

## CHAP. VI—GENERAL CONCLUSIONS.

HAVING now detailed the causes which led up to the strikes, which we were specially commissioned to investigate, and having set forth their inter-connection, as well as the principal occurrences to which they gave birth, we now proceed shortly to discuss the general questions which they raise for consideration.

## Duties of Employers and Employees in regard to Strikes.

As strikes are intended to cause loss and inconvenience to the employer in order to force him to yield in whole or in part to the demands of the strikers, and as they always cause loss and privation to the strikers themselves; and as they are almost invariably followed by loss and damage to many others in the community where they occur; as they are in some cases accompanied by sympathetic strikes and are frequently accompanied by reprehensible and illegal practices, such as boycotting, blacklisting, picketing and intimidation, and sometimes by assaults, riots and loss of life and property; it is the plain duty of the employer and employed, and of the state, to exhaust all possible means to secure their prevention.

With respect to the employers and the employed, it is their clear duty to the community, whose protection they both enjoy, to meet each other either by themselves, or through the mediation of third parties, and by temperate discussion and conciliation, settle their difficulties as best they can, each making considerable sacrifice, if necessary, to avoid the loss and injury which will otherwise occur to the public. And here it may not be amiss to warn employers of labour that the old relation of master and servant no longer obtains, that it has been supplanted by that of employer and workman, with the probability that it will develop in the near future into that of co-contractors. There is no doubt that a con-

siderable percentage of strikes are caused, not so much by the refusal of the employer to yield to the particular demand, as by the way in which it is done, or by a long course of arbitrary conduct. One of the results of the spread of unionism throughout the various trades has been to put the workman in a better position to make terms with his employer; to preserve his independence of character; he is now able to drive a bargain and does not have to accept a dole. Formerly, employers were too often in the habit of regarding their men as so many machines or units of labour, and those of them who felt humane instincts thought they fulfilled their whole obligation if they gave an occasional extra remuneration or bonus, or conferred some benefit which they regarded as a gratuity. But the workmen of modern times demands as his due a fair day's pay for a fair day's work, and that he shall get a reasonable share of the product of his toil; what he seeks is honourable employment, not slavery; he wants fair dealing and justice, and not charity or patronage.

It is necessary, then, in their own interest, and in that of the community generally, that employers bear in mind that they are no longer dealing with submissive and unquestioning units of labour, but with sentient beings who have, equally with themselves, senses, affections, desires, doubts and fears. It is, therefore, especially incumbent on corporations, and other large employers of labour who do not come in personal contact with their employees, to place persons of tact and discretion in all the offices of superintendence, and to forthwith dispense with the services of any one who is found to be tyrannical or arrogant in his dealings with the men. Many a strike could have been averted if the employer or his superintendent had taken the trouble to reason the whole matter out with his men,