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OVERSEAS

WAS LIMBY.

It requires some audacity, surely, to make the suggestion that the 1914 standard is to be actually lowered. Says J. N. Bell, general secretary of the British National Amalgamated Union of Labor, writing on the attacks on wages and hours, "but apparently, organized capital (and capital is organized to-day as it never was before in this country) has made up its mind that the moment is favorable for imposing its will upon the workers, now that the unemployed have become so numerous."

All the fine talk and the promises that were made when the help of Labor was needed to enable the country to win the war, are, presumably, forgotten. The higher standard of life that we were promised is being largely not to be established. Instead of that, advantage is to be taken of the workman's difficulties to force upon him worse conditions.

In short, organized capital appears to be bent upon the application of the good old rule, the simple plan, that they who take should have the power, and they should keep who can.

Those who are carrying forward this campaign for the purpose of securing a lower standard of living among people who have been promised a higher standard—and there can be little doubt that it is an organized campaign—might do well to consider whether there may not be lights after all, to what the people are willing patiently to endure.

This is not a country in which revolutionary talk usually finds much favor, and certainly the responsible leaders of labor have given countenance to it, but their efforts to keep the peace might well, in certain circumstances, prove futile.

If some of the projects which more aggressive sections of the labor movement have in their minds are given effect, things may well happen that will not only destroy all their hopes of profits, but will inflict lasting injury upon the whole community.

The men who fought and suffered in the great war will expect a better regard for all they endured than to have their standard of living reduced below the level of that which prevailed before the war was fought.

OVERSEA SETTLEMENT. According to a recent despatch, out of a total of 16,000 ex-service men given transportation to the dominions under the British scheme of Overseas Settlement, approximately one-third have come to Canada. A number of these have secured employment through offices of the Employment Service.

The scheme of overseas settlement was inaugurated by the British Government on the recommendation of an Overseas Settlement Committee appointed after the close of the war to deal with the question. In addition to recommending schemes of free passages as a reward for their service in the war to ex-service men and women and their dependants desirous of emigrating to other parts of the Empire, the Committee suggested that aid for emigration of women, and for supplementing the existing provisions for the emigration of juveniles. In April, 1919, the Committee's proposals with regard to the grant of free passages to ex-service men were accepted by the Government.

Under this scheme, as at present in operation, ex-service men and women and their dependants, who wish to settle within the Empire, may obtain free third-class passages at the lowest Government rate to the nearest convenient port to their destination, providing they are approved under one of the agricultural settlement schemes of the overseas government or are going to assured employment and are otherwise acceptable to that government.

Applications receiving the approval of the Overseas Settlement Office are forwarded to the representative of the overseas government concerned. In the case of Canada for instance, it is the Superintendent of Emigration for Canada at London who decides whether the applicant is in all respects acceptable to his government.

With regard to the emigration of women, the Overseas Settlement Committee succeeded in affecting the formation of an organization known as the Society for the Overseas Settlement of British Women and composed of representatives of the various societies interested in the settlement of women overseas. This organization assists the Government in the selection, departure and supervision on the voyage of women emigrating to the dominions, and for this purpose receives an annual grant from the state of £7,500. During 1919 representatives of the Overseas Settlement Office were sent to Canada, Australia and New Zealand for the purpose of inquiring into the reporting on the prospects of suitable openings for women.

In dealing with industrial employment overseas an arrangement was effected with the Canadian Government, under which information regarding vacancies which cannot be filled by Canadian labor is forwarded to the Overseas Employment Branch of the British Ministry of Labour, which refers persons available under the overseas settlement scheme who are qualified to fill the vacancies in question.

In the winter of 1921 the Government held a conference with the dominion governments principally concerned for the purpose of discussing the possibility of introducing a system of state-aided settlement within the Empire. At this conference

proposals were formulated for consideration at the conferences of Ministers and Representatives of the United Kingdom, the Dominions and India to be held during the following summer. These proposals embodied a comprehensive policy of Empire land settlement and Empire direct emigration, involving an annual contribution on the part of the British Government up to a maximum of £2,000,000. At the conference in the summer these proposals were considered by a special committee and a resolution was finally adopted by the conference, expressing satisfaction with the proposals. With the exception of South Africa, the representatives of the dominions offered their cooperation, subject to parliamentary sanction, in the development of schemes based on the proposals but adapted to the particular circumstances and conditions of each dominion.

MINERS WAGES SHOULD NOT BE REDUCED

It would be an economic wrong and inhuman to reduce the wage rates of the mine workers of the country below a living wage, declared William Green, secretary-treasurer of the United Mine Workers, to the International Organization of delegates in the anthracite wage committee. Great pressure has been brought to bear upon the miners for a voluntary reduction in wages, "but never will the consent of the national organization be given during the life of present contracts to a reduction of wages below the standard of living," he said.

He did believe, he said, the public would want lower coal prices if it would result in the miner being compelled to take a wage rate that is below the American standard of living.

The international secretary referred to royalties as a proper point for attack in the process of definition and said he thought the present a splendid opportunity for an investigation to bring down the profits of those who hold coal lands and derive large incomes.

The anthracite wage scale, which probably will come before the committee, is being worked out by the sub-committee of the wage scale committee. Delegates expect it will carry a demand for a 15 to 20 per cent increase in wages, uniform wage rates, shorter hours for those men working more than eight hours, and the check-off.

DOMINION TRADE CONDITIONS SHOW SOME IMPROVEMENT

Trade conditions throughout Canada continue to show improvement. While this improvement is still slow, it is marked in several lines. Since the middle of December, extreme prices have shown a tendency to come together and while this movement is as yet in its early stages, it is looked upon by many authorities as a very hopeful sign.

Eastern centres, including Montreal, Quebec, Toronto and Ottawa, are, in their reports, all optimistic as regards the outlook. In certain manufacturing lines orders are coming in on a somewhat better basis than in the past, and as these are on the whole from Canadian wholesalers, it reflects conditions in that circle. Retailers who have been quiet since Christmas say business is now looking up. Collections are still slow throughout the east. Failures are on the decline.

Winnipeg and Manitoba advise say wholesalers report slight increase in volume of orders and slightly easier credit conditions. One very hopeful sign is a marked decrease in failures, although in a degree this has been brought about by an unwillingness to unduly press on the part of the wholesalers. Collections show an improvement. Retail trade in larger cities shows an improvement, but smaller country towns find business still quiet, owing in many instances to retailers being unable to grant credit to any extent.

Reports from Regina and Saskatchewan, where conditions are somewhat "fair." Retail trade is still on the quiet side and collections poor.

British Columbia advises say "dry goods, furniture and several other lines fair with shipping of spring orders. Boot and shoe business at the coast is quiet. Hardware shows a slight tendency to improve over December. Retail trade reports are encouraging but weather rather changeable for improved business. Collections at coast slow to fair."

REGINA UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION

Extremists among Regina's unemployed threatened to parade 1,000 men to the city hall for the purpose of demanding a minimum cash dole in lieu of relief in the form of food, clothing and shelter now being granted.

It is estimated that about 1,000 of both sexes are without work in Regina alone. Of these 164 single men and 275 married persons and children are being assisted.

The Saskatchewan Government has complied with the request of employers of labor in the province to delay proposed amendments to the Workmen's Compensation Act pending presentation of statements setting forth the views of the "honest" trade unions of the American International to summon a conference of the trade unions of all countries.

The object would be mainly to deal with the question of co-operation by the workers against the "International Capitalist Class" and to discuss what measures can be taken by the workers to promote and preserve the sense of the world, says the Regina paper.

SEEK TO MAKE APPOINTMENTS PERMANENT

Mr. J. F. Marsh, Dominion secretary of the G.A.U.V., with headquarters in Toronto, appeared before Hon. Charles Murphy, postmaster general, on behalf of the postal service of Toronto, submitting plans to Mr. Murphy from the Civil Service Association to make it possible to provide permanent employment for 200 ex-service men who have been employed in a temporary capacity in the Toronto postal service for periods from six months to two years. Mr. Marsh stated the fact that these men were only temporary men, which prevented them obtaining any increase in salary from the original \$820 per annum which they receive, although all are over 40 years of age, and almost all are married. According to the present regulations the holidays for the present permanent staff are only allowed during the first half of the fiscal year and it was shown that if this term could be eliminated by the cabinet the services of these temporary men could be retained as permanent civil servants, filling places of others who might then take their holidays during the winter months. Hon. Mr. Murphy stated that the case of these men was being acted upon at the present time, and that he would endeavor to have the government eliminate the present holiday regulations, and also to have the numerous vacancies in the Toronto service filled by the present temporary appointments permanent. He instructed the post-master at Toronto to retain the services of these temporary men till action could be obtained by the government, with a view to making their temporary appointments permanent. In the case of those giving satisfactory service.

MANITOBA WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BOARD RETURNS

Employers of labor in Manitoba paid \$421,544.98 compensation to injured workmen through the operation of the Workmen's Compensation Board in 1921. During the previous year employers paid \$261,359.11, an increase of 40 per cent. During the year 3,705 employers were assessed by the board, representing a payroll of approximately \$53,000,000 and about 25,000 workmen. Employers were promptly meeting their assessments and at the end of the year less than one half of one per cent was outstanding of the amounts levied. Accidents during 1921 numbered 6,685, 2,800 of which were fatal. This increase is accounted for by the fact that the board now orders compensation for a workman if disabled for more than three days, instead of for six days as formerly. In 1920 a total of 2,564 workmen received compensation, and 2,829 in 1919.

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FOODS IN COLD STORAGE AT BEGINNING OF YEAR

The Dominion Bureau of Statistics has issued a preliminary report of food commodities in cold storage and its progress of care at the opening of the new year. It shows that there were 18,313 barrels and 156,737 boxes of apples in cold storage, 11,111,306 pounds of butter, 214,465 of margarine, and 15,421,233 pounds of cheese on January 1. Eggs in cold storage on that date totalled 988,300 dozen, other than in cold storage 255,509 dozen, and frozen 1,113,147 dozen.

ONTARIO RETAIL MERCHANTS IN OPPOSITION

Opposition to any legislation which would fix the working day at eight hours applying to retail merchants, and also to any attempt that may be made to have the provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Act apply to the retail trade, was voiced at the final session of the Retail Merchants' Association of Canada, Eastern Ontario and Ottawa District convention. The Minimum Wage Act was classed as "bad legislation," and it was referred to as a meddlesome and paternal legislation. A resolution providing for careful study of the act and its requirements by the executive, and if it be found to be of an injurious nature to the retail trade, that the Government be asked to omit the retail trade from its operation, was passed. The prevalent idea was that the act would be detrimental to the employees themselves. The opposition of the rural merchants was very strong.

That the executive oppose attempts to carry the eight-hour day in the Ontario and Dominion Parliaments for all manufacturing, producing and distributing classes.

That any attempt to make the Workmen's Compensation Act applicable to the retail trade be opposed.

Minimum Wage Act.

Asking the government to omit the retail trade from the operation of the minimum wage act.

That the Dominion board watch attempts to establish investigation into the profits of retail merchants as existing in the United States.

MANITOBA MORATORIUM TO REMAIN IN FORCE

The Manitoba Moratorium Act, which withholds legal procedure to recover debts aggregating hundreds of thousands of dollars, will not be altered at the present session of the provincial legislature it was learned from government sources. The purpose of the government, it is said, had been to reduce the effect of the measure by degrees starting in 1922 but owing to the stringent financial conditions throughout the province no changes will be made. It had been planned to start payment of principal of debts by easy stages, legal action was to be permitted to recover ten per cent of the principal in arrears this year and 15, 25 and 50 per cent in subsequent years.

As a result of amendments approved in 1921 the stipulations regarding interest, taxes and insurance premiums were lifted, effective Jan. 1, 1922.

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