

Editorial Page of The Canadian Labor Press



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LABOR UNIONS AND MERCHANT

Fifty or more years ago the merchant was a hard-working, plain-living individual, his necessities governed by his business, his stock of goods by the demand of his trade. In those days wage workers were earning small wages for an extremely long work-day; their demands were limited by a small pay envelope; their amusement practically limited to conversation; seldom discarding his overalls, except to attend a funeral, marriage, or church, when he wore his tri-yearly Sunday best.

The demands of the wage workers, who constituted the great majority of consumers, limited the turnover and profits to the merchant, hence the status of the merchant was little if any better than the wage worker. Long hours and small income was the rule. With the rise of the labor unions came better wages and a shorter work-day. This was followed by an early closing movement of the merchants. Higher wages created a bigger demand for necessities and so-called luxuries. The profits were greater and his variety of stock greatly extended. By rapid disposal of his own stock he now has quantity, quality and variety; and above all, some leisure to enjoy life. The labor unions have raised the standard of living of all layers of society, the merchant being no exception to the rule.

What, then, does a strong labor movement mean to the merchant. Just this: It means that the wage worker has enough to spend for the necessities and some of the luxuries of life; a \$25 suit instead of a \$10 one; a \$3 hat instead of a 50 cent one; better furniture at home with other comforts; good seats at theatres, with a little saved against future debt accumulation.

A poorly paid non-union worker is brother to a pauper, that is, he is a poor customer at best—even if he can remain honest and pay his debts. The non-union worker would be still worse off if it were not that the labor unions were the means of his getting more money. When union scales increase the non-union worker can get a little more money, can creep a little closer to the union scale, getting something which he did not get before.

It is seldom you see a union worker begging; he is too proud, too self-respecting to do so. The union worker lives from 10 to 50 per cent better than the non-union worker. The union worker is the merchant's best friend.—Exchange.

EDUCATION OF GREAT VALUE

Economic education with the facts which science has accepted, attested, and gives up—in the greatest value to labor. Without education we would wander as one lost in a forest without a compass, going around and around in a never-ending circle, with no hope of an ultimate goal. Education gives us knowledge. It has marked the dangerous places in our social wanderings so that we avoid them and thus prevent the recurrence of a former disaster. Without education and experience our efforts would be aimless even should we have any desire for improvement.

Every manifestation of social unrest, every change in the structure of society, has its educational value and there is no limit to the field from which we make our observations and calculations. Things and occurrences, trifling in themselves, when rightly seen and rightly understood, may be fraught with great import and of great value to labor in its struggle toward higher things. Since education is what is most lacking in labor's equipment for this struggle, it ought to be the duty of every trade unionist to do all in his power to educate both himself and his fellows in a knowledge of economics. Advantage should be taken of every opportunity to acquire economic knowledge, and the meeting hall with its opportunities for discussion should not be neglected. Sometimes a great deal of valuable time is wasted at our meetings in discussing points of order and needless disputes on delicate points of parliamentary law; this could be avoided often by the chair, but in a great many cases it is caused by a dearth of subjects of sufficient interest to create intelligent discussion. If we had a little more education along economic lines, subjects for improving our minds with debate would be plentiful. Subjects of living interest affecting every one of us in a lesser or greater degree come to the observer's notice every day. Take for instance the subject of underpaid labor. What a field for economic education there is in that question alone; the crime against the worker committed by society and the crime against society committed by society itself.

The subjects of the benefits to be derived from a shorter workday is a source of perennial inspiration for debate and a splendid subject with which to impart economic knowledge. This field alone seems almost limitless. Since the whole force of human effort has been directed to the pursuit of leisure, the importance of discussing the advantages of a shorter workday is at once apparent and its value as a factor in economic education becomes appreciated. Above and beyond this labor must be educated to the fact that our aspirations toward higher social ideals can only be realized by co-operative action. When we have acquired an economic education, when we realize what our true position in society ought to be, it will be useless to us unless we know how a change can be effected. But an economic education will teach us that the power rests with ourselves to improve our conditions to a state undreamed of by the dreamiest of altruistic people. It will teach us also that a union of our forces at the ballot box will solve some of the economic problems that seem the most difficult of solution. Majority rules; we have the machinery if we had but the sense to run it. Economic education will supply this deficiency.—Exchange.

CONGRESS PRESIDENT AGAINST WAGE CUTS. In an interview at Toronto Tom Moore, president of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, stated employers in the building trades throughout the country are "unfair" in demanding that there be a reduction in wages as an attempt to lower the cost of living. He said the worker should not be called upon to share an undue proportion of the burden; that it was up to the employers to take less profits. "Wages did not go up high enough during the war to enable them to be lowered very much further now without lowering the standard of living," he remarked. "Well, who wants a lower standard of living? Has the working man got too high a standard of living now, or has the average well-to-do employer got it? If either one of them has it, surely it is not hard to guess which one it is."

FEDERAL LABOR MINISTER ADDRESSES OTTAWA AUDIENCE

Plain pronouncements on what was to be his policy in office as Minister of Labor were made by Hon. James Murdock, Minister of Labor, at the annual meeting and dinner of the Ottawa Board of Trade. It was the first time Mr. Murdock has publicly announced his views on certain pressing labor problems since his appointment, and in characteristic, deliberate manner he delivered some forcible remarks that left no doubt as to how he intends to act when dealing with many of the questions uppermost in the minds of labor today.

Mr. Murdock made an appeal for cohesive effort and determination by Canadians to overcome labor problems existing today. He had taken the office of Minister of Labor under conditions which had never existed before and co-operation was never so much required as now. He thought conditions seemed to have gone from bad to worse since Nov. 11, 1918. Two hundred thousand were out of employment and business in many respects was uncertain. People were told labor was largely responsible for some of the conditions today. There might be a substantial amount of truth in that statement. But he wanted to make a brief plea for labor. Education should make toward charity and recognition of the other fellow's rights. Many labor leaders were mistaken in believing that they were presenting the real views of labor. No business operation were required by Canada today. Labor could not provide this alone. Capital and Labor had to formulate a concrete plan that would benefit both.

Mr. Murdock referred to two of the basic principles in the report of the Conference Labor Committee, adopted at the Hamilton meeting of the Building and Construction Industries. These were: No business could last unless there was a substantial accumulation of reserves in order to provide for expansion, periods of depression and unfortunate experiences involving loss; secondly, on the other hand, employment was being entitled to expect a remuneration for their services which was more than sufficient to provide for a mere existence, and which would enable them to accumulate a surplus to meet contingencies, always provided that of scientific services have been rendered. The foregoing was the foundation of what should be written into any new agreement between labor and capital, thought Mr. Murdock. Too often, however, labor had been thoughtless. Perhaps the depression of the last few months had not been altogether an unmixed blessing. It would help people to think how to prevent a repetition of it.

Mr. Murdock declared that he did not intend to take sides but he hoped he might be able to bring a new viewpoint on labor questions. One thing that he did stress was the importance of validity of contracts. One of the unfortunate things in the past was that agreements had been made and then ignored. It was a Canadian to say the least. There was the practice of undertaking to "club one's friends" in other words the "sympathetic strike" should not be countenanced and as Minister of Labor he would promulgate this to the tens of thousands of labor men in Canada. An agreement was sacred and he would propose a doctrine that it was improper to use one's friends to force one's enemies.

The Minister of Labor said it had been charged that labor had adopted the practice of "showing up" in other words, had adopted the passive strike. His labor organization had taken the stand that this was unfair and inconsistent. No reputable organization countenanced this showing up to get even with the employer, and whether or not certain organizations believed it was unfair, posterity would say it was unfair. One of his first efforts as Minister of Labor would be to convince the rank and file that this was the fair and proper viewpoint. He appealed for labor to give honest work for a fair day's pay, and to look upon agreements as sacred. It would help to solve the numerous disputes of today. He would endeavor as Minister of Labor to bring about a better understanding along these lines.

He made it plain that he could not please everybody and he was not going to try. He was going to try and say the things that seemed in the best interests of all concerned. "It was a job for a big man," he declared. "The habit of some labor men originating grievances for their fellow men. Proper grievances were deserving of utmost consideration, but not the grievances originating in the fertile mind of some labor man, who, perhaps, had nothing else to do but earn his salary that way. He would tell them so in just as emphatic language."

MONTEVAL RAILROADERS ON SHORT TIME. When the Canadian Pacific Railway's Angus shops close down until February 6, practically no Lenoxy shops will be operating in the vicinity of Montreal, as the works at Point St. Charles, connected with the Grand Trunk System, are already closed and will not be opened until Monday. Railway employees, however, are not complaining, for they realize that if the shops were not shut down temporarily many men would have to be dismissed permanently.

MOVING MACHINES BUSY ON WAGES. Reductions in the wage scales of officers and men on U. S. shipping board vessels amounting to more than fifteen per cent, and effective Feb. 6, was announced by the board. The new scale which will run until next June 30 amounts to a cut of 15 per cent for deck officers, radio men and engineers, and of 25 per cent for the unlicensed personnel, including seamen and deck hands.

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COMPLETE JOURNAL. The wages on such goods as shoes, valises, etc., are being lowered very much further now without lowering the standard of living," he remarked. "Well, who wants a lower standard of living? Has the working man got too high a standard of living now, or has the average well-to-do employer got it? If either one of them has it, surely it is not hard to guess which one it is."

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT TO CALL CONFERENCE

The Melbourne correspondent of Reuter's says that, in further reference to a statement made by him yesterday that the Government had decided to invite representatives of employers and organized labor to meet and discuss the acute industrial crisis arising from the high cost of production, Premier Hughes declared that the present state of affairs was causing unemployment. The conference would consider Australia's impossible position which rested upon prices and wages created under war conditions that had now passed away. This matter, the Premier said, was affecting the construction of the Commonwealth's 12,000-ton ships for which Australian steel was preferred, but at prices comparable with those asked by foreign manufacturers. Reuter's Sydney, N.S.W., correspondent cables that the coal miners there, by a majority of four to one, have rejected a proposal to limit the working fortnight to nine days in lieu of 11. Which the proposal was advanced last autumn the mine owners contended that its adoption would bring disaster upon the coal mining industry of Australia.

WINNIPEG MODERATION LEAGUE REQUESTS. In a speech of an hour and a half's duration, Joseph Bernier, of St. Boniface, in the Manitoba Legislature, pressed the claims of the Moderation League for a referendum on the establishment of Government controlled liquor stores in the province. His resolution did not go to a vote, a debate on it being adjourned by John H. McConnell, Independent Farmer, who has already proclaimed himself an opponent of the proposal. Mr. Bernier made the claim that the proposed legislation would be in the interests of temperance, and would do away with such evils incidental to the present legislation as bootlegging, home brewing, and the drug habit. He also emphasized the revenue aspect of the matter. Bootleggers were making fortunes, and the home brewers and drug sellers were making big money, he said, and why should the Government rather than those people not get revenue which would convert its general deficit into a surplus and enable it to relieve the community of what he called "the terrible burden of taxation."

Several petitions opposing the Moderation League's proposition for a referendum on the establishment of Government liquor stores were presented. The move for a referendum was denounced by A. E. Kristjansson, Farmer member for St. George, when speaking in the debate on the reply to the speech from the Throne. All that would be done if the proposition carried, he said, would be to set back temperance work 25 years. He contended that the Moderation League's plea that the pro-

posed legislation was in the interests of temperance was not an honest plea, in his opinion, the proposal was a subtle attempt of the liquor interests, and not the moderate forces, to gain an advantage.

By refusing to attend a meeting called to consider the question of affiliation with the International Brotherhood of Railway Employees, members of the Canadian organization have precipitated a showdown. They declare emphatically that they will no longer send their money across the line, but will endeavor to support and build up a Canadian organization. The first clean break of members from the Brotherhood of Railway Employees took place this afternoon when switches of the London divisions of the Canadian National Railroad voted to secede. They have decided to affiliate with the Switchmen of America. J. D. Murray, of Vancouver, the only Canadian representative to the grand lodge, was present.

STRIKE THREATENED. A proposed reduction of wages by the wholesale butchers, if carried out, may precipitate a strike that will involve the meat trade in a large part of England. The slaughter men in London have declined to accept the proposals and a stoppage of work is already in progress.

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FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES WANT SALARIES NOT BONUS

General upward salary revision to replace the cost-of-living bonus will be requested from the Government by organized civil servants within the next few weeks. The time for the change would normally be April 1, from which the bonus is dated, but should the Government not be prepared for an early revision of salaries, continuation of the bonus would be recommended as a temporary measure until revision could be effected. In any case the Government would be asked to abolish the present distinction between married and single civil servants. Whatever revision would be made, would not necessarily affect all classes equally, the general feeling being expressed that some would require greater increases than others.

The basis for the request is mainly upon the fact that salaries today are prepared from what is called the theoretical normal of 1918, a normal which officers claim to be purely theoretical. They meet the argument that costs have decreased, with the statement that present costs are about 50 per cent above what was figured to be the theoretical normal. Another basis is the steady shrinking of the Service, with the constant application of the promotion system instead of new appointments, which should result eventually in something like a minimum of employees. For these, the Civil Service Federation and the Civil Service Association will ask a fair wage, an adequate superannuation measure, and just compensation for the settlement of difficulties.

ONTARIO GOVERNMENT NOT AID NEW EDUCATION CALL. The Ontario Government is preparing to undertake the financial burden of directly assisting the municipalities in carrying the cost of educating adolescents who, under new legislation, must continue attending school until 16 years of age. The matter was brought before Hon. E. H. Grant by a deputation from the Toronto Board of Education, and the minister, in point out that he was not in a position to recommend a special grant to the municipalities in this connection as part of a general scheme which all municipalities in the province might share—was not possible at present.

CLEVELAND OPEN-SHOP PRINTERS GET WAGES CUT. Wages of employees of a number of commercial printing houses here were cut 10 per cent, February 1, was learned. These shops, it is understood, include most of those having been working under open shop conditions since the strike last year. Compositors and pressmen, the highest paid of the employees, have an averaging \$45 for a 48-hour work week, an adequate superannuation measure, and just compensation for the settlement of difficulties.

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OUR NEW SERIAL

The Captives of the Kaid

By B. MARCHANT

SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS

Thirteen-year-old Lalla was the only one who never shrank from her Grandfather, Squire Trevor, of Oakhurst Manor. One day when visiting the picture gallery with one of the maids she came across a picture turned face to the wall. The maid told her it was the picture of the squire's eldest son, who had been drowned by his father, and had never been heard of since. The picture was turned for Lalla to see. What a nice kind face he had. "Perhaps if he had come back you would never be here at the Manor," said the maid. During a thunder storm Lalla is lost in the woods. She is found by a young sailor lad, who carries her towards home.

at the door the lad hurries away without waiting to be thanked. Circumstances lead to the belief that the sailor is the son of the Squire's eldest son.

"Which decidedly she hasn't got at the present minute," retorted Sir Basil testily, the very fact of his unwonted irritability bearing witness to his perturbation. "We can't be more than three miles from land, and the wind is in our favour for getting in—too late to show a clean pair of heels now to the shore, even if we wished to do so."

The mate dropped his voice to a lower key, though plainly he was urging something that his superior officer would not consent to, for Lalla saw her uncle shake his head with an unconvinced air; but as she only caught here and there a word of Davidson's, she could not even guess what his objections to going into harbour might portend.

"Natives—ladies on board—open sea, and mariners' luck"—nothing of this was capable of a satisfactory solution by her just then; so she dismissed it from her mind entirely for a time, and returned to the saloon to tell her mother that the head of the "Bygh" was turned for the land, and they were going to run into a harbour, if only they succeeded in finding it.

"How very nice that will be, for a storm is certainly impending, and I think it would be as well to get in the sea because very rough," replied Mrs. Trevor, who was a martyr to sea-sickness, and for that reason had engaged an experienced stewardess to attend upon herself and Lalla, instead of bringing a maid with her from the Manor.

"Poor Mummy, I'm glad that I am never sea-sick; it must be horrid. I hope they will find the harbour and get in all right, for I should dearly love to give Blaise a run across country, and see what the place is like, even though it doesn't appear very interesting from outside. Won't you come up on deck, Mother? I think the "Bygh" is really more bearable up there than down here—at least it is not so stuffy."

They went on deck for half an hour or more; but by that time the heavens had gathered blackness, and the wind came in long, swirling gusts that took their breath away, and made them glad to take refuge below.

The "Bygh" was skimming through the water now, like some white ocean bird, her white bow dipping and lifting as she cutted to the unfriendly land she was approaching so fast. The channel is visible, and if only the light should show for another hour, he would carry the vessel in triumphantly. It wanted more than that time to wind down; but this evening there were clouds of the gathering storm to be reckoned with, and already the light was dim and uncertain, while the wind was freshening to a gale. He was standing with the one glass to the glass, shouting his orders to the men at the wheel, while Davidson stood by steady grim and silent, his face as dim and uncertain as the light.

"We shall do it! We shall do it!" yelled Sir Basil, stamping with quite frantic delight, as the "Bygh" lifted on the crest of a big roller,

took the narrow channel between the pinnacle rock and the round-topped bluff.

"Yes, we shall do it safe enough; the trouble is, will the doing be any satisfaction in the end," muttered Davidson, under his breath, as he flew to obey an order from Sir Basil allowing to let the anchor go.

But before the command could be carried out, the darkness dropped like a black pall over ocean and land; then before those on board had recovered the momentary confusion of this sudden coming of night, there was heard a loud grating sound, a great shiver ran through the vessel, and those who manned her knew that the "Bygh" was aground.

CHAPTER X. What Ighil Saw. Twenty years before that memorable night, when the "Bygh" ran aground at the entrance of the cove—which was not the harbour of Arkis, despite the fact that it looked so much like it—there was living in a duar, or village, in that part of Suis, a miserly rich man named Sid 'el Bashir.

His duar stood high up in a sheltered valley about fifty miles from the coast; and he was rich in slaves, in cattle, and in horses, besides owning great stretches of organ forest, with olive yards, fig orchards, and wide-spread fields of maize and barley. But greatly as he valued his broad acres, and the live-stock of all kinds which helped to make those acres so productive and fruitful, he loved best of all yellow gold, and sparkling diamonds, with every precious stone of price that could be bought for money or money's worth. He lived poorly, and fared hardly all the days of his later years, in order that he might increase his wealth, and satisfy the craving for hoarded gain, which had come to be almost a mania with him.

There were no banks in that part of the world, or any other means of taking care of portable riches, such as silver and gold, otherwise than by hiding them, so it was the custom to dig holes in out-of-the-way places great stretches of organ forest, with olive yards, fig orchards, and wide-spread fields of maize and barley. But greatly as he valued his broad acres, and the live-stock of all kinds which helped to make those acres so productive and fruitful, he loved best of all yellow gold, and sparkling diamonds, with every precious stone of price that could be bought for money or money's worth. He lived poorly, and fared hardly all the days of his later years, in order that he might increase his wealth, and satisfy the craving for hoarded gain, which had come to be almost a mania with him.

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in itself a calamity. When, therefore, he saw his master starting off upon another of these mysterious journeys, Ighil at once resolved that he would go too, so that he might see for himself what happened.

Keeping so far in the rear that neither Sid 'el Bashir nor the two slaves could catch sight of him, the little black boy trotted after the travellers, following them past the sheep and cattle inclosures immediately surrounding the duar, across the fig orchards and grain fields, into the forests of prickly oak, gumistus, and arbutus that clothed the steep hill-side.

"They go to a soko," he whispered to himself, as, panting and perspiring, he trailed along in the wake of the travellers; but his eyes shone with delight, and his heaving breast was filled with a most resolute determination to see the end of this business at whatever cost to himself. A soko was a country market where slaves and cattle, horses and sheep, were bought and sold, with every other conceivable article to be had in that sparsely settled region; and Ighil wanted to see a soko more than he wanted anything, saving, indeed, the father he had so strangely lost.

That he remembered later, as the sun gave place to thickets of thorny scrub, and grass a long that his small legs had hard work to struggle through it, that a soko had been held in the district only one moon previously, and that Sid 'el Bashir had sold five hundred head of cattle, three hundred horses, and a hundred slaves—both men and women; so that this subvival, or morning's ride, could scarcely be taken for the sake of attending a market, since he was by this time so far from Sid 'el Bashir's duar as to be completely lost, and his only chance of ever finding himself again lay in taking care not to lose sight of the party in front. So he toiled on still, a very tired and hungry boy, but with unabated curiosity.

His efforts were rewarded presently by seeing the party halt, whilst Sid 'el Bashir descended from his mule, and became actively engaged in directing the efforts of the two slaves, who were now digging a hole under the shadow of a big boulder. Both the slaves appeared tired with their long tramp from the duar in the hot sunshine, for Sid 'el Bashir never spared any thing or anyone belonging to him. One of them was more exhausted than the other, or appeared to be, for he kept falling down, and did not move or even wince when his master kicked him. Ighil, who, hidden by the long grass and scrub, had kept quite close, believed in his own mind that the slave was shamming. His name was Hashem, and Sid 'el Bashir had bought him at the last soko but one, taking him in exchange for a couple of broken-winded mules; a great bargain, and one that the cheating old miser had chuckled over ever since, although, had he but known it, it was one he was to pay dearly for in the end.

Presently Sid 'el Bashir left off kicking Hashem, who lay spread out and limp as if already dead, and hurried to help the other slave in finishing the hole, and hiding the mule's burden therein.

When this was done, the hole was filled up again, and grass and scrub arranged over it to lend a natural, undisturbed appearance to the spot; then, without a minute's warning of what he was going to do, Sid 'el Bashir cocked his long gun, and coolly shot his patient helper through the heart.

The barrel had not done smothering the death-cry of the murdered slave was still ringing in Ighil's horrified ears, when, with a snarling growl like an enraged wild beast, Hashem sprang upon the old miser from behind.

Taken quite unawares, for Sid 'el Bashir had believed Hashem to be dying, if not already dead—he was unable even to draw a dagger in self-defence; and it was a double tragedy which Ighil saw that morning on the hills.

He understood then why it was his own death-loved and sorely-loved father had never come back to cheer the heart of his little girl, for it was plain the poor black had been killed by his master, even as the one Ighil had seen die but a few minutes before.

But now Sid 'el Bashir himself was dead, and his lean old body was hastily stripped by Hashem, who was apparently searching for something which he supposed to be hidden on the dead man's person.

Judging by his extravagant capers of delight, he found the for which he had searched, as Ighil saw him tuck some object, like a strip of parchment, into the ragged loincloth which was the only garment he wore; then, without further loss of time, he proceeded to dig up the sacks and treasure which had just been buried; and, loading the burden once more on to the back of the mule, he donned the flowing garments of his dead master, and, mounting the other mule, rode slowly away by the opposite way to which he had come.

Again Ighil started in pursuit; not so much from curiosity as from an instinct of self-preservation; for he dared not stay alone in the wilderness, where Sid 'el Bashir and the murdered slave lay with dead faces turned upward to the sky. There would be "sokas" coming to the feast, with hyenas and leopards for companions by and by; and if provisions ran short, who could tell but that the wild beasts might not slacken their hunger on the little black boy who had wandered so far from his duar.

But what are two legs compared to four—especially when the two belong to a little black boy, who had started on his travels without any breakfast!

It was the very longest journey Ighil had ever undertaken, and he was so thoroughly lost that the most he could hope for was that he might keep the mules in sight, until he reached some duar where he could rest and shelter.

But the haunts of men were the very places that Hashem most desired to shun; and as the country, through which he travelled, became continually wilder and more broken, Ighil was soon filled with complete despair, and faced with the dreadful alternative of either starving and being eaten by the wild beasts of the desert, or discovering himself to Hashem and being killed by him. Of the two fates, Ighil thought he would prefer to take his chance with the denizens of the wilds; but, in the end, choice in the matter was taken from him. The two mules had been going slower and slower, as if they too were

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NEW BANKRUPTCY LAW PROTECTS WORKERS' WAGES

Washington.—Under the new bankruptcy laws money due as wages or salaries which employers sometimes exact from workers will not be dischargeable in bankruptcy. Employers who resume business after going through bankruptcy will still be liable for the money due their workers at the time they fail. Stalesmen will benefit by the law as well as manual workers. Under the former bankruptcy law the worker was regarded as an ordinary creditor and money due whatever to collect the payment of wages and from speculating with money borrowed from their employees. Bankrupt employers can now be held for wages in the bankruptcy business after their discharge from bankruptcy.

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Industrial Review From Many Sources



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OVERSEAS

Continued from page 1.

group have written to the prime minister suggesting legislation in the coming session of parliament to establish peace in industry.

The petition is signed by the following members: Messrs. J. A. Suedou (chairman, N.P.P.), Clem. A. Edwards, J. F. Green, C. E. Stanton, J. Walton, T. E. Case, E. Lewis (N.U.T.), J. Edwards (N.U.T.), Sir Edgar Jones (N.U.T.), Captain Loseby, M.C., Captain E. Gee, V.C., Captain E. A. Bagley, and Messrs. A. F. Jephcott and C. Jenson (acting hon. secretaries).

It is the aim of the petitioners to secure a restoration of confidence between buyers and sellers, employers and workers.

Most industrial disputes, whether caused by strikes or lockouts (they say) are nearly as disastrous to the public as civil war; they inflict enormous suffering and loss on millions of people in no way responsible for them; and these innocent sufferers have a right to ask parliament to protect them from the effects of other people's quarrels.

We believe this protection could best be afforded by compelling those taking part in industrial disputes that inflict injury on any section of the public to submit their differences to specially appointed industrial courts; that the arguments and evidence of both sides should be stated on oath, and that the decisions given should be binding on both sides under penalties.

Reference is made to the fact that thousands of workers refuse to join trade unions because they may be called upon to strike as a result of the action of extremists, and also to the fact that thousands are leaving their unions. The petition adds: "We realize that unemployment cannot be effectively solved without the most complete organization amongst both workers and employers, and we fear that this disorganization may tempt unscrupulous employers to re-establish the old sweating conditions of pre-war days, and so compel the good employers, by unfair competition, to follow their example."

Another important fact is the difficult position many honest trade union officials are placed in by the competition of the extremists, which often compels them to choose between being hounded out of their unions, to which they may have given years of faithful service, or agreeing to policies they know to be wrong.

In conclusion, the petitioners ask the government to introduce legislation of their own, or to give facilities for the "Industrial Armistice" Bill, introduced at the end of last session.

TRADE BOARDS.
If the whole of Trade Unionism does not rise like one man and declare that Trade Boards must stay, it will be betraying the most dedicated members of the community," said Eldred Hallas, M.P., at a meeting held in the Birmingham Town Hall to protest against the attack on the Trade Boards.

Referring to the shameful conditions existing locally before the Trade Boards were set up, Hallas said he had gone into hovels where a man and his wife and child were carding hanks and eyes, and the total sum earned by their combined labour in an hour was three shillings.

"We have to realize that in this matter we are our brothers' keepers," declared Jack Jones, M.P., in a fighting speech. The Trade Boards were not ideal, he continued, but they were a big step forward. They stood for the principle that a decent standard of living for the producers must be the basis of industry.

If Trade Boards went, it would be the unscrupulous and merciless employer who would dictate conditions to the workers.

Miss Madeline Symons said that even in the event of the Cave Committee reporting in favour of the Trade Boards, there was no guarantee that the present Government would honour the findings of its own committee.

The meeting unanimously carried a resolution demanding that existing Trade Boards be retained with all their present powers, and that new Boards be established in all trades in which the workers are not to protect their interests by trade union organization.

ACTORS' CONTRACT
Representatives of the Society of West-End Theatre Managers have met representatives of the Actors' Association.

After a friendly discussion, the managers stated that the Actors' Association had misconstrued their letter, and that the Society of West-End Theatre Managers had no intention of repudiating the Valentine Standard Contract.

The managers wished merely to point out that they found it impossible to enforce the contract on all their members in its entirety.

JONES' OPINION.
In a few weeks' time the workers of this country will be trooping to the polls," said Jack Jones, M.P., at a meeting. "And no longer have they to decide whether Collins or Short is their friend. In every industrial centre in the country they will have the chance of deciding between the robbers and the robbed."

The Labour Party was out to establish the principle that the people who made the wealth of the country were good enough to make its laws. The Prime Minister's slogan to his followers would be, "For God's sake, ladies and gentlemen, let us hang together, or there is grave danger that we shall hang separately."

But some of Labour's enemies have not the wind up," said Jones. "Sir George Younger says, 'For God's sake don't let us have an election yet.' If he thought he could win, he would have an election tomorrow."

Lord Morley had prophesied in 1905 that the political fight of the future would be between the Haves and the Have-Nots. That fight was now proceeding.

STONEMASONS' TROUBLE.
Owing to a breach of faith on the part of the masters, the Cornish stonemasons are on strike against a proposed cut of 4d. an hour. Both sides recently signed an agreement which, albeit a sliding scale, ne-

gording to prices, would have stabilized wages until the end of February, when an estimated reduction of 1 1/2d. an hour would have come into operation.

The masters, for reasons best known to themselves, later resolved to violate this agreement and to enforce a reduction of 4d. an hour as from January 1.

This the men declined to accept, and the strike was the consequence.

LAY OFF IMMINENT.
Nearly 3,000 men are slated for discharge from Rosyth Royal Dockyard during the next three months. This will result in a saving of one hundred thousand pounds annually.

GOVERNMENT ATTITUDE ON HELD-UP CONTRACTS

No action has yet been taken by the Government toward the commencement of work on certain contracts, awarded by the late Government, and on which instructions were issued either to commence or to stop work where such was already under way. Among these were the contracts for the construction of an ice-breaker at the Vickers yards in Montreal, and the building of dry docks at Vancouver, B.C. Investigations are understood to be under way by the Public Works Department as to the advisability and necessity of proceeding with the drydock contracts at present and under present conditions. Until these investigations are completed no work is to be done.

In regard to the ice-breaker contract, regarding which a deputation from Montreal met the Prime Minister and the Minister of Labor it is understood that the Montreal men were informed that the Government did not intend to present ordering the contract to be proceeded with as a means of combating unemployment. The matter of unemployment relief, it was stated, was being cared for separately and this and other contracts were being reviewed before there was any decision as to whether or not work on them was to be allowed to proceed.

At Vancouver the Premier received numerous protests from public bodies in the Ottawa order which has caused a cessation of work on the floating drydock here. He is investigating the drydock problem and also other Government projects during his stay.

MISREPRESENTATIONS ARE BEING MADE

That the return to normal prosperity is being seriously delayed, and that inconceivable harm is resulting from misinterpretation of the actual situation as regards the farmer in the United States was the statement made today by E. A. Strout, President of the Strout Farm Agency, Inc., which has headquarters in New York City and nearly 700 local offices throughout the United States and Canada.

"A wholly false impression regarding the situation is being developed," said Mr. Strout, "in that what is undoubtedly true of a certain class of farmers is made to appear as true to all engaged in farming. As a matter of fact, conditions as they affect the farmer generally are good when compared with almost any other industry in the country today. The one-crop farmer working on a high price is raising grain or cotton. For instance, he has suffered a serious setback. But the average small general farmer with eight to a dozen cows, a few hogs and sheep, a flock of poultry and with fair-price land and a good diversified crop is in a pretty comfortable position."

"The high cost of labor, which is the determining factor in so many industries, cuts a very small figure where the general farmer is concerned. For government statistics show that of the more than 9,000,000 farms in this country, only about 7 per cent. employ hired labor in any form. That means that more than 90 per cent. of the farms are actually operated through the high cost of labor, because the labor they are buying is their own, and the diversified products of their farms, despite reduced prices, are giving them a good labor income."

"On the average dairy farm there are from eight to twelve cows, and practically all the work on that farm is done by the owner and members of his family. A good deal of the feed for the stock is produced on the farm, and in addition to the dairy products, there are certain farm products, eggs, poultry, etc., that can be sold in the local markets quite as readily as can milk and cream and butter. Many general farmers raise a few acres of sweet corn, often on land worth from \$35 to \$50 an acre, and the records show that they receive from the cannery for their sweet corn at the rate of as much for one acre from their own land as the one-crop dent corn farmer in Iowa, for instance, receives from two acres of his 320-acre land. And the man who raises sweet corn is at no time in fear of disaster, because even if his sweet corn crop fails, which it is not likely to do, he will still have his 'guin,' giving him two crops a day with a ready market right at home."

"An example of what is being done on many small general farms at the present time has just been made known by G. W. Mapes, who owns and operates a small farm in Orange County, N.Y. About the only help Mr. Mapes has on his farm is his 18-year-old grandson, and at the present time, Mr. Mapes says the grandson is doing practically all the work. They keep 10 cows and 1,500 hens. The income from that farm in the month of December was approximately \$1,000 of which about one-half was labor income. Mr. Mapes says that while December was admittedly a big month with him, he has had a good balance on the right side of the ledger every month last year."

"There are a good many families in the cities and industrial towns whose labor income has given them a mighty scant living during the past year. The general farmer usually counts his labor income above the rest of his. His farm provides him a good home, with shelter, fuel and a large portion of the food required for his family. On the whole, his condition at this time is markedly better than the situation of the average man in city or town."

ONTARIO CONGRESS EXECUTIVE

Continued from page 1.

iteration of our demands for public ownership and operation of all public utilities. Labor representation on appointed commissions and especially on the Hydro Electric Commission. Protest against the unnecessary use of the Dominion Police at the request of Provincial authorities in the Thorold strike. Consideration of aid in developing Co-operative Societies. Protest against the arbitrary fixing of low wages on highway construction. An Act to license Barbers.

In speaking Pres. Moore asked for provision for an old age Pensions Act and an amendment to the Ontario Temperance Act to permit the sale of beer and wines, under a license system, in Ontario, in discussing legislation to be introduced at the coming session of the Legislature, which opens on February 14. Mr. Moore declared that the trades unionists of the province expected consideration of these matters by the Legislature. The delegation urged that the Provincial Government recognize its moral obligations as a province of the Dominion and enact as much of the legislation as possible.

On the 8-hour day legislation the Premier pointed out the difficulty of enforcing it in a single province.

The suggestion was that it should not be operative until at least surrounding provinces, or perhaps the Dominion, enacted a nation-wide law.

The suggestion of legislation of light beer and wine licenses, Premier Drury pointed out that the law as at present in effect was passed by the people themselves, and the proper form for the Laborites in this connection was before the people, who, if there was to be a change in law, must be educated to sanctioning such change.

The understanding the labor men got from discussion of suggested proportional representative legislation was that a bill would be introduced during the coming session to give the electoral system a tryout in one or two urban and rural ridings. Premier Drury said afterwards that such action was not improbable. Mentioned in that connection, however, were Toronto and Ottawa and surrounding districts. A report of a special committee dealing with the subject previously recommended one of the Middlesex ridings as a suitable place for a rural experiment.

All of the balance of the suggested programme of legislation, according to both the Premier and Mr. Moore, received very sympathetic hearing.

BENEFITS OF TREES ON PRAIRIE FARMS

There are several ways in which plantations of trees benefit the prairie settler, the most important of which are the following:—

- 1 They afford shelter from the wind to crops, buildings, and stock.
- 2 They collect and hold the snow during the winter, preventing it from banking up around buildings.
- 3 They preserve and retain the moisture in the soil by breaking the force of the hot winds in summer thus retarding evaporation. The snow held by them in the winter, melting in the spring, furnishes a great deal of moisture to the land in the immediate vicinity which otherwise it would not retain.
- 4 Plantations will supply fuel, fencing material, and wood for repairs.

5 They are of aesthetic value, beautifying the landscape and making life on the prairie much more pleasant and less monotonous.

6 They greatly add to the money value of the farm. There is not the slightest doubt that a farm which had on it a well managed and productive woodlot of a few acres would, other conditions considered equal, sell for more than one without trees.

From Bulletin No. 1 "Tree Planting on the Prairies," issued free by the Director of Forestry, Ottawa.

RAILROAD PATROLMEN MEET.

Chicago.—At the recent convention of the Brotherhood of Railroad Patrolmen, held in this city, Charles C. Copeland was re-elected grand president and A. C. Berndt grand secretary (re-elected), both for terms of four years. Every local was represented at the meeting. By a change in the constitution the brotherhood will meet hereafter every four years, the next convention being held in St. Louis, November 22, 1925.

DEMAND BETTER FOOD.

Edmonds, Wash.—Over 125 lumbermen in one of the camps of the Admiralty logging company have quit work because their repeated requests for better food were not complied with.

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