

TABLOID OF INTERNATIONAL LABOR NEWS

AUSTRIA. It is claimed by Austrian manufacturers that the heavy financial burdens imposed on employers by the so-called social welfare laws, which were enacted for the benefit of wage earners, are largely responsible for the present industrial stagnation in Austria.

During the month of January 1923 the Austrian metal manufacturers informed their workmen that wage reductions aggregating 15 per cent had been decided upon. The metal workers' union declined to consider this proposition, which was finally mollified, under agreement, to a five per cent reduction.

Conditions in the Austrian milling industry are said to have gradually become so unfavorable that the reduction of work from three to two eight-hour shifts daily, has necessarily been followed by a further reduction from two shifts to one shift.

There were an unusual number of demonstrations of social unrest in Austria during January, 1923, culminating in Vienna on January 27, when 100,000 Social Democrats and Communists united to demonstrate for higher government unemployment relief for idle wage earners of Austria. Similar demonstrations were held simultaneously in all Austrian industrial centres.

Unemployment in Austria increased steadily during the month of January, 1923, at the close of which 50,000 or one-eighth of the country's entire labor population, as compared with 120,000 at the end of December, 1922, were idle. In this connection it is said to be probable that the Government will be forced by the labor party to increase the unemployment dole.

CEYLON. Railroad strikers, who ceased work two weeks ago, have been joined by harbor freight stevedores, whose strike has practically paralyzed harbor activities.

FRANCE. Arbitration of the questions in dispute between the Lyon Printers' Syndicate and the publishers' body has finally been secured, with resultant wage increases for the printers. As a further result of the settlement, certain Lyon newspapers have already increased in price and it is anticipated that the remainder will soon follow this precedent.

At a recent meeting of the National Council of the Federation of Underground Workers, the delegates of various French mining centres rejected the proposal of extremists for a general strike. Resolutions were passed in favor of salary increases and improvements in miners' pensions.

With more than eighty fishing ships of and above the 400 horse power, idle as the result of the strike of the association of boat engineers, the fishing industry at Boulogne-Sur-Mer, France's largest fishing port, is seriously crippled. More than 1,600 striking fishermen, who in this protested wage decreases, are involved in the strike protest.



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EDDY'S

GREAT BRITAIN.

On January, 29, 1923, the wholly unemployed on the live registers totalled approximately 1,409,900, a decrease of 28,941 under the preceding week.

JAPAN.

In order to settle disputes between landlords and tenant farmers, a co-operative society has been organized in the Tainan province. Its Board of Directors will include the principal officials in the county government office.

SOUTH AFRICA.

At the present session of the South African Parliament it is said that a bill will be introduced providing for the establishment of conciliation boards for the settlement of disputes between employers and employees.

WOMEN IN WORK AND OUT OF WORK

The Employment of women in industry in England at the present time is a matter of deep concern, as they are passing through a siege of hardship which we do not believe is equalled by any other class of labor today. In dealing with this subject "The Labor Woman," a monthly journal for working women, published in London, Eng., says: . . . .

There is no doubt about the fact that women are in Jack Jones' phrase "going through the hoop." Out of work or in work, they are bearing the worst of the brunt today. The weakest link in the industrial army, when bad times come they have the least chance. Every wage cut, cuts most cruelly those who have the lowest wage. Every threat to the weakest worker by the weakening of the Trade Boards set up to protect them, menaces most tragically the women who are the most sweated of all.

There are still about 200,000 women and girls of sixteen or more on the register at the Employment Exchanges. There are many thousands more who are under eighteen. There are hundreds of thousands of little girls of fourteen and fifteen and even sixteen who have never had a job at all since they left school. They are learning the terrible lessons of idleness in poverty at the very beginning of their lives, learning to be unemployed before they have learned to work.

There are thousands more who have given up the hopeless trudging to the Exchanges and are saving their weak forces—and wrecks of boots—and not registering any more. Thousands have never registered at all.

At this moment there must be more than 300,000 women and girls from sixteen upwards unemployed.

If they get unemployment benefit fit, they have only 12s. a week. On the "gap," they get nothing. If they have poor relief, they may get 10s. 6d.—or they may have to go into the Workhouse. Some get nothing because they are living at home and have a father or mother or sister in work or on relief who is expected to provide for them.

But take those who are alone. A lodging cannot be found for less than 5s. In many cities 5s. is too little, but even that leaves only 7s for food, clothes, and fares in the hunt for work. Some have to keep a mother or sister or a child on 12s. A young widow gets 12s. and 1s. for each of her three children.

Think what it means for a young girl turned out of her lodgings for which she cannot pay, and the streets offering the only profession open to her. In some of our cities, this most terrible traffic of all is overcrowded, and competition and low wages have made it more precarious than ever.

The middle-aged and elderly woman's plight is one of lonely starvation with permanent imprisonment in a Workhouse as a possible alternative. For how can she ever get out when once she has entered its doors? Especially pitiful are the poorly trained clerks who have been years in their jobs, and now are the victims of the trade slump.

Domestic service. That is the remedy which is drummed into our ears. Perhaps, for some, it is a good solution. But many are both untrained and unsuitable. For those who can leave home and can bear the loneliness and restrictions of the life and its "Yes, Ma'am," "No, Ma'am," marks of servitude, training can do something, and we have advocated the extension of schemes of

training with maintenance. It is no use trying to get domestic work without training because scarcely any mistresses know enough themselves to train their servants. But thousands of women are not suitable for training, and thousands, alas, are not strong enough to do the work at all. They cannot manage the running up and down stairs, the scrubbing and cleaning, the heat of the kitchen, and the long hours.

The home workers, such as the lace-makers at Nottingham, the chain makers of Cradley, the glove makers at Yeovil, and a host of others, are not eligible for unemployment benefit at all. When they fall out of work, it is Poor Law or occasional charity, or nothing. Some are too proud to go to the Guardians.

But what of those in work? Do our readers realize that women's wages are rapidly falling to less than pre-war rates? There are women today getting 9s. for a full week's work; there are some getting piece rates that bring in 6s. And at present these are worth less than 6s. or 4s. pre-war. It does not sound possible, but it is true. Those working under the Trade Boards ought to get the minimum rates laid down and legally enforceable. But the Government, in the name of economy, have so reduced the staff of inspectors, that bad employers openly disregard the law without fear of detection followed by prosecution. In numbers of low paid trades, Trade Boards were promised four years ago, but have never been set up. The Government are now talking of a Bill to amend the Trade Boards Acts, by lessening their power presumably in accordance with the Cave Committee Report. So even this protection of minimum wages under the Trade Boards is failing the women.

Meanwhile, is it surprising that the membership of women in Trade Unions is falling off? First, came the change from war work to peace work. Then came the general attack on wages and the slump. Discouraged and poor, the women are dropping out.

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THE WRONG ANGLE.

Continued from Page 2.

ful, or perhaps, as Alice would say in Wonderland, "Curious and Curiouser."

Capital cannot feed its workers. What is capital? Capital is labor. Therefore, labor cannot feed its workers.

With the further development of Capital, that is with more work, which creates capital, the workers will be worse off and employment will be less. This paradox we leave to the O.B.U. Bulletin to explain.

The only way is to erect a system where the existence of an abundance of good things shall be a blessing and not a curse.

Exactly, but what is the system? Some hundreds have been tried. One is now in operation in Russia. Where Lenin and Trotsky, with Russia to play with have failed, we do not think the editor of the Bulletin will succeed, notwithstanding the assistance of the Winnipeg Central Labor Council.

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DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR. SPADINA GRESBENT, TORONTO. Hon. W. E. Rolfe, Minister. Jas. H. H. Ballantyne, Deputy Minister. THE STATIONARY & HOISTING ENGINEERS' BOARD. J. M. Brown, Chairman. THE FACTORY INSPECTION BRANCH. Jas. T. Burke, Chief Inspector. THE STEAM BOILER BRANCH. D. M. Medcalf, Chief Inspector. THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OF CANADA. H. C. Hudson, Provincial Superintendent. OTTAWA ZONE OFFICE. 138 Queen St. Phone Q. 3700. G. S. Ford, Superintendent.

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