



Industrial Review From Many Sources



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ROUND-THE-TABLE CONFERENCES TO SETTLE INDUSTRIAL TROUBLES

Premier Hughes, of Australia, Points Out the Way to Peace.

Representatives of the employers' organizations of Australia recently laid their views on industrial unrest before the Australian Government. The chief spokesman for the employers stated that at no time had they been more willing to face the industrial position on lines of equity, justice and humanitarianism.

The Prime Minister, W. M. Hughes, replying, said that he agreed that the restoration, or at any rate the establishment, of harmonious relations between the employers and the employees would be best brought about by a round-table conference. The interposition of a third party, whether or not it were clothed with the majesty of the law, was less effective than that perfect agreement that came from the personal touch of man to man. The law and the compulsory bringing together of the parties was at best but a clumsy expedient for that settlement between the two parties which must in the long run be the only sure foundation upon which industrial peace could rest.

"If we inquire what is the fundamental factor of such a peace," continued Mr. Hughes, "we will find that it is a better understanding of each other. I speak as a man chastened by many vicissitudes, industrial and other. Class hatred is not a plant without a root, nor did it spring up in a night. It is deep-seated and has its roots in the injustices suffered by workers in the days that are gone.

"My experience of unions is that the great bulk of the men—a vote would show seven-tenths—are free from the bitter class consciousness. Unfortunately, men have been led from the beginning of time by the few who have made up their minds. Although naturally law-abiding, there are people who are likely to be beguiled by alluring, lying statements, propaganda which has for its object the overturning of the State and the existing condition of things. If that propaganda is to be combated it is necessary to put something to put in its place. I have put the basic wage proposition forward as a means whereby one of the most prolific causes of industrial discontent may be removed."

Dealing with possible remedies for the existing condition, the Prime Minister advanced unexpectedly a proposal for a grand council of industry. He said: "Supposing I were asked to give counsel whereby we might set our industrial house in order, I would take just such a body as I see here and try to meet it a body which would be as representative of Labor, and I would say, 'Make yourselves a grand council of industry of this country and whatever you say we will do. There is no better way. The thing is, how are you going to do it? You must remember that the body industrial has been saturated with class hatred, so that every attempt made by the easier of Labor men and the easier of the employees is counteracted by the bitterness of those sections to whom I have alluded."

Mr. Hughes explored the rejection of the referendum proposals recently and said that the only way of meeting the position in view of the rejection was for the states to hand over to the Commonwealth power in regard to certain industrial questions. At present, he said, the Commonwealth's powers over industrial matters were farcical. Experience had shown that the arbitration court was not a convenient or effective instrument, hampered as it was and had always been by the ever-increasing limits of its jurisdiction. No man knew and no man was able to define what its jurisdiction was.

LINES ON A SHEEP.

O sheep whose days are so demurely spent, I wonder if it's past your comprehending That you and I between us represent The starting of a process and its ending?

On you the wool, on me the cloth and hose— Thus swings the cycle from its start to close.

But not direct, old thing— O not direct— 'Tis sharing you and my "spring suiting" choices There intervenes a host of the elect Who jam around in Daimlers and Rolls-Royces.

Well-nourished cows, with appetizing necks, Who drink champagne and sign colossal cheques.

A-down the path from you to me (Who tries to dodge them, only meets a cropper), And each with outstretched and expectant hand

Deliberate the solution that we seek— Your wool would stand on end if you could see The final price at which it's charged to me.

Therefore I call you "comrade" from my heart, Although we two adorn a different gentles;

If you and I are plainly in the cart, At least we share the vehicle between us.

We have one point in common, Brother Beast— We both exist in order to be second.

—Lucia in Toronto Globe.

NOT ACCURATE.

"I asked Miss Ann her age and she told me she was as old as my tongue and a little older than her teeth."

"She's 40 years older than her teeth for I know she only got them last week."—Baltimore American.

A SOLID FOUNDATION.

Marsden G. Scott, president of the International Typographical Union, who represents much that is soundest and best in the labor movement, and stands for a point of view that is a bulwark against the encroachment of a type of radicalism that bids fair to nullify the progress that has been made through the evolutionary processes through which such men as he sees the surest prospect of industrial advancement in its broadest aspects, has written for the Typographical Journal an analysis of the foundations that have been laid for the industrial reconstruction of the commercial and preindustrial branches of the trade.

The spirit in which the effort is being made to standardize the relationship between capital and labor in this industry to the end that the whole industry may advance, seems to be a spirit as reflected in President Scott's discussion of the proceedings of the International Joint Conference Council, which is making the attempt, that is worthy of the best, to bring about a clear perception on both sides of a mutual interest, and an earnest desire to have done with the things that are blocking progress against the interests of both.

President Scott thus characterizes the movement:

"These conferences have been characterized by the frank determination of the representatives of employers and employees to meet the conditions which the war created without equivocation or evasion. No time has been frittered away in discussing the right of the workers or the right of the employers. There has been no senseless chatter to delay the complete recognition of the absolute necessity for collective bargaining between the employers and the workers in the industry, and the mutual benefits to be derived therefrom. Nor has there been any attempt to restrict the right of the workers to select their representatives in wage conferences even been questioned.

The cardinal points thus far agreed to are presented herewith. It should be clearly understood that the adoption of these principles by the joint conference council does not arbitrarily compel their acceptance either by unions or by employers. They point the way to the elimination of much of the controversy, to the fair adjustment of wages, to the establishment of stability and prosperity, and to the progress of those who are engaged in this branch of the printing industry.

There may be, of course, room for discussion bearing upon some of the points referred to, but it is the clear purpose of "getting somewhere" through reasoning and reasonable processes that attracts attention in these days of restless and inflammatory propaganda.

The points themselves are as follows:

First: That the industry recognize the cost of living, as compared to 1914, as a basic factor in wage adjustment.

Second: That the industry is to pay at least a reasonable living wage; scales below this to be adjusted in frank recognition of the basic principle involved.

Third: That local contracts be for a period of not less than three years; with provision for annual readjustment of wages based upon the cost of living and economic conditions in the industry.

Fourth: That a uniform standard system of cost keeping be considered fundamental to insure stability, permanence and prosperity to the industry, with provision that a clause be required in local agreements providing for the maintenance of such a standard system.

Fifth: That controversies over "lockouts" and "strikes" between employers and employees can and should be settled without resort to treatments to refer disputes that can not be settled through conciliation to a joint board of arbitration.

The last point is merely applying

to the commercial and preindustrial branches of the industry a condition that already obtains in the newspaper publishing branch, in which the International Arbitration Agreement between the American Newspaper Publishers Association and the International Typographical Union has for several years protected both local unions and local newspapers which have become a party to it from the possibility of either strikes or lockouts, and in innumerable cases has prevented any interruption in the process of newspaper publishing. So well has this acceptance of compulsory arbitration worked out that no newspaper publisher now working under the arbitration agreement would consider its abrogation, while through its operation many unions have secured fair awards of increased wages without the loss of a day.

In summarizing the situation in the other branches of the trade, where the incentive to co-operation has not perhaps been so pressing as in the newspaper field, President Scott, reflecting again the spirit of conferences now in progress, says: "The worker is entitled to at least a wage sufficient to enable him to live in comfort, to provide adequately for the support of his family, and the education and development of the next generation, with a modest allowance to be put aside for the inevitable rainy day when he will be physically unable to keep pace with the ever-advancing industrial army. An inadequate wage breeds privation, poverty, and in the end mental, moral and physical bankruptcy.

The inflexible rule which applies to the worker's basic necessities is inflexibility to the dollar invested in industry. It too, must receive a reasonable living wage or face starvation and physical destitution. In years gone by neither the worker nor the dollar has received a reasonable wage in many instances. Both have starved together.

There we see the recognition of something the existence of which has of late been so often denied—the real community interest which does exist between the two main elements of industry.

It is a recognition which seems to us to provide a genuine starting point for the evolution of sounder industrial relations, whatever form that evolution may take.

The next step, we believe, is a much more general appreciation in this trade that the worker, beside recognizing the importance of the factor of costs to the industry as a whole, will recognize his own direct relation to those costs and his responsibility to help control them through the quantity and quality of his own work; and on the part of both workers and employers a recognition of the fact that this interest of the worker in the factor of costs must be reflected in the return that accrues to him from the industry.

It is by such steps, whether carried on under the present form of organization or through new methods

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ods of co-operation, that we look for the sound development of a fair apportionment of both the fruits and the responsibilities of an industry among those who in any capacity are engaged in it.

Radicalism will, if applied, simply set back those processes and result ultimately in an incalculable loss of time and momentum.

Attempted short-cuts will not lead to any permanent solution.—North Adams Transcript.

WOMEN'S WORK IN CANADA.

The only kind of immigrant that is of any value to a country, especially a new country, is the immigrant who "comes out" fully understanding what he must expect. The weak point in many immigration efforts, in the past, has been that quantity and not quality was given first consideration. A disappointed disillusioned immigrant is of no use to any country. It is for this reason, amongst many others, that the commission sent out to Canada, last year, by the British Government to inquire into the openings for women in the Dominion, is so specially useful.

The commissioners have done their work well. They have stated the facts just as they are, and while there is no attempt to produce a discouraging picture, there is also no attempt to produce an unduly rosy one. The commissioners were well aware that the work which Canada has to offer to women is, of course, just the kind of work which will appeal to certain women, and that these women will make a success of it. They saw, in fact, that the only way to induce the right woman to undertake the work, and to prevent the wrong woman from doing so, was to tell the truth about her situation. Thus, in dealing with the question of domestic service, the commissioners point out that greater friendliness is to be found in Canadian homes, and opportunities are shared by mistress and maid alike. But they do not hesitate to warn prospective immigrants that Canada is not the Eldorado of the labor-saving device that has often held out to be; that the work in domestic service is hard and, especially in the country, often very isolated. The report, however, is a most interesting and individual action considerable; whilst lift in the country offers much the same attractions and opportunities to all, no matter what particular part of the work they may be engaged upon.

The report deals with the same frankness with the teaching profession. Englishwomen able to teach are needed, especially in foreign communities. The work is hard in isolated districts, but progress is assured to those courageous enough to take up these teaching posts, whilst there are, the report states, great attractions in such a life. Then again, the women agriculturist is warned but not discouraged. She is told about the rigorous winters during which little or no cultivation is carried on, in many parts of Canada; she is warned that she must expect strenuous work; and she is shown the desirability of three or four women joining together in any agricultural enterprise. If they want to make a success of it.

Perhaps the chief service performed by the report, however, is the decided way in which it condemns the bonus system in immigration. Under this system the shipping agent is paid a bonus on every immigrant secured through his efforts. In order therefore to secure as many immigrants as possible, the agent undertakes to pay practically the whole of a girl's expenses from England to her destination in Canada, requiring the girl, however, to sign a bond agreeing to make repayment by instalments out of her wages. This bond is frequently taken over by the girl's employer, who thus secures a hold upon her which, until the obligation is discharged, practically reduces the girl to the status of an indentured laborer. The report is most emphatic on the matter.

"Practically every experienced authority consulted in Canada," it declares, "agrees in expressing the opinion that the system of captation bonus paid to an agent for inducing an emigrant to land in the Dominion is a mistake, and has been the source of much evil."—Christian Science Monitor.

NATURAL PROCEEDING.

"They had a hard time in that piece with the actors representing the elements of the storm."

"How so?"

"The lightning struck."—Baltimore American.

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