

DIRECT ACTION



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ONE PENNY

The Eight Hour Farce

Forty-three years ago the first eight-hours procession marched through the streets of Sydney. Since then Labor has prided itself that it has accomplished something which no other country has achieved. There have been processions galore. Old age has retired, waving its war-worn hat, giving place to youth full of enthusiasm for what it calls the "Labor Movement."

But the question which obtrudes itself, when the banquets and applause and the clapping of hands are over, "Has labor moved, and in which direction?" What has been achieved? Where are the trophies of victory? Have the workers reason to be proud of the struggle, and should they or should they not, continue the fight with the same weapons and the same tactics?

These are some of the questions which every intelligent member of the working class should set himself to answer.

If the questioner is candid with himself, he must admit that, far from any progress being made, the working class of Australia is to-day more firmly shackled to the chariot wheels of Capitalism than at any other period in its history.

The trade unions, and what is called the "Labor movement," have absolutely failed to hold their own against capitalist exploitation. The profits of the capitalist class are greater, and more secure from attack than at any period during the past half century, and labor is seen cowering and crawling, bending the knee to Parliaments and Courts, begging for a crust to keep hunger from the door.

Female and child labor is even on the increase, working practically at terms dictated by the boss, never seeing the sunlight from Monday to Saturday, sweating and toiling from dawn to dark trying to keep body and soul together, or, in more fortunate cases, pitifully endeavouring to imitate the "respectability" of bourgeois society.

The spectacle of labor, thumping the drum and waving its banners, celebrating an eight hour day, while passing the hell-holes of exploitation, where the most weak and defenceless of the working class moil and toil at all hours, every day in the year, is certainly a joke which should be appreciated by our masters.

Is the fight of the future to be continued in the same old style? Are the workers to remain divided into hundreds of warring factions, with no ambition other than to see another of their number adorning plush seats of Parliament? Are the employers to be allowed to go on increasing their profits, fortifying themselves securely on one side of the social chasm, while the workers remain on the other, shrieking in vain for some of the good things their labor has created?

Trade Unionism and Parliamentarianism have helped to widen the abyss which separates the two classes of modern society. Instead of making an endeavor to bridge it, these institutions are snapping and quarrelling for the few spoils the capitalist class contemptuously sling to them. A few of the stronger have collared the tit-bits of the discarded loot, while the great mass of the workers sinks deeper into poverty and starvation.



Good God! Still Eight. After Fifty Years.

MELBOURNE NOTES.

October 1, 1915.

A meeting was held under the auspices of Local 8, I.W.W., at the Guildhall on the evening of the 30th September. The speakers were Fellow-workers Laidler and Barker, while F. W. Kelly officiated as chairman.

Owing to the short notice, the audience was not quite so large as it might have been, but nevertheless, what it lacked in numbers it more than made up in enthusiasm.

After the opening remarks of the chairman, F. W. Barker briefly outlined the happenings that led to his arrest and conviction on the charge of publishing a poster, telling the employers to go to the front, and which was alleged to be prejudicial to recruiting. The speaker then went on to describe briefly the tremendous advances made by science and capitalism in the past century, and compared it with the stagnation among the working class organisations.

The time is more than ripe when the rank and file should take upon themselves the task of conducting operations.

One Big Union of the working class is the only weapon by which the capitalist class can be driven from its entrenchments. Forge the weapon on I.W.W. lines. Let all militants stiffen their backs for the coming fight. It is going to be tough and fierce, and only the spirit of the I.W.W., combined with sound organisation, can carry the working class through.

tion among the working class organisations.

He then described the tenets and principles of the I.W.W., an international revolutionary industrial organisation, which aims at instilling the efficiency and power of the capitalist trust into the ranks of the working class. He touched upon politics, and said that it was a side issue that Parliament was a subordinate capitalist institution, and that it could not be expected to destroy the system that produced and supported it. F. W. Barker wound up his address by urging all in the audience to study the principles and structure which were the basis of a new society to be constructed and developed within the womb of capitalism. (Applause).

F. W. Laidler in his address asserted that the New South Wales Premier (Mr. Holman), the Minister of Defence (Senator Pearce) and "the political hypocrites who sat with them" were trying to trick or force men to go to the trenches. They had been tricking them ever since the war began, and they were now endeavoring to force them to go. If conscription was introduced into Australia there were thousands of men who would not obey the law. (Applause.) There was sufficient spirit in Melbourne, and he believed in Sydney also, to get a number of people who would say to hell with everything before they would go to the trenches in Gallipoli. There were men in Australia to-day who had learned from Senator Pearce in years

gone by that the worker had no country to fight for. The moment they turned round, as Tom Barker had done, and urged the capitalists to go to the war, they were placed in gaol. They should tell Senator Pearce, Mr. Holman, and their friends that they would be prepared to fight and take lives only in a war in which the working classes were fighting the capitalists. (Applause).

He then touched upon the making of laws, and showed how laws made in union halls by men in bowwings could be maintained and upheld, whilst laws made in Parliament, and backed by police, law courts, the army and navy, could not be maintained. He quoted, numerous cases to prove his point, after which he dwelt for some time upon "solidarity," which he said was the essential requisite for widespread revolutionary action by the international workers.

At the conclusion of the address many questions were forthcoming dealing with Barker's conviction, conscription, the I.W.W., "slowing down," unemployment, and politics. All the questions were evidently answered satisfactorily.

For the initial indoor meeting, held by the I.W.W. in Melbourne, the meeting was a decided success, and will have a beneficial effect upon the future membership and propaganda of revolutionary unionism in this city. Good "Direct Action" and literature sales resulted.

"SPANWIRE."

Will The I.W.W. Be Suppressed?

KAISERISM IN NEW ZEALAND.

The fact that the employing class of New Zealand found it necessary to exclude, by special proclamation, I.W.W. papers and literature from entering New Zealand is the best tribute to the influence of direct action propaganda.

It is remarkable that although "Direct Action" has been one of the few papers which has looked upon the war as a topic of propaganda as more or less of secondary interest, it has been the first paper, south of the Equator, which has been singled out by the authorities for suppression.

This is explainable only on the assumption that the bosses are more afraid of action on the job than of all revolutionary oratory pertaining to the war.

It remains to be seen whether Mr. Massey and those whose interests he is serving have correctly estimated the power of a legal enactment to stop the growth of Industrial Unionist propaganda.

The spirit of working class revolt has been propagated in the face of more difficulties than Mr. Massey in his most tyrannical moments ever dreamt of; and the bosses of New Zealand are living in a fool's paradise if they think that by a "Special Order-in-Council," or any other kind of an order, they are going to keep back the oncoming tide of industrial discontent.

The I.W.W. seeks to give expression to this discontent in a scientific manner, and trace the cause to its foundation. Even if the ruling class in New Zealand is temporarily successful in excluding I.W.W. papers, it is merely sowing the seeds of a harvest the advantages of which the I.W.W. must ultimately reap.

Militaristic and despotic Germany, in its time, passed similar laws in an endeavor to suppress the militant voice of the working class. Kaiserism and militarism in "democratic" New Zealand will assuredly meet with the same success in that direction as their prototypes in Germany. The working class will not fail to note the kind of tactics and propaganda which its enemies fear, and recognising its power in that direction, will refuse to recognise enactments created for the purpose of perpetuating its suffering in the economic wilderness of Capitalism.

Capitalism in New Zealand, in Australia, in Great Britain, and throughout the whole capitalist world, what, with its Munitions Acts, War Precautions Acts, and so forth, is engaging in a sort of rough-and-tumble with the workers for the purpose of getting its fingers more firmly adjusted on their throats. The rulers recognise no methods of "fair play" except those calculated to be in their own favor. The workers as a whole must realise that it is only by adopting similar tactics can they possibly hold their own in the struggle. Economic strangulation is the only alternative.

A Weekly "Direct Action" depends upon the Membership.

Direct Action

Corinthian, W. A. "Conscription of Wealth."

The Cry of the Underlings.



OFFICIAL ORGAN

Of the
INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF
THE WORLD.

(Australian Administration).

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HEADQUARTERS I.W.W. (Australia):
330 CASTLEREACH ST., SYDNEY.

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS—
164 W. Washington St., Chicago,
Ill., U.S.A.

"Nero Fiddling"

The Future of Labour.

Despite the enormous loss of life in this war, there is every possibility of an unlimited amount of labor-power in the market after peace is declared.

The war has opened the eyes of the capitalist class to many possibilities of displacing adult male labor, which were not previously apparent.

Notwithstanding the "efficiency" advocates, who tell us, in effect, that the greater the production the more employment there will be, it does not require any deep knowledge of dusty economic volumes for the experienced job-hunter to convince himself that the boss never, never employs two where one can do the work required; nor will he employ an adult worker at full wages where a girl or a child of tender years can function at considerably lower wages.

The masters are fully alive to the serious economic situation which sooner or later will arise. Thousands of workers now employed at munition making will be thrown on the unemployed market, to compete with the workers for jobs in other spheres of industry; and the disbandment of the huge army of non-producers at present engaged on the battlefields of Europe must affect the economic position of workers, not alone in those countries where disbandment takes place, but in every part of the capitalistic world.

The seriousness of such a situation, in the danger which it involves to the interests of the ruling class, has already prompted the economic spokesmen of capitalism to advocate the gradual disbanding of the armies in their respective countries.

This course would have a twofold effect. In the first place it would relieve the congestion in the labor market, and thus mitigate the menace of a huge unemployed and starving populace to the economic system responsible for their plight, and secondly it would mean a considerable armed force at the disposal of our rulers, ready to crush every symptom of working-class revolt. This suggestion, though, is a curious commentary upon what has so often, of late been driven into our ears, that with the end of this war, provided victory over Germany results, militarism and its dangers will also be at an end in Europe.

However, to probe too deeply into the logic and consistency of capitalist spokesmen on this point might not be personally advantageous. But the point which should be emphasised here is that the workers in the near future, in

Many of the fellow workers of Boulder had to leave Boulder owing to victimisation, and the many vicissitudes of militant proletarians, and seek a master in new pastures. They happened to be congregated at Corinthian; they at once started on the job propaganda. Papers and literature were at once distributed.

Now, in the stopes, loud above the rat-tat-tap of the machine, you can hear the ringing strains of "Shall we still be slaves," and truckers can be seen pushing trucks to the tune of "Tramp," or that classic, "Hallelujah, I am a Bum."

Every Sunday evening we meet in a fellow-worker's camp and discuss the I.W.W. Songs and speeches are sung and made in Italian and English.

The Italian fellow-workers predominate here. No longer are workers of other nationalities looked upon as foreigners, but as "Compajo" (the Italian for fellow-worker).

The gospel of Industrial Unionism will never die in this State. When this little camp is broken up rebels will meet again on some other job and carry on the propaganda of working class solidarity and sabotage.

Last Sunday night we discussed the imprisonment of fellow-worker Barker, and decided upon a campaign of "Black Cat." We will let the kitten go in this State.

M. SAWTELL.

HARVESTERS!

Members striking out for the harvest fields should arm themselves with a supply of Subscription Cards for "Direct Action." Don't miss such a splendid opportunity for Propaganda.

Push the sale of "Direct Action." The boss loves it.

respective of the course pursued in disbanding soldiers, are going to be faced with a situation absolutely unparalleled in the whole history of capitalist exploitation.

Meanwhile, craft unions are pursuing their usual policy of wrangling amongst each other as to who shall be granted the privilege of being exploited by the boss.

The writer recently attended a meeting of the Sydney Labor Council. More than half the evening was taken up by that intelligent (!) body; so far as the general incoherency of the debaters would allow one to gather, in deliberating whether an unskilled worker, who was admittedly competent, should be paid the same wages, or employed in the same trade, as "the man who served his time."

The case of "Nero fiddling," etc., is a stale quotation, but surely if it ever applied, it does so in this case.

Industrial unionists have devoted their propaganda to the necessity of considering the new conditions imposed upon skilled, or so-called skilled, trades by economic development and improvements in machinery. The war is bringing home the truth of their arguments more forcibly than years of propaganda could do.

Already many capitalists, to their pleasure and surprise, are discovering the facility with which production can be carried on by cheap female and juvenile labor. "Military necessity" has also afforded them the excuse of dispensing with adult male labor, where hitherto they were not disposed to challenge industrial turmoil by wholesale dismissals and replacement by cheap labor.

The time has arrived when it becomes imperative in the interests of all workers, young and old, skilled and unskilled, black, brown, or brindle, to organise on the lines which capitalist development and economic conditions dictate.

Labor-power must be trustified in the One Big Union of the working class—organised scientifically, with the watchword of "No Compromise," until the whole rotten fabric of capitalism is overthrown.

Trade Unionist Fatuity.

The N.S.W. Labor Council, at its weekly meeting on September 30, carried a resolution opposing any form of conscription which did not include "conscription of wealth."

It would be instructive to have the definition of each delegate present as to what he meant by the term.

On the face of it, it might appear that the Council had suddenly become converted to the I.W.W. advocacy of the seizure of all property to be utilised in the interests of society as a whole.

If this is what they mean by "conscription of wealth," the debate on the subject was conspicuously remarkable for the absence of any methods whereby the scheme could be put into operation.

The I.W.W. has been condemned by all the wise-heads of the Labor Council as "extremists," "faddists," "impossibilists," etc., but Industrial Unionists, at all events have never been so hair-brained as to advocate the "conscription of wealth" without laying down a means for accomplishing the end in view.

If the eleven hundred and odd Trade Unions in Australia carried a similar resolution to-morrow, would we be any nearer the goal? If Parliament "passed an Act" would the capitalists forthwith step out of control of industry, don dungarees and take their place in factory, mine and workshop? And if they did, are the workers prepared and organised to operate the industries on a co-operative basis?

All these questions must be answered by all intelligent people with an emphatic negative. But who expects intelligence from the average trade union leader?

Their talk of "conscription of wealth" is a mere catch-phrase to deceive the workers and cover up their own timidity to oppose conscription in the only way it should be opposed, that is, by a general stoppage of production.

The Trade Unions, by their nature and method of organisation, are impotent to impose their will on capitalist society. Passing "hot air" resolutions does not conceal the fact that Union leaders are bitterly opposed to the only method of organisation which can make conscription of wealth, in any sense of the term, possible; nor does it serve any purpose except to keep the capitalist class highly amused.

When the workers are organised along the lines of Industry into the One Big Union of the working class, and educated up to the ideal which the term conscription of wealth implies, they will "take and hold" the means of production, and operate them in the interests of all, not by "resolution" but by action.

T. G.

ANOTHER PROTEST.

A contribution of £5 to the Barker Defence Fund has been received from the city branch of the Railway Workers' and General Laborers' Association.

At the last business meeting of this branch a delegate from the I.W.W. was given the platform to put the facts of the Barker case before the meeting.

After hearing the delegate those present unanimously pledged themselves to aid in Barker's defence by further financial and moral support.

Industrial Efficiency on the job means prolonged holidays at both ends of the social scale. More holiday jaunts for the boss, and compulsory sight-gazing on the street corner for the working stiff.

By Philip Green Wright.

The masters stand at the head of things;
They are lords of work and pay;
And we must run till the set of sun,
Because the masters say;
For we, for we are the underlings,
And the lords of bread are they;
And we must eat though they scarp and cheat,
And when they nod, obey.

Sometimes there is work for every one,
And sometimes, barred each gate;
And why it is so, the masters know,
We only wish and wait.
They know when the freights will begin to run,
And the factory whistles blow,
And the fires burn and the spindles turn:
These things the masters know.

We work and work at things we must,
We don't so greatly care,
By the rushing flume, at the roaring loom,
In the coal mine's killing air.
We fashion gems for a dole of crust,
And silks, with a rag for pay;
And the things we make, the masters take,
To make their women gay.

There is wit and grace and courtesy,
When the masters meet and dine,
And the lives of men are ticked off then,
Over the nuts and wine;
For before then they somehow seem to see
All that the future brings:
Our minds are dull as we mull and mull
Over these puzzling things.

We shape the clothes that the masters wear
With such easy air of right;
We mine the coals that warm their souls,
As we shiver at home to-night;
We build the yachts that the masters bear
With their graceful swallow wings:
For they are free; but we, but we,
Are only the underlings.

Our minds are dull, we mull and mull,
But we're waking, masters; ay,
We're waking now, and, with knotted brow,
We're wondering dimly, why!
Only wondering, slow and vast and dull,
Brutal to do and dare;
But if ever we shake ourselves awake,
Masters of bread, beware!

— "International Socialist Review."

I. W. W. Preamble.

The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people, and the few who make up the employing class have all the good things of life.

Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organise as a class, take possession of the earth and the machinery of production, and abolish the wage system.

We find that the centre of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions unable to cope with the ever-growing power of the employing class. The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping to defeat one another in wage wars. Moreover, the trade unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working-class have interests in common with their employers.

These conditions can be changed and the interests of the working-class upheld only by an organisation formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry, or in all industries, if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.

Instead of the conservative motto: "A fair day's wages for a fair day's work," we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword: "Abolition of the wage system."

It is the historic mission of the working-class to do away with Capitalism. The army of production must be organised, not only for the everyday struggle with capitalists, but also to carry on production when Capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organising industrially, we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old.

SYDNEY LOCAL.

MEETINGS, &c.

Street Propaganda at Bathurst and Liverpool Streets Every Friday and Saturday Evenings, at 8 p.m.; also Sunday Evening, at 7.

Meetings in Hall:

Sunday, 8 p.m., Propaganda.
Wednesday, 8 p.m., Economic Class.
Thursday, 8 p.m., Business Meeting.
Also, Public Meeting Every Sunday Afternoon in the Domain.

What's the difference between a German Boss and a British one? Do you think the choice worth dying for?

"The safety of our National Existence" means the right to exploit without competition.

Do you know more about the war in Europe than the war on the job? Which affects you most?

Efficiency on the job where you are concerned may mean starvation in another worker's home.

My Visit to Melbourne.

Our Standpoint.

As the Twig is Bent.

I arrived at Melbourne on Saturday after a tedious journey. In the evening I was allowed ten minutes at the Amalgamation Conference of Trade Unions, held at the Trades Hall, to place the facts of my case, and my views upon, Industrial Unionism.

I was well received, and after explaining the facts of my case, I touched briefly upon the need for an international industrial organisation, the abolition of arbitration awards and sectional agreements, and the necessity for an unlimited amount of agitation and educational work in the industries. I was informed by the President that a deputation from the Conference to the Prime Minister on the subject of conscription, had called his attention to my case. Mr. Fisher replied that he would make enquiries into the matter. Sunday turned out to be very wet, and a meeting at the Yarra was quite impossible. However, on Sunday evening I had the pleasure of addressing a very large audience at the Bijou Theatre, under the auspices of the Socialist Party of Victoria.

Mrs. Katz, who is well known to Sydney industrialists and rebels, was to have lectured upon "Child Culture and Child-Conscription," but when she heard that I was in Melbourne she very kindly offered the use of the platform to me, a fact which I appreciated very much.

I was introduced by my old friend, R. S. Ross, editor of the "Socialist," and secretary of the V.S.P., who said many kind things about me. I received an ovation from the audience, which showed that they regarded my charge and sentence as an outrage. I touched briefly upon the facts of my case, and showed how the prosecution was due to political intrigue and machination.

I referred for some time to a few incidents in the N.Z. strike of 1913, to the free speech and literature fights in Sydney and Newcastle. I compared the Liberal and Labor Parties, and showed how the working class would tolerate more oppression from their "own" party than they would from the declared political party of the employers.

In conclusion I dealt with industrial unionism, and told the audience that the reduction of the output by one per cent. would create more consternation to the employing class, than the registering of a million votes. Also that systematic, persistent agitation alone would create the necessary intelligence in working class circles to develop their power economically in the industries, until they finally master the control of the same.

At the conclusion of the meeting a retiring collection was taken up to help in the defraying of expenses of my defence.

Prior to my address, recitations, songs and musical exercises were rendered by members of the Socialist Sunday School connected with the Victorian Socialist Party. The children enjoyed themselves just as immensely as the audience. They will be big factors in the stirring times to come.

I must tender my heartfelt thanks in general to the V.S.P. and in particular to Bob Ross, who has done all in his power to make my visit a success, and which undoubtedly will have much to do with the successful termination of my case.

On Tuesday I am going to Geelong to address a meeting of the Trades Council upon my case and upon Industrial Unionism. A successful evening propaganda is assured, as the hospitality of the workers in Geelong is proverbial.

There are splendid possibilities, I am convinced, in Melbourne for the propaganda of Industrial Unionism, Sabotage, and the Restriction of the Output.

GEELONG, V.

(Special to "Direct Action.")
On Tuesday I went down to

Geelong to place the facts of my case before the Trades and Labor Council. I was well received. After placing my case before the members the following resolution was moved by Mr. Gerson, and seconded—

"That this Council deploras the action of the N.S.W. Labor Government in tyrannically gaoling Tom Barker for publishing a poster reminding the employers of their duty to their country. We ask for his immediate release, and further, we declare for the maintenance of freedom of speech (for discussion), freedom of assemblage (for discussion), and freedom of the press (for discussion), without which progress and liberty cease to exist."

This motion was carried unanimously, amid applause.

On Wednesday evening I addressed a meeting of the Implementation Workers' Union, where I received a splendid reception. My case was listened to sympathetically, and on leaving after a vote of thanks, the chairman assured me that if I should go to gaol that his Union would give the authorities no rest until I was released.

The same evening I addressed the Eight-Hours Committee for ten minutes. I was favorably received, and after leaving the chamber a strong resolution was carried unanimously demanding my release from bail.

The Malvern P.L.C., and the Peace Alliance have also brought the matter by resolution under the notice of the authorities. Many Unions are doing likewise. The Victorian Socialist Party have forwarded £5, partly collected at the Bijou Theatre and partly donated by the Party, to the Defence Fund.

To-night I lecture in the Guild hall on "The New Unionism," and on Friday I am to speak at the Naval Base, Crib Point, where there is a good congregation of rebels.

TOM BARKER.

Subscribers:

Please Note.

Subscribers should note that now we have become a weekly, the yearly subscription to the paper will be four shillings; half-yearly, two shillings.

Those who have already subscribed will be supplied with a weekly copy until their subscription runs out, on the terms now prevailing.

If we are to continue as a weekly, it is imperative that all interested should immediately support the paper by sending their subs. at once, or renewing the old as soon as possible.

A little effort on the part of all members now, will obviate in the future those painful appeals for financial help which so often characterise revolutionary organs.

"Direct Action" is one of the very few working class papers that never looked back since its inception.

It depends upon YOU that its reputation in this direction shall not suffer in the future.

Remember, without a press all other propaganda is useless.

ACTIVITIES OF LOCAL No. 6.
HALL, LANE ST., BOULDER, W.A.

Wednesday Evenings, in Hall—Class Meeting.

Friday Evening, Boulder Post Office—Propaganda Meeting.

Saturday Evening, Kalgoorlie—Propaganda Meeting.

Sunday Morning, 10.30 a.m., Hall—Business Meeting.

Sunday Afternoon, Keane's Goldfields Hotel, Athletic Club, at 2.30—Lecture.

Sunday Evening, Boulder—Propaganda Meeting.

Good Library at Hall. All Reds are invited to dig in and make Industrial Unionism the Topic of the Day.

F. H. LUNN.

Some people are kicking up a noise because the wife of a returned soldier, who applied for assistance to the Lord Mayor's Patriotic Fund, was told to sell her piano. Surely it is time these people recognised that this Fund was subscribed for the noble and patriotic purpose of financing the Gas Company and providing fat billets for those "administering" it.

"Tramp, tramp, tramp," is the advice of a Westralian Labor Minister to the Perth unemployed. The Government had for some time been providing "free meals" (shadow soup and stale bread, presumably), when the "honorable Minister" told them to "shoulder their swags" and get to hell out of it. The workers will continue to be treated in this manner until they get wise to the game, and cease to provide free meals and free everything else for "honorable gentlemen" and other parasites.

The Kaiser is reputed to be the largest shareholder in Krupp's, and it is said much of his enormous war profits has been sent to America for investment in American munition factories, so that he is now drawing large dividends from the supply of armaments to the Allied Powers. He is also said to hold shares in companies registered at Somerset House. These facts need not surprise the British or German workers, who have all along declared that the capitalists who rule us know no country save one capable of exploitation, and acknowledge no God but the God of Profit—"Freedom."

A remarkably successful strike was pulled off in July last in Bayonne, New Jersey, U.S.A., by 5000 employees of the Standard Oil Co.

Despite the tactics of John D. Rockefeller, who made an endeavor to crush the strike by armed force, the strikers refused to be intimidated, and paid some of the armed Rockefeller thugs back in their own coin. One eye-witness reports an incident in "Harper's Weekly" as follows—"I have never seen anything like it—the sheer grit of these men. Twice, practically unarmed, they charged the ten-foot stockade from behind which the guards were picking them off with Winchester. About a hundred actually scaled it, swinging and pulling each other up, while the women and children cheered them. It was like one of those cavalry drills at Madison Square Garden. Only the difference was that a quarter of them were shot down before they reached the ground on the other side. If the guards had shot better they'd have got all of them. Even the kids are in this strike. They gathered stones and sailed in with the men. A bunch of little chaps from ten to fifteen years old sneaked up to the fence and lighted a fire to burn it down. They wanted to make a hole for their fathers and big brothers to go through. I saw one youngster catch a loose police horse, crawl on its back and ride up to the stockade, swinging his cap and yelling while the men charged."

It appears that something like civil war raged in Bayonne for days.

Notwithstanding the superiority of Winchester to stones and clubs, solidarity won out and the strike ended with practically all the terms of the strikers being conceded.

Many arrests were made, including Frank Tannebaum, an organiser of the I.W.W.

NOTE.

Make the job last, if you don't want to join the unemployed.

The moral precepts instilled in our confiding minds during the days of our childhood are, perhaps, the longest-lived, and with the truths, or otherwise, learnt at a mother's knee, exercise an immense influence on our mental outlook in after life. Does anyone ever take the trouble to analyse the legendary drive that has played such an important part in regulating the conduct, and shaping the ideas, during the years in which we are supposed to be taught the best way to ensure a favorable answer to the supplicatory appeal in the Lord's Prayer regarding our daily bread?

Most of us can remember fables extolling the industry and thrift of ants and bees. These insects were held up as examples to be followed when we tackled the task of wrestling our daily crust from a society which keeps an uncommonly tight grip on the neck of the flour bag. Some fortunate ones among us were happy in the possession of an elder brother, or, perhaps, an uncle, who irreverently shattered the halo with which we had invested the insects referred to by pointing out that the industrious and thrifty bee is regularly robbed of the fruits of its industry by the very ones that pretend to protect it—its owner. Also, that the rewards of the ant's industry, although numerous, are unpleasant, such as tar, boiling water, hot ashes, poison, and other hints that its industrious habits have made it one of the best-hated things on earth, barring, perhaps, body-lice and politicians. Some unfortunate, who lacked the kindly mentorship of a fraternal or avuncular iconoclast, are to be met with to day. Our Yankee fellow-workers call them boneheads.

Throughout our school-days these trashy traditions, exemplifying the beauties of industry, thrift, obedience and all the meaner virtues, were impressed upon our assimilative and retentive minds. The wasp and the bee, the ant and the grasshopper, and the idle boy who, tempted by the beauty of the day, resolved to "play the wag." This young villain meets successively a horse, a dog and a man, and entreats each in turn to forsake his usual avocations for that day and become his playmate, and partner in sin. "It is such a beautiful day," pleads the wee law-breaker, "and it is a pity to be shut up in school." But the equine, canine, and human boneheads each and severally sternly rebuke the infantile pleasure-seeker, and point out the importance of work. They have to work. Why should he be idle? The youthful truant is so abashed and humbled by their reproaches that he repents of his fell design, and hurriedly retraces his steps towards the school house, grimly resolved to do his share in the great World of Work, and grow up to be a good bone-head—I mean a useful member of society. The dour degenerate, at whose door lies the crime of inventing these allegorical incentives to industry, neglected to point out to the young rebel that each of these three advocates of Hard and Constant Work was working for an Idle Master, and received in return for his labor but a bare living. Nor, while fabricating these figurative fictions, did his bone-spined brain prompt him to point out that, had the trinity of faithful, hard-working animals continued toiling, for an idle master up to the present day, the necessity for the continuation of work and for the abjuration of holiday-making, would have been quite as insistent as it was on that bygone sunny morn.

Let us follow the Idle Boy a little farther. Passing over his later school-days, during which his plastic mind is still more misshapen by copious supplies of doctored history, and the orthodox moral, social and political superstitions are forcibly instilled into him, we arrive at the critical period when he takes his place in the ranks of the workers. He has

no positive intellectual trend, and his early training has left him as barren of all knowledge of economics, sociology, biology, and all that goes to make up the philosophy of life, as a Labor politician. What mental bias he has is all in favor of the cultivation of the ignoble virtues—thrift, obedience, humility and, above all, industry. But now, freed from the brain-crippling trammels of his school-days, he is his own master so far as his selection of reading matter is concerned. What is offered him? The choice of the master minds of the past? By no means. Our "heir of all the ages" is a working lad, and good literature is beyond his reach. Besides, it might put bad ideas into his head, and arouse the Divine spirit of discontent. The Public Library is not for him or his class; and, moreover, situated in the city. Go into any suburban reading room or circulating library—the workers live mostly in the suburbs—and note the books whose well-thumbed leaves and battered covers indicate constant usage. What are they? Let's hazard a guess. Kant, Spencer, Nietzsche, or Swedenborg? Nay, the librarian tells us they are not in stock. Ah, well, perhaps philosophy is a trifle dry for youthful minds, and maybe the younger generation prefers the Ancient Classics—Homer, Virgil, Pliny or Lucian? The attendant has heard of these, but has never seen them. Well, well, possibly the alert young intellects of the present day disdain these frivolous ancients and seek a more improving mental fare. Let's try again. Darwin, Huxley, Wallace, or Morgan. The librarian, evidently under the impression that we are a trifle cracked, reaches down one of the much-used books and we open it—"Get-rich-quick Wallingford," an attractive title, and a fleeting glimpse of the pages shows plenty of dialogue. We make a further selection with the attendant's assistance—"The Adventures of Captain Kettle" and "Sherlock Holmes." "Both widely read books, sir," the attendant assures us.

An examination of these popular works and of others of the same type, leaves one in a despondent mood. Without going into an exhaustive analysis they may be classed as the fables of our childhood brought up to date, and made attractive to maturer minds by the introduction of the sex-interest. Be efficient is the ruling note. Successful financially, at whatever cost. Truth, loyalty, and humanity are at a discount. Success is the end and aim of life. Fellow-creatures are either obstacles to progress or a possible means to advancement. Study them closely, and be prepared to profit by their weaknesses and mistakes. Fawn on the rich and powerful, and trample on the poor and helpless. The workers are clay-brained, degenerates of filthy habits, and do not count in the struggle. If possessed of good-looking female relations, make every possible use of them. Sex is a powerful weapon, and a wife, sister or daughter with a pair of tender eyes and trim ankles is a handy asset. Rich men are idle men. Idleness breeds lust, therefore neglect no opportunity. There is only one life worth living, and that is the life the ruling class live. Then get on in life, and maybe you will get into this class. And this sort of stuff, written entirely from a ruling-class viewpoint is eagerly absorbed by workers of both sexes. It is amazing. Truly, "as the twig is bent, so is the tree inclined."

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Exploitation.

By "Ajax."

"Religion, freedom, vengeance—what you will—
A word's enough to raise mankind to kill;
Some factious phrase by cunning caught and spread,
That kings may reign and kites and wolves be fed."

—Byron.

A hen that has just laid an egg makes far less fuss than the cliques of charlatanism and quackery. What with reform and revision, financial failures, war scares, political piffle, religious jargon, and the frantic efforts of unimportant people to become important, amid the chaos and muddle of decaying capitalism, the average person is sophisticated and deluded with platitudes, and unable to understand social phenomena.

Behind the veil of all this bedlam and charlatanism, and of far greater importance than the trivialities which for the moment appear in the limelight, there is at the basis of the social strata, sometimes veiled, but always stealthily at work, a scheme of plunder and robbery, breeding poverty, crime, disease, and death, which, for want of a better word, may be called exploitation. Exploitation in its varied forms, existed in previous societies, and to-day, irrespective of national boundaries, races, creeds, governments, is international in its scope, and cares naught for religion, morality, sex or custom. With the evolution of capitalism, exploitation has intensified, and become world-wide in its application. As machinery improves, and quicker transportation is introduced, exploitation increases, thus forcing the poor to crowd into the towns, where for the most part they eke out an artificial and miserable existence, living in slums, wearing shoddy clothes, eating adulterated food, drinking bad beer, and becoming dehumanised and degenerate, with no hope of any better life than that of the commonest slave in a young country like Australia, with its Labor governments and broad acres we see the people rapidly drifting into the towns in spite of the exorbitant rents.

This exploitation in factory, mine, and workshop, is best exemplified by the trust, which, by its elimination of competition, speeding up, superior machinery, specialisation, utilisation of female, colored and child labor, with the possibility of training monkeys looming in the future, is reducing the worker to a mere cipher—a cog in the industrial machine—whose social status, individuality, health, and even life, don't count. In fact, he is only a "hand," not a human. The trust stands on no scruples, its only concern is "How much profit can be squeezed out of the 'hands'?" It is in vain for the slaves to cry out about political rights, trade regulations, or whine about Jesus and his blood. Even the middle class, although they possess some wealth and influence, cannot stop or stay the trust. Indeed, this European war will probably deliver the middle class into the hands of the enemy, that enemy, needless to say, is not Prussianism; it is the financial trust that, silently and unseen is every hour and every minute, stretching out its tentacles to every corner of the globe for more dividends. As the industrial trust (which is really the incarnation of scientific exploitation) evolves, it crushes ruthlessly everything in its path. The minor matters of freedom, paid for with so much blood and sacrifice on the part of the people in the past are swept aside. Before the economic power of the trust, Magna Charta, Bill of Rights, and so forth, count for nothing. Not only does the trust intensify exploitation at the point of production, thus robbing the worker to an increasing extent of the product of his toil—a margin of profit that no slave owner in the past ever obtained—but the trust is also in a favorable position to fleece the consumer. It is able to dominate the law, church, and state. Indeed, the political state is fast becoming a back number, and like the church, is only kept supported by a declining section of the community (the lower middle class). The unseen parliament (the industrial magnates) now dominates the political state. Alterations in parliament do not affect the question of exploitation, which, whether our political chiefs are on the razzle-dazzle or asleep in Parliament House, still operates. Neither is there any hope from state ownership. Even if we could nationalise industries, you cannot nationalise money, and the bought-out capitalists would charge usurious interest for the money they loaned the State to buy them out with. Indeed, the State has failed to be even a passable employer, and in some cases has abused its power to intensify exploitation, and use coercive methods, which are outside the scope of the private employer. This is natural for the State in the last analysis, is only a trustification of plutocratic interests whose function is to oppress and exploit. In Australia there is a superstition that the State is a sort of father, who will right every wrong, adjust all differences, and abolish exploitation.

Exploitation is not decreased by the introduction or decay of a religion. The prevailing mode of worship in any given society has always been used to further the ends of exploitation. In ancient Egypt, the priest caste reigned the slave classes with visions of immortal glory, while taking care never to say anything about the exploitation of slaves. In Feudalism, the Christian church performed the same function for a consideration. In those countries where feudalism was overthrown, the Protestant hierarchy took on the same job. To-day the captains of industry, as they inaugurate the discipline of the factory, can dispense with the mental discipline of the church, and that is the reason why parsons are beginning to veer round to labor. They will soon not be necessary in the scheme of exploitation, and may have to find work.

Legality cannot cope with exploitation. Even in ancient Rome, when industry was limited, and far less complex than to-day, the elaborate Diocletian tariff (which fixed prices as well as wages), broke down before economic laws. The same thing happened in England during the Plantagenets and Tudors. Law likewise failed in France and elsewhere to regulate wages, let alone control industry. It seems paradoxical that we in Australia, after all the experience of the past, still blunder along with arbitration and wages boards. The question of exploitation has got to be settled on the job. There is where the evil lies. There also are the only people who really understand the matter, and have the power to cope with the problem.

Meanwhile, the herd are rushing this way and voting that way, exploitation increases. Another machine invented, another factory gone bung, a few hundred more workers thrown on to the overstocked labor market. The path of exploitation also forces the economic evolution, thus causing financial and industrial crises to occur with increasing frequency and trouble. All statistics prove that crime, lunacy, disease, and poverty are on the increase, despite all the political journalistic talk of "the progress of medical science," "reforming the criminal," "housing of the poor," and the misdirected efforts of philanthropy. Amidst the galaxy of social reformers and salvationists, with their hundred and one palliatives, this vital question—the supreme issue—exploitation, has been ignored. They talker with effects, but studiously ignore

Economics of Labour.

Melbourne Doings.

WAGES.

The working-class have only one thing to sell, their labour-power, and they sell it on condition that they receive in return the money value of sufficient food, clothing, and shelter to reproduce their energy in production. If the wages received will not buy back the necessities of life then slow starvation must result, the worker loses his ability to produce wealth and the capitalists themselves are the greatest losers. It can be seen then that there is a dead level below which wages can not go, which is defined as a living-wage. Just as a steamship requires a certain amount of coal to drive it through the water, so the human machine requires a certain amount of coal in the shape of the necessities of life to keep it in going order.

The above facts will explain why it is that the employing-class always approve of arbitration as a method to settle disputes, and why, when a strike is threatened, they always try to persuade the workers to place their case before a wages-board, to trust to the "fairness" of a judge who is always a capitalist himself and therefore always prone to side with his own class. The employing-class know perfectly well that Arbitration Courts cannot and do not increase or decrease the wage above or below the standard set by the natural law of supply and demand. In fact, it was stated plainly when arbitration was introduced and since, that its object was simply to regulate the cost of living. That is, under the guise of rising wages now and again they are merely bringing the purchasing power of wages up to the standard that obtained before the rise in the price of commodities. We are told by the capitalist papers and others interested in keeping the workers in ignorance that every rise in wages increases the cost of living, the "vicious circle" as they term it, but in reality it is wages that follow the cost of living, very slowly, and not always proportionally. The institution of Arbitration Courts proves this to be so.

There are three aspects of the wages question: First, the nominal or money wage, the actual

amount of money received; secondly, the real wage, which is the purchasing power of the money wage; thirdly, the relative wage, by far the most important and also the most neglected of the three. The first two do not interest the worker in the least, as they are determined automatically by the position of the labor market; if the supply of labor exceeds the demand then the price falls in the same ratio, and vice versa. No permanent increase of the nominal or real wages can be gained in the face of a huge oversupply of labor such as exists to-day.

The relative wage is the proportion between the amount of wealth produced by the worker and the amount he receives. By a study of industry it will be found that the working-class as a whole are receiving a far smaller portion of the products of their toil than did the workers of any other age. This is due to several causes, the principal one being the invention and perfection of the huge machines which are used so extensively in production nowadays. There is hardly an industry at the present time wherein labor-saving machines are not in use.

Another cause of increasing disproportion between wages and profits is the growing number of women and children engaged in the factories and workshops of the world. It is a well known fact that the female requires less of the necessities of life than does the male worker, while children, forced to work by necessity, are only expected to receive enough to eke out the meagre wages of the adult worker. Moreover, these classes of wage-workers are more servile and less liable to kick over the traces than are men, consequently they can be more profitably exploited by the capitalist.

The tendency of capitalism is constantly to reduce that portion of the products of their labor, which is returned to the working-class as wages, by the methods I have enumerated. As a consequence the profits of the capitalist class (surplus labor) are increasing all the time. The result is that they are becoming even more powerful and tyrannical, while we, the poor, deluded wage-

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slaves, the producers of all the wealth with which the earth is overflowing, are constantly sinking further into the quicksands of capitalism.

And what is the remedy? That is the question which intelligent workers are asking themselves, and the answer we give is, Industrial Unionism. By organising as a class we will gain the power and solidarity necessary to fight effectively our historical enemy, the ruling class, to abolish child-labor, and so reduce the hours of toil that the unemployed army, the real cause of low wages, will be absorbed by the industries. Wages will then rise of their own accord, and this is the only way we can gain a permanent rise in wages. By organising industrially we are "forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old."

FRANK CALLANAN.

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