

Milestones.

Socialists in every land are for the time being given pause in their anxious straining for the sunrise of the Social Revolution. The first shafts of light, too unmistakable for a false dawn, seem to be succeeded by darkness again. We seem to have been too impatient in expecting immediate results in Russia. But let us be suspicious of a too jumpy barometer. After all, can we for a moment acquiesce in the Press cables as presenting anything of a fair or true, still less complete, reflection of the progress of the movement? Must we accept what they would have us believe, that the "extremists," anarchists," or what not, have been turned down by five to one at the Workmen's and Soldiers' Congress, or that the Soldiers have turned on the Workmen? Is the great scheme for a Pan-Socialist Conference, or Working-class Peace Council of the world, really fizzling out? Are the people of Russia deliberately going to start fighting again? Have the independent republics in the vast district of Kherson and elsewhere quietly collapsed? Is the Spanish revolution just so much corrupt Pro-Germanism, "reactionary and anti-dynastic" (note how within a few weeks of royalty's fall in one country they are boosting up dynasties everywhere else)? Is the release of Maclean, the fearless International Socialist teacher of Glasgow, after one year out of his sentence of three, a purely voluntary act of clemency? Did the Sailors' boycott of Ramsay Macdonald melt of itself and not at the dictation of Revolutionary Russia? Is the movement in Austria just pro-Ally, or concerned forsooth merely with electoral reform? Is the "Internationale" at Helsingfors only a lunatic's "Tipperary"? And is Germany utterly unresponsive to all those ominous stirrings? Which of us after all would seriously look to Sir Starr Jameson's Reuter Company, we will not say for a historical interpretation of the various revolutionary movements that have sprung up in the the last few months, but even for a correct statement of their outstanding episodes?

Yet when you observe the rapt air of reverent credulity with which your average free and intelligent elector pores open-jawed over his "Star" or his "Sunday Times," or find "lifelong Socialists" giving their votes, "in order not to waste them," to wasters, you hardly wonder that it is still only possible to count 355 men clear-sighted enough to declare themselves International Socialists in Benoni, and 71 in Commissioner Street; so that in this benighted land it is positively a distinction, shared by only a few hundreds or thousands at the most all told, to be able to spew out of the mouth, instead of swallowing whole, the greasy hash dished out to us daily by Press gangs who, as we all know, are avowed hirelings of the little ring of capitalist bosses now running the world, purchasable any day for a million or so by pro-Germans or pro-Allies, whichever bids highest or last.

Undoubtedly a colossal effort at counter revolution is being made by all the Powers, less by force of arms than by the subtle and more effective weapon of wholesale spooimongery. The German Press (echoing the English), represents the Russian Revolution as Anti-German, hoping thus to alienate from it the sympathy of the patriotic Boche; the British, when it shows itself palpably more socialistic than Anti-Romanoff, call it indiscriminately anarchist, pacifist, extremist, or Pro-German; while Henderson, Thomas, Van der Velde, with other "Socialist" wisacres (who will still be passionately refusing ever to meet a Hun long after the diplomats have taken their seats together at their Peace Conference table) are despatched to vomit Allied Imperialism (called "democracy") over the luckless Russians, and no doubt the Kaiser in turn is hurling his emissaries at them with converse poison for their ears. Both groups would rather lose to each other than lose to the Proletarian Revolution, and both are therefore employing the last ounce of their spooif-power to belittle and discourage the movement which is destined soon to close down both their War game and their Peace game.

So when news, or the dearth of it, seems depressing to us Revolutionaries at this shank end, let us infer, from that very fact, that it is concocted or concealed expressly to depress us, and that therefore there is very good reason behind why it is desired to depress us. The enemy can see even if we cannot, that the Socialist Revolution of to-day must be international and simultaneous in all capitalist countries, and that as long as it can be prevented from being that it will fail. The duty to "give a lead" therefore rests on us all alike. Instead of waiting on Russia, any apparent slackening oversea must spur us on to redoubled propaganda, redoubled organisation, by way of compensation here: and in particular to much more than redoubled educative effort among our disinherited native toilers, the real working class, broadly speaking, of South Africa.

S.P.B.

League Notes.

Johannesburg.

Our month's election campaign has shown that Commissioner Street, in spite of the Revolutionary Socialist propaganda preached on the Market Square for years past, is no longer the home of any considerable body of class-conscious Socialists. On the other hand, a certain not inconsiderable element of the population of Ferreiras-town notoriously allowed itself to be bought away from its deeper convictions in the interest of ambitious candidates, and on the other, the hotel and tenement block working class population of the Eastern portion of the Constituency is after all not of the type which can be counted upon to keep the