

DIRECT ACTION



VOL. 3, NO. 91. Registered at the General Post-office Sydney, for Transmission by Post as a newspaper D. Y., October 7, 1916. N. Y.

WORKERS'



Members of Your Class are in Long Bay Gaol for TREASON



Jesus Christ
was Crucified
FOR TREASON

(Regular Number)

Christ was Crucified for Treason



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SYDNEY,

October 7, 1916.

ONE PENNY.

Hail! The Stalwarts!

The eleven men who are under arrest, charged with treason, appeared at the Central Police Court on Wednesday morning, before Mr. Macfarlane, S.M.

Their names are—

CHARLES REEVE, 30, England; no religion.

THOMAS GLYNN, 35, Ireland; a Roman Catholic.

PETER LARKIN, 46, Ireland; a Roman Catholic.

JOHN HAMILTON, 42, Victoria; no religion.

BERNARD BESSANT, 25, native of England, a Roman Catholic.

DONALD McPHERSON, 29, Scotland, no religion.

WILLIAM TEEN, 30, of Tasmania; a Roman Catholic.

WILLIAM BEATTY, 30, England, Church of England.

MORRIS JOSEPH FAGIN, 40, a Russian; no religion.

DONALD GRANT, 27, Scotland; a Presbyterian.

THOMAS MOORE, 34, New Zealand, Church of England.

Mr. Bathgate (Crown Law Office), who appeared for the prosecution, asked for a remand till Friday.

Mr. White (for the accused) stated that the charge of treason was general, and he had applied to the Crown Law Office for certain information regarding the dates of alleged offences.

Mr. Bathgate said that he would supply the dates.

Mr. Macfarlane: Mr. White has a right to the dates. In regard to the remand, perhaps Monday would be suitable.

Mr. White: I ask for a remand till Thursday.

Mr. Macfarlane: Are you prepared to go on Thursday, Mr. Bathgate?

Mr. Bathgate: No; I am instructed to ask for Friday.

Mr. White: I have an objection to Friday, because the case will probably run over Saturday and Monday, while if it were started on Thursday it could probably be finished by the end of the week.

Mr. Bathgate: Friday would be more convenient for the Crown.

Mr. Macfarlane: Remanded till 10 o'clock on Friday.

Mr. White asked Mr. Macfarlane whether he could see his way clear to allow bail.

Mr. Macfarlane: The charge is serious. Mr. White: It is a hardship to these men to be incarcerated.

Mr. Bathgate: I oppose bail. The charge is a very serious one, and I have grave doubts about the surrender of the men if they should be bailed out. They are men of no State, and are birds of passage. They have no really settled place of abode.

Mr. White: Regarding the likelihood of the men not answering their bail, the majority are married men living here, and have families.

Mr. Macfarlane: I refuse bail. —"The Sun."

NOTES AND NEWS.

The latest mails from America contain loud rumblings of the class war. A bitter struggle is raging on the Messaba Range, where the miners of Minnesota are on strike against the Steel Trust. The latter are endeavouring to crush the miners with gunmen. Several labor-agitators have been convicted on a trumped up charge of murder. There are eight hundred families starving, and a reign of terror exists on the Range.

Hundreds of people have been thrown into jail. In a future issue this matter will be dealt with, meanwhile the Minnesota Iron Range Strikers' Defence Committee is appealing for funds which should be sent to the treasurer, 226 Lafayette Street, New York, U.S.A.

Despite the inclemency of the weather, the Domain meeting last Sunday was a success. Some new talent gave a good account of themselves on the stump, and despite the comparatively small audience a good collection (£16/11/-) was forthcoming.

In the Hall, Fellow worker Farrell lectured in the evening to a large audience. Although the elements were against them, the literature sellers sold over £5 worth of "Direct Actions" on Sunday.

Worker's Defence Committee.

Box 98, P.O., Haymarket, N.S.W.

September 30th, 1916.

Fellow Worker—

During the past two years, members of the Industrial Workers of the World have been systematically persecuted and gaoled by both State and Federal Governments. Over forty members have been awarded sentences during that period, varying from a week up to fines of £100 or twelve months' imprisonment. The sentences inflicted upon Tom Barker, ex editor of "Direct Action," amounted to two years and three months.

These prosecutions are traced to the unremitting industrialist propaganda, strong anti-militarist and anti-conscription attitude of the I.W.W. The authorities have never neglected an opportunity to gaoil or traduce this militant union.

During the past two years, the premises of the organisation, and its press, have been raided on a dozen occasions.

On Saturday, 23rd September, a large number of detective officers raided the premises at 403 Sussex Street, Sydney, and seized the membership books and ledgers, all correspondence, pictures, and over £500 worth of industrial educational literature.

They also arrested Thomas Glynn, secretary of the Sydney Local, and editor of "Direct Action," Peter Larkin (brother to Jas Larkin, and member of the Irish Transport Workers), Chas. Thos. Reeves, a prominent I.W.W. speaker, John Hamilton, Bernard Bessant, and Donald McPherson. These workers were taken to the Central Police Station and charged with TREASON, which includes the following:—"That they feloniously and wickedly did compass, imagine, invent, devise, or intend to levy war against Our Lord the King, within His Majesty's Dominions."

Such a charge, needless to state, is unique in the history of Australia, and the authorities have dug back into the thirteenth century in order to convict and silence modern working class champions for the rest of their lives.

We, of the Workers' Defence Committee, call upon the militant working class of Australia and New Zealand to stand by their fellows who are now rotting in the ruling class' gaol in New South Wales.

Both money, and support, active and moral, are vitally necessary at this moment. The men have to be defended, both in court as well as in the union hall. We can't afford to lose these men, and the Labour Movement cannot allow the ruling class to create a precedent by gaoiling I.W.W. men under antiquated and outworn Treason Laws. If I.W.W. men can be gaoled to-day, Trade Union fighters can be gaoled to-morrow.

Since the writing of the above, Donald Grant, a well known I.W.W. speaker, has been arrested in Broken Hill, on a similar charge, so has Thos. Moore, of Sydney.

Fellow Workers.—The thin edge of the wedge is being driven in before your eyes by the industrial barons and their lickspittle tools, the politicians. What are you going to do? The men are in gaol. They are working class champions and fighters. You alone can release them.

Send funds immediately to the Secretary, Workers' Defence Committee, Box 98, Haymarket, N.S.W.

Resolutions to D. R. Hall, Minister for Justice, Sydney.

"AN INJURY TO ONE SHOULD BE AN INJURY TO ALL."

Yours for working class victory,

H. McCUE, WORKERS' DEFENCE COMMITTEE.

E. A. GIFFNEY.

Secretary, PAT. HARFORD.

On Monday morning the I.W.W. held a propaganda meeting opposite the Trades Hall, and another during the afternoon at Bathurst Street.

The treason prosecution seems to have given the I.W.W. a large advertisement. During the last week new members and subscriptions from the country have rolled in.

The members charged with treason appeared before the court on Tuesday. The cases are adjourned to Friday, bail being refused.

WANTED, Recruits, male and female, for the Industrial Workers of the World. Must be determined, unscrupulous, and unafraid of gaol or death. Apply to-day at the nearest I.W.W. Recruiting Office.

Treatment of Conscientious Objectors

The "People's Journal," the well-known Scottish weekly, has the following in its latest issue—

"Were you prepared to be shot for conscience sake?" asked counsel for the accused of a man named Bevis in Enfield Police Court.

"Yes, most decidedly," was the answer.

The incident arose during the trial of Herbert Brown, a builder, of Abbey Road, Bushill Park, Enfield, who was summoned for spreading reports intended to do, or likely to, prejudice the training and discipline of His Majesty's forces, contrary to the Defence of the Realm Act.

Evidence was given by Captain Massey, who expressed the opinion that a circular sent out by the defendant was calculated to prejudice the discipline of the army.

Mr. J. McEwen, prospective Liberal candidate for the Enfield Division, said that a circular bearing the defendant's name and signature was left at his house. It was to the effect that a letter had been received by a Mrs. Bevis, of Edmonton, from her son, who was a conscript. The circular contained the following:—"We have been warned that we are now in France, and that the military authorities have absolute power, and disobedience may be followed by very severe penalties, and very possibly by the death penalty. So I just drop you a line in case they do not allow me to write after to-morrow. Don't be downhearted, for if the worst comes to the worst many have died cheerfully for a worse cause. The circular contained advice to write to Mr. Asquith, Mr. Tennant, and other members of Parliament, and it concluded with the question—"Bevis and other conscientious objectors were sent to France. Are they to be shot?"

Bevis, who appeared in court attended by prison warders and wearing khaki, described himself as a teacher of languages and a conscientious objector, adding that he had lived both in France and Germany. He was taken to a port, he said, and put on board a boat while still in handcuffs. When in France he was court-martialled and sentenced to be shot. That sentence was afterwards commuted to ten years' penal servitude, and he was now serving that in Winchester Prison.

The Bench imposed a fine of £50 on Brown, with the alternative of two months' imprisonment.

Correspondence.

The Editor, "Direct Action."

Sir,—When will the working class realise that the persecutions perpetrated on their leaders are persecutions perpetrated on them.

It is impossible for the master class to gaoil the wealth-producing units of society, therefore they resort to gaoiling our leaders.

Labor's reward for all it does, for all it produces, for all it creates, for all the wealth it raises, is injustice.

We give to the master class years of fruitful and reproductive labor, and get in return a pauper's grave. We slaves of toil defy the air, exploit the earth, brave the depths of the ocean, and get in return the depths of poverty.

We give to the master class, idleness, wealth, luxury, ease, plenty, and keep for ourselves misery, poverty, and degradation.

The exploitation of the masses permit the master class to commit the seven deadly sins of pride, covetousness, anger, gluttony, lust, envy, and sloth. Because we say the seventh commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," and the fifth commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," must be kept, they meet out to us, what they gave to Christ. They crucify us, through the crucifixion of our leaders. J. J. Hill.

DIRECT ACTION

Clerical Cant.

LET THERE BE LIGHT.



WEEKLY
OFFICIAL ORGAN
of the
INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF
THE WORLD.
(Australian Administration)

Office: 403 Sussex Street, Sydney,
Australia.

Subscriptions: 4/ per year; New Zealand,
6/ per year; Foreign, 8/ per year.

HEADQUARTERS, I.W.W. (Australia):
403 SUSSEX STREET, SYDNEY.

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS: 164 W.
Washington Street, Chicago, Ill., U.S.A.

FROM NORTH QUEENSLAND.

Fellow worker Arbutnot, writing from Cloncurry, says:—There is a feeling here among the workers of dissatisfaction of the A.W.A. officials who have again misrepresented their interests. These workers have lately taken matters into their own hands, and despite the opposition of the A.W.U. officials, have gained by DIRECT ACTION a 44 hours week in the mines, and a minimum wage of fourteen shillings per day. This is the best wage paid in the industry in Australia.

In the shearing industry the fight is on in the North Queensland district for the 44 hours week. The opposition has almost collapsed. At one shed, where they made a stand, after signing an agreement to work 48 hours, all hands were summonsed by the contractor (the Federal Company) and fined from £2 to £3 per man, with costs, on the understanding that the fines would not be collected if they returned to work.

The men stood solid, and the contractor, after unsuccessfully trying to get a team, agreed to pay the men's fines and concede the 44 hours week. This is a back-down unprecedented in the industry. This served as an object lesson to the workers in this district, and showed the advantages of solidarity in getting good results.

Work is plentiful here, while the conditions are about the best in the Island. A good speaker in these parts would have tremendous effect upon the workers here. T.B.

TRANSPORTATION ISSUE.

Following upon the success attendant upon the publication of the special "Miners' Edition," it has been decided by the Press Committee, to publish an early date a special "Transportation Industry" Edition. Now, wharf laborers, seamen, railwaymen, tramwaymen, and carters, let see what you are made of.

AGRICULTURAL WORKERS ORGANISATION OF THE I.W.W.

Secretary Treasurer W. T. Nef, of the A.W.O., writing from Minneapolis, U.S.A., sends along an order for 100 copies of "Direct Action," to be sent weekly to his organisation. There is something doing, evidently, around John Farmer's dwelling in the States. The Australian cocky and squatter is not the only man of his kind, who is having experience with the I.W.W.

MILITARISM.

Whatever fosters militarism makes for barbarism; whatever fosters peace makes for civilisation. There are two fundamentally opposed principles on which social life may be organised—compulsory co-operation and voluntary co-operation, the one implying coercive institutions, the other free institutions. Just in proportion as military activity is great does the coercive régime more pervade the whole society. Hence, to oppose militarism is to oppose return toward despotism. IBID.

One of the many curiosities of this war has been the attitude of clergymen towards Imperialism. The war drums had scarcely begun to sound before parsons solemnly adured their flocks that this catastrophe was a judgment of God upon the people for their sins. Some Jesus men went so far as to insinuate that this war was a war of ideals. God, liberty, progress, morality, and other nonentities were on our side against the cruelty, atheism, and immorality of the Huns. In short, the issue was whether the ethics of Jesus Christ would triumph over the philosophy of Nietzsche!

From the wilderness of wowsersism is heard a feeble cry. It is the wail of the Presbyterian Assembly, which in this grave crisis has thought fit to deliver its spiritual opinion on mundane matters in which Presbyterianism plays such an insignificant part. From the published reports we gather that all the faithful at this august gathering are not united on the matter of national service. Nevertheless the following motion was submitted, and after debate carried:— "Thumblly recognising God's purpose to cleanse the chastened peoples, and summon them to a nobler national life, the assembly applaud those who have gone to the front, and earnestly pray that our soldiers, having served gallantly on the battlefield, may on their return take their part in the life of the Commonwealth with deeper earnestness, holier purpose, and larger vision than they could have attained without this experience. Finally, the assembly exhort all the members of the Church prayerfully to consider the problems of life and service in the new era after peace has been secured, and to prepare themselves to enter on it with an assured faith that God will accept and guide and bless their efforts and sacrifices for the up-building of the city of God in this land."

This is a fair sample of the theological jingo jargon with which various clerical bodies have regaled the public during the war. We are unable to detect the slightest guide to action in this long-winded motion. Whether analysed, condensed, boiled down, or bisected, it remains just a maribund motion. If it were not so long and lifeless one would suspect the parsons had sabotaged the clerical creed! Perhaps they have been loafing on the job, for wondrous are the ways of the wowsers!

We had suspected that the deity was dead, but the above suggests that God, despite the war, still has a paternal feeling for mere mortals here below. Unfortunately, God has not seen fit to make manifest his purpose in this world war. Being only human, we have to admit we know nothing anent God and his purpose, and we surmise the parsons know less.

The motion explains nothing and solves no social problem. It just leaves us in the dark at the very time the workers are trying to find the light. It is true certain statesmen profess to have seen "the light," the Presbyterians have also seen a light, and the I.W.W. have observed a light, but unfortunately we all appear to be looking at different light-houses.

The light of ministers of state needs no explanation. It is the light of Imperialism. The light of Presbyterianism is of a peculiar tint. This beacon once burnt fiercely in the night of mediaeval superstition. It was the star of sectarianism that was responsible for so much strife. This light despite the clerical claptrap about building the city of God in this land has failed. It still flickers feebly from a few tin tabernacles which, like other gospel shops, will soon be wrecks on life's river, once the rising tide of industrialism gains sufficient strength to sweep away these obsolete dams to progress. The light of the I.W.W. is a totally different light. It is not founded on any theological thesis or jingo jargon. It is based on an economic necessity on the one hand and a historic truth on the other. We are keenly interested in "the problems of life and service in the new era after peace has been secured." Industrial unionism, above all else, is concerned with the problem of life—material comfort, not spiritual blessings—here and now. As to service we maintain that the workers give too much service without adequate reward, while the parsons and politicians claim a large reward for very little service. We are out for a new era—when the class war shall be over—in which equality of opportunity and service will operate. In the new industrial democracy even wowsers will have a chance to work.

Once the economic basis of society is

changed for the better, ethical and spiritual wellbeing will quickly follow and regenerate society with a new hope and a higher ideal. Then and not till then will we be within measurable distance of the goal that centuries of pulpit preaching has failed to achieve; that material welfare that jingoism cannot give, in short, the ideal of social righteousness that a spiritualised anarchist of Nazareth was reported to have preached "The Kingdom of Heaven on Earth."—AJAX.

Economics.

SURPLUS-VALUE.

An analysis of the capitalist system of production discloses the existence of two separate and distinct classes—the working class and the employing class. The former are the producers, without whom production would cease. The latter are the owning class, who through their ownership and control of the industries and the machines of production thereby control and are the predominating force in society.

The worker being entirely separated from the machine, has but one resort, to sell to the highest bidder the power he possesses which, when applied to machines and the raw materials, creates the necessities of life. This power to create wealth is known as Labor Power, and is bought and sold on the open market just as is any other commodity. The raw materials are provided by nature, but it is only when labor has been applied to them that they become of any value to the community. Labor Power is, therefore, the foundation of capitalist production, the pivot around which revolves the whole complicated organisation which we call society.

Labor Power is divided into two parts, firstly necessary labor, and secondly unnecessary or surplus labor. The first is the energy which is expended by the worker in producing the equivalent in commodities and the amount of money which he receives as wages. This wage must be sufficient to purchase enough of the necessities of life food, clothing, and shelter, etc., to keep him up to the standard, both mentally and physically demanded by modern conditions. Immediately he receives less his efficiency as a worker is reduced, and consequently the capitalist himself is the bigger loser.

Unnecessary labor, over and above that which the worker receives as wages, is unpaid labor, the surplus-value, which is the cause of all the bitter strife which has existed between the master class and the slaves, whether they be chattel slaves, feudal slaves, or the wage slaves of today, ever since man first exploited man.

The necessary labor—time may be either lengthened or shortened by different causes, such as, for instance, the introduction of new and more efficient machines, which, by increasing the productivity of the worker, reduces the necessary labor time in the same proportion, while at the same time it increases the surplus-labor time and so benefits the capitalist while making the position of the working class more precarious and uncertain. All efficiency and speeding up schemes have this effect and are advocated by the employers for that reason.

As capitalism evolves, the machines become more and more perfect, the rate of exploitation increases, and as the exploitation intensifies, so the relative strength of the employing class becomes greater and the strength of the working class becomes less. Another factor which tends to lower the standard of living of the workers is the growing number of women and children who are being forced into the industries to compete with the men for the jobs.

It has been estimated by one statesman that the working class as a whole produce what they receive as wages in two hours, while for the rest of the work day they produce surplus value to be appropriated by the capitalist as his just share. Therefore, where the eight-hour day is in force the worker toils only two hours for himself and six hours for the boss. Then if through the use of more up-to-date machinery scientific management or greater speeding up the productivity of the worker is increased by 50 per cent., what is the result? Simply this, that whereas before he received one-fourth of what he produced, he now receives only one-eighth; while the employer, instead of getting three-fourths will now pocket seven-eighths. An increase in the hours of labor has the same effect, the worker produces more but receives less, more men are thrown on to the unemployed market, and the position of the working class is weakened to that extent.

On the other hand, if the workers,

through their organised intelligence, decide to shorten their hours of labor or to slow down, which would have the same effect, the opposite would be the result. Instead of working eight hours, we will suppose that we have reduced our hours to six per day, it would not mean, as the capitalist economists claim, that wages would be reduced. The worker would still require the same amount of nourishment to keep him fit; the necessary labor time would still be the same, but the unnecessary or surplus labor time would be decreased by two hours. The capitalist would then receive only four hours, while the worker got his two hours as before; therefore the relative position of the latter is much stronger than previously.

If the working class are to gain better conditions, then these methods must be adopted. The machines are becoming more-and-more perfect, the number of unemployed is growing year after year, and there is only one way to stop it, by organising in such a way that we will have the power to such an extent that there will no longer be a surplus. When we reach that point capitalism will collapse of its own accord, because the foundation will have been taken from under it.—HISWHISKERSGREW.

NATIONAL SECRETS.

PENALTY FOR DISCLOSURE.

In the House of Representatives Mr. Poynton (S.A.) directed the attention of the Prime Minister to the alleged statements of two members of the House, wherein they declared that they intended to divulge secrets. He asked if the Prime Minister intended to take any steps in the matter.

Mr. Hughes: I can hardly believe that any man would divulge what was given to him under circumstances that involved not merely the honor but the safety of the country. Much of the information given was vital to the welfare of Australia, and if any man divulges it I shall take what steps are necessary to safeguard the country.

The above extract from "The Herald" makes interesting reading. Presumably the two members referred to are two well-known politicians who, when speaking at the large anti-conscriptionist meeting held at the Town Hall, Sydney, threatened to give the game away.

If these secrets involve the honor and safety of the people of Australia, they certainly have a right to know them, the Premier to the contrary notwithstanding. The workers especially should demand to know the State secrets. As the workers comprise 90 per cent. of the population, the information is of vital importance to them. If the Premier is not prepared to trust the people, he can hardly expect the people to trust him. Not only does he decline to trust the people, but there is a threat against those who wish to tell the people the truth. Of course, safeguarding the country means protecting the interests of the capitalist class. This statement of the Premier in itself is sufficient to convince the person who thinks at all, that the class who are behind Mr. Hughes have designs that are antagonistic to the class who put the Premier in power. It is high time the unionists woke up to the fact that our liberties are being filched from us, lest we forget that "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

CASH IS WANTED.

For the legal defence of Fellow-workers Glynn, Larkin, Reeve, Grant, Bessant, McPherson, Hamilton, and Brice, Champions of the working-class MUST not rest in gaol for the want of the necessary.

THE DEFENCE FUND.

On October 3rd the appeals of Fellow-workers Grant, Larkin, and Reeves against their recent convictions in the Police Court will be heard at the Quarter Sessions. The time is short, and funds are imperatively needed to meet legal expenses. Members and sympathisers throughout the country need not be reminded that this fight is their fight. These men are being persecuted and gaoled because they place the cause of the working class before their own liberty and wellbeing. It is the DUTY, therefore, of all militants to subscribe to the defence fund. All donations will be acknowledged in these columns.

Address to
P. HARTFORD,
Secretary Defence Committee,
Box 98, Haymarket.

Behind the Veil.

By Ajax.

Capitalist property presupposes the exclusion of the toiling masses from the possession of the soil, and must, therefore, be established by violence. It is accordingly maintained by virtue of two distinct processes. Economic means are requisite, in the first place, in order to enforce the continued suppression of the free land. . . . But, in order to support itself, capitalistic property must furthermore have recourse to a series of what we may call connective institutions, whose special function it is to guarantee property against all reaction on the part of those excluded from the possession of the soil.—Aehle-Loria.

These sentences from the famous Italian economist strike at the root of the capitalist system. Not only the present commercial regime, but the empires of the past were built upon a foundation of hunger and force. It is well to remember this in these days when the word Empire is shrieked from pulpit, press, and platform. This word is used as if it had some inherent magical qualities. Liberty, freedom, law and prosperity are indiscriminately jumbled up in this Shibboleth called "Empire," so much so that its incessant reiteration by jingoes reminds one forcibly of the famous old lady who confided to her confessor the important news that she found much comfort and consolation in that blessed word, Mesopotamia.

History carefully scrutinised shows that underlying and of far greater significance than the power of the pontiffs, the decay of dynasties, the numerous convulsions that shake the social fabric and the rise and fall of Empire, there has been an incessant class struggle. It is true that the manifold forms of this struggle are varied and the real issue is frequently obscured. Nevertheless, the cry of creeds, political crises, and the numerous reform agitations are manifestations that however ignorant the majority may be on social questions, there is an instinctive intuition amongst the people that something is rotten in the state of the body politic. Strikes in particular are the outward and visible sign of the inward rottenness of production, and are not merely an attempt on the part of greedy workmen to rob the capitalist, as those mouthpieces posing as "righteous defenders of legitimate business against mob rule" would have us believe.

The continued suppression of free land and free access to the means of life is the foundation stone upon which a society for the benefit of the few at the expense of the many is maintained. No tinkering with law, measures of morality, political plots or social sops can alter the nature of the class struggle which, in spite of all revision and reform, and irrespective of the advance of education, pursues the even tenor of its way unmindful of "The will of God," "Imperial decrees," or the rise of political, social, or religious saviours. No tongue can tell or no book adequately convey to the human mind the fearful ramifications of the class struggle. In spite of all efforts to suppress, impede, or sidetrack the class war, the struggle goes on, becoming keener and fiercer as society, blundering in an economic bog, steadily gravitates to extremes of wealth and poverty. This struggle has been the tragedy of the ages. On the one hand we see the aristocracy of idleness enthroned in sumptuous luxury and on the other Labor crucified on the cross of class slavery. The story of the crucifixion of Christ, although discounted by modern investigation, has a symbolism and a semblance of truth hidden beneath the veil of mysticism and dogma. In those days the Jews were groaning under the yoke of Roman dictatorship, which imposed severe hardships on the poor. Here the class struggle was screened behind foreign aggression and showed itself when the Jewish priests condemned Jesus. The Christian creed made headway amongst the Roman slaves because it suited their psychology. Underlying theological conceptions the hopes, fears, and ideals of the slave class were crystallised. This is the secret of the symbolism of the cross and explains why, for centuries it has been the rallying cry of the weak and oppressed. To-day, although the once mighty empire of ecclesiasticism has shrunk to a shadow of its former greatness, there is still much lip service by sycophants to a crucified Redeemer, but not a whisper about the degradation of labour, which across the dark ages has hung crucified between two thieves, the priest and the capitalist. The upper classes and their intellectual lackeys have always zealously supported

the connective institutions, law, church, and State. The infallibility of the Pope, the Divine Right of Kings, the necessity for war and numerous other prejudices are assiduously fostered, and there are not found wanting many people who will believe anything provided it has authority and respectability's sanction. This blind belief sometimes lures the community into tolerating the grossest abuses and even atrocities which are harmful not only to individuals and classes, but society as a whole. The remarkable prevalence of the belief in witchcraft and war and the willful woe and wanton waste these beliefs are responsible for is a glaring illustration of this fact.

There can be no doubt that for the ignorant imaginary terrors have a more restraining effect than physical fear. It is questionable if the fabric of feudal society could have been held together without some spiritual discipline. People imagined they saw gods, ghosts, and goblins of the air. In the fight of science against superstition vested interests always leaned to the latter because it was thought necessary to maintain a moral discipline to conserve plutocratic interests.

The evolution of industry and machine production has supplanted the discipline of the church with the discipline of the workshop. Soon the former will no longer be an economic necessity to the rich, and the time is fast approaching when workers will have to get work. To a lesser degree law, politics, and bourgeois institutions are used to put a damper on social discontent. The duties of the intellectuals as pillars of society is to maintain the present regime by promulgating error and superstition as far as possible with the threat of violence looming in the background. One has only to glance at the plutocratic press to see this process of sophistication going on daily before our eyes. Take up any commercial newspaper and glance at its contents. What do we find? Just this: A plentiful supply of dubious advertisements, some sentimental slush, plenty of blood and guts called war news. The speeches of prominent politicians, parsons and empire saviours are reported at great length, and backed up by eulogistic leaders if their ideas suit the paper. There is not a word about science, no attempt to educate the people to higher ideals, very little that interests women and children; in fact, some papers seem to consider that this section of the human family are unworthy of notice. The social functions of society snobs and other useless persons are prominently reported, while the doings of the large mass of useful people are incorrectly expressed in a few paragraphs headed "Labour." If a king dies, the paper is full of agony columns depicting his marvellous ability, saintly character, and irreparable loss to society. If a famous scientist solves the great mystery the matter is hardly worth mentioning. A few lines stowed away on the back page is quite sufficient. If one carefully reads these papers one will note that art is neglected, science starved, and Labour vilified. The word "business" is stamped on every page and creeps into nearly every article. The enormous amount of ink-slinging indulged in by the capitalist press can be summed up in three words: Profits, murder, and superstition. Around this capitalistic trinity the whole system of commercial activity revolves.

The text preached to the workers by the hirelings of plutocracy from pulpit, press, and platform is really very simple. It is surprising that the workers, after all these generations of capitalistic education, cannot read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest this dictum. Respect the sanctity and rights of private property. Obedience to the will of property holders expressed through their connective and coercive institutions is the one thing above all others plutocracy demands. This request is not only a maudite inspired by greed for pelf and power, but it is also to some extent born of fear. As society becomes more degenerate and social evils increase, the ruling class being the controlling class have certain responsibilities. In all civilised countries statistics show that crime, disease, lunacy, and poverty are on the increase. In spite of the advance of medical science, improved sanitation, philanthropic institutions, and a medley of nondescript palliatives which are garbed in the cloak of progress exploitation is not only sucking the blood of the poor, but is making inroads into the ranks of the privileged few. The liquidation of businesses, the bankruptcy of individuals, and the financial chaos especially since the war is adversely affecting everyone except the wealthy, who see in war a chance to increase their wealth at the expense of the middle class, and to further exploit labour. When discontent becomes rampant and plutocracy hears the cry of the wolves of Socialism, Syndicalism, and Anarchism grow-

ing louder and louder in spite of all attempts to stem the tide of democracy the ruling class have only one trump card left them. The moment they cannot control the people they endeavour to turn the national masses against each other. It is in vain for mitred hypocrites to unctiously proclaim, "They will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven," it is useless for peace societies to plea for peace; it is futile for crowds to protest against war. War, bloody and terrible, to be followed, if necessary, by another war still more horrible, is the refuge of the ruling class. Immediately orders are issued to the intellectuals to prepare the public mind for war and jingoism thunders forth from every avenue of education.

Not only for psychological reasons, but also for economic reasons, the present economic order necessitates war and will breed more wars in the future unless the world's workers are organised to prevent them. Meanwhile society stricken with the cancer of capitalism blunders on to its doom.

Tear away the gilded trappings, the pomp of potentates, the livid lips of lies and capitalism rotten to the core stands unmarked as an immoral and insane system of society, which is so diseased that it is past mending and wants ending. Already the handwriting is on the wall. "Weighed in the balance and found wanting" is the verdict of the world's best thinkers. They are not deceived by the gilt and gloss with which those who are paid to fabricate falsehood try to obscure the issue. The veil of the temple of trade has been torn in twain and reveals the presence of two hideous pillars: Exploitation and Class Dominion. These pillars will remain the buttresses that support the superstructures of capitalism, law, parliament, church, and press until the Samson of Labour shall dimly conscious of its strength tear from its eyes the veil of ignorance and use its power to pull down the pillars. On that day capitalism will fall with a crash and Labour will be free to erect the temple of science on the ruins of superstition and the tabernacle of art where the sweatshop had formerly stood.

Might is Right.

It is highly amusing, when we hear the workers indulging in sentimental wailing and gnashing of teeth at the candidness of speech of some undiplomatic employer or the harshness of the measures used by the employing class to beat the working class into subjection. It portrays their woeful ignorance of the class war. In order to realise the position the worker must look at it from the view point of the property owning class. In the opinion of that class, workers have no rights whatsoever. Their only function is to produce wealth and obey implicitly all rules and regulations laid down by their masters. Discontent is blasphemous, disobedience is high treason, and interference with "the sacred rights of property" is the most heinous of crimes. Property owners are, therefore, justified in using any and every means to suppress manifestations of working-class discontent. A strike being an attempt to defy the rights of capitalists to exploit labor for profit must be crushed without mercy. It must consequently be granted that the worker who asks his fellow slaves to assert their manhood—a quality which slaves are not supposed to possess, deserves hanging at the very least; but the fact that he is let off with a mild sentence of three or twelve months imprisonment with hard labor is not to be looked upon as an act of mistaken leniency on the part of his masters. They would be quite within their rights in hanging him, and in calling upon their formidable array of armed slaves to shoot down their unarmed slaves, who had the amazing presumption to demonstrate their discontent. Probably the remarkable restraint exercised by the masters is their fear lest the passions of the mob might be roused to a dangerous pitch. In discussing the relations between master and slaves we must dismiss from our minds any preconceived idea of right and wrong. That only is right which has the power to exert itself. If it were expedient to shoot, masters would do the shooting. Force must be used, but always in a diplomatic way. Care must be taken to encourage slaves to believe that their lives are protected by the killing of their rebellious brothers. But it is dangerous to kill too openly on a wholesale scale. The sight of blood is apt to give rise to a dangerous spirit among slaves. It is extremely dangerous for slaves to get into their heads the idea that organised physical force is used to cow them—and then only—into submission. That idea brings

about revolution—hateful word.

Some of the railway strikers of England are accusing the railway directors of dishonorable conduct, in that they have not kept their promise not to victimise any of the strikers. Childish! What are promises made for if not to be broken? Obviously the masters had no option but to pledge their word of honor in the face of what seemed a successful strike of discontented wage slaves. Physical force at that moment was not opportune or diplomatic. The strikers were criminals in power for the time being; and, pending the recovery of their lost prestige, the masters were perfectly correct in temporising. The morality of such conduct is quite in keeping with all the theory and practice of our present social system. We must give the employing class credit for their splendid organisation and solidarity; when faced by an active revolt of wage slaves. It is for the latter to learn and profit by example. When they are capable of practising similar solidarity they will conquer their masters, and the power of their might will be proof of their right.—E. A. GIFFNEY.

LABOUR.

The Giant sleeps—upon his form
The Lilliputians bravely swarm
Their little kings and little lords
Make mighty boasts and flash their
swords,
Crying aloud in swollen glee,
"Behold how strong and great are we!"

They have the Titan closely bound
With stakes and hawsers—to the ground,
They think—his slumber is so deep—
That he will always be asleep,
And fancy—though his strength is vast—
That if he wakes he'll still be fast!

Poor little lords, poor little kings
So certain of your hold on things,
Rule while you may and plot and scheme
Until the sleeper ends his dream,
Your power dies—your scepter breaks
When this huge giant, Labor, wakes!
"Appeal to Reason."

WHY YOU SHOULD READ "DIRECT ACTION."

1. Because it prints the latest industrial news (both foreign and local). Critical articles dealing with all phases of industrialism are a speciality.
2. D.A. prints revolutionary cartoons and poems that no other paper in Australia dare publish.
3. D.A. panders to no political party. Being non-political, it exposes political pitfalls.
4. D.A. has no space for sentimental stories or racy gossip. It is out to deliver the goods, that is, the scientific knowledge.
5. The fact that D.A. has been more abused and persecuted than any other paper in Australia is sufficient testimony to the esteem in which it is held by plutocrats. This is because plutocracy knows that D.A. knows and will let the workers know those things plutocracy does not wish them to know.

POLITICAL SUPERSTITION.

"No human laws are of any validity if contrary to the law of nature; and such of them as are valid derive all their force and all their authority mediately or immediately from this original." Thus writes Blackstone, to whom let all honor be given for having so far out-seen the ideas of his time—and, indeed, we may say of our time. A good antidote, this, for these political superstitions which so widely prevail. A good check upon that sentiment to power-worship which still misleads us by magnifying the prerogatives of constitutional Governments as it did those of monarchs. Let men learn that a legislature is not "our God upon earth," though, by the authority they ascribe to it and the thing they expect from it, they would seem to think it is. Let them learn rather that it is an institution serving a purely temporary purpose, whose power, when not stolen, is, at the best, borrowed.

—Herbert Spencer, "The Right to Ignore the State."

A considerable number of complaints are arriving at this office re non-delivery of "Direct Action" to subscribers. In 99 per cent. of these cases the fault lays with the Post Office authorities. As it is impossible for us to attend to each individual case, subscribers are advised for the future to address all complaints direct to the Deputy Postmaster-General, Sydney.

A Senatorial Popinjay.

It was an overcrowded anti-conscription meeting. The large audience had repeatedly cheered the various speakers, amongst them was a well-known I.W.W. propagandist, whose trenchant and witty language had the crowd in fits. After showing and proving conclusively the fallacy of the conscriptionist arguments, our fellow worker thought that there was nobody about who had the temerity to oppose him. But imagine his surprise when a wild-looking figure, jabbering incoherently, and fighting his way to the platform, asked permission to speak for conscription, which request was immediately granted. Without any semblance of sound logical argument the speaker made all sorts of foolish contentions with a vehemence comparable only to his "sublime" ignorance. Striding up and down the platform and gesticulating wildly with his arms, this mixture of wind and bounce reminded one of man's primitive ancestors' tempered by the fear of the lurking dangers of their surroundings, giving expression, as it were, to their natural restrictions, and impetuous by fierce strong blows on the chest. The frantic attempts to convince the audience were unavailing, as the vociferous hooting made only too clearly still, the senatorial one—as such he happened to be kept on, but he looked somewhat askance when someone asked why he did not enlist, seeing that he was of eligible age. His answer was a "dandy." It happened that in the dim long ago the dove from the Senate had by some miracle or other, saved another person's life, for which he received the Royal Humane Society's medal for bravery—thus exempting him so he told us from military service, forgetting the obvious fact, however, that it was "brave" men that was needed so badly at the front. This was the signal for hilarious laughter among the crowd, who ridiculed and jeered the sorry plight of the political ignoramus. Still he was not beaten, because, continuing his frothy discourse, he crowned all previous efforts by the following:—"As a practical socialist and Irishman, I believe in conscription." Shades of Jim Connolly: what stuff to peddle out to intelligent men with the doings of the German socialists and the recent Irish rebellion, in their minds. In the foregoing, goodness knows there was provocation enough for any normal man to become enraged, therein to get off the platform, else there might be trouble. This man, who suffered the most degrading hardships in Ireland was compelled to emigrate to Australia to live under better conditions. When in Australia, however, our senatorial humber had to take on the most menial work, but through his fury and filiterate speech—common to all demagogues—he managed to climb on the backs of his fellow slaves, thereby getting into Parliament on their gullibility. His record is typical of most politicians, hence his ardent advocacy of conscription. Lynch, for that is his name, ought to be lynched, in the words of the crowd. Possibly he may never again attempt to impose himself upon intelligent people, for his obnoxious bounce cuts no one with working folk these days. However, Lynch was made to look a fool, as he was never made before. This ought to show him that politicians ought to discreetly keep away from places when they are not wanted.

NORMAN JEFFERY.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

Subscribers and members can now obtain a complete file of the 2nd volume of "Direct Action." The volume contains from number 21 to 55, inclusive, and dates from February 1st, 1915, to the same date in 1916.

The complete file will be forwarded to any part of Australia upon receipt of money order for 3s, which includes postage.

From an historical standpoint, as well as from an educational standpoint, the volume is essential. All the information re the Newcastle free speech fight, the poster and stickers case, the hundred and one strikes of the year, are contained within the volume.

It also includes "Cresset's" satires, Nicholl's cartoons, West's Ballad of "The Interrupted Court," and "The Interrupted Snooze," as well as dozens of first-class Maitland Gael, "General Strike," "Articles and criticisms upon matters industrial and political.

An early application is necessary, as the supply of files are limited. There are no files of the first volume left.

Treatment of Conscientious Objectors

The "People's Journal," the well-known Scottish weekly, has the following in its latest issue:—

"Were you prepared to be shot for conscience sake?" asked counsel for the accused of a man named Bevis in Enfield Police Court.

"Yes, most decidedly," was the answer.

The incident arose during the trial of Herbert Brown, a builder, of Abbey Road, Bushill Park, Enfield, who was summoned for spreading reports intended to, or likely to, prejudice the training and discipline of His Majesty's forces, contrary to the Defence of the Realm Act.

Evidence was given by Captain Massey, who expressed the opinion that a circular sent out by the defendant was calculated to prejudice the discipline of the army.

Mr. J. McEwen, prospective Liberal candidate for the Enfield Division, said that a circular bearing the defendant's name and signature was left at his house. It was to the effect that a letter had been received by a Mrs. Bevis, of Edmonton, from her son, who was a conscript. The circular contained the following:—"We have been warned that we are now in France, and that the military authorities have absolute power, and disobedience may be followed by very severe penalties, and possibly by the death penalty. So I just drop you a line in case they do not allow me to write after to-morrow. Don't be discouraged, for if the worst comes to the worst many have died cheerfully for a worse cause. The circular contained advice to write to Mr. A. Smith, Mr. Tennant, and other members of Parliament, and it coincided with the questions Bevis and other conscientious objectors were put to France. Are they to be shot?"

Bevis, who appeared in court attired by prison uniform and wearing khaki, described himself as a trader of languages and a conscientious objector, adding that he had lived both in France and Germany. He was taken to a post, where a man whom he heard a loud while still in his hands. When in France he was sent unarmoured and unarmoured to be shot. That sentence was afterwards commuted to ten years' penal servitude, and he was now serving that in Winchester Prison.

The Bench imposed a fine of £50 on Brown, with the alternative of three months' imprisonment.

Correspondence.

The Editor, "Direct Action."

Sir.—When will the working class realise that the persecutions perpetrated on their leaders are persecutions perpetrated on them.

It is impossible for the master class to gaul the wealth-producing units of society, therefore they resort to gauling our leaders.

Labor's reward for all it does, for all it produces, for all it creates, for all the wealth it raises, is injustice.

We give to the master class years of fruitful and reproductive labor, and get in return a pauper's grave. We slaves of toil defy the air, exploit the earth, brave the depths of the ocean, and get in return the depths of—poverty.

We give to the master class, idleness, wealth, luxury, ease, plenty, and keep for ourselves misery, poverty, and degradation.

The exploitation of the masses permit the master class to commit the seven deadly sins of pride, covetousness, anger, gluttony, lust, envy, and sloth. Because we give the seventh commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," and the fifth commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," must be kept, they meet out to us, what they gave to Christ. They crucify us, through the crucifixion of our leaders. J. J. Hill.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

As the authorities are in possession of our address book, about 300 of our subscribers will not receive their paper through the post this issue. We particularly request that all readers and members make this known as widely as possible, so that subscribers can send in their names and addresses with the amount of subscription paid by them. Subscribers living in Melbourne, Sydney, and Broken Hill can obtain their paper from the respective locals, who will be credited by the Press.

NOTICE.

Any local or fellow workers having sent in orders for literature are requested by the Literature Secretary, Sydney Local, to communicate again with him, as all correspondence is at present in the hands of the police.

Omnipotence.

By G. W. Parsley.

Thou great, Eternal Infinite,
The great unbounded whole,
The body of the universe,
Thy spirit is its soul.

If Thou dost fill immensity,
If Thou art all in all,
If Thou wast here before I was,
I am not here at all.

How could I live outside of Thee?
Dost Thou fill earth and air?
There surely is no place for me
Outside of everywhere.

If Thou art God and Thou dost fill
Immensity of space,
Then I am God, think as you will,
Or else I have no place.

And if I have no place at all,
Or if I am not here,
I surely then cannot be damned,
For then I'd be somewhere.

Then I must be a part of God,
No matter if I'm small,
And if I'm not a part of Him,
There's no such God at all.

THE WAGE SLAVE.

Tune: "Genevieve."

Oh, workingmen: O can't you see
That your class is in slavery?
That you—yes, you—and you alone
Can the masters overthrow.
Oh, yet, how hard it is to see
You cringing at your master's knee,
To beg that which is yours by right,
And you could have by your own might.

Chorus:

Workingmen, oh, workingmen!
The days may come, the days may go,
But till you organise to fight,
The master-class won't grant you right.

Oh, workingmen, you know we're right:
Come, organise and use your might.
Industrial Union leads the way,
Then, come and join our band to-day.
There's women and children to be freed
From this life of slavery;
The mills and factories claim their toll,
Then, Workers, will you claim your own?

OVER THE HILLS.

Tune: "Down in the Deep."

Over the hills with their blankets they go,
Into the woods and the mines down below;
Blazing the trails, laying the rails,
Piercing the mountains,
Yet onwards they go.

Chorus:

But Master beware! Master, take care!
The wage slaves are joining this one union grand.
So, beware, beware!
The wage slaves are joining this one union grand.
So beware—beware!

He sails on the seas to far distant lands,
Piling the wealth up on every hand;
Building great castles,
And mansions so grand,
Yet stripped of his wealth
By an exploiting band.
(Repeat Chorus.)

Yet bolts and bars do not prisons make,
When man he strikes for Freedom's sake.
The Industrial Workers bid ye slaves arise,
And the earth will be yours
If you'll only get wise.
(Repeat Chorus.)

Write it in letters of fire, shout it from the housetops: THE LOWERING OF THE STATUS OF THE WORKING CLASS BY THE COMPETITION OF INDENTURED LABOR IS THE REAL PURPOSE AND OBJECT OF CONSCRIPTION IN AUSTRALIA.

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Melbourne Local of the I.W.W. wishes it to be announced through the columns of "Direct Action" that they are now established in new quarters at 197 Russell-street (corner Little Bourke-street).

William Morris Hughes, during a reply to M.H.R. Finlayson said that Ananias was a Scotsman. Mr. Hughes probably knows also that Judas Iscariot was a native of Wales.

WAGE-WORKERS alone can join the I.W.W. There is no room in the I.W.W. for capitalists, parsons, politicians, landlords, or other undesirable citizens.

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