

# INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

*A synopsis of movements in Great Britain, the United States and Canada to effect a better understanding between employers and workers.*

It is necessary that there should be a better understanding between capital and labor. After the war, industrial Canada will have to face grave problems of reconstruction. Factories employing a quarter of a million workers will have to be readapted to peace activities. Hundreds of thousands of soldiers will have to be reestablished in industrial pursuits. Between 1,500,000 and 2,000,000 persons will be affected vitally by demobilisation and cessation of war orders. Unless there is sympathetic understanding and sincere co-operation between employers and employees, industrial machinery cannot be adjusted to the new conditions without severe loss to capital, extensive unemployment and individual distress. Conditions which are the cause of the present labor troubles must be corrected or graver disturbances will mark the reconstruction period. Much of the present disquiet is due to high prices but much of it also to specific industrial causes. Amongst these are the refusal of capital to admit the human rights of labor, the domination of extreme elements in labor organisations and the ancient and still active distrust between labor and capital. These causes must be corrected in the interests of industry and of the nation.

## A VITAL PROBLEM

Sir John Willison in his Galt address, outlining a national policy, said:—"It is only by methods of conciliation, sympathetic appeal and laborious effort towards a better

understanding that the class war will be abated, and a more satisfactory relation between capital and labor established. It is unfortunate that upon both sides, in too many cases, there is a vindictive spirit and a disposition to misinterpret and misunderstand. Too often the Labor Union approaches the employer in an arrogant temper and exercises a species of intimidation. On the other hand the employer regards the union as his natural enemy and assumes that it exists for purposes of tyranny and extortion. Too often the union protects inferior workmen and insists upon vexatious regulations which impair efficiency and hamper the exercise of necessary authority. Too often both employers and employees observe only the letter of agreements and the steady and satisfactory operation of a great industry is embarrassed by constant friction and misunderstanding. Again the employer, struggling, it may be, through a bad season or a falling market, feels that there is no sympathetic identity of interest between his workmen and himself, and that the loyal co-operation and the energetic support which the situation of the business demand are withheld. So often the employee in evil domestic circumstances, with sickness or death in his home, and accumulating obligations which his wages cannot satisfy, feels that his employer is far removed from his trials and difficulties, enjoying a prosperity to which he has contributed, and careless of the welfare of the one poor cog in his