

MARITIME MINING RECORD.

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BRITISH TRADE UNIONISTS.

Under the captions, "Labor, Liberty or Licence," the Glasgow Herald of 7th June has a couple of articles referring to the attempts of the extremists in the labor ranks to seize the reins of power.

Referring first to the attempts of the uncontrollable section of the Laborites to secure control not only of the police but the military, the Herald says:—

Obviously both these bodies above all others must be responsible to the community (as represented by the powers that be) and not to any section of it. Yet Labour—or the active part of it—is plainly out to use the trade union lever to capture both the soldiers and the policemen for party ends. We do not say that they want to turn the civil and military arm directly against property—not for a start, at any rate—but they clearly desire at the very least to ensure that the practical executive shall not be against the agitators when the day of revolution, to which they look forward, dawns.

Their attempt to "noble" the Army was particularly weak and futile, but it reveals their mischievous intentions.

Early in the year, when the country was full of strikes and rumours of strikes, with threatened mutinies in the Army, the military authorities, as in duty bound, thought it time to take stock and see where they stood. With this object in view they issued a circular inviting information from commanding officers. As summarised by Mr. Adamson in the course of his complaint in the House of Commons a week ago, this document called for weekly reports under the following heads:—(1) Whether the troops would respond to orders for assisting to preserve the public peace; (2) whether they would assist in strike-breaking; (3) whether they would parade for draft overseas, particularly to Russia; (4) what the effect was on soldiers of Army Order 14 relating to demobilisation; (5) whether there was any growth of trade unionism among the troops; and (6) what effect outside trade unions had upon them.

Now, in all this, what has Labour to complain about? And what did the Labour newspaper and the man who, through it, betrayed a confidential document, hope to gain by the discovery of their mare's nest?

Apparently they fix on the reference to "strike-

breaking" in item 2. Mr. Churchill was warned that he was playing with fire, and was making a huge mistake if he imagined that the British Army, "consisting largely of trade unionists," would consent to "shoot down fellow trade unionists."

But did "strike breaking" imply shooting? We think not? And if it did, would not the tactics of the strikers themselves have been responsible?

Mr. Churchill admitted that the use of the word "strike-breaking" was unfortunate, and went so far as to say that he would regard the employment of soldiers in the capacity of "black legs" as an illegal and monstrous invasion of the liberties of the subject. But what about the protection of the liberties of the subject from the effects of trade union license?

At the time the War Office circular was issued, was the policy of the Labour agitators not to hold the entire country up to ransom? And would it have been either "illegal" or "monstrous" for the soldiers, in the event of the threatened railway strike for instance, to have manned our railways and maintained the necessary communications in the interests of the public or protected the railwaymen willing to do so?

No, no. The nation is not thus to be gulled into impotence. As between Capital and Labour it is out to see fair play, but neither Capital nor Labour can be allowed to paralyse the industries of the country whenever they choose to take it into their heads to do so.

That is why both the Army and the police force must be kept free of Trade Unionism. Fancy what a time Bill Sykes would have if our policemen either belonged to or were affiliated with the Operative Burglars and House Breakers' Union!

And what was the alternative to the circular in which the War Office figured as anxious inquirer! Only one was suggested. It was that Mr. Churchill should have secured the co-operation of the Trade Union Committee, as he did when he was Minister of Munitions. Would this have been an alternative!

When we remember the facts of the case we are bound to say "No." For in January last, when the circular was issued, was not this same Trade Union Committee, to whom Mr. Churchill is now told he might have toadied, bewailing the fact that Labour was in the hands of irresponsible agitators and itself was powerless to ensure order? And who then was left to act when occasion arose but the authorities through the military?

In this matter—as in others—Labour has behaved itself like a spoiled child. Wartime coddling has had its inevitable result. The more Labour gets to-day the more it wants. It never was better off, yet it never asked for more. There is, indeed, no satisfying its demands. It batters on agitation, and seems to grow in arrogance as it goes on puffing itself up on its spoils.

Does it forget that there is a bursting point!

LABOR ZEALOTS.

Certain officials of the Nova Scotia district of the U. M. W. during the period of the Winnipeg strike, and after the imprisonment of certain of the