

The Two Classes.

(By HENRY SARA.)

A wrangle is taking place in the columns of one of our contemporaries, a "strong" Social-Democratic production, regarding the *Communist Manifesto*. One writer says it was published here, another that it was published somewhere else, and so on. But fortunately the infallible Spargo—John Spargo—Marx's great biographer, has been consulted, so the end of the controversy is now in sight. Poor Marx, he has his uses even nowadays.

Speaking of Marx, reminds us of that old doctrine that he tried to popularise one time of day—the class struggle. We wonder if there are fossils believing in the old obsolete theory to be found anywhere. The lions and the lambs seem to hit it very well together, taking all things into consideration, and in so doing have made the Marxian theory worthless. Of course the lambs do not think, and so long as the lions roar, they will always succeed in frightening the lambs, and so there you are. So perhaps it is just as well to argue about where Marx wrote his works, instead of making them live in revolutionary activity.

However, this is a material world, and whether we like it or not, ultimately we have to think in "realities," which brings us back to the *Communist Manifesto*. Turning to the first chapter we read:—"The history of all hitherto existing society, i.e., all recorded history, is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, baron and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in one word oppressor and oppressed, standing constantly in opposition to each other, carried on an uninterrupted warfare, now open, now concealed; a warfare which always ended either in a revolutionary transformation of the whole society, or in the common ruin of the contending classes." And further on we read:—"Modern Bourgeois Society, springing from the wreck of feudal society, has not abolished class antagonisms. It has but substituted new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of warfare, for the old."

Now if the class-struggle does hold good, if it be true that the freeman, patrician, baron, guildmaster and capitalist, on the one side, and slave, pleb, serf, journeyman and "hand" on the other, does represent a correct historical picture, carried down to our own time, then the oppressed has nothing in common with the oppressor. Along those lines of thought war is impossible, for let the worker be true to himself, to his class, and he ceases to be a unit in a capitalist army. It is greatly to be regretted that such propaganda is not made more general than it is, for by its aid the labour leader would be unable to prey upon his dupes, and further betrayals would be at an end. Politicians whether they be of the direct-action variety, or parliamentary species, would likewise cease to function in the perpetuation of capitalism.

Recognition of the class struggle enables one to have a clear conception of the workings of society. Deny it, and you have nothing by which you can analyse, or explain the numerous seeming contradictions and absurdities, concealed with our daily life. History is incomprehensible, a meaningless series of events. The daily round an enigma. Religion the greatest aid to man. Marriage the most ideal form of relationship. Workshop life, the happiest of happy moments. And death—well, not to be despised. *There is no hope for the worker in the negation of the class struggle.*

Society can be compared to the working of a magic lantern. You put the slide into the frame the right way up, yet when you

look upon the screen, you will find that your picture is upside down. But take the slide out, turn it upside down, slip it back into the lantern again, and this time there upon the screen is the picture correct in detail and intelligible.

Society likewise wants turning upside down. Or rather the top class wants removing from its pinnacle of laziness, the workers want to do less work; and the fundamental basis of society must be production for use, and not for profit. A class that lives on the labours of others, is a danger not only to itself, but to everybody else as "our" Prime Minister recently explained. Speaking on the payment of pensions, etc, to the participants of the "negation of the class struggle," Nov. 18th last, he said:—"I am perfectly certain that my honourable friends will agree with me, that nothing could be worse in the interests of the working-class, or any other class of the community, than that you should establish a section of them in a position of ease and security in which they need not work at all. It would not be in the interests of their class, or in the interests of the State." Seeing that "our" friend Mr. H. H. Asquith is a lawyer, we must compliment him on giving us the above from which we can extract at least three meanings. One is that, it will be bad for the workers to have to keep some of themselves on their backs. Another is, that it will be bad for some of the "on the backs" if some of the bent backs stop bending. And finally we have the inference that nothing could be worse than that any class in the community should be in a position of ease and security in which they need not work at all. Of course Mr. Asquith talks about classes as though there were about ninety - and - nine different brands, but the obsolete *Manifesto* reminds us that there is only oppressor and oppressed, in other words two. Yes, there are but two classes hating each other like poison. The one affecting culture, or "kultur" (it is cant which ever way you spell it, or which ever country affects it) the other "dragged up." The one changes its clothes by the clock, in order to indulge in luxuries. The other selling its labour power by the same instrument in order to get the necessities of life. Yet both prepared to act a big lie when occasion demands. An old man with white whiskers and top hat is the keeper of the inferno—lets have at him. Now its an upturned moustache, and tinsel helmet—and again the sickening game is played. Monarchy relic of the past, struts its half-hour in vain glory and pomp. Priestcraft watches all with hateful cunning; sanctifying the sexual relationship; calling upon —x to forgive the result born in sin; and mumbling over the shell when lowered in the grave. The politician scheming and conniving as to how to thwart the "dangerous" signs in the masses. The labour leaders leading their followers up cul-de-sacs, and down blind alleys, making a pretence that they are their emancipators.

And the workers—cowards. Ignorant cowards, afraid to question the right of their superiors, afraid to doubt the "eternal truths" that their red-cloaked, ermine-cloaked, blue-cloaked, black-cloaked, and white-cloaked masters, preach and drum into them from the cradle to the grave. Afraid to accept the revolutionary principle of the class-struggle, and preferring to go forth on to the field of battle, to stand shoulder to shoulder with those who rob them of what they produce, so as to kill ignorant fools like themselves.

Let us finish with the closing word of the *Manifesto*:—"The Communists disdain to conceal their aims. They openly declare that their ends can only be attained by the forcible overthrow of existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at

a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Workers of all lands unite."

"AT GRIPS WITH WAR"

The Book to End War

IT IS

The Handbook of the Revolution—The Manifesto of The New International—The Herald of the New Epoch—The Book every worker must read.

Other Books Against War

Debated Its Horrors—Exposed Its Scandals—Condemned Governments—Censured Wealth—Blamed Capitalists.

THIS BOOK

Exhibits the terror of peace—Explains First Causes—Dismisses Governments—Indicts Poverty—Puts aside Capitalists.

Speaks to Every Worker.

Convicts Wage-Labour.

Traces the Bloodshed of Battle

To the Workers' bench, his home, his organisations.

This Book will End War—It will Kill Compromise, the organised PROMOTER OF WAR—It will Make the Workers Repudiate their Assassin interests as wage-slaves and hired stool-pigeons.

It is the First Book to Define and stand for the Remedy for War instead of weeping over its Horrors. Your interest in this book will be intense. It will capture your pal for the Revolution. It is the most essential book of the time. This office is in debt to its printer, and cannot undertake the publication without your assistance. It invites your co-operation in the biggest thing it has yet attempted in the way of boosting the revolution. *We want to raise enough money to pay off the debt on our propaganda, and to issue this book now.*

We would ask every reader of this paper to become an Annual subscriber, and to send along his 1/6 at once. We offer no rebate of any kind, but ask our comrades to do this service for the paper, because it stands loyally by the principles of the revolution at a moment when every other journal is either preaching reformist, pacifism or compromising with rampant militarism. If there are still 5,000 Socialists or Anarchists in this country, they will send along their 2/6—1/- advanced subscription for

"At Grips with War,"

1/6, Year's subscription to *The Spur*.