Alberta.

THE LIBEL TRIALS. II.

Since last week we have read the evidence in the Powell trial (as reported in the Calgary Daily Herald and the Edmonton Journal of November 15 and 16) together with a recapitulation of the story and comments on the verdicts.

One point is made clearer. It now appears that at the beginning of the Unwin trial the Crown was ready to exculpate the four charges in the libel suit, but that Mr. Aberhart (who holds the position of Attorney-General) thought it best to proceed with the three charges, and would reserve the right to proceed with the other two later on. This decision led Major-General Griesbach's counsel to proceed under the direction of the Court and to seek permission by the Court—which was given—to proceed with the libel suit. The latest news is that the Crown is no longer going to proceed with the remaining charges.

As regards the reason for Mr. Aberhart's decision on the subject of proceeding with the third charge, the Calgary Daily Herald (November 16) attributes it to intervention from London. It says:

"Perhaps Major Douglas regrets now that he ordered the Alberta authorities to drop the charges against Unwin. The truth has been exposed that while he may have some power in the government of the province he does not control the courts of justice.

We do not know whether this paragraph is based on evidence or information. If the latter, we suggest that our own theory (which last week) is just as plausible, namely that Mr. Aberhart and of not proceeding against a colleague and an attorney by private prosecutors. In fact it ought to be no surprise to anybody that the party conducting the prosecution was the one most interested in seeing it fail and that there are plenty of people in Alberta who are only too ready to impute such desire to the Attorney-General.

As regards the reservations of the prosecution and the other charges, this was logical, because until defamation had been proved, there was no ground (or quite inadequate ground) on which to sustain the charges of sedition and incitement. Critics of the Attorney-General have only one ground of complaint, and it is that he, after defamation has been proved in the lower court, has now decided to drop the other charges irrespective of what may happen in the Appeal Court.

There are two reasonable answers: (a) that the Alberta Government's legal advisers think the evidence for sedition and incitement not strong enough to warrant a conviction; (b) that the Canadian banking interests think in any case for such prosecution they think it inexpedient in deference to the wishes of the bankers. We do not mean by this to suggest that Aberhart's decision was taken in order to oblige the bankers, but that the bankers have refrained from bringing any pressure on him to carry the case further. However, whatever be the reason, it is possible to drop the major charges is a welcome one and it is a sign that the Society's journals are not free of criticism. All that is necessary is for the Society to show what they think about the law and its relations with the joggers.

A correspondent suggests that we have concealed too much in saying that Powell or Unwin "published" the article. He points out that printers, unlike ordinary citizens, are joined in authorship and the printers have a right to the profits of the publication, which is not the case in the present instance.
The New Age, December 16, 1937

Police and Politics.

Sir James MacBrien is commissioner of the Royal Irish Constabulary, and his Mount Police. On Armistice Day he made a speech. In it he spoke of the Canadian Legion's value in helping police forces to combat subversive influences in this country.

"Smite the ugly head of communism wherever it appears, before it has a chance to dominate the youth of the country, as it aims to do, and so bring about ultimate disaster."

On November 17 the Ottawa Evening Citizen devotes a leading article to this passage, and one of its comments is as follows:

"It is obvious, in the case of this statement, that the Canadian Legion is responsible for the speech, and the responsible head of the Royal Canadian Legion appears to have spoken figuratively, and the thought of violence."

Queering "The Querist."

Here are some suggestive queries in The Querist of The Irish Times.

Q. What is the meaning of "The Querist."

A. Querist is a word that is occasionally used in Ireland to mean a person who asks questions. It is derived from the Latin word "quaestor," which means "questioner." It is often used in a humorous or ironic way to describe someone who is asking a lot of questions or who seems to be seeking information or knowledge.

Bishop George Berkeley published a discussion of this question in 1770.

C. The term "The Querist" is also used to refer to a literary journal or periodical. The first issue of The Querist was published in 1766 and it was a monthly periodical that featured anonymous letters and questions on a wide range of topics, including science, politics, literature, and philosophy.

D. The term "The Querist" has also been used to refer to a type of comic strip that was popular in the United States during the early 20th century. These strips were often drawn by artists such as Mort Walker and were characterized by their use of puns and wordplay.

E. The term "The Querist" has also been used to refer to a type of comic strip that was popular in the United States during the early 20th century.
The Disallowance Crisis.

Major Douglas, in his recent speech at Belfast, made no reference to the trials of Unwin and Powell. He devoted his remarks to the disallowed legislation. He expressed the opinion that disallowance by the Dominion Government was illogical—a usurpation of the prerogatives by the Governor-General. The banking interests had, he said, scored a success by causing the legislation to be held up for a period which might run into several months if it was remitted to the Privy Council. In the meantime they had created a "slumber," he said, the Dominion Government was "losing prestige."

This is satisfactory so far as it goes, but the lost prestige will accrue to the official Opposition unless steps are taken to capture it for Social Credit. It has been pointed out in these columns before that the disallowed legislation does nothing towards applying Social Credit principles, nor does it even commit the Government of Alberta to a recognition of the principles. The Bank Acts and the Press Act, as they stand, could constitute the foundation of a Fascist State, and in fact are being attacked on that account by the Farm and Ranch Review. It is no use complaining that attacks of this sort are unfair or misleading; they are inevitable in political controversy everywhere, and should be foreseen, and have been, and may yet be, forestalled. There is no need to formally enact dividend payment on Social Credit principles. By doing this they would make it clear beyond any doubt that the intention behind the Social Credit Credit is not to use that legislation for bureaucratic ends, but, as the enemy insinuates, to declare it in the name of those who want an excuse to deny them the means. As we have insisted before, the only justification for the Government's action is to maintain the principle of decentralisation of the banks and the power that would result from it. The surest guarantee would be for the Government to give an undertaking to the creditors that it would not use the powers now sought until it has first had the opportunity to implement the principle.

The Consumption of Capital.

In an article, "Should Capital be Consumed?" published Dec. 3, it was argued that when physical capital is not effectively engaged in supplying the consumption market and used to increase the productive power who own it or to the community generally. The existence of this excess of capital represents an expenditure of energy which could have been exerted for consumption uses. It also represents materials which could have been embodied into the composition of consumption goods, cut off from the productive process. For example, an idle stamping machine, a quilting machine, a loom, which is not in use, is just as much a consumption of capital as a large industrial plant. When it is not used, it is not being consumed, even though its existence is maintained by the community (investors and other consumers alike) to break up the machine and convert it into the desired utensil, even by the most primitive methods, the potential or theoretical capacity of service. Much more, it has paid the community not to have to endure the discomfort of use directly into those utensils. The question is, what proportions of these utensils do not depend on the necessity of use? On this evidence, it will be seen that the machine could have taken the form of utensils. Next, if it had, these utensils would have been the capital of the investors just as the machine is that was made instead.

This opens up the question of what capital really is. Fundamentally all production is capital while it is within the industrial system. And all consumption is a depletion of capital. Capital is, thus, simply a necessary property for which a price is demanded when transferred to consumers. Everything made becomes capital on its way to the shop counter.

Here the question of finance must be brought into the argument. In the above illustration the financing of the construction of the machine would be exactly the same in principle as it would be in the alternative case of the production of the utensils. So the cost of the alternative could be recovered from the community so that of the alternative utensils. If not, not.

Hygiene

OR

TOO FIT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION.

"Untouched by human hand," they shout.

My confidence to engage,

But would they please resolve this doubt?

Has no hand touched a wage?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

RUIN IN SIX WEEKS.

Sir,—I shall be glad if someone can give me the reference to a statement made at the beginning of the Great War to the effect that the war could not last longer than six weeks without financial disaster. I want the reference, date, and occasion.

Forthcoming Meetings.

LONDON SOCIAL CREDIT CLUB.

Bluecoat Room, Cadogan Street, S.W.
January 7, 8 p.m. "Social Credit, Why and How?" by Mr. Best.
January 14, 8 p.m. "In essentials, Unity; in non-essentials, Liberty; in all things, Charity," by Mr. W. L. Hoggart.
January 21, 8 p.m. "5s Monthly for All for Life," by Mr. W. L. Hoggart.
January 28, "Social Credit and War," by Mr. B. S. Higgins.

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