

Poverty" helped to shape the course of his thinking. Lincoln's letters and speeches were among his favourites, too.

One night a big dock bruiser grabbed a package of tobacco off the counter, but before he could move a step Hughes had caught him under the jaw with his fist. His burly associates cheered the game little shopkeeper. They now came to him with their troubles and he was soon their friend, philosopher and guide.

For years the synonym for Australian Labour was strike. When the unions were merged into a national body Hughes was the unanimous choice of the husky stevedores for leader. He became the Great Restrainer. Never was influence of lip and brain over muscle and temper better demonstrated. The wild men of the wharves—the roughest crowd in all labour—were under his spell. This nimble-footed shopkeeper flouted them with his wit: ruled with his mind.

On a certain occasion five hundred of them were crowded into a building at Sydney yelling bloody murder and clamouring for violence. Suddenly the tiny figure of Hughes appeared on the platform before them. At