

remedy it, if it be in human power, and you will have dealt with the discontent and the agitators at the same time.

Now there is one obvious cause, an obvious and unmistakable cause, of discontent among the wage-earners. The prices of food and necessities have risen in the last fifteen years more than wages; that is an undoubted fact which every employer who is a worthy citizen and wishes to be a good captain of industry is bound to face and do justice to.

Some of you may say: How are the railway-men to get their grievances redressed and their wages raised unless, like other trades, they have the power to fight their trade disputes to a finish at all costs to themselves or others, and how are they to do this if the government comes in and says that railways cannot stop running whatever happens? I think that would be a fair question. Railways must run, and any government which exists in this country must be responsible for making them run. In the ultimate event it follows, therefore, that railway men and others cannot enjoy the same full powers of collective bargaining as are enjoyed by other workers in less vital and essential trades.

That would be all the more true if the railways were nationalized. I said at the election before last that I was in favor of the railways being nationalized, but it would be all the more true to say that they would have to be kept running, and that those employed on them could not exercise their full powers of collective bargaining if they were nationalized.

Railway servants have to discharge their special obligations to the public, and the question arises if that be so has the public not special obligations towards them? Now parliament has already assented in its passage of the Sweated Trades Bill, which I had the opportunity of carrying through parliament in the session of 1909—parliament has already assented to the principle that in certain trades where, owing to the weakness of individuals composing them, there is no effective power, no real power of collective bargaining, that in these trades there should be special legislation and special means of fixing the rate of wages. It would be very absurd to compare the great, powerful Association of Railway Servants to these poor, weak, sweated trades which manifest themselves mostly in the east end of London, but they have this in common that apparently their power of collective bargaining is not operative with its full force and freedom, and if that be so it is clear that it is the duty of society and parliament to make sure that those who have not for reasons of public interest the same power of collective bargaining as other trades should not be the losers by the fact that they have to forego this advantage for the general sake of society.

It is the duty and interest of the state and of society in general to make sure that the conditions of labor of persons employed in services which are absolutely vital, persons who for this reason have not the full bargaining power which others have, to make sure that their conditions shall not fall below or lag behind the general economic and social standards of the country, and provide effective

machinery for the discussion and redress of the grievances so existing.

### THE LABOR LEADERS' TEMPTATIONS.

J. B., the famous essayist of the "Christian World," writing on "Temptation," says among other things:—

"But close against this modern temptation, of robbery under law, stands another, largely begotten of it, which needs for the public generally, and especially in those immediately concerned, the most careful consideration. We have spoken of the small tradesman; let us come now to that vastly larger class, the handworker, the man who sells his labour for his living. He, too, has felt the power of capital, and is rebelling against it. He is organizing himself, and beginning thereby to feel his power. In this fight of his for a better living he has all our sympathy. But he stands to-day in front of a great temptation. Or we will say, not so much himself temptation. His organization has produced a new class, that of the labour middleman. Between him and capital stands now a body of officials recruited from the labour ranks, from mine and mill and railway, but no longer working there. A most capable, and we believe on the whole a conscientious and honest class. But here is their danger, and that of the people they lead. As recent events have shown, the leaders' power and prominence come most into evidence in the time of agitation and unrest. So long as peaceable relations obtain between employer and employed they remain comparatively obscure. But when the strike breaks out, when a labour war is declared, the professional leaders find themselves in the limelight. They are besought by interviewers, their speeches are reported, their photographs appear in the daily paper. More than that, they have the intoxicating sense of power, as of generals whose word directs the movements of great armies. Every labour-leader is to-day face to face in his wilderness with this giant tempter. The lure before him is to win him place and power by sheer agitation; to make himself by that war of classes where he seems to have self by that war and so little to lose. There is no so much to gain and so little to lose. There is no greater temptation in the world to-day, and no greater danger. Pray God these trustees of their greater danger. To win here their inward fight; to win on this field of the soul the victory over self, with its paltry ambitions; to be inspired by God's love and not by the devil's hate; to be mediators of peace rather than instigators of war—this were achievement indeed! Here on this battlefield they stand to win or lose; to win or lose their place in history, their place as knights in the world's highest chivalry."

The Greek ambassador, speaking at the opening ceremony in Manchester of the British Fisheries and Greek Currant Industries Exhibition, said that currants had a very high dietetic value. He claimed that when they were mixed in certain proportions in the preparation of bread, the loaf produced provided a stimulant far more agreeable than strong drink.