

THE LUMBERJACK

Education
Organization
Emancipation



Freedom in
Industrial
Democracy

Published Weekly by National Industrial Union of Forest and Lumber Workers, Southern District.

Offices of Publication:
335 Carondelet Street, New Orleans, La.;
1194 Gould Avenue, Alexandria, Louisiana.
COVINGTON HALL, Editor.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

Yearly, United States	\$1.00
Six Months, United States	.50
Foreign, Yearly	1.50
Bundle Orders, Per Copy (in Canada)	.02 1/2
Bundle Orders, Per Copy (in United States)	.02
Bundles, Orders of 500 or more (Spot Cash) Per Copy	.01 1/2
Single Copies	.05

Cash must accompany all orders.

Please make all checks and money orders payable to THE LUMBERJACK (not to individuals), Alexandria, La.

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Entered as Second-Class Mail Matter, January 9th, 1913, at the Post Office at Alexandria, La., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

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EDITORIALS

ROCK-BOTTOM TRUTH.

By ARIEL.

The purpose of this article is not to discredit the literary methods of industrial and socialistic organizations, but merely to call the attention of the reader to the many injustices that the laboring class comes in daily contact with, which has a similar effect upon them that reading has upon a literary person. It was not through reading that my attention was first attracted to the injustices that are being perpetrated upon the producing class. Although I agree that reading is the quickest and best method for anyone to follow who wishes to study any problem that concerns society.

In the year of 1907, during the financial panic, an acquaintance of mine who had been working at a sawmill for a number of years was thrown out of employment on account of the over-production of lumber and the closing down of the mill. After trying and failing to find employment elsewhere, he applied for help to the manager of the company where he had been previously employed. He was told that the company did not propose to act as God-father to the unemployed; they were not responsible for the position of anyone, and were under no obligation to any of their employees; also, that he should feel very grateful for being allowed to remain in the company's shack, while they ran such risk of ever getting the rent.

After this man had seen carload after carload of lumber that he had helped to produce shipped away during that panic and his boss pocketing the money and enjoying all the good things of life while he was forced to exist upon what he could beg or borrow, he was ready to admit that he had learned something by actual experience that no writer could have made plainer, and no politician's argument could change. And the experience of this man is the same as hundreds of others.

There is no place in the civilized world where the injustice of the profit system is not reflected by the master class. If you are on the street your attention is attracted by expensive automobiles that whirl by you with a rich and pleasure-seeking class, who never produced a useful commodity in all their lives—while tired and hungry children walk miles to save five cents, after working all day in some profit-grinding factory.

I cannot go to the river or lakes without reflecting over the vast difference between the pleasure crafts and those which serve some useful purpose. On the pleasure boat you will find all the modern conveniences that add to comfort, such as cushions, chairs, curtains, carpets, handsomely-arranged berths and all the fixtures of an up-to-date vessel. In the dining-room will be found fine wines, champagne, in fact, everything that goes to make up an expensive bill-of-fare, and the very best chef to prepare this food. Germs, men work through the long summer days, from early while the furniture of the craft that is of service consists of a bunk, box and barrel, perhaps a broken-handled broom and a few other articles of the same make. Anyone who can start a fire is a competent person to fry the sow-belly and boil the beans for the crew. The same conditions exist on the railroads as on the water craft.

Fine Pullman cars are reserved to haul from coast to coast a crowd of lazy gluttons who feast upon the fat of the land, while the dirty, little, red caboose, which serves as a storeroom for the railroad, is good enough for the operators of the train to eat their cold snacks and spend a great portion of their lives.

In poisonous swamps, the home of the moccasin, where mosquitoes swarm like bees, where stagnant pools abound with hundreds of dead and dying fish polluting the air with their deadly morning till the sun goes down at night. They are fed on the coarsest foods that can be had. Their bunk house is by far the filthiest habitation of mortal man. Smallpox and vermin are no longer recognized as a menace to an up-to-date swamp camp. They are considered to be a part of the equipment of the sleeping quarters. No official of the board of health is ever caught prowling around the sacred quarters of the cypress lumber manufacturers. No one seems to know these horrible conditions except the poor wretches who serve their country by removing cypress timber for \$1.50 per day, out of swamps of the lumber companies. One class of humanity who endure all the hardships and miseries of the Southern swamp to produce lumber is robbed of their profit by a thieving band of parasites who serve their country by heaping misery upon the toiling masses.

Not long ago I walked through the sacred abode of a great city's dead. I was amazed to see such grand and costly tombs that marked the last resting-place of some pirate of industry. Labor and genius combined had lifted high in the air great marble shafts which bore inscriptions that told of the remains of princes of finance, who had robbed the people of their product. Among all these grand and splendid tombs of brick and granite, stone and marble, there were none which told the spectator that inside its walls rested the bodies of those who moulded the bricks and cut the stones out of which they were made. No workmen's weary bones were ever laid to rest inside this beautiful and well-kept cemetery. But not so very far away, in a quiet and lonely place among the trees and vines, where wild flowers grow unconfined, unshrouded and unknown, rest the workers of the world beneath the sunken sod which marks their graves.

No literary genius could make me see the injustice of the profit system to the extent that I have seen it reflected through its industries. Just as I see and realize conditions, thousands of others are doing likewise. Industrial and socialist writers are rendering a great service to the labor movement, but economic conditions are having their effect upon the people. The cry to-day is: "Why have we nothing? Whither hath it gone, that which we have produced?" The answer is reflected from million-dollar palaces. It is honked from expensive automobiles. It flourishes brilliantly from bejeweled fingers. It gurgles in the goblets of precious wines. From each display of extravagance there is a cry of poverty. The people are beginning to realize that the machinery of concentrated wealth is slowly crushing them into helpless subjection. From a race of producers has sprung a generation of people the world calls financiers, that rear memorial churches, endow universities, erect libraries, found scientific institutions bearing their own names that posterity might read and hold the donors in loving remembrance. They also appoint Supreme Judges, bribe senators, corrupt politics and influence dignitaries of religious institutions. From these conditions the people realize that a remedy cannot be applied so long as the machinery of production remains in the power of those against whom the remedy is to apply. Be a man, an Union man, a Free man, an I. W. W.

THE POWER OF THE GENERAL STRIKE.

By C. L. FILIGNO.

In the last two years, two great general strikes have taken place; one was an economic strike, and the other a political strike, to get manhood suffrage. Although each strike was for a different purpose, in both cases the strikes were won, and all their demands conceded. Now, with this new knowledge gained by the workers, it is hoped that we shall see this weapon used oftener in the future, as it has proven beyond any doubt, that it is the only effective weapon in the hands of the workers.

The great general strike of the transport workers of England was a pure economic strike, and it was composed of seamen, longshoremen, teamsters, dock hoisting engineers, all branches of the railroads from section laborers to engineers, and the coal miners of Lancashire, who went out on a sympathetic strike.

Not long before this noted strike took place, many articles were published in this country commenting on the labor situation of Great Britain, stating that the conditions were worse in Great Britain, than any other country in Europe. But after the solidarity displayed in this transport strike, it proved to the world that the British workers had a better knowledge of their power, than the workers of any other country.

In the history of the labor movement, it is not known where the Government had to go to the striking committee for a permit to transport food for the army horses. (Is there any doubt in any man's mind that the strike committee wasn't more powerful than the Government?)

The hospitals secured a permit to get a supply of food from the warehouses, the drivers carrying food supplies had to have a permit signed by the strike committee; all teams engaged to transport hospital supplies had a red cross on both sides of the wagons, and under the red cross was a sign that showed who was the real power. The sign read: "By order of the strike committee."

One of the principal reasons why the seamen started the strike, was to do away with the Shipping Federation, which was controlled by the Ship Owner's Association. The outrages of this association were worse than anything known in the so-called civilized countries.

When seamen applied for jobs they had to submit to a physical examination which was practically a Bertillon system. The seamen stood for this humiliation for many years, so they began to organize to put an end to it, because the experiences of the past had taught them that the only thing able to cope with the situation was their own organized power. However, when the transport workers struck they did not stop at that. An increase in wages was demanded, which was also granted along with the rest of the demands. The workers of England are putting their energy toward building a powerful organization, and we shall see many things accomplished by them within the next few years.

The general strike of Belgium, which is still fresh on our minds, it had another motive, entirely different from the English transport strike. The workers of Belgium did not strike to ameliorate their economic condition, but only to gain the right to vote.

The I. W. W. Preamble

The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people, and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life.

Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the earth and the machinery of production, and abolish the wage system.

We find that the centering of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions unable to cope with the ever-growing power of the employing class. The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping defeat one another in wage wars. Moreover, the trade unions aid in employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working class have interests in common with their employers.

These conditions can be changed and the interest of the working class upheld only by an organization formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry, or in all industries, if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.

Instead of the conservative motto, "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work," we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, "Abolition of the wage system."

It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism. The army of production must be organized, not only for the everyday struggle with capitalists, but also to carry on production when capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organizing industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old.

The strike was initiated almost solely by the socialists, and it was supported by the socialists throughout the world.

One thing we must not overlook, and that is, that the Socialist Party, as a party, does not condone the general strike when it is for economic reasons only. But they are ever ready to support any move that will make berths for the political job-hunter.

The Socialist Party claims that strikes bring disorder and chaos, and that nothing can be gained by strikes.

We wonder if the Socialist Party knows the power of the general strike?

We wonder if they didn't, why do they advocate it for political purposes?

We wonder why they didn't get the manhood suffrage through politics?

We wonder if they knew that politics had failed to get manhood suffrage?

We wonder if they knew that the general strike is the only reliable weapon?

We wonder if they know that a weapon used to get the ballot, is mightier than the ballot?

We wonder if they know where the worker is robbed?

We wonder if they think that it is at the ballot box?

We wonder if they think that Spargo, Hilquit, Berger, Seidel, Barnes, Job Harriman, et al., are going to emancipate the working class, or that the working class will be emancipated by its own power?

We wonder if they think that the foundation of the industrial commonwealth is in the air, or on the ground?

We wonder if they think the workers know what they want, or will have to be told by professional job-hunters?

We wonder if they read Vic de Berger economic farce: "Parrots or Pullets." (1)?

We wonder if they read Morris He'll-quits comedy: "Mount the pulpit and fight like a preacher" (2)?

Now, let us think for a moment. Why does the office-seeking Socialist abhor the general strike? This is a question well worth considering. We think, however, that the only reason why the Socialists oppose the general strike is, that, as the worker finds out his power lies only in direct action, he will lose confidence in politics, and no politician can appeal for his political support, because he has discovered his real power, the consciousness of working class solidarity.

The dying middle class may think the workers don't know what they want; but we are here to tell you, all, that we do know, much better than any of you can ever know, because we are running the industries of the world, not the lawyers, preachers and business-men, and we will get what we want, in spite of all you can do to keep us from it.

We have learned also that the church will always aid the ruling class, whenever the opportunity presents itself. In the Belgium strike we found the so-called Catholic Unions not participating in the general strike, because the priests, who controlled the said unions, were supporting the Government, and everything else the reactionary movement stands for.

The same thing can be said during the overthrowing of the Portuguese monarchy. The Catholic church has tried at different times to overthrow the Portuguese Republic, and re-establish the old monarchy.

Fellow workers, you know that anything the workers tried to get through politics have always failed, and you received only the benefit of the policeman's club and the gun and bayonet of the militia, for politics is part of the capitalist system, and you have no say-so in making the laws, because laws are made for the subject class, and if the subject class could make laws in the capitalist political machine, they would not be the subject class. But you have gained something through strikes, and you are gaining things right along. You have never seen the capitalist beg the mercy of politicians, because they own them. But you heard the British and Belgian Governments get down on their knees to the workers.

When the workers can make the government (the strongest organized power known) get down on its knees, it should convince any thinking person that the power of the workers lies only in the general strike.

ITA EST.

"Workers in the craft organizations, unTIE! You have nothing to lose but your executive, and a whole lot of solidarity to gain."

"An exchange warns: 'Don't abandon the farm.' It is very foolish, when the landlord and mortgagee will put you off without your stirring a hand."

"A Roman patrician once said that it was fortunate for his class that the slaves did not have sense enough to count them and see how few they were."

"You are a good fellow as long as you are good enough to support the idle fellow. You are a dangerous demagogue when you become good to yourself, your family and your class."

"The successful politician is the one who makes two jobs grow where only one job grew before."