

PROBLEMS FACING STRICKEN WORLD

Shall Chaos or Reconstruction in Europe Follow the Great World War?

GREAT NEED IS PRODUCTION

Men Must Be Given Inducement to Work and Guaranteed Fair Deal in the Distribution of the Result.

Article VI.

By FRANK COMERFORD.

The world lives by two kinds of work, the work on the soil and the labor spent in making things. In this way we get the things we eat and wear. We have eaten up our surplus. The world's reserve is gone. We are literally living from hand to mouth. To overcome the food shortage we must put every inch of available ground into production. Only by doing this can we live and gradually get back the surplus which stood as a protection against crop failures.

Production is not automatic, it is the work of man. There is not anything complex about it. You can't use magic. To grow things men must plow and gather. The will to work is our greatest need. The land is available. God furnishes the sunshine and the rain. To get the plows, tractors and farm tools we must look to the industrial arm of life. Here again is the call for men. We are short of man power. Men were killed and crippled in the war. The men who survived the war must help do the work that would have been done by those who did not come back. In their present frame of mind they do not will to work, at least under the old conditions obtaining before the war. It is necessary to furnish them with an inducement to work. There was little inducement for men to work before the war. The discontented are not kicking at work. Their objection goes to the unfairness shown in distributing the result. It isn't any secret. They are shouting it from the rooftops of Europe, they demand a larger share of the things they produce, or they refuse to work. There is a good deal of human nature in it, too. It is only human nature to think of self. There isn't anything unnatural in the workman looking for reward. Willingness to work is largely based on the thought of working for oneself.

Five things are necessary to start and keep production going. In other words, to get the clothes, shoes, stockings, coal and comforts of life, to give the farmer the tools he needs for agricultural production, so that we may eat; to provide the transportation necessary to collection and distribution, to bring the city to the country and the country to the market we must do five essential things.

Production's First Need.

First, we must have plants, and I use the word in the most general sense. These plants must be equipped with machinery and tools, they must be ready for work. Second, a plant is useless and stands idle unless we provide raw material, the thing furnished by nature that man and machine work into the finished product. Third, we must have coal. Coal runs the machine and keeps warm the home of the man who runs the machine. The helplessness of the world without coal is brought home to me while I am writing these articles. The miners have left the pit. The government, through the courts, has tried to force them back. The effort is a failure. The streets are dark at night. The houses are cold. Business is crying out against necessary restrictions imposed because of the coal shortage. I realize as I never have before how dependent we are on the men who pick and dig the coal. All of the intelligence and culture, the courts, the gold, are but symbols of power. When the coal miners folded their hands and set their teeth things stopped.

Fourth, transportation is necessary to the gathering, collecting and delivering of raw material and the distribution of the finished product. Fifth, and last, but first in importance, is man power. The purpose of production is man. He is master of it at every stage, in every department. Without him production is impossible. The business men who proceed on the theory that men could not live without their business, its pay roll, forget the first and greater truth that there would be no business without the workers. Man cuts, digs, gathers and hauls the raw material. He hews the wood, builds the plant. He mines the ore, he makes the tools, the machinery. He oils it, sets it in motion. He runs it. He makes the furnace and the boiler. He digs and shovels the coal which makes the power. He does the heat of the furnace. He builds the locomotive and pulls its throttle. He makes the freight car and stands in the street in the dangerous railroad yard with the signal of safety.

Railroads All Worn Out.

Transportation in Europe is partly paralyzed. During the war railroad tracks and roadbeds were allowed to deteriorate. It could not be helped, but the fact that it was unavoidable doesn't alter the situation. Roadbed and rails have fallen to pieces. There is a terrible shortage of cars. Everywhere on the Continent this is felt.

They have less than a third of the rolling stock necessary to meet normal requirements. The demand for transportation facilities will necessarily increase during the period of reconstruction. I have seen locomotives sneezing, coughing, expiring every few miles. Old, broken-down engines, the kind one expects to find in a museum. I was on a de luxe train, a diplomatic express. I commented upon the condition of the locomotive, which came to a full stop every once in a while. I commented upon the condition of the coaches. The chief of the train looked at me, smiled and said: "If you think this one is bad you ought to see some of the others."

The war disarranged plants and factories. The demand was for munitions. Peace gave way to war and plant equipment efficient for peace production gave way to plant construction necessary to manufacture the weapons of war. Plants were commandeered. Machinery was torn out, new machinery put in. A complete reconstruction and reorganization was effected. Now that the war is over and the demand for everything is great, it is necessary to change these plants back and fit them for the production needed. It is expensive, it takes time, it retards production.

It is strange that, while everyone can see and understand the difficulties and delays incident to reorganizing and rearranging machinery and plants, many people cannot see or understand the problem of rearranging men's lives, who for four years have been living abnormally. The effect of the war upon plants and equipment is conceded by the very man who refused to see any effect of the war on the men who were in it.

Women in Labor World.

During the war women answered the roll call. They left their homes and went to work. There is hardly a kind of work that I can think of that I have not seen women doing in Europe. I have seen them loading boats, shoveling coal, washing windows, driving wagons, cleaning streets, conductors on trams. Many of the women who went into the industries were young women. Now that the war is over and the men have come back there is a demand on the part of the men that the women retire to their homes. This is impossible in many cases, for these women have grown dependent upon their jobs for their living. Then, too, there is a shortage of marriageable men. Some employers of labor have taken advantage of this situation. They pay a woman less money than they pay a man for the same work. This makes both dissatisfied. The woman has the sympathy of the working man. He doesn't want her to compete with him to the extent that his wages will be lowered, neither does he want the boss to discriminate against her.

Women have come into the world of work to stay. If there is any meaning in the phrase "class conscious," they are living examples of it. They are more outspoken about their demands than men. They sense a wrong long before a man can see it. They have brought their intuition into the labor world. They are more radical than men, and they stimulate men to action. They have brought to the labor problem a new and interesting angle.

The key to the future is in the hands of these men and women. Production is the door that must be opened. Men and women must work, or winter and want will make a No Man's Land of Europe before the sun of 1920 thaws the frost from the ground.

Children crying for bread, shivering in the cold these bleak winter nights, are praying that men will work when they pray to God for good and warmth. Their help cries are smothered by a great blanket—unrest. Will men hear them?

So I sought to find the causes of unrest, knowing it would bring me close to the heart of the trouble.

Dickens' Tribute to the Cow.

If civilized peoples were to lapse into the worship of animals, the cow would certainly be their chosen goddess. What a fountain of blessing is the cow! She is the mother of beef, the source of butter, the original cause of cheese, to say nothing of shoeleathers, haircombs and upper leathers. A gentle, amiable, ever-yielding creature, who has no joy in her family affairs that she does not share with man. We rob her of her children, that we may rob her thereafter of her milk; and we only care for her when the robbery may be perpetrated.—Charles Dickens.

Approaching the End.

Cicero in his dialogue entitled "De Senectute" makes one of his interlocutors say that all men wish to attain old age and yet complain of the fact when they have attained it. He adds that one of the grievances of the old is that age steals over them more rapidly than they expected. It is pointed out that we cannot prevent time from passing, and that even if we lived eight hundred instead of eighty years the past time, however long, cannot when it has flown away be able to "soothe with any consolation for an old age of folly."

A Sister Wilhelm Did Not Like. Princess Charlotte of Meiningen, sister of the ex-kaiser, who died recently, had been a sufferer for years and had undergone many operations. She passed most of her time on the Riviera. Indeed, the princess was a woman you couldn't miss. She wore bobbed hair, when no other woman had ever dreamed of such a thing, and talked democracy, and smoked all the time. The ex-kaiser was rather alarmed at her vagaries and preferred his other sister, Queen Sophie of Greece, who is more his sort.—London Mail.

FAREWELL RECEPTION GIVEN REV. AND MRS. LITTLE

Members and Friends of Baptist Church Presented Them With Remembrance Tokens.

Last Friday evening the members and friends of the Baptist church tendered a farewell reception to Rev. and Mrs. J. B. Little. It was held at the church, which had been made homelike and beautiful for the occasion.

A brief program of unusual merit followed an hour of informal enjoyment. The church quartette and the male quartette sang, Vernon Fuller rendered a violin solo, and Eleanor Hanchett gave a reading.

The women of the church presented Mrs. Little with a beautiful silk gown the presentation being made by Mrs. A. H. VanValen with an original poem. Mr. Little received a watch and fob from the men of the congregation.

Following this refreshments were served. The affair proved most enjoyable to everyone present.

On Sunday evening at 6:30, the B. Y. P. U. gave a luncheon to Rev. and Mrs. Little and presented him with a pair of gold cuff links.

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"FLORENCE NELSON HAD TONSELS"

The following letter was received by little Lawrence Hoegren from his former chum out in Nebraska.

Phillips, Nebr., Feb. 1, 1920.

Dear friend:

How are you? I am fine and hope you are the same.

What are you doing these days? I am going to school these days. I hate school each day I go.

The Dr. came out Friday to examine the kids. I and my sister was perfect but Viola Nyblom had blurred eyes and Florence Nelson had tonsels and Orville Hooker had oversized ears.

We bought a oil stove at school and now we cook our dinners there. I guess I will close.

Yours truly,
Clarence England.

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