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CO-OPERATION AND WAR

(By Katherine deSelling)
Co-operation has stood the supreme test of War!
Professor Gide of Paris writes, in his 1917 preface to his book on Consumers' Co-operation, that the region of France which suffered the invasion of the first days of the war is precisely that in which the Co-operatives were the most numerous and the most prosperous. He states that the public authorities obliged to provide for the feeding of the population, have been most grateful to encounter, in this task where they were so inexperienced, the disinterested assistance of Consumers' Co-operatives. He describes how the new Co-operative Federation from the city of Paris the advances and facilities necessary for organizing the sale of cold-storage foods; how it has taken over the hundreds of establishments of the Maison Maggi, which was plundered in the beginning of the war, for the sale of milk; how it has obtained from the military authorities the means, by the use of some automobile bazaars, of selling its commodities at the front and of thus freeing the soldiers from the exploitation of the merchants; and how it has created permanent work-shops, and shared in the work of relief. In the invaded and devastated regions the co-operative stores have almost been universally spared by the enemy.
Professor Stein writes from Germany:

"Where would we be in this war—in this besieged fortress which is Germany—if we did not have the Co-operatives?"

The number of co-operative stores have increased very considerably in Belgium, where, at Brussels, the cry is: "Communal Stores for the Brussels Masses!"
Occasionally the refugees have organized co-operatives among themselves, as the Belgium refugees in Holland in the camp of Caasterland. Senator la Fontaine predicts that the speedy reorganization of Belgium will be due chiefly to the splendid spirit of brotherhood among Co-operatives.
In England, where the Co-operative Movement with its four million members means so much to the working-man, the societies are laying aside money to help reconstruct, after the war, the co-operatives of their enemy.
And in Russia the rapidity of development of the Co-operative Movement with its twelve million members has surpassed that of all other countries. In no small measure it deserves credit for the immediate success of the Russian Revolution and much of the ultimate success depends upon it. The chief wholesale societies of the world did a trade in 1916 of nine million dollars, an increase over 1915 of more than two hundred million dollars.
Dr. James P. Warbasse, president of the Co-operative League of America, states in the October issue of the Co-operative Consumer the League's monthly organ that "Many governments have placed food regulations in the hands of the Co-operatives. Everywhere they have established prices. They have been the people who had the largest experience in handling big problems of food supply, and their freedom from the profit-making psychology has made them invaluable in the time of need.
All experience abroad tells the same story of Co-operation helping make the world safe for industrial democracy.

Such a prohibition is already in effect in four states in this country but no provision has yet been made for the care and support of working mothers when thus deprived of their wages.
All European countries that have this restricted period also have maternity insurance, according to official reports, as a protection against suffering, destitution, and impaired strength of both mother and child. To afford full protection of motherhood among families of industrial workers in the United States, the workmen's health insurance bill prepared by the American Association for Labor Legislation in co-operation with the American Medical Association provides for maternity benefits including medical, nursing and obstetrical care, as well as cash payments.
Maternity insurance to accompany the restricted working period for mothers, it is being urged, is necessary in the United States as in the allied countries, to safeguard effectively the health and well being of women workers now entering industries in greatly increased numbers.

CONSUMERS WHY NOT CO-OPERATE?

The whole system of profit-making, from top to bottom throughout the commercial system, is aimed at the wages of the ultimate consumer. It is aimed to exploit the man who works with his hands to sell, and the man who works with hands to buy. Life is limited, health undermined, spirits depressed, blessed opportunities lost and disastrous deprivations suffered because every individual of a host of middlemen exacts his toll of profit from the very requirements of your animal existence for food, for clothing, and for shelter.
Has it ever come home to you that you could do all this business yourself, just by co-operating with your fellows?
Why not HAVE YOUR OWN STORES, where there is no incentive to adulterate, to misrepresent the goods, or to give short measure where the earnings come back to you in dividends; and where policies are inaugurated and supported that result in Federation, Wholesales, Workshops and Factories, Wheatlands and Pastures, Dairies and Laundries (as in several European countries to-day) under one vast voluntary democratic control in the interests of the ultimate Consumer?
Consumers' Co-operation is the most direct sort of direct action.
Why should not the Solidarity of Labor, when it buys as well as when it produces, lead toward the Co-operative Commonwealth?
SCOTT H. PERKY.

PROTECTION FOR WORKING MOTHERS ON WAR CONTRACTS

Protection for mothers employed on government war contracts is recommended by the Committee on Women in Industry of the Council of National Defense. "No woman," says its bulletin on industrial standards, just issued, "shall be employed during a period of two months prior, or two months subsequent to childbirth."
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ON SHOOTING ONE'S DAUGHTER

Down on Staten Island, on Sunday, there was enacted a little tragedy that should make men think. A man tried to kill his child, failed, and killed himself. He was no maniac, just a victim of the economic system in which we live, a system of "the devil take the hindmost." When sickness came upon him, he was one of the hindmost. So the devil took him.
His name was Thomas Newhart and his daughter Agnes was ten years old. He told her in the early morning that if it wasn't for leaving her alone in the world, he would end it all. She was frightened. So later, when she saw him taking something gleaming from his bureau drawer, she fled from the room. He fired two shots after her, but missed. He had decided not to leave her alone in the world. When she came back with a policeman, her father was dead.
The steers on the plain, the bees in the hive, the ants in the hill, all stand together. It is the wolves in the pack who turn upon a fallen comrade and rend him. Is modern society much better than that? Thomas Newhart had fallen victim to rheumatism, which had compelled him to give up his business. A year ago he tried to commit suicide by gas. He gave the last warning of distress, but the aid did not come. Surrounded by demonstrations of the vast organized power of society, he was left an unorganized individual to fight alone at a time when his earning power was gone. In the blackness of despair, in the abyss of want, he was told to struggle with disease alone.
Think of the mighty power to fight disease which we possess to-day! Shall that power be available only for the wealthy classes? Baths and scientific treatment would have restored Thomas Newhart to health. It would have given him his courage back, his earning power. Agnes would have grown up in a home, with a father to guide her. The treatment which Thomas Newhart needed should have been his and not out of charity. It should have been his as a rightful return for the contributions which he, in his earning days, made for a social insurance fund designed to care for just such things.
Not only Thomas Newhart has failed. You and I and all who ought to have been organized to help him—we also have failed. The social organization has failed.
Is it not time for us to drop this selfish laissez-faire policy of "the devil take the hindmost" and substitute a policy of "all of us help the hindmost"? If we have no leadership capable of rising to meet these problems, the leadership we have will be repudiated like so many leaders of the past.
The cruelty of this social order turned Thomas Newhart's love for his daughter into attempted murder. Because he loved her, he chose not to leave her alone in the world he was voluntarily quitting. If we are not careful, other natural sentiments will be turned into their opposites in men of Thomas Newhart's class. Love of country, belief in leadership, trust in religion will be turned into a fierce and active resentment against a system which treats the worker like an orange — to be sucked dry and thrown aside.—Editorial in the New York "Evening Mail."

THE ALMIGHTY DOLLAR

Why Almighty? Because, in our civilization, it is the medium through which most of what we call the good things of this life are obtained. Our possession of plenty of dollars thus means easy satisfaction of our desire for these "good things."
The easiest way to get dollars therefore becomes the easiest way to get the physical necessities and comforts we crave; and it is the law of our nature that we seek the line of least resistance and greatest attraction.
The easiest way to get dollars is by means of rent, interest and profit. The hardest way is by work—productive work. Is not this true?
And yet—all these things, obtainable through the medium of the dollar, are the result of human work upon natural resources.
This is why the moralist teaches "the dignity of labor."
But the "practical man" teaches us to "make money" by the surest "business" methods. Which are: enterprises and investments that will yield rent, interest and profit.
Ground rent comes from land ownership; interest from loaning money; profit from marketing commodities.
As Henry George said, "It is this capacity of yielding rent which gives value to land. Until its ownership will confer some advantage land has not value."—W. E. Brokaw.

I. W. W. ARE RELEASED FROM IDAHO JAIL

ST. MARIES, Ida.—Neil Guiney and all members of the I. W. W. who were indicted under the new Criminal Syndicalist law of this state were yesterday released from jail as the outcome of the acquittal some days ago. The members of the organization are well satisfied with the outcome of the trial.

War is fast bringing famine to the world, and famine has ever preceded revolutionary change.
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DEVELOPMENTS IN RUSSIA

John Reed, prominent Socialist author, who is now in Russia, in a cable to the New York Call, writes of the Bolsheviki revolution as follows:
This is the revolution, the class struggle, with the proletariat, the workmen, the soldiers and the peasants lined up against the bourgeoisie. Last February was only the preliminary revolution. At the present moment the proletariat are triumphant.
The rank and file of the Workmen's Soldiers' and Peasants' Councils are in control, with Lenine and Trotsky leading. Their program is to give the land to the peasants, to socialize natural resources and industry and for an armistice and democratic peace conference. The extraordinary and immense power of the Bolsheviki lies in the fact that the Kereny government absolutely ignored the desires of the masses as expressed in the Bolsheviki program of peace, land and workers' control of industry.
The entire insurrection is a stirring spectacle of proletarian mass organization, action, bravery and generosity.
The many stories being sent out regarding Bolsheviki looting and murdering are without foundation. In fact, after being captured and released on the word of honor, many "junkies" again took part in treacherous fighting.
All newspapers except the Bolsheviki ones retailed lies to excite the population, and yet many of them were not suppressed. The City Duma is the center of absolute hostility to the Bolsheviki, with no workingman a member of it.
No one is with the Bolsheviki except the proletariat, but that is solidly for them. All the bourgeoisie and appendages are relentlessly hostile.
The employees of all government departments, state bank, telephone, etc, are on strike, paralyzing the business of the government. They refuse to work with the Bolsheviki ministers. The new Bolsheviki plan is to run the government by a series of collegiums, instead of a ministry, headed by a chairman. The collegiums are called the People's commissars, who meet in a council of People's commissars, with Lenine as chairman.
The news from the front and from all over the country shows that although some fighting is still going on in various cities the masses are pretty solid for the Bolsheviki, except in the Donez region, where General Kaledine and the Cossacks have proclaimed a military dictatorship.

BREAKING UP THE HOME

According to a bulletin recently issued by the Equitable Life Insurance Company, there are twenty-two million men in the United States between the ages of 18 and 44 years of age, and of these, ten million are bachelors. The years from 18 to 44 represent the period in which marriage normally occurs, and yet nearly one-half of the American men of age-group are not married.
We learn that these men are not bachelors from choice, but that living is so expensive in this country, and incomes so relatively low and uncertain that "marriage has become a luxury whose sheer cost causes many prudent men to hesitate."
The Chicago Herald, in commenting on this alarming situation, says: "In order to assure their own prosperity, the governments must conspire to arrange economic affairs in such a way that reasonable men and women may marry without financial fear."
Somebody is beginning to see that they are starving the geese that lay the golden eggs. Something is breaking up the home, and doing a thorough job of it, too; but somehow it is not what they have been wont to accuse of that the sinister crime.
"Breaking up the home". Ten million American home that might have been, but could not be, because Capitalism has taken such a heavy toll from the American Labor that ten million American workingmen of marriageable age have found themselves unable to meet the expense of maintaining homes!
Go into any of our large cities, and walk up one street and down another and you find needless miles of houses bearing the sign "Rooms for rent." This means two things. It means that the occupants of those houses are unable to live upon their incomes, and must eke out their meager earnings by sharing their habitations with others. And far more serious than this, it means that millions and millions of American men and women have no homes at all, but must live, or exist, each in a little room in a stranger's house. The barrenness of such life is known only to those who have lived it; and yet, if present conditions continue the day is near at hand when this class will be in the majority.
The American home! What is happening to it? What can save it? Who are its friends, and who its enemies? Wherein lie the hope for the future of family life and the home? Ask your neighbor, or your fellow-worker. And if he knows, ask him what he is doing about it, or what he is going to do.—Idaho Party Builder.

A STORY THAT INDICTS CIVILIZATION

A powerful novel which radicals should read and get their conservative friends to read, is David Graham Phillips' posthumous work, "Susan Lenox, Her Fall and Rise." It is not a propaganda story and is all the better for that reason. But it lays bare all the evils and shams of existing society. It shows people as they are and though it presents no remedy, no thinking person who reads the story can lay it down without feeling that such things should not be, and that no superficial remedy will suffice.
The heroine of the story is not a pure unsullied saint. Far from it. She is one who makes her life conform, not to conventional ideas of propriety, but to conditions with which she is compelled to deal. Phillips makes clear that under existing social conditions there are people who, however desirous to be good, cannot be so and live. "Susan Lenox" could no more have regulated her life as convention requires than one of Ernest Thompson-Seton's wild animal characters could have been reasonably represented as a strict observer of the Golden Rule. Although the novel has a happy ending, although not of the conventional kind, it is one that is only possible with extraordinary characters who happen to have a stroke of good fortune. It brings no comfort to those who would like to feel that "all's right with the world."
The world lost much when an insane assassin put an end to Phillip's life. His last work shows that he had a vision of a better social state and the power to make it clear to others. "Susan Lenox" shows the civilization that is. It may well have been followed by other stories showing a civilization that is possible and how it may be attained. But after all, that is not necessary. One who has been awakened by Phillip's great story should be urged to pursue the subject further, not by reading entertaining fiction, but by study of a serious work by such writers as the author of "Progress and Poverty."

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