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THE AUSTRALIAN STRIKE.

The Story of the Troubles in Aus-
tralia and the Progress of
the "New Unionism."

A correspondent of the Union Printer
writing from Wellington, New Zealand,
graphically describes the great labor up-
heaval in Australia:

A little over 12 months ago, the atten-
tion of the whole civilized world was fixed
upon the labor troubles of the dockers of
London, and in the settlement of that
strike Australasia was given no little share
of the credit. The dockers have just cele-
brated their anniversary, and at the dem-
onstrations upon that event, cheers upon
cheers were called for and given to Aus-
tralians, for their timely aid in the hour of
need.

To-day, the attention of the world is
fixed upon the Antipodes, and Unionists
particularly are anxiously awaiting the
outcome of the struggle. As I write, Aus-
tralia is right in the midst of the greatest
trial of strength between labor and
capital which has doubtless ever
taken place. The whole of the
Australian Colonies are involved—
namely, New South Wales (Sydney), Vic-
toria (Melbourne), South Australia (Ade-
laide), Queensland (Brisbane), Western
Australia (Perth), Tasmania (Hobart) and
New Zealand (Wellington). The places in-
serted between parenthesis are the capitals
of the colonies, and are the places around
which operations are centred, except in the
case of New Zealand, Dunedin being the
starting point on account of that city being
the headquarters of the Union Steamships'
Company, and also of the Maritime Coun-
cil and Seamen's Union.

Naturally the question arises: "What is
the cause of the strike?" The new Union-
ism has been growing so rapidly in our
colonies, and has bettered the order of
things to such an extent, that an observer
of the times could not but have observed
that it would not be long before a trial of
strength would take place between the op-
posing forces—capital and labor.

In the strife between the Shearers' Union
and the pastoralists of Queensland, after a
bitter struggle the Unionists won the day;
but from all signs the pastoralists did not
forget the beating, and they evidently took
a lesson from the method by which the
Unionists had conquered—and that was
complete organization. The narration fol-
lowing here will show to you that the pas-
toralists have not been idle during the
four months since they were beaten, for we
now have Employers' Unions in all cen-
tres, and those unions are as busy as
Unionists have ever been in amalgamating
their forces in preparation for the struggle
now upon us.

In my last letter I informed you that
there was every promise of the complete
boycott being put upon the printing firm
of Messrs. Whitcombe & Tombs, of Chris-
tchurch (N. Z.) Forces were marshalled up
in preparation for this strife, the meantime
labor, the railway employees, the book-
sellers, the school teachers, and in fact
every avenue in life were told to be pre-
pared for the coming strife, the cause of
which being a little business not worth
\$50,000. Many argued that it "was not
the littleness of the concern, but the prin-
ciple concerned in it" that was to be looked
at. We are told to take heed of the day of
small things, and after all this was but a
straw of direction. Orders were issued
for a general strike after every effort of
mediation had been tried and failed, and
the time of notice had almost expired,
when the Maritime Council, which body
was directing things, showed rare courage
by withdrawing from the extreme position
laying the onus of blame upon the objec-
tionable firm, and calling upon the public
to avoid any dealings with Whitcombe &
Tombs. This action of the Council won
many friends for unionism, and the news-
papers unanimously lauded that body
for their action, and condemned the firm
at fault, and the press declared that the
Council by its action had the right to call
upon all true citizens to do all in their
power to assist Unionists to bring Whit-
combe & Tombs to terms.

The result of this call has been that
School Committees, Boards of Education,
and other public bodies have been called
upon to withdraw their support from
Whitcombe & Tombs, and word comes in
every day that such steps are being at-
tended to.

Now all these things show us that we
should not despise the day of small things,
as I think that neither Unionists nor cap-
italists have neglected the injunction—for
now that the great struggle is with us all
sides seem to be prepared.

Following upon their victory over the
pastoralists of Queensland (which quarrel
was brought about by certain sheep-
owners having their sheep shorn by men
who were not members of the Shearers'
Union) this Union made a compact
with the Carriers' Union of Sydney to
block all non-union shorn wool. On the
15th the Marine Officers' Association and
the Seamen's Union asked for a conference
with the shipowners. The former were
asking for increase of pay chiefly, and the
latter had drawn up a set of new rules,
which they wished adopted. These rules
chiefly provide for a modification of the
eight hours system and a higher rate of pay
for overtime and Sunday work. By the
proposed modification of the eight hours
system the sea watches previous to ar-
rival and after departure are to count
among the eight hours in port. On the
15th the owners appointed in conferences
with delegates from these two bodies. On
the 17th the wharf laborers of Sydney re-
fused to work with the stevedores on the
ground that their employment might lead
to the sweating system. The shipowners
protested that this was contrary to agree-
ment, which provided for due notice, ex-
plaining that contracts had been entered
into with the stevedores for long periods.
The idea of a Shipowners' Association was
that day agreed upon. Later the Wharf
Laborers' Union agreed to continue under
the stevedores until the contracts expired.
Next day they broke their resolution when
they were asked to unload the Pukaki.
The owners thereupon told the seamen's
representatives that they could not dis-
cuss their rules—it was at the first con-
ference arranged—unless they agreed not
to support the wharf men. The seamen
replied that they did not approve the con-
duct of the wharf men, but they could not
promise not to support them. Thereupon
the owners told the Marine Officers' Asso-
ciation at their conference with them that
they would not permit them to affiliate
with the labor bodies. On the same day
the sheep owners and others formed the
Pastoralist Association to meet the threat
of the Shearers' Union to block non-union
shorn wool. The officers decided not to
affiliate, and asked for a conference. On
the 22nd the shipowners met the seamen's
delegates in conference and declined to
grant any further concessions except to
officers. The seamen determined to en-
force their demands and declared they
would cable to England for steamers if the
owners continued obdurate. On the 23rd
the Sydney Chamber of Commerce de-
clared at its quarterly meeting that the in-
vestment of capital was prejudiced by the
labor difficulties. On the 24th there was
another conference, at which the shipowners
refused definitely to accept the new rules
and to give increases of pay to the seamen
on the ground of the widespread com-
mercial depression. They intimated that
they would continue the discussion on this
basis, but that if the men refused they
would lay up their steamers. Various
concessions followed on both sides, but
each remained firm about the hours of labor
and the overtime. On the 26th, the Marine
Officers determined to withdraw their re-
quests unless the owners agreed to a con-
ference, which the owners refused. On
the 27th the owners again met the men,
went into the whole question of the eight
hours and sea watches, and the new rules.
They declined to accede to the new mod-
ification of eight hours, i. e., to count the
sea watches, but they offered to give more
overtime, and to pay for three extra holi-
days, and to pay wages at terminal ports.
The men refused to depart from the eight
hours' demand, and decided to throw the
onus of a strike on the owners. On this
day a cable from home was received by
the men inviting Australasian delegates to
a conference of seamen at Glasgow to be
held in October to affirm the eight hours
principle. The next day the owners re-
plied that the new rules involved an ex-
penditure which would prohibit the con-
tinuance of the shipping business. The
men declined to believe this, and declared
the rules to be fair and just and necessary
to the comfort and well-being of the men.
On the 29th news came from Brisbane that
the employers had held a meeting, Sir T.

McIlwraith in the chair, and decided to
cope with "the inordinate demands of the
labor organizations." The same day the
Marine Officers withdrew their demands,
indignantly protesting against the neglect
of the demands, which had been admitted
to be just. By the 30th the difficulty with
the shearers had got to a head both in
Sydney and Melbourne, the shearers and
wharf men having completed arrangements
to block non-union shorn wool, the ship-
owners, stevedores, warehousemen and
pastoralists having combined to appeal to
"free" labor and recognize only the ships
which would take their wool. Thus
passed the month of July.

On August 1 the Masters and Officers'
Association intervened in the matter of
the officers, and the Shipowners' Asso-
ciation formally agreed with them to in-
crease the pay of officers and give them generally
better terms, which were specified. The
Marine Officers' Association refused to
accept these concessions. On the same
day the Federated Seamen's Union en-
dorsed the action of their delegates,
adopted the new rules, and determined
that when the unions of the other colonies
had accepted them they would give twenty-
four hours' notice of their enforcement.
On the same day a second Marine Officers'
Association was formed without intention
of affiliation to any other bodies, and the
old promptly repudiated it the next mor-
ning, and two days after, on the 5th, in-
timated to the shipowners that failing com-
promise on their part they would give
twenty-four hours' notice of withdrawal
from the ships. The next day the newly-
formed association's delegates at a con-
ference with the Shipowners' Association,
and agreed to the terms promised to the
Masters and Officers' Association of Mel-
bourne on the 1st of the month. On this
day a strike was nearly caused by the
Corunna difficulty, but was averted by the
owners of the vessel, who promptly laid
her up. The union had insisted on the re-
instatement of a dismissed fireman. On
the 8th the Trades and Labor Council of
Sydney decided to support the demands
of the original Marine Officers' Asso-
ciation, and determined to stand by the wharf
laborers in their determination to block
non-union shorn wool, the first batch of
which was expected to arrive that day.
The Marine Officers forwarded an intima-
tion to the shipowners that they had with-
drawn their request, and named the 15th
as the day on which they would give twenty-
four hours' notice in the absence of any
concessions. The wharf laborers formally
advised the employers that they would
not handle non-union shorn wool. On the
11th the combination of employers replied
that they would appeal to "free" labor.
All throughout this month and the last
great demonstrations of the unemployed
were held in Sydney and Melbourne from
time to time. The shipowners sent an
intimation to the maritime labor combi-
nations that their demands involved an
increased expenditure of £200,000, which
would absorb their profits under the most
flourishing circumstances; in consequence
of which they once more declined to
accede. The next day they announced
their intention of laying up their boats if
the men persisted in their demands, and
they sent a refusal to the Marine Officers'
Association to consider their proposals;
the later, thereupon instructed their mem-
bers to give twenty-four hours' notice on
the 15th. On the 13th it was generally re-
cognized that all hope of averting extreme
measures was at an end, and both sides
prepared for the conflict. On the 14th the
stevedores' men were said to be wavering,
but the crisis was delayed by non-arrival
of wool, due to the fact that shearing had
been generally postponed, and where it
was begun no wool had been sent away
by advice of the warehousemen, who foresaw
lack of sufficient storage. On the 15th the
officers gave their twenty-four hours'
notice, and the shipping advertisements
and timetables were all withdrawn. On
the 19th the seamen, cooks and stewards
gave twenty-four hours' notice in Sydney,
and the Brisbane Maritime Council called
out all hands; and very soon all the ships
were laid up. On the same day many off-
icers left the ships in Melbourne. On the
20th assurances of help from the wharf
laborers of Antwerp were cabled. On the
21st the Adelaide seamen passed a resolu-
tion that they preferred not to allow the
marine officers to affiliate, and declined to
strike. The Waihora, arriving in Sydney
from New Zealand, was stopped, but

eventually was permitted to be unloaded
by her crew. On the 25th the men of the
Tarawera, Taiari and Onau went out, and
at once the strike involved the whole New
Zealand trade.

Those who have followed the above pre-
cise account of the strike will see that it is
the result of three separate disputes which
ran concurrently. It has been argued that
it has not been caused by the refusal of the
shipowners to concede the demands of the
Marine Officers. This I hold is incorrect.
The whole trouble is the result of a series,
but the final straw was the refusal of the
shipowners to allow the officers to affiliate
with other labor bodies. It was the in-
tention of the Marine Officers' Association
of New Zealand to affiliate with our Mari-
time Council. Again, those who wish to
avoid discussing this point argue that the
Shearers' Union would have caused the
strike in a week or two, and others say
that if neither of these powers would have
brought it about the Seamen's Union
would have caused it at any time, having
decreed as far back as July 27 to strike
and throw the onus upon the shipowners.

The New Zealand seamen have made no
demands at all, and the New Zealand off-
icers had their demands complied with
about the time the strike began in Aus-
tralia. The New Zealand Maritime Workers
have gone out purely in support of the
unionists on the other side of the water.
The employers of Australia and New Zea-
land declare that the power of unionism
must be put down at any cost, and the
unionists of Australia, New Zealand,
Europe and America have responded that
unionism must be maintained at all costs
—and so the fight is fairly understood by
both parties, who are prepared to go to the
end.

RED JIM McDERMOTT.
The Labor World's Charges Against
a British Consul.

LONDON, October 9.—The Labor World
to-day asserts that Mr. Hoare, the Brit-
ish consul at New York in 1883, sent
James McDermott from New York to
Montreal for the purpose of getting a
dynamite agitation in that city and sup-
plied him with money and means to carry
out his purpose. Mr. Hoare communi-
cated with Dublin Castle about the time
stated and asked the home Government to
request the Canadian Government to facili-
tate the performance of the work which
McDermott was to carry out. The reply
which the Canadian Government sent to
the request from Dublin Castle and Mr.
Hoare was that the Canadian Government
considered it its duty to prevent and not
to encourage or abet it.

While McDermott was in Montreal en-
deavoring to ensnare Irishmen in that city
in dynamite plots he was supplied with
funds by Mr. Hoare and encouraged by
him to keep up communications with
O'Donovan Rossa and such men in New
York. "We will prove by sworn testi-
mony if required," says the Labor World,
"that James McDermott was exposed and
denounced in Montreal by a cable sent by
Mr. Davitt to the editor of the Montreal
Evening Post.

"We further charge Mr. Hoare with
having in 1883 employed Matt O'Brien to
enter the service of the post office in New
York in order to tamper with letters going
through that post office. We can prove
that O'Brien opened Irishmen by the score,
and wrote letters to Irishmen in New York
which purported to come from Fenians and
dynamiters in California, St. Louis and
Chicago, and that he stamped these bogus
letters so as to make the recipients believe
they were communications which came
through the post office.

New York, October 9.—When shown
the charges made against him by Michael
Davitt in his paper, the Labor World, Mr.
Hoare, the British Consul in New York,
to-day, said the whole story was a tissue
of malignant falsehoods. He declares he
never saw McDermott in his life, and
never had any connection with him in any
way.

Mr. H. J. Cloran, president of the St.
Patrick's Society, who was editor of the
Post in 1883, fully confirms the above
statements of Mr. Davitt.

THE NEW HOODS for children just received
at S. Carsley's are really beautiful, and the
assortment is very large.

LARGE CROWDS attending the sale of dress
goods at S. Carsley's.