

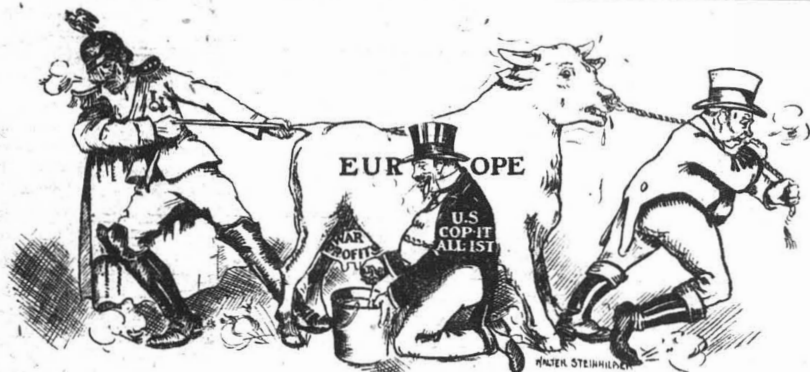
THE MAGAZINE YOUNG SOCIALISTS'

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE Y. P. S. L. OF U. S.

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NEUTRALITY

WHAT SOCIALISM IS

By W. L. GHENT

Socialism is the collective ownership and democratic management of the social means of production for the common good.

We use the general term "collective," rather than some more specific term, because common ownership under Socialism will no doubt take on various forms—national, state, municipal, labor-union and co-operative.

We say "democratic management" because collectivism with-

out democracy would not be Socialism.

We say the "social means" of production instead of "all means" because, as all Socialists agree, many kinds of small industry will probably be left in private hands. It is the large-scale industries, the industries in which labor is performed socially, by groups or masses of men working with tools owned by other men, that Socialists insist shall be made collective property.

And, finally, we say the "common good" rather than the "equal good" or some other term which assumes foreknowledge of the rule of recompense for labor or service in the society of the future. Socialism strives for the "greatest good of the greatest number," but no one to-day can say upon what basis the apportioning of that good will be determined.

IMMIGRATION AND WAGES

By SCOTT NEARING

The United States Immigration Commission which spent several months and hundreds of thousands of dollars during its inquiry into the immigration problem, finally published its report in forty-two volumes. By way of summary of this vast mass of evidence, the commission states, "The investigations of the commission show an oversupply of unskilled labor in basic industries to an extent which indicates an oversupply of unskilled labor in the industries of the country as a whole—a condition which demands legislation restricting the further admission of such unskilled labor."

The Immigration Commission further suggested that "it is desirable in making the restriction that a sufficient number be debarred to produce a marked effect upon the present supply of unskilled labor." Elsewhere in the report, the Commission called attention to the fact that the economic and social standards of the working population of the United States were being greatly lowered through the competition in the labor market of large numbers of unskilled foreigners who came to the United States without any families, and who were willing to live on a standard much lower than that generally accepted by American workers.

The European war has given the American people a chance to try out the effects of immigration restriction. The total number of immigrants in 1913 and 1914 was slightly less than a million and a quarter for each year. In 1915 the immigration dropped to one-third of a million (326,700). Here was

an artificial cut of almost a million in the number of immigrant arrivals.

At the same time there was a tremendous spurt in industrial activity. Bureaus of labor and other departments charged with inquiring into industrial conditions report a far greater employment of labor in 1915 than in 1914 and a further increase in 1916 over 1915.

While the number of available laborers was decreasing, the number of jobs was increasing with the inevitable result—high wages in most of the unskilled labor markets of the country. Large numbers of American wage and salary earners have received no wage increase during the past two years, but the unskilled labor market has moved up everywhere from 10 to 50 per cent, in some cases even more than that.

The conclusion which this situation forces upon the observer of economic conditions is quite obvious. If we could substitute for our present hit-or-miss system of immigration a scheme that would prevent any immigrant who did not have a job at a wage representing living decency from entering the country, we could prevent much of the disastrous competition between unskilled laborers for unskilled jobs and thus succeed in holding up the unskilled labor market to a level that would at least provide a minimum standard of physical health and social decency. Such a provision is no remedy for the worst aspects of the wage system, but it would lop off a big branch of the system that has expressed itself in frightfully low wages, long hours, and living conditions sur-

rounded by all of the squalor and misery that usually accompanies poverty.

"We're raising hell to get heaven on earth," is the terse way one worker puts it."

"The Socialists ask you to do a little thinking. Are they expecting too much?"

"The workingman who tries to ape the capitalists usually makes a monkey of himself."

To be a good wage-slave it is necessary for you to believe it is right for the capitalists to own the world. Are you a good honest?

Socialism will give you something more than the right to enjoy. It will give you the right to enjoy the results of your work.

"Poverty is a hell made by those who live in it."

"Getting away with it," the only capitalist test of virtue.

O war! what art thou? at once the proof and scourge of man's fallen state.—Samuel G. Dixon, Commissioner of Health of Pennsylvania.

Wages can never keep pace with the cost of living. They never have and never will as long as capitalism endures.

"It's all a matter of viewpoint. Give the average worker a job and he is happy. Give any capitalist a job and he is miserable."

"In every year the workers do their bit while the capitalists make their bit."

DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH

According to the computation of Prof. W. I. King, mention of which is made in the report of the Industrial Relations Commission (1915), the grand total wealth of the United States in 1910 was \$140,000,000,000. (It has since been computed by government statisticians as \$187,000,000,000 in 1912.) Prof. King shows that the wealth of 1910 was distributed, as to classes, as follows:

Class	Number	Per Cent.	Average wealth	Aggregate wealth	Per Cent.
Rich	2,000,000	2	\$42,000	\$84,000,000,000	60
Middle	33,000,000	33	1,480	49,000,000,000	35
Poor	65,000,000	65	107	7,000,000,000	5

One man (John D. Rockefeller) is reputed to be worth \$10,000,000,000, which is one hundred and fortieth of the total wealth of the United States.

The average annual income of the workers is placed at \$500.00. Assuming that this is correct, the wealth of Rockefeller is equivalent to the income of 100,000 men for twenty years.

There are 300 working days in the year. At \$1.65 per day the worker would have to labor 2,000,000 years to accumulate a sum equal to the fortune of Rockefeller.

This table shows that 2 per cent. of the people of this country own 60 per cent. of the wealth, while 65 per cent. own only 5 per cent.

The 65 per cent. produce all the wealth of the nation. This means that 65 persons in every hundred must produce, by their labor, the means of their sustenance and in addition support 35 other persons in comfort and luxury.

The 2 per cent. who own 60 per cent. of the wealth of the nation control all the functions of government. They are now clamoring for an increase of the army and navy for the purpose of protecting their property in foreign lands.

This powerful force in American government controls the issuing of money and banking, and it absolutely owns the Supreme Court. It creates the economic conditions that determine the procedure of the State, county and municipal courts.

The boards of trade and commercial clubs that rule the municipal governments of the cities and electric light towns are only the small ramifications of this huge octopus that is sucking the very life-blood from the people.

The governments of the cities are undergoing a departure from the old custom of government by law and are rapidly becoming governments by police orders. This method of government is expensive and burdensome, but it is the surest and swiftest means of enforcing the will of the despotism of wealth.

The maintenance of municipal government by the assessment of fines has reduced the necessity for taxation to a minimum so that the burden of maintaining police departments, for the purpose of protection of property, falls almost wholly upon the property-less class.

Courts are nothing more than mere collection agencies for the

THE SPIRIT OF SOCIALISM

A Parable

By Blanche Watson,
Full Time Student Rand School of
Social Science

My neighbor was chasing flies this morning, using the switcher vigorously at the window, before drawing the shade to darken the room.

Most of the flies persisted in sticking to what she was trying her best to make an untenable position. They dashed (and were driven) hither and thither, but most of them stuck fast. Some of them were turned completely upside down in the struggle, but they managed to get right side up again and held on. Others buzzed protestingly all the while, but resisted the efforts of my neighbor and the switcher. A few took advantage of the way of escape that the open door afforded. A certain percentage of them were crushed in the struggle, but those that remained were apparently unmoved by these tragedies. In fact, they redoubled their efforts to keep near the light of that window—why, it would have been hard to say, for outside, there was plenty and freedom, while inside was bare existence, ill treatment and (in some cases) premature death.

It came to my mind, irresistibly, "these flies, fighting blindly against all efforts to dislodge them from the window pane, are like the great mass of the working people. My neighbor is the spirit of Socialism. The switcher represents the Socialist press—ignored, misunderstood, fought—even by those for whom it is working, and for whose benefit it was brought into existence."

It was in turn vigorous, per-

exploiting class, and the police officers are the paid emissaries that carry out their mandates, just as the militia and regular army enforce the orders of the coal barons and steel magnates.

The control of government has been taken completely out of the hands of the producing classes and turned over entirely to the exploiting class, and they use this control to rob the people. They do it through manipulation and combination of wealth.

It is accomplished through the ownership of public service utilities and the control of government, and this legalized form of robbery will continue so long as the public utilities remain private property.

When this stolen property is restored to the people who produced it and the control of the government is placed in the hands of the people they will be able to procure an equitable distribution of wealth.

WHAT'S NEXT

By Jacob Wilner, State Educational Director Y. P. S. L. of Indiana

Now that the campaign is over, and the enthusiasm has colled down, the question arises what's next? There must always be something in the League which should interest the members and also get the attention of outsiders. There are a number of leagues organized at present in Indiana, and there are prospects for many more. The young generation is drifting away little by little from the conservative ideas of their fathers and forefathers, and are ready to grasp something new. The Socialist philosophy sounds great to the energetic young boy or girl, and they are to learn and discuss it in the leagues.

While it is true that it is very beneficial for the Yipsels to run socials and entertainments, in order to enjoy, we must not neglect the educational part. Study Socialism first, and then dance. It should be the duty of the league as a whole, and of every member individually, to have some reading and discussion at every meeting. There are a number of books in elementary Socialism which are easy to read and very comprehensive. Robert Blatchford's "Merry England," Hillquit's "Socialism Summed Up" and Benson's "The Truth About Socialism" are some of those that would be of great benefit to the league members. Why not select one of the Yipsels at your next meeting and make him read one of these books for half an hour? If there are some points not clear, let the members take it up for discussion, limiting each speaker to about five minutes. A meeting of this kind would benefit every member and would make them attend meetings.

Another educational feature for the Y. P. S. L. leagues is the course in Socialism which the Rand School offers. It is a course of twelve lessons written by Anna Malley, and costs one dollar. The leagues are to elect an instructor or director who is to organize a class of at least seven members (minimum). All those enrolled in the class are to pay one dollar each to the director who is to send that money to the Rand School. The lessons are sent to the director every week beginning with lesson number one the first week, number two the second week, and so on for twelve weeks. Every student gets his lesson from the director and must study it up at home. There are a number of questions found at the end of every lesson and the student must be prepared to answer them, when called upon by the director. I am glad to note that a number of leagues in the State have already organized classes and are very successful. Why not you?

I hope the comrades will consider this matter properly and adopt an educational program to be carried out. Make your members interested and your league will greatly benefit by it.—"The Bulletin," issued by the Socialist Party of Indiana.

"The workers will love their country just as soon as they own one to love."

"The ballot-box is the road to prosperity for the working-class."

"Necessity makes more Socialists than are made by Socialist arguments."

suasive and compelling. Like the Socialist press—directing, helping and coaxing—it led, it explained, it cajoled, it begged, it drove, it lashed even, but always with one idea in view—to enlighten, to guide, and to direct toward that open door.

And what was the result? Every last one of those flies, eventually, went through that door. It is true, a small number remained for a time unnoticed, picking up the few crumbs that the table afforded, until my neighbor's second onslaught, when they, too, went the way of their less stupid brethren.

So it is, with us working men and women. Just so surely shall we, too, go through the open door, at the behest of the Spirit of Socialism, into the light of a new order of things. Some of us will go gladly, some unwillingly, some timidly, some fearfully, some only because we can no longer resist; but eventually every last one of us will pass through, the door will be closed, and the old order of things will be no more.

NEWS NOTES

New leagues have been organized at Harrisburg, Ill., with 11 charter members, and at Greenville, Pa., with 12 members. Just to show the national scope of our league it is interesting to note the Comrade Maurice A. Shilman of the East Side Cleveland, Ohio, Y. P. S. L. moved to Newark, N. J., and we now have a new Jewish League in that town. After almost two years of agitation in the face of considerable opposition, the North Side Milwaukee League has applied for a National Charter. This leaves only three Milwaukee circles and one in Chicago among those still outstanding. The North Side is the second Milwaukee league to join within the last few months.

Omaha, Neb., a recently re-organized league, reports that a highly interesting program at its third meeting has proved the success of the new organization.

THE YOUNG SOCIALIST MOVEMENT

(From the "Elöre", Hungarian Socialist Daily, June 8, 1916.)

Our most important problem, in the increase of our strength, is the development of the modern young people's movement. This co-ordination of our strength depends on two things: our own internal development, in turn dependent on the class-consciousness and general education of our membership, and secondly on the foundation laid down for us by social evolution of the times. This second, exterior factor depends on the extension of the boundaries of our organization, and the constant winning of new members and new fighters in the struggle.

The support and acquisition of the young members constitutes our greatest source of strength. Among the young workers is found the most fertile soil for our economic and political teaching, and here, too, are we surest of speedy and worth-while results. By all means the winning of the youth is of great importance to the working class movement, for youth to-day, owing to better educational facilities, is better educated and hence of greater value in the struggle. And finally, they are entering our industrial life by the thousands—to neglect our duty in this regard would place in jeopardy even the meager achievements thus far won.

For these reasons the organized workers of all civilized countries are making the most strenuous efforts to rally the youth to the banners of their movement. And although this effort is found everywhere, the methods employed in the various countries, none of them perfect, differ considerably. The shortcomings of most plans of organization are caused by the enormous difficulty

of the problem. It is much harder to organize the young workers than it is the old, it is next to impossible to organize them on either purely political or economic lines. Politically, the laws of many countries hamper or forbid this, and it is doubtful if it would be even desirable to have inexperienced, untrained youth waste its time, and lose its freshness in the wrangles and excitement of political strife.

Organization along industrial lines is bound up with even greater obstacles. The great mass of the young workers (in European countries) come to us from the ranks of the apprentices, most of whom are bound by contract to their employers and are subject to countless medieval trade and apprenticeship customs and regulations. Their problem of organization is far more intricate than that of their elders, for should the apprentice lose his job through strike or other activity he would either have to give up the idea of learning the trade, altogether or else face merciless exploitation through lengthening of service time at the hands of the unscrupulous employers. Under the conditions it is therefore best that he be organized under the direction of capable leaders to achieve the physical and intellectual development so sadly needed. He should be taught his economic and political interests—and this training should be undertaken by the political and economic organizations of the workers. On this basis the newer young people's movement will be built up within the structure of the existing labor movement.

The Young People's Movement Abroad

The oldest and most successful young people's organization is that of Austria. It consists of 200 circles with a membership of 10,000. The Bohemians constitute the strongest group within the league. Their program includes the training and protection of the young workers, trade school and apprenticeship reforms, and other important problems affecting the young people's organization.

The movement in Germany is more the product of the modern time. Other obstacles presented themselves here to the normal development of the young people's organization, most important of which was the governmental opposition. During the time of the "Socialist Exception Laws" absolutely no mention could be made of a young people's league, and even after the ban was lifted officially the young workers still found themselves greatly hampered by police interference. The authorities, while using every means within their power to cripple the workers' organizations, did their utmost to aid and encourage the formation of "good" bourgeois young people's societies, with their self-confessed purpose of lulling the workers into a condition of stupid contentment. In this way it was hoped to keep the youth of the nation away from the influence of the Social Democrats. The state's bogey, with all its power, failed in its efforts, and in spite of all artificial obstacles, the young Socialist organizations reached a position of prosperity.

The organization there dates back actually to 1906 when three

organizations then in existence, with 1,440 members, combined. After a few years of experimentation the party executive and the central body of the unions founded the present central organization of the young workers. Their paper, "Arbeiter-Jugend," is now read in 500 cities and has a circulation of 80,000. There are 500 circles in the country and their work is very effective. In 1911 there were 5174 affairs held. Included in this central organization are also young people's societies formed by individual crafts and trades. Leadership is generally in the hands of older comrades, chosen generally for their fitness and ability by the local union committee, and whose efforts are directed toward the training and education of the young workers in their charge.

Of greatest help in the organization of the young is the "Federation of German Sport Societies," with a membership of 120,000, largely recruited from among the youth. The whole-hearted enjoyment of sport prevents the workers from indulging in useless, trashy forms of other entertainment, and besides cultivates in him the desire for the development of his body. The desire for physical development then serves to pave the way for intellectual development as well. It is undeniable that this sport society exercises great influence in winning over the youth, and the constant intercourse with the organized workers that it brings to the youth serves to awaken in his breast the feelings of class solidarity, and the spirit of organization.

Switzerland and Sweden both have strong organizations, the organ of the latter having a circulation of 50,000. Great quanti-

ties of young Socialist literature is scattered broadcast, and splendid capability is shown in the work. The same, to a greater or lesser extent, is true of all Europe and of the United States.

Young People's Socialist League and the Socialist Party

The General Plan of Organization

Absolute Democracy with Several Buts

By Harry D. Smith,
Director Circle 2, Brooklyn, N. Y.

A Young People's Socialist Club or Circle can be made the nucleus of a literary, debating, social and athletic organization, with the Socialist background as the adhesive and magnetic feature. However, regardless of what may develop later, this nucleus must have a plan of organization, a complete set of officers, and some method outlined for the conduct of its meetings and other activities.

The following list of officers and their duties may not be absolutely complete, and may not suit all occasions and conditions; but such a set of officials have conducted successful Young People's Socialist Circles in the past.

Chairman, chosen at every meeting from list of members, either by the leader or a reliable arrangement committee. Duties: to conduct the particular meeting in an efficient and level-headed manner.

Critic, picked like the chairman. Duties: to closely observe and note down all important happenings, especially details of the literary programme, and to present a constructive criticism thereof.

Organizer, elected for a term of three months. Should be a member of keen observation, sound judgment and some diplomacy. Duties: to be ever ready with plans for increasing the efficiency of the Club and enlarging the membership. Also a member of the arrangements committee.

Arrangements committee, chosen for term of three months, composed of the organizer and two other capable members. Duties: to arrange for and plan all literary programs, entertainments and other events of the Circle.

Financial secretary, recording secretary, corresponding secretary and treasurer elected for term of three months. Duties: the same as those of similar officers in other organizations.

The time allotted for the meeting should not be over two hours. A business meeting of approximately three-quarters of an hour to an hour is long enough. Long, drawn-out business meetings are exceedingly tiresome to young people, and the shorter they are the better they like it. The so-called literary program can also consume an hour with ease. The program is always more interesting to the young folks than the business part of the meeting. Many novel features can be introduced here in order to avoid dull monotony.

In articles to follow, the director, the chairman and the critic will be discussed somewhat in detail in order to show particularly the educational effect of such officers upon the membership if they are efficient and made of the right stuff.

"Private enterprise always succeeds at the expense of public welfare."

CONFESSIONS OF A FANATIC

By ELLIS O. JONES

Last winter I had a number of long and earnest talks with a professional Preparedness advocate, and I must confess that he made me see everything in a new light.

At first I was inclined to be skeptical. I thought it was just a scheme of the munitions manufacturers to sell more goods and get more profits, but the more I studied into the real facts and got hold of the underlying philosophy of the movement, the more I saw it was based on solid logic.

In the beginning, I used to ask my friend what there was to be afraid of.

"Suppose someone should attack us," he would remind me.

"But who is going to attack us? All the nations of Europe have their hands full and no other nation anywhere shows any belligerent intention." Thus I argued in my then unenlightened condition.

"You never can tell," he would reply earnestly.

"But," I would persist in my innocent way, "now that the nations of Europe have greatly weakened themselves in fighting men- and fighting materials, isn't there less danger from attack than ever before?"

"It may be true," he would admit in a kindly way, "but you never can tell. We ought to be prepared for any emergency."

After each conversation of this kind I would go home and ponder carefully what he had said, and finally I came to the firm and unalterable conclusion that his argument was sane and unanswerable. Therefore, I am now a firm advocate of Preparedness, and I

believe we ought to prepare for any emergency.

Accordingly I believe we ought to have a navy ten times as big as all the rest of the navies of the world combined, because you never can tell what might happen. And we ought to close up all our factories at once so that every able-bodied man can at once join the standing army and be ready for any possible attack from any possible direction.

And not only in a military way am I a confirmed advocate of being prepared against any possible emergency, but I also follow the same principle in other matters to the very best of my ability.

For instance, I never go outside the house any more without my umbrella and my raincoat and my rubbers. I have discovered that you never can tell about the weather, and often it is fairest just before a storm. One should be prepared against such an emergency. In addition to that, I now carry my heavy overcoat around with me all summer. Formerly, before I gained wisdom, my wife used to put my overcoat away in the spring and leave it there until fall, but I found that occasionally in the summer there comes a chilly day, or I might possibly get locked in a refrigerator by accident, so now I am never without preparation against inclement weather, either winter or summer.

Another thing I did was to build a cyclone cellar in my backyard. One of my benighted and unintelligent neighbors remonstrated with me, and said I was doing a foolish thing. He said

that we never had cyclones in New York and therefore there was no need of preparing against them.

I pointed out to him that his argument was invalid. I told him we had never had an attack on our shores from a foreign power, and that nobody could point to the slightest sign of any danger of such attack, but was that any reason why we should not go ahead preparing just the same? This settled him, and I proceeded to finish my cyclone cellar in peace.

Another thing I do nowadays is never to attend Sunday School picnics without being heavily armed. You never can tell what minute some wild-mannered Sunday School teacher is going to jump at you and try to rend you limb from limb.

These are but a few of the more conspicuously forethoughtful things I do since I have seen the true light of the Preparedness philosophy. I now believe that we ought to be ready for any possible emergency, no matter how remote, because you never can tell.

"Property has no value that labor does not put into it."

"Ours is an appeal to reason: theirs is an appeal to rifles."

"Capitalism thrives on ignorance; Socialism on education."

"The reason the average voter does not think is simple: If he did he would be ashamed of himself."

The Young Socialists' Magazine

FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

Organ of the American Socialist Sunday School and Young People's Federation

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Every strike that fails teaches the lesson of industrial unionism and enforces its penalties against craft division.

"Poverty is not a crime—it's a disease. Socialism is the only cure."

"You are free to quit your master and hunt for another."

A PROPHET

When the war broke out, John Burns resigned from the British cabinet, quitting a \$25,000 a year post, something inconceivable to an American politician, in protest.

When Mr. Burns quit he prophesied that Great Britain would be driven to conscription, then to production, and then to revolution.

Conscription and production have come true. Revolution is waiting at the door.—Wilwaukee Labor Leader.

The next Young Socialist Magazine Conference will be held on Sunday, January 21st, 1917, at 2 P. M., Rand School, 140 E. 19th St., New York City. All leagues of Greater New York and New Jersey are requested to send their delegates.

WHAT IS THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP CONTEST?

By William F. Kruse, National Secretary Y. P. S. L.

The members of the League are proud of their organization. They have a right to be; for when we consider the short space of time that they have been organized and the great difficulties of reaching and holding the American youth, they have made very substantial progress in the past few years. There are a large number of really first-class organizations of the Y. P. S. L. in this country. Some of them might well be models of Socialist organization work. Others are not so well fixed, but on the whole it would be an interesting matter to find out just which league is the best of the whole movement.

There are two reasons for wanting to find this out. One is a personal one, the other for the good of the organization. The first need be treated only in passing. Young people are ambitious, they aim for nothing short of perfection, and they want the things that they have connection with to be, if not exactly perfect, at least the best thing of that kind that can be found. There is nothing harmful in that feeling and it contributes mightily to our progress. But there is something harmful in letting them brag of being the "best and only" when, as a matter of fact, they are no such thing. The purpose here is to find out just which is the best league and why.

That last word tells the story. If we find out the good things about each organization it will help them all in adapting these good things to their own uses. And if, in the course of the contest, each league finds out its own weak points in comparison with the strength of others, it will help

and better that league making the discovery. In the course of this contest we are going to get all kinds of good suggestions for entertainments, organization work, etc.—hundreds of good suggestions. The best of these are going to be put into such form as to make them decidedly useful to every league. In this way each league will get the benefit of the brains and experience of the whole movement.

How the Contest Will Be Run

There will be two general ways of scoring the points: by the ability of your officers, and by the work of the membership. This will put all leagues, large and small, city and country, on the same footing. It is not mere numbers that make a good league—it is the brains and ability of its officers and the good qualities of the members. And the entry can be either a circle or a whole city league. This may seem to be favoring the city movement if we allow a city movement composed of fifteen or twenty circles to compete as one unit—but when we consider the great amount of hard work needed to keep harmony and co-operation in a movement of this kind you will see that the advantage is not so great as it might seem.

Each league is to elect four officers. They are:

- (1) An Organizer.
- (2) An Entertainment Manager.
- (3) An Educational Director.
- (4) A Press Agent and Correspondent.

The duties of the first three are to answer one question each per month. That isn't much. The

question will refer to their line of work and is to be answered in an essay of 200 words. For the best answer submitted there is an award of 10 points, second best 7 points, third 4 points, and for every other answer received on time 1 point each. So a league with a clever board of officers can win thirty points a month right here, enough to balance half a dozen hundred members. The work of the press agent will be to send in a list of the membership every three months, a report card every month, and to take care of the local publicity work. He, too, can win heavily for his league.

The way that the general membership can score is by getting subscriptions to Socialist papers; getting and holding new members, helping in the work of the Socialist Party, and doing other special work to bring the league into prominence.

Administration and Prizes

The board of administration on this contest is recruited from among our best known comrades. On this board are Adolph Gerner, Executive Secretary of the Socialist Party and former prominent official in the United Mine Workers; John C. Kennedy, Socialist Alderman and State Secretary, S. P. of Illinois; Adolf Dreifuss, of the German Socialist Federation, dean of the Translator-Secretaries; J. Louis Engdahl, editor of The American Socialist, and the writer of this article. The purpose of this committee will be to give a square deal to every contestant, and its decisions will be based solely on merit.

The prizes will consist of gold and silver medals to the officers in each division who get the highest individual scores during the year's work. For the league making the

highest score there will be a handsome red silk banner conferring the national championship. It will be a worthy honor for any league to be able to carry this flag on parade, or to hang it in their headquarters. There will be a flag of "Yipsel blue" given to the league taking second place, and one of "true-as-steel gray" to the third-place winner. There will be a "Certificate of Good Service" to every league staying in the race until the end, regardless of place. There will be a great deal of good coming from the activity itself and the good suggestions on all fields of activity—and these will be distributed for the good of the league in general.

All leagues are requested to get busy at once to elect their officers, and have them enter upon their duties. Help them all you can and urge them to do the same with the national office. Then let's go to it, and may the best man win.

"In the holy name of profits the rulers of the world are draining the blood of the workers of the world."

Parents and children are invited to inspect the methods of the **Ferrer Modern Sunday School-Yorkville**, a school conducted on strictly Socialist principles. Look what we offer you:

Object Lessons (Anschauungsunterricht) rendered by four Socialist teachers. All objects concerning the life and struggle of the working-class.

Singing of English and German songs with Socialist tendency.

Esperanto. Violin School. Stenography.

Kindergarten (Sundays only).

An excellent **German School**. Offerings of eight different nationalities visit this department with the most brilliant results.

Fees are so minimal, that every worker can afford to send his children to this school.

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What Is Meant By Wealth?

By JOHN SPARGO

In order that we may understand the problems incident to the production and distribution of wealth, it is necessary to know first of all what we mean by wealth. Primarily, it may be said to consist of an abundance of useful or otherwise desirable things, quite irrespective of whether they can be exchanged for other things or not. The savage, without any idea of exchange, but with all his felt needs plentifully supplied, was a comparatively wealthy man. But in our modern society, based upon production for profit rather than for use, the idea of wealth is commonly associated with exchange, and wealth itself may be said to be an accumulation of commodities, or articles possessing the quality of sale or exchange. Now, we take the view that this quality is produced by labor. Going further, we say that the value of all commodities is determined by the amount of socially necessary labor-power embodied in them.

That is not a theory peculiar to the Socialist. We are not seeking to impose a strange principle upon the student of political economy when we state it, but, on the contrary, it is common to all the economists of the "Classical School." Sir William Petty, who wrote in the time of Charles the Second, taught that very clearly; Adam Smith, in his epochal work, "The Wealth of Nations," laid great stress upon it, declaring labor to be "the real measure of the exchangeable value of all commodities," and that "it is natural that what is usually the produce of two days'

or two hours' labor should be worth double of what is usually the produce of one day's or one hour's labor." Ricardo and John Stuart Mill both endorse this theory of value, the former declaring it to be "a doctrine of fundamental importance in political economy." Benjamin Franklin, too, estimates the value of everything by labor and declares that "the value of all things is most justly measured by labor." Thus you will see that this view of labor as the source of all wealth and the basis of value is amply supported by all great economists of note. True it is that we have our Decadents of political economy, mere word spinners, who seek to evade this truth and its logical consequences. We are told by some of these "profound" and "deep" thinkers that there is something more important than labor, and when we ask what it is, we are told that it is "genius," "ability," "managing capacity," and so on. Now, to any but these very clever gentlemen it would be easily apparent that if all the genius of the ages could be concentrated in the mind of one person, and that person were to sit and think, let us say upon a theory of agricultural chemistry, from now till the crack of doom, it would not assist the growth of a single ear of corn unless actually embodied in labor. Ability, in the abstract, apart from labor could never produce—never has produced—a pin's value.

This attempt to divide labor into two separate classes, "intellectual" and "non-intellectual," is entirely absurd and foreign to the whole science of economics. John Stuart Mill taught very much sounder political economy when he declared that "even the stupidest hodman who carries the hod

of brick or of mortar up a ladder performs a task that is not wholly mechanical, but is in part intellectual." In the world of industry there is no such thing as "unskilled labor," and it always seems to me a great pity that workers themselves should use the cant phrase. When, therefore, we speak of labor, we mean all those physical and mental qualities in ourselves which are used in the production of wealth. Thus, to take the case of a great railway, we say that the labor of the engineer who designed the plans and of the surveyor is equally necessary—but no more so—with that of the man who coals the engine or lays the tracks. Rightly understood, the labor of the lowest and most ill-paid is equally as valuable—because equally indispensable—as that of the highly-paid official.* Therefore, we are entitled to protest, and do protest, against a system which gives to one man working under conditions of comparative comfort and ease, a salary amounting to a hundred or perhaps five hundred times as much as the wages of another whose labor, equally necessary, is attended with discomfort and risk to life and limb. But there is a worse phase of the question than this. A pale-faced curate in New England, for example, who, it may be, never saw the railway, will be drawing a comfortable sum, in the shape of dividends, from the unpaid labor of the workers on some British railway, or some old maiden lady in the South of England whose only

*This must not be construed as implying that every such "official" of modern industry, whether highly paid or otherwise, is, per se, a useful worker. This should be true to the humblest intellect. Yet, the warning seems necessary in view of a good deal of lamentably loose thinking, speaking and writing lately observed.

"labor," is the fondling of her tabby cat will draw from the unpaid labor of men, women and children in some American factory which she has never seen. How does this help those who so glibly talk of the "rent of ability"?

Again, we sometimes hear that it is not labor which constitutes value, but utility. Jevons, for instance, states that "value depends entirely upon utility." This does not mean that a sack of potatoes being more useful than a sack of gold will also be more valuable, nor that a ten cent collar button will be as valuable as one containing a costly diamond, just because it is quite as useful. Ricardo killed that silly notion long ago. But when writers of the school of Jevons use the word "utility" they are word-jugglers, and they give to the word "utility" the meaning of "esteem," "desirability," and so on. This theory, the popularity of which is another evidence of the intellectual bankruptcy of capitalism, is only the old Supply and Demand theory masquerading under another title. Jevon's theory of value is equally remarkable with his other theory that commercial crises are somehow or other due to the spots on the sun!

Dismissing, then, the vagaries of these pseudo-philosophers, we can with perfect confidence rest upon the solid foundation of economic science, that all wealth (as previously defined) is produced by labor, and that social labor is the real secret and explanation of the establishment of the relative value of commodities, which are, except in that one quality, utterly unlike each other.

"As soon as your mind belongs to capitalism, your body follows."

LETTERS OF A VACATIONIST

(No. 5.)

Friday, July 15th.

This morning we went by carriage to Hamilton. It was our only opportunity to ride on the stage and we let it pass, but I hope we shall have another some day. For a few minutes we stopped at the cathedral, and then we went shopping in the souvenir stores. Our money was accepted as readily as British, everywhere but at the postoffice, where none but the official would do. So we had to find a place to exchange it and the nearest we found was the office of a Bermuda newspaper, either a weekly or a monthly, I've forgotten which. After lunch, back at the Brascati, we hired a sailboat with the owner to sail it and took a trip along the shore.

This was certainly enjoyable. It was one of those little open boats that look as if they could be built with a few boards in a couple of days, but the owner told us it had been imported from Halifax. In an hour we had covered a good stretch of the North Shore. Then we stopped at a private landing called the Admiral's Cove, took a few pictures and started back so as to reach the creek at the Hotel before the tide would be too low to get in. This evening we would have been out again by moonlight but someone else had made arrangements for the boat on Saturday afternoon. Back to the Orotava and the lazy, restful life of the steamer, we went this morning. Our friend of the little boat, whose acquaintance we made rather too late in our short stay, was out to dip his colors to us as we passed. Before the morning had gone we were out of sight of land again.

The passengers were on more

familiar terms with each other now, having been reunited from different parts of the island, and returned to the familiar surroundings of the steamship. There were a few entirely new faces, among them a soldier's family on its way by New York and London to a post in Africa, and a negro family, probably bound for Canada. Of the latter, the children wore knitted caps, in preparation for a northern climate, their elders being uninformed of the sultry weather that awaits them up north at this time of year.

Sunday. Last night we were all invited to a concert and vaudeville show given by the crew for the benefit of their athletic association. The music was very good and several innocent-looking members of the crew turned out to be real stars. Notable among them was the stokers' cook, who gave a monologue and songs.

This morning there were the usual happenings of a Sunday morning on board ship. There was no fire drill, but there was roll call and prayer meeting. Afterward some of the young people among the passengers strayed to the forward deck, where the sailors gathered, and started to snap pictures. Soon one of the crew came out with a freshly-laundered white sailor blouse, which he offered to be worn, and after that boys and girls alike were slipping into blue and white blouses and caps and group pictures were being taken in all the different corners of the deck.

This afternoon we read for a while and played shuffle board on the deck. In these games, it struck us that every beginner is a lposer, but once everyone gets

the "hack" the interest becomes quite absorbing, as the competition becomes keen. We have run into a fog this evening and there is a lookout in the crow's nest, peering out to one side and then to the other and moving about as much as the very small space will permit to show that he is on the alert.

Monday, July 18th. Here we are, back again in the big city, with its noise and heat. We arrived here earlier in the day than we did just a week ago in Bermuda. One reason for this is that when we sailed southeast we lost just about an hour and while we were asleep the hands of the clock were set forward, whereas on the trip home we gained an hour and the hands of the clock were set back to agree with New York or Washington time.

This morning when we got up it was still foggy and partly for that reason and partly because we were already in shallow water off the New Jersey coast, the water was brownish dark green. We passed the Ambrose Channel lightship, were overtaken and passed by a fleet of battleships and then I went below to pack up. When I came out again, the sun was shining and we were sailing a stone's throw away from a beautiful green bank. I did not get my bearings for several minutes and then I woke up to the fact that we were right next to Staten Island. On none of the various trips down the Bay had I ever been so close to this shore, and I had to admit to myself that for natural beauty only, this spot compared favorably with any that I had seen anywhere. By one o'clock we were still going up the

bay, but when we had finished lunch, the Orotava was just being warped into her pier. All there was left to do was to walk over the gangplank, have our bags inspected by the customs officers and take the "L" home.

In less than two weeks we have been to the Bermudas and back. It is something we shall remember all our life, and the memory of it will always kindle a desire to repeat the pleasures of our first trip. We have been fortunate indeed among the many people of our class to have the opportunity in time and means to enjoy this wonderful experience. True, the expense was not so great, but how many are there among the producers of the nation who can allow themselves as much. Let them but taste of the pleasures, the feasts for the soul that are now denied them and they will never rest, until they have won them for themselves. The crying need is for an abundance of bread, of the necessities of life for all. But that is not all that can be accomplished. The pleasures that a few now revel in must be thrown open to the masses. The ultimate aim shall be "The best there is for all."

Despotism consists in putting in force against the people a will in opposition to theirs.

The philosophy of Socialism is the philosophy of industrial freedom and social justice.

In the six months from March to August, inclusive, 2,006 strikes occurred in this country, against 633 in the same period last year, according to figures just issued by the United States Department of Labor. This unprecedented record shows that the capitalists are not winking at any of their boundless prosperity to any extent, but it must be taken from them whatever labor does secure.—The Cleveland Citizen.

BE NOT DISCOURAGED

By JOS. TUVIM

Comrades, let us not be discouraged, let us keep that bit of activity alive. Though the vote of the Socialist Party decreased there is no room for shirking our duty. We owe it to ourselves and to our friends. We must get together, we must work on, for our cause is one which must not be neglected.

The people of the United States must solve this tremendous problem, "The Bread and Butter Problem." It has become more acute every year. Millions of people live in absolute poverty. Millions are out of employment. Hundreds of thousands are dying of disease. The Industrial Relation Commission Report, published in 1914, gives some very interesting figures. It says on page 22:

"Elaborate studies have been made in all parts of the country at the same time and have shown that the very least that a family of five persons can live upon in any approaching decency is \$700.

"Figures show conclusively that between one-half and two-thirds of these families were living below the standards of decent subsistence, while about one-third were living in a state which can only be described as abject poverty."

"Seventy-nine percent of the fathers earn less than \$700 per year. In brief, only one-fourth of these fathers could have supported their families on the barest subsistence level without the income of other members of the family, or from other sources.

"The most striking evidence of poverty is the proportion of pauper burials. In New York City one of every twelve that die is buried on Potter's Field at the expense of the city, or given to physicians for dissection."

On page 107 it further says:

"The problem of unemployment

has never received adequate attention, apparently because it has been believed generally that it affects only a small portion of the working population. Such a belief is absolutely false. Not only is practically every wage-earner in constant dread of unemployment, but there are few who do not suffer bitterly many times in their career because they are unable to get work. Every year from 15,000 to 18,000 business enterprises fail and turn their employees out, every year new machinery and improved processes displace thousands, cold and wet and hot weather stops operations and force wage earners into idleness."

On page 104 the following statement can be found:

"It has been found that the lowest paid worker is subject to the greatest loss in working time, not simply because he is unskilled, but also because he is poorly nourished and weakened by the effects of unfavorable conditions of living and in many instances by unbearable severe conditions of work."

On page 33:

"The rich 2 per cent. of the people own 60 per cent. of the wealth. The middle class, 33 per cent. of the people, own 35 per cent. of the wealth. The poor 65 per cent. of the people, own 5 per cent. of the wealth."

Comrades:—These are but a few facts of the conditions of our class. Will you shirk your duty? Will we leave things as they are?

We must not, we cannot, and we should not. The material to work upon is here and is just begging for your assistance. Go out and help them! Let our motto be: Organization, Education, Solidarity.

Are we in it? Well, I guess.

Socialism, Socialism,

Yes, yes, yes.



OUR OWN AFFAIRS



Y. P. S. L. PRESS SERVICE Be Easy About It

Many comrades think that we are too radical and that we should hit the soft pedal on when we hand out the dope. But does the soft soap ever get the gang? Nope, in the three years that the league has peddled soft soap there has been no perceptible change in our affairs. So let us try the backbone stuff. Tell the world what the Young People's Socialist League stands for. Let them know that it is composed of young men and women with a backbone and with a big ideal—and who are fighting for that ideal. They are not necessarily all Socialists yet, but they are game enough and broad-minded enough to give the question some thought. Now, let us shout it over the hilltops.

We are the Young People's Socialist League and we stand for Socialism.

"WAKE UPS"

"Sure, let George do the dirty work, I'll just attend the affair." Look out! George may die and then the bottom will drop out of all the arranging.

Wake up to the fact that affairs need planning and arranging as well as attending.

Here, you one-stepping waltzers! What's the matter with you coming to a business meeting? Let us see if you have any grey matter in your knob. At times there are people who need to have their feelings hurt with a sledge-hammer before they wake up.

Buy an alarm clock so that we won't have to buy a sledge. Say, we are not running a morgue.

A MESSAGE TO THE Y. P. S. L.

By Henry Berger,

Nat. Committeeman of New Jersey
The never ceasing struggle of the Young People's Socialist League for youth's enlightenment, which must ultimately result in its final emancipation, calls for immediate action by every Yipsel within our ranks.

Never before have our opportunities been so great for organization as they are now. We have a large field for organization and we must not neglect that field.

The Y. M. C. A., Y. W. C. A., Boy Scouts, Campfire Girls and others, such as church organizations, all are making desperate attempts to draw within their folds young people whom

they may train and prepare for service according to their ideas, beliefs and convictions, whether those are honest or otherwise.

Our organization, unlike all others, disregard sex, race, color or creed, and holds out its arms in comradely spirit and welcome to all those whose opportunities have been robbed. Our loyalty and sympathy is extended to the oppressed young people who are constantly being denied of every opportunity to develop themselves and blossom forth into the full bloom of manhood and womanhood.

In our ears ring the pitiful groans and the painful cries of children who are confined in the industrial dungeons of this country, from the desolated homes of war-stricken Europe, even from those who are as yet unborn, who will have to bear the burdensome war debts of the present European war and all other wars capitalism might make into plundering greed for gold.

We young Socialists who see the light of freedom looming up in the horizon—dim as its distance may be—should, in the face of those and other deplorable conditions build up a stronger and mightier organization than that which we now have. Organization is the most powerful weapon at our command. Thousands of young people are now, as never before, eager to listen and to receive our message of cheer and hope. Therefore, we must all start together and put a shoulder to the wheel and success must be ours.

Let us provide for every means within our organization for the young people who join us. Let us afford them the opportunity to develop themselves physically as well as mentally. The preamble of our national constitution promises these, so let us give to them what we know is good for them. Let us sing and be happy that we are the only ones upon whom the world can look as being true to our colors. And when we become old as our elders in the movement and ready to pass away, leaving others to take our place, we will pass away with a conscious feeling that we have served society right, that we fought for humanity, justice and for a better world, in which people need no longer suffer of misery and for want. Where each will be given an equal opportunity to serve society and receive as compensation for that service the full social value for the product of its toil. So organize! Agitate! Educate!

KARL HÄVLICEK CIRCLE Y. P. S. L.

West Hoboken, N. J.

Karl Havlicek Circle held its regular monthly business meeting Saturday, December 9, 1916, at Nepivoda's Hall. Election of officers for the next six months took place. Result was as follows: Jack Schejbal, Organizer; Anthony Novak, Recording Secretary; Anton Zaparka (re-elected), Treasurer; Raymond Texel, Jr. (re-elected), Corresponding and Financial Secretary; Frank Hassa (re-elected), Circulating Manager for the Young Socialists' Magazine; Charles Martin, Athletic Manager, and Wm. Eickhoff, Caretaker of Gymnastic Apparatus. Various committees and delegates were also elected.

Final preparations are being made for the Farewell Leap Year Dance to be held December 31, 1916, at Nepivoda's Hall, 420 Spring St., West Hoboken. The girls will select their partners till 12 o'clock. Tickets are 25c, including hat check. All Yipsels and Socialists are invited to attend, and a good time is promised to all.

On Saturday evening, January 27, 1917, the Circle will hold a lecture and dance at Nepivoda's Hall. Comrade Fred Krafft of Ridgeland, N. J., Socialist candidate for Governor of New Jersey at the recent election, will speak on "Militarism." Admission will be 10c, to cover expense for music, etc. Dancing will continue till early morning.

On Saturday, February 10th, 1917, will hold our yearly monster mask and civic ball, at which many new features of amusement will be introduced.

The Circle is holding lectures every few weeks, in order to let all members interested in the work.

The Circle is somewhat handicapped by the fact that all business meetings are conducted in the Bohemian language, and naturally non-Bohemians do not come up, but still in all, it is progressing very rapidly and hopes in time to be considered one of the strongest Circles in this section.

Fraternally,

Raymond Texel, Jr.,

Secretary.

TRENTON, N. J., YIPSEL ACTIVITIES

After a long summer of all kinds of pleasure, the Trenton Y. P. S. L. has buckled down to real educational work! Every Sunday night, after our

business meeting, we have fine educational programs, which interest all our members. Later in the evening we have a little dancing, which ends our program. Our educational committee has found a good way to attract outsiders to the Yipsel meetings. They invite someone of the city officials to give a talk of the work in his office. This method of attracting outsiders has worked wonderfully in Trenton, and we think if applied right in any other city will work out good. The official takes up part of the evening, and the rest of the evening is spent in explaining Socialism to the youth of Trenton.

We now have a membership of about 100, 80 in good standing.

At the start of the campaign we organized a literature brigade, which passed out 5,000 Benson leaflets every Sunday. In the near future we hope to be the largest and most effective branch of Yipsels in the State of New Jersey. Simon Moser.

Organizer Trenton Yipsels,
123 E. Front St., Trenton, N. J.

YOUNGSTER CLUB, NORTH BERGEN, N. J.

An entertainment was given October 22, 1916, by the Youngster Club for the Campaign Fund; that is, to help Comrade F. Krafft become Governor of New Jersey. Five cents was charged for admission, and those who wished coffee and cake after the entertainment were charged five cents extra. Over two dollars was taken in at the door, and a collection was made after the affair, making in all three dollars and twenty-three cents. This money will be sent to the Campaign Committee of Hudson County. There were thirteen members taking active parts in the entertainment. There are fifteen boys and girls in the Club, all are under sixteen or over nine.

The program was as follows:

1—Greeting Song, by Club, accompanied by piano and violin. 2—The Red Ribbon, by Walter Corcoran and Katie Hartwigsen. 3—A Hint to the Wise, by Lottie Fruse and Martha Grassman. 4—We're Comrades Ever, song by Club, accompanied by piano and violin. 5—Laughter Wins—Laughter, Minnie Blechschmidt; Tears, Elsie Reinhardt; Boy, Harold Corcoran; Wealth, Kruse; Father, Fred Blechschmidt. 6—After Dinner, dialogue—Father, Henry Hartwigsen; Mother, Emma Blechschmidt; Niece, Johanna Reinhardt; Tom, Philip Grossmann. 7—Marsellaise, sung by Club, accompanied by piano and violin.

The violinist was Mr. J. Blechschmidt; the pianist, Miss G. Hylar.

The entertainment was held at 920 Savoy St., North Bergen, N. J.
Emma Blechschmidt, Secretary.

Young Socialists' Magazine Conference

The "Young Socialists' Magazine" Conference, in its meeting in the Labor Temple on December 4th, received with unanimous approval a letter from Comrade Wm. Kruse, National Secretary of the Young People's Department of the Socialist Party, in which he assured the magazine of his sincere co-operation in the efforts to increase the circulation, and commented upon the fact that the magazine is now being received everywhere with great favor.

A motion to call the conference of the delegates of the Y. P. S. L. at the Rand School for January 21 was adopted without opposition, and all the circles of the Y. P. S. L. in Greater New York and vicinity, as well as those from New Jersey are urged to send representatives.

The delegate from Queens reported that 25 copies of the special October issue were distributed at the magazine social and were well received. They also procured one subscription and resolved to purchase copies to be kept on a news stand in Queens. Januwksna who was in the chair reported of good activity in Brooklyn. Delegate Reinhardt reported of a very successful magazine social in Finnish Hall. The proceeds, she said, would be turned over to the magazine fund.

On account of the holidays the next meeting of the conference will take place on Monday, January 8th, 1917.

THE CHICAGO FOOD SQUAD

The Chicago diet squad has solved the high cost of living. Possibly.

Twelve persons, under the supervision of the health commissioner of Chicago, started out to demonstrate that it is possible to live on 40 cents a day. They demonstrated it. Therefore, says the kept press, the high cost of living is to be blamed on the public itself. If everybody lived on 40 cents a day the problem would be solved. Would it?

The Chinese coolie lives on six or seven cents a day. And he gets six or seven cents a day wages. In other words, he gets in money wages just about enough to keep soul and body together.

In America, before the high cost of living was quite so high, a number of scientific investigations showed that the least a family of five could live upon in anything approaching

decency was \$700 per year. And the most exhaustive investigation ever made of wages in the United States showed that the incomes of almost two-thirds of the wage earners' families (including the earnings of father, mother and children) were less than \$750 a year, and of almost one-third were less than \$500.

In other words, when everybody in the United States gets down to a forty-cent a day standard of living, wages will just about approximate forty cents a day.

It is not important what the money wage is; it is important what the real wage is. How much food, clothing and shelter can you buy with your day's wage? If you can buy barely enough to keep alive, it is not of great importance whether your wage is the same as the Chinese coolie, or whether it is the "American" wage for considerably more.

If a few people by economy and scrimping can get the cost of living down to 40 cents or 20 cents or 10 cents a day, they benefit. They benefit because they are the exceptions. But the rest of the people still find it as hard to live.

And, after all, we don't want to live on forty cents a day! We want plenty of food, plenty to wear, a good place to live in, and plenty of amusements and pleasures. In other words, we want to live!

SYRACUSE

Have just completed a successful series of social and educational activities, such as making \$75 on a masque ball, doing the Jimmy Higgins work for the Scott Bennett Lecture, running a package party and dance, at which Comrade Wack was to speak, but unfortunately had to cancel, holding a series of lectures on wireless, frogs, the Taylor Efficiency System, organizing and Rand School Class. We have arranged to hold dances at headquarters every Saturday evening, commencing January 6, and, of course, these will be some educational work taking place at same.

Also the formation of a Dramatic Club is well under way.

It is with regret that we lose Comrade G. Steifer, who is blacklisted as a result of labor activities, but such things happen.

Nevertheless, our able comrade J. W. Walters seems to discharge the duties of organizer with equal satisfaction, so Syracuse opens the new year on a jump, and by the time the next State convention rolls around it will have trebled its membership.

A. Goodman.

Wir wollen Weihnacht feiern

Von Anna Meyenberg.

Der Sommer ist dahin,
Der Wald liegt stumm.
Ein kalter Nordwind
Rüttelt an den Bäumen,
Die hängen sich
Ein weisses Mäntlein um
Und neigen sich
Zu winterlichen Träumen.

Da geht das Christkind
Durch den Märchenhain,
Und schüttelt von den Tannen
Schnell die Flocken,
Und lässt erstrahlen sie
Im Kerzenschein.
Und durch die Lande
Klingen Weihnachtsglocken.

Das Fest der Liebe —
Kinder freuen sich.
Streif' ab des Tages
Hässliche Beschwerden . . .
Wir wollen Weihnacht feiern!
Du und ich —
Und mit den Kindern
Wieder Kinder werden . . .

Hasenbraten

Eine Hundegeschichte.

Von E. Schubert.

Soeben hatte man Waldin, der grossen Hühnerhündin, mit rauhem Griff ein Kind entrisen, es vor ihren Augen ertränkt und in den Düngerhaufen unweit der Hundehütte vergraben. Mit ihren Vorderzähnen hatte die Hündin ihr Kleines unklammert gehalten und es verteidigt, bis ein heftiger Schlag sie wehrlos gemacht hatte, worauf sie es mit ansehen musste, wie ihr Liebling in einen Waschzuber versenkt wurde und zapfelnd verendete. Ähnliches hatte sich schon öfters in ihrem Leben ereignet, und immer waren es schreckliche Augenblicke für diese Hundemutter gewesen, wenn man ihr ein Kind in dieser grausamen Weise ent-

Trotz des Verlustes dieses einen Sprösslings konnte sich aber Waldin doch noch ihrem Mutterglück hingeben, denn zwei liebliche Junge, die ihr aufs Haar gleichen, krochen in der niedrigen Hundewohnung umher und steckten ihre putzigen Köpfchen auch wohl schon neugierig zur Öffnung hinaus, bis ein sanfter Druck der Alten sie wieder zurückbeförderte.

Die „Wohnung“ Waldins bestand in einer in die Mauer eingelassenen Höhle. Wie ein grosses, dunkles Auge hob sich der Eingang zur Höhle von der weissen Wand des Hauses ab. Wenn der Wind über den Hof raste, sackte er sich am Eingang zu Waldins Loch; infolgedessen war das Tier Sommer und Winter dem schärfsten Zugwind ausgesetzt. Darum waren auch die Züge Waldins so wetherhart und struppig ihr Fell.

Oberhalb von Waldins Wohnung war ein Balken angebracht, über dem ein Eisenring mit einer Kette lose hing. Auf diese Weise konnte Waldin fast die ganze Vorderfront des Hauses, besonders die Eingänge zum Pferde- und Kuhstall bestreichen.

Waldin hatte mächtig lange Ohren, die ihr beim Fressen in den Napf hineinhiengen. Ihre Augen troffen beständig. Aber trotz der schon vorgerückten Jahre war ihr Gebiss noch messerscharf.

Dieses Tier hatte unter den Menschen keinen Freund ausser mir. Alle, die mit Waldin in Berührung kamen, taten ihr Böses. Weniger aus Schlechtigkeit oder Abneigung gegen das Tier, als aus Angewohnheit. Es war ja nur ein Hund.

Wenn Waldin von ihrem Herrn mit zur Jagd genommen wurde, freute sie sich zwar der stundenlangen Freiheit, aber die aus der Jagdtasche des Herrn hängende Peitsche nahmte sie, dass für sie überall Leid und Freud eng beinander wohnte. Wenn Waldin nicht vorschriftsmässig das geschlossene Wild apportierte oder bei der Verfolgung nicht fink genug war, dann gab es Hiebe.

Da wir nahe zusammen wohnten, besuchte ich jeden Tag meine Freundin. Ein Stöckchen Zucker oder sonst einen leckeren Bissen gab es stets, wenn ich kam. Am Abend, wenn es auf dem Hofe ruhig geworden war, sasssen wir oft stundenlang beieinander und beschäftigten uns miteinander. Wenn das Tier mit seiner rauhen Tatze über meinen Rücken fuhr, war es, als wenn man mit einer Drahtbohrer bearbeitet wurde, und berührte es gar in seiner ungelinken Weise Hände oder Gesicht, dann gab es Hautschürfen. Man liess es auf dem Hofe gern geschehen, wenn ich mich mit dem Hunde abgab. Ich säuberte sein enges Gellass, wusch den Futtertrogtrog von Zeit zu Zeit aus, was sonst niemand tat. Und wenn sich die kleinen braunen Quälgeister manchmal gar zu dicht in Waldins zottigem Fell festgesetzt hatten, dann waren meine Freundschaftsvisiten besonders willkommen, und sie konnte gar deutlich zu verstehen geben, was sie bedrückte. Ich half immer, so gut es ging. Wann es nottat, sogar mit Seife und Wasser.

Einmal, im Herbst, trat eine vorübergehende Trübung unserer Freundschaft ein. Auf dem Gelände un- ser Dorf wurde Treibjagd abgehalten, und wer etwas bedeutete, vom Amtshauptmann abwärts, war zu Gast geladen. Waldin hatte an diesem Tage strengen Diest.

Es war ein prachtvoller Herbstnachmittag. Goldiger Sonnenschein lag über den gelbweissen Stoppeläckern, von denen sich die saftigblau-glänzenden Kohlfelder satt heraus hoben. Die Treiberkette war aufgestellt, und im Hintergrunde, mit dem Rücken nach dem Dorf zu, schwärmten die Jäger aus. Die Hunde tummelten sich ausserhalb des Treiberfeldes und bellten ob der kommenden Hetze vor Freude und Aufregung.

Die Strasse nach der Stadt war am Naclitnaght nur wenig belebt. Ich hatte an diesem Tage in der Ziegelei,

wo ich als Schljunge mit dem Abtragen von Ziegeln beschäftigt war, früher Feierabend machen müssen und war daher zufällig in dieses Jagdreiben geraten. Ich sass im Strassengraben und beobachtete den sich immer mehr vorengenden Kessel der Treiber. Schüsse fielen, Rebhühner flogen mit erschrecktem Klirrik, Klirik davon, hin und wieder sauste ein geängstigter Hase vorüber und brachte sich in Sicherheit. Das Treiben näherte sich. Schon konnte ich die Gestalten einzelner Jäger unterscheiden.

Auf der anderen Seite der Strasse breitete sich ein grosses Kohlfeld aus. In diesem Augenblick mochte sich so manches Häschen in dem schützenden Wald von Kohlköpfen sicher glauben vor dem Blitzen der Feuerrohre. Da schoss auf einmal ein braunes Ungetüm daher. Mit mächtigen Sätzen sprang es über die hohen Stauden und war eine Zeitlang meinen Blicken entschwunden, bis ein klägliches Quieken bewies, dass ein armes Häschen unter den unbarmherzigen Zähnen eines Jagdhundes sein Leben gelassen hatte. Nun kam es wieder daher gestürzt in langen Sätzen über die Kohlstauden hinweg; ein grosser Jagdhund hielt einen Hasen hoch emporgestreckt in der Schnauze, um aus dem Gewirr der Kohlstauden heraus zu gelangen. Bei jedem Sprung knickte und raschelte es von abbrechenden Kohlblättern.

Es war Waldin. Ihre langen Ohren schleiften gleichzeitig mit dem toten Hasen über die Kohlköpfe. Der Schweiss des Hasen setzte sich auf den Blättern an und liess eine Strecke weit die Fährte erkennen. „Waldin, Waldin!“ rief ich laut. Das Tier hatte mich sofort erkannt und kam in grossen Sprüngen auf mich zu, mit sichtbarbarem Stolz seine Beute präsentierend. Die Ohren nach vorn geschlagen, den Hasen fest mit den Zähnen gepackt, die Vorderpfoten eingestemmt, so stand Waldin vor

mir. Jäger und Treiber waren noch weit zurück.

Da durchzuckte mich blitzschnell der Gedanke, dem Hunde den Hasen wegzunehmen und nach Hause zu rennen. Fleisch, Fleisch, und gar Hasenbraten — hurra! das gäbe ein Fest!

Infolge unserer grossen Armut konnten wir Fleisch nur vom Hörensagen; es geschah selten, dass unsere Mutter ein halbes Pfund Schweinefleisch kaufen konnte — und hier dieser stattliche, feiste Hase! Ich sprang auf die Strasse zu dem Hunde und ging daran, ihm das Tier wegzunehmen. Ich liebte und streichelte ihn, wie ich es immer tat, und versuchte ganz sacht, den Hasen aus seinen Kiefern zu befreien. Das war leichter gedacht als getan. Bei einem kräftigen Griff sprang Waldin zurück, fletschte die Zähne und zeigte nicht übel Lust, mich zu beißen, wenn sie nur die Schnauze frei gehabt hätte. Diese Untreue meiner Freundin reizte mich gleichfalls, und nun ging ich aufs Ganze. Mit einem Fausthieb glaubte ich meinen Zweck erreicht zu haben, aber da wandte sich das Tier plötzlich in langen Sprüngen zur Flucht. Ich hinterher; zum Glück gelang es mir, den Hund von den Jägern weg ins freie Feld zu treiben. Eine tolle Jagd begann. Kilometerweit ging es in wildem Rasen, bis der Hund auf einer Wiese plötzlich zusammenknickte und sich alle Viere lang auf die Erde warf, den Hasen immer noch fest in der Schnauze haltend.

Ich musste den Hasen haben.

Nun erst recht, nachdem kein Mensch weit und breit mehr zu sehen war. Und ohne Besinnen ging ich wieder zum Angriff über. Ein kräftiger Ruck und der Hase war mein; nur ein Büschel Wolle blieb zwischen den Zähnen des Hundes zurück. Mit einem Satze sprang mich der Hund jetzt an, aber ein kräftiger Fausthieb auf die Nase machte ihn kampfunfähig.

Dann zog Waldin pustend ab, den Kopf gesenkt und den Schwanz eingeklemmt. Ihre Ehre als Jagdhund war vernichtet.

Ich weiss nicht, was im weiteren Verlauf der Jagd noch aus meiner Freundin geworden ist; sicher ist sie ohne eine gehörige Tracht Peitschenhiebe nicht davongekommen.

Trotz des in Aussicht stehenden Hasenbratens war mir aber nicht wohl zumute. Es war mir nicht recht, dass ich die Freundschaft dieses Tieres derart missbraucht hatte; aber bald tröstete mich das Bewusstsein, dass zwischen uns alles schon wieder gut werden würde. Waldin würde ihre Prügel vergessen, wie so oft, wenn sie um geringerer Anlässe willen solche erhalten hatte — und unser kleines Stübchen wird am nächsten Sonntag Hasenbraten durchziehen. Das würde ein Fest sein!

Aber so bald ich konnte, wollte ich doch meine Freundin besuchen. Abends ging ich hin, die Westentasche voll Zuckerstücke. Waldin sass vor ihrer Hütte und sprang freudig auf, als ich kam. Der Hund ist doch das unegennützigste Tier und hat für erlittene Kränkungen kein Gedächtnis! Gleich stopfte ich die Schnauze des Hundes voll Zucker. Dann sassen wir eng aneinander gerückt und nichts erinnerte mehr an den heitigen Auftritt vom Nachmittag.

Kratzend fuhr Waldins Tatze über meine Schultern und Hände, und ich erzählte ihr im Flüsterton, dass wir doch auch gern einmal Hasenbraten essen wollten und ich es nur deshalb getan hätte.

Der Mond schien auf den Hof. Wie ein riesiger Schattenris hob sich das schwarze Dach der Scheune vom erleuchteten Himmel ab. Darüber hinaus schwebte die grosse Ruhe.

Wir sassen noch lange zusammen, Körper an Körper gedrängt und blickten hinaus in die weite, weisse Nacht.