gas has poisoned the intelligence of our South Africar Parlimment, blunted its conscience, fogged its sense of justice. This is the Sisyphian task before us.

(Truly a Sisyphian task if you look to Parliament only. The workingclass is still rolling-up the stone of Parliamentary action and is periodically hurtled to despair by its disapointments. To-day they are learning te back their POLITICAL RIGHT with INDUSTRIAL MIGHT. The self-reliance of industrial solidarity: every nerve answers to that iron sping.

Meanwhile, the Bill is practically withdrawn for 12 months, during which the natives will have rare opportunities to agitate against its provisions. EDITUR. INT.)

Have we not learned to our satisfastion, by experience it the Reichsize elections, that the oppression which the (apit list exercises on his wage-slave is stronger than that exercised by the most reactionary W: LAM IEBENECHT. State.

Here you subscrib: he laternational." Ss. per annux. prat : ez, Box 417°, Johnesonburg.

International Socialist League (S.A.)

OBJECT: To propagate the principles of International Socialism, Industrial Unionism and anti-militarism, and to maintain and strengthen international workingclass organisation.

P. O. Box 4178 Phone 6035. 6 Trades Hall, Rissik Street, Johannesburg General Secretary: D. Ivon Jones.

LEAGUE NOTES.

!)URBAN Socia! Struggles."

On Thursday evining illimrade Dunning read a paper on "Scialism and the War, "taken from a lecture by Louis Boudin. Debate followed and the conclusion come to by the Branch was that Boudin was a good Booksell-

On Sunday morning the Sunday School showed an increase of four scholars and was addressed on Early History by Comrade Campbell.

On Sunday evening Comrade Campbell addressed a good audience on the fourth lecture of his series.

"Earlier Social Struggles."

As a prelude the lecturer pointed out that a larger proportion of wage earners came into existence daily, but that the intelligent few who are really taking notice of what is happening around them, in any one town, can fingers of one's hands.

Speaking to the subject the lecturer said that all dominant classes of any period had always come into power by a Revolution, but the middle class had always sought to ignore, and in fact to carefully hide the fact. Always as Rebels they had gained the ascendancy, but the turbulence, riots, and bloodshod of any particular revolutionary period they had been very careful to lay at the doors of the masses, who they referred to usually as the rag. lag and bobtail. As a stand. ing proof of this phenomenon the period 1616 to 1636 in Germany was gone into. The Middle Class have never, in any instance, shown generosity to those they have overthrown, as economic history of any country amply pioves.

From time to time Society on the eve of a Revolution had been side tracked by various subterfuges. There is no doubt that this is the present case, with the Great War as the sidetracking agent. The people would today curse the day that they were born could they but foresee the result of the holocaust in Europe. Times of war have always lent themselves to reconstruction, and with the scrapping of Trade Union rules. Social questions; and all semblance of equality before the law, the introduction of a steady Military and Industrial Conscription, a change was coming about which would generate an impatience which had never had an historical parallel since Sparactacus led the slaves into revolt against their tyrannical masters. The Government of this country were merely a pack of Anarchists, and Trade Union and Labour Leaders had

signed contrasts to scab until the Waris over, and to cease from "embarassing" the Government for the same period.

This fact probably accounted for the further fact that the British proletariat was the most backward in sociology, and the most ignorant working class generally in the whole world. because their Government had always right through history carefulls supprossed all understandable literature. of a sociologic kind that mattered, and had fostered the ignorance of the masses by scattering false impressions of neighboring countries, their people, politice, customs and manners. The consequence of this had been to let the movement get into the hands of a few, which in turn had engendered bosship or cliqueism and consequent loss of discipline.

Discipline in the movement was essential if anything was to be accomplished. Without discipline the movement which should be a Socialist Army became merely a disorderly mob with which nothing could be done and in which spydom, sabotage, assassination and all manner of underground tactics, which by their very nature were sure to cripple and destroy that movement in which they were favoured, would flourish to the disruption of the movement generally and the strangling of

progress.

CAPETOWN

Comrade Harrison got reprimand... ed and discharged by the Capetown Magistrate in the hearing of the charge against him. Hague Conference realmost always be counted upon the ports were adduced as proof re dumdum bullets, and the "Review of Reviews "was brought in to back up the statement that Lord Fisher had five years ago advocated boiling, prisoners. in oil. We congratulate Comrade. Harrison on emerging so successfully from yet another scrape. He is the most policed and summonsed antimilitarist in South Africa.

BENONI

At last Monday's Branch nieeting Comrade Becker delivered an address to the members on "The Failure of the old International and the prospects. of the New." The history of the Socialist movement prior to the war pointed to failure. The attitude of International Socialist Congress on the question of the war made it now clear that the International was not prepared to. stop the conflict, one of the last resolutions of the International condoned wars of defence. In nearly all Socialists the nationalist sentiment had lingored. What wonder then that the masses had remained nationalist in the crisis. What could be expected of the common people when the leaders thomselves had justified national defence:

A good hom ely discussion sollowed, and soncluded an interesting evening. Next week: Comrade Aronowitz on "The Development of Society."

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