

The sword may strike the shackles from the limb of the slave, but it is education and organization that make of him a free man.

LABOR'S RIGHTS IN DANGER.

Some of the recently rendered court decisions sound like death-knells upon the grave of labor's rights. About the most interesting, and perhaps the one that will be remembered for some time to come, is the decision rendered by Judge Tallman in the case of Simpson Mill Co. vs. the Timberworkers and Shingle Weavers union in Seattle last week.

According to the reports, the decision makes every member of the union liable for damages in case it is proved that picketing has been practised. The above mentioned unions and their members were acquitted, not because the right of picketing was recognized, but because there was no evidence that they had picketed the mill in question. Had the plaintiff been able to prove that the strikers had tried to prevent the scabs from working, the judge would have slammed a fine on the unions and its individual members, which would have devoured every penny's worth of wealth any of them might have possessed.

The significance of the decision, which is resting on the precedence laid down by the Supreme Court of Washington in last July, is greater than many of the workers may think, as it will have the effect of disrupting the organizations, by threatening to make the meagre belongings of the members liable for expropriation!

If a man intends to join a union under this decision, he assumes the responsibility that he would in any individual business enterprise, although it has been declared time after time that the labor power is not a commodity, nor an article of commerce.

It seems to us that the wires are crossed somewhere, and we suspect that the crossing is intentional.

Here in Oregon, for instance, the last legislature decreed that the right to picket the places where the workers are on strike shall not be abridged. But what are the actual facts? Is the picketing right guarded in Astoria? Should not all the laws be enforced? It seems that this particular law is not receiving the attention of the authorities it should receive.

The soldiers, while here on guard duty, ought to protect the workers from any molestation in picketing, but we are sorry to say that the contrary is true.

What is the answer of those whose duty it is to uphold the laws?

WHY THE STRIKE

Every once in a while you hear some one remark, "I don't see why the shipyard workers are striking when they are getting \$6 per day for 8 hours."

A lot of people seem to have this idea. Fact is the majority of these workers were getting \$2.80 per day when they struck. A few of the skilled mechanics were receiving \$6 and some of them more per day.

Then you hear a lot about the average wage that was paid. You see if you take a skilled worker and pay him \$6 per day and an unskilled man and pay him \$2.80 the average is \$4.40 per day. But the man who gets \$2.80 real money can't buy any groceries or pay any rent or buy and clothes on the strength of the imaginary \$1.60 increase.

And also remember that since they began building ships in Portland the workers here have been asked by the bosses to work for from fifty cents to one dollar per day less than was paid for the same work in Seattle and San Francisco.

The bosses raised the wages from 20 cents per hour to the rate of \$2.80 per day when they were forced to do so. The bosses have consistently and persistently refused to deal with the men collectively. The bosses have discriminated against men because they became members of labor organizations. The workers know the calibre of the men they are dealing with and they know that the old working conditions will be enforced at the first available opportunity if there is no agreement signed which will prevent it, which explains the insistence of the workers for the Union Shop, or "closed shop" as it is commonly known.

Every time one of these steel vessels slides down the ways into the water the boss makes a clean profit of from \$150,000 to \$200,000 and there is little wonder that the man who helped

build it and is trying to support a family on \$2.80 per day is dissatisfied.

In view of the previous actions of the bosses it is no wonder the men struck. The wonder is they didn't strike long ago.—Labor Press.

LABOR'S "FRIENDS" AND OTHERS.

It is not necessary to condone all of the methods employed in labor's behalf to justify our unalterable stand with the cause of the workers. It must be kept in mind that when the economic interests of the owning class and those of the disinherited workers clash, war results, and war is not scrupulous about obeying laws. But for those who sacrifice comfort and economic security in their service to the cause of labor we have unbounded admiration. On the other hand, we entertain nothing but contempt for the officials, the theoretical representatives of the people, who write polished homilies about the ethics of labor while they permit industrial brigands to crucify the workers.

THE CITIZEN'S RIGHT.

"I do not propose to sit down and let any man govern me unless I have at least a voice in it. If he does not heed my advice, I propose to make it as unpleasant for him as I can."—Woodrow Wilson in "The New Freedom."

In the future society the private ownership of natural resources by individuals will be regarded with the same distaste with which we today regard the ownership of one man by another.—Marx.

WHO ARE TRAITORS BLOCKING WAR GAME?

Profiteers Who Gorge While Workers Are Doled Out Wage That Will Not Buy Enough Food.

Who are the traitors? Are they the members of the I. W. W. or the captains of industry? President Wilson tells the story when he says the shipowners "are doing everything that high freight charges can do to make the war a failure. * * * Prices mean the same thing everywhere now * * * whether it is the Government that pays them or not."

Bisbee, Arizona, is suffering from the same fact of which the President is complaining. The greed of the industrial, commercial and financial kings is the trouble in Bisbee as well as in foreign transportation. The shipowners have raised the freight rates. There is absolutely no reason for it. This act is as diabolical as the bottomless pit. Their cargoes and bottoms are insured against loss. The bulk carried is enormously increased. The carrying cost per ton is less than ever before, but the charges are outrageously high.

This fact, the President says, is "natural enough, because the commercial processes which we are content to see operate in ordinary times have, without sufficient thought, been continued into a period where they have no proper place. * * * We must make prices to the public the same as the prices to the Government."

There is but one way to make freight prices the same to the public as they are to the Government, and that is for the Government to take over, own and operate the business of transportation in time of peace as well as war. This holds good alike on land and water transportation. The President had as well tell a rattlesnake to put only a taint of poison in its fangs as to tell a merchant to add only a little unjust profit to his charges.

Greed will not listen to the admonitions of the President, however just they may be. Greed knows only how to gorge. Gorging increases greed. Greed thrives on land and sea alike.

The mine owners and merchants at Bisbee are as viciously greedy as are the merchants of the high seas. The prices of food in Bisbee are soaring as high as the freight charges on the Atlantic. The I. W. W. boys must have food if they work. They cannot buy sufficient food

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INDUSTRIAL UNREST WILL BE PROBED

Will Investigate British Methods, Including Organization of Employes and Employers Now Unorganized.

Alarmed by the growing unrest of workers, the United States Government has decided to look into the matter and to develop if possible some plan that will stabilize conditions without doing injustice to workers or employers.

It is reported that the government's policy will be:

To extend to a number of industries having war contracts the present system of wage adjustment boards which have been created for cantonment construction, shipbuilding, longshoremen's work and Army and Navy clothing production;

To increase the number of War Department contracts containing clauses providing that in case of suspension of work by strikes the Secretary of War shall settle the disputes;

To enforce agreements with industries for whose products standard prices are fixed not to reduce wages;

To encourage employers groups to deal collectively with labor demands, and

To press informally for adjustment of disagreements before they reach the strike stage, under the implied pressure of the government's war power to commandeer and operate plants.

These practices already are in effect on a small scale, having been developed gradually to deal with specific labor problems as they arose. They have failed to prevent many walkouts, however, despite the government's recognition in most cases of the right of labor's demand for higher pay to meet the increased cost of living.

Continued evidence that employes, and employers were not working in harmony led government officials and their advisers of the Council of National Defense to look for a more fundamental solution. With this end in view, special study is being given British government methods by many American officials, including Secretary Baker, Secretary Wilson, Samuel Gompers, chairman of the Defense Council's labor committee, and Felix Frankfurter, special assistant to Secretary Baker for labor adjustments and secretary of the new labor investigating committee.

While recognizing that British methods may not be adaptable entirely to American labor conditions, government officials are

HEARTBROKEN FOR WANT OF CHILD LABOR

BALTIMORE.—W. E. Robinson, a Bear, Md., canner, is heartbroken because the Keating-Owen child labor law has forced him to employ men and women instead of little children. In a letter to a local newspaper Mr. Robinson says:

"Since the first of September I have not permitted these boys and girls to work in the factory. They are healthful, industrious youngsters, and the work they have been doing was very beneficial to them, mentally and physically. But my heart aches for them now. Their parents are all at work in the factory. Where are these husky boys and girls; what are they doing?"

"The advocates of this child labor law have undertaken a serious responsibility. I sincerely trust the supreme court of the United States will declare it unconstitutional, and I hope congress can wake up to the absurdity of it, as it now stands, and repeal or at least modify it."

When the working class awakens to the fact that the interests of capital and labor are not identical, but will demand and receive a greater share of the comforts of life, then, we believe, civilization will have won a victory over ignorance and equal justice will prevail.

giving special attention to the following British practices:

Centralization of administration of all labor matters affecting war production in a single government department.

Entrusting of mediation of troubles reaching the strike stage to another branch.

Government promotion of the organization of labor now unorganized and of employers by industries, to make collective agreements possible.

Heavy tax levies on war profits, which some observers consider a prime cause of labor unrest.

The Defense Council's labor committee, headed by Samuel Gompers, will co-operate in any movement to stabilize labor conditions, but cannot be expected to prevent strikes or force mediation, except by its general advocacy of industrial peace as a war policy. Efforts of the subcommittee on conciliation, of which V. Everett Macy is chairman, have been limited by the fact that it lacks government authority.

Considerable effective work looking to avoidance of strikes and consequent suspension of war production has been done by contracts specifying that the Secretary of War shall adjust controversies in case they interfere seriously with production. In many cases also they have been able to mediate threatened labor disputes and avoid strikes.

The Shipping Board is considering an attempt to organize shipbuilders under an agreement not to lure workmen from one plant to another, and there has been considerable discussion among officials of other departments of a nation-wide movement to stabilize labor conditions in that way.

Employers' interests represented by the National Industrial Conference Board are urging the government to call a conference of labor leaders, including those not affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, to ratify an agreement which includes a provision against changing conditions of open or closed shops during the war. Since this would virtually suspend the labor organization movement, it is opposed by organized labor.

The Federation of Labor has no well-formulated new features of a programme to promote harmony between employers and employes for the war emergency. Most leaders advocate a more thorough organization of employes in each industry in order that wage scales might be uniform throughout the industry and any government proposal for employers' associations probably will receive strong support from the labor men. Union leaders also look with favor on the system of adjustment boards representing in their membership the government, the employers and the employe, having found that the few boards of this kind already established have settled disputes satisfactorily.

THE BRITISH CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT

(By Harry W. Laidler)

It was a Sunday afternoon in November, 1843. The place was Rochdale, England, a growing industrial town hard by capitalism's birthplace, the city of Manchester. The times were dark with misery for the nation's workers. They seemed that afternoon especially dark to Rochdale's flannel weavers, who had just emerged from an unsuccessful strike. Twenty-eight of them were gathered together in the Chartist's Reading Room to discuss what could be done.

Some of the twenty-eight were Chartists who had been fighting with might and main for the political rights of the workers. Some were Owenite Socialists whose vision was a cooperative brotherhood. Some were just plain, unphilosophical weavers chained hand and foot by the credit system of the "truck" store and by the wage system—then at its worst.

Many were the remedial schemes proposed. One found favor. It was to start, as soon as capital permitted, a co-operative store of the workers, by the workers, for the workers, which immediately might free its members from dependence on exploiting merchants and from the enslavement of the credit system; which ultimately might lead to the abolition of the wage system, and "so arrange the powers of production, distribution, education and government as to create a self-supporting home colony."

Their dream seemed indeed Utopian. The dreamers were poor. They were unschooled. And who had ever heard of the working class controlling its own industrial affairs? But these dreamers not only had vision, they also had their share of good horse sense and bulldog resolution.

Two pence a week this little band resolved to put aside for the venture. The two pence gradually grew to \$140, and with that a dilapidated old store in back street known as Toad Lane, Rochdale, was hired. The Rochdale Pioneers, as they were called, bought a few packages of flour, sugar, butter and oatmeal with which to supply the store, and finally got up sufficient courage to fling open the doors amid the jeers of surrounding store keepers and the cat calls of street urchins. Mondays and Saturday nights the store was kept open. Its first week's sales amounted to the munificent sum of \$10. One member acted as salesman, one as cashier, another as secretary and the fourth as treasurer. Tenderly the members coaxed along their small establishment. Many a conference was held over its probable demise.

It did not die, however. To the surprise and wrath of merchants and the joy of the few faithful, it actually grew.

In 1914, seventy years after, if the original Pioneers had been still alive, they would have found that their dream had grown in England and Scotland into no less than 1,400 retail stores; into two enormous wholesale societies which supplied the retail "coops" with almost every conceivable article of common use, and which was in turn supplied from over a half hundred factories, wholesale and retail stores of no less than \$650,000,000 and a membership of over 3,000,000—comprising, with the families of the members, between one-fourth and one-fifth of the population of Great Britain!

They would have discovered that the little capital of \$140 had grown into one of over \$300,000,000; that the four employees had increased to nearly 150,000, and that the surplus divided at the end of the year to the workers who purchased their supplies from the "coops" had jumped from a few paltry dollars to more than \$71,000,000!

Incidentally they would have learned that the co-operative movement was among the largest single buyers of produce from England on the New York Produce Exchange and the largest shipper of butter from Ireland; that it possessed the greatest tea warehouse and the most extensive shoe factory in the United Kingdom; that it had

HOW FARMERS SAVE MONEY ON INSURANCE

The Farmers' Mutual Insurance Company, of Emmelaw, Washington, was organized in 1898. Number of members on May 1, 1917, 7,000. Insurance in force, \$11,000,000; losses paid, in year 1916, \$36,349.25.

This organization is a protection and not a speculation; it is not owned by stockholders, it is owned by the policy holders. It has furnished insurance to its members for that length of time at about 33 per cent of stock company rates, a saving of 67 per cent, which is no small item.

As the name indicates, this is a farmers' institution and is managed by farmers. We insure only farm and village property, country churches and school houses, but no business houses of any kind, even in the country.

The cost is \$2.00 for membership, which holds good for lifetime, and entitles the member to a vote at any of the meetings. A yearly contingent of 20 cents per \$100 insurance is collected in January of each year.

Policies are written for five years; at the expiration a fee of \$1.00 is charged for reinstatement.

If at any time caused by heavy fires we should run short of funds then the Board of Trustees have power to levy an assessment to cover the shortage. We have had only one assessment in the last seven years.

While we do not claim to be the strongest company as far as membership and amount of insurance is concerned, we do claim to be the cheapest, safest and most conservative of any of them.

The reason that insurance in this company can be had at such small cost to the policy holders is that we pay our officers a very small salary, according to the amount of work they perform, and because of the very conservative risks taken. No buildings in cities, no homes with terra cotta or stovepipes, and insure for only two-thirds of the cash value.

Our best recommendation is the satisfaction of our old members; ask any of them.

FORCED ARBITRATION NO LABOR SOLUTION

Cincinnati.—"The more we become acquainted with conditions affecting trade unionists under compulsory arbitration in Australia and New Zealand, the more cause we have for being on the alert to prevent any such system being introduced in America, regardless of the form in which it may be advocated," says Editor Frey in the International Moulders' Journal.

"The government report for the month of July, 1916, prepared by the department of labor and industrial New South Wales, indicates that the law has not enabled the governmental machinery, operating through the courts, to punish strikers if this is deemed advisable.

With the passing of many other befogging maxims and precepts we note the widespread unbelief in the old saying that the king (or kaiser, as the case may be) can do no wrong.

We no longer revere a ruler because we believe that he rules by divine right. It would seem, therefore, that even the Henry Dubbs, as the unthinking working men are called—are beginning to think, to use the body and its various animal faculties have been engaged in the tasks set upon them by the employing class.

its buyers in every part of the world; that it owned thousands of acres of farm land; that it chartered its own ships, tea estates in Ceylon and factories in Australia and had its agents in dozens of countries all over the world; that it was spending thousands of dollars annually for educational purposes, was growing five or six times faster than the British population, and that it was proving such a thorn in the flesh of the British merchant class that, at a recent convention in Glasgow, it was described by them as "the devil let loose upon trade."