

THE LUMBERJACK

Education

Organization

Emancipation



Freedom in

Industrial

Democracy

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EDITORIALS

WHEN THE LEAVES COME OUT.

(By a Paint Creek Miner.)

[It will be a surprise to some readers of The Masses to know that such a poem as this was written during the past winter in the United States. It will be a wholesome surprise. The poem was written in West Virginia where a civil war exists between the Steel Trust, with the militia as its mercenaries, and a Mine Workers' Union affiliated with the American Federation of Labor.

Sixteen miners were killed with a machine gun in one engagement. The Governor has declared West Virginia to be in "a state of insurrection." He has declared martial "law." The general public knows absolutely nothing of the armed tyranny which that declaration signifies. The Steel Trust does not intend that it shall know.

The representative of the Associated Press is the Prorogist Marshal. People who visit the West Virginia miners speak of "returning to the United States" when they leave.—The Masses.]

It don't surprise the readers of THE LUMBERJACK in the least, old boy, for such a poem could just as well have been written in Louisiana as in West Virginia. Down here in these forests, too, Union men have been shot down and clubbed like wild beasts. Down here, too, workmen have been thrown into prisons so vile as to be a disgrace to the Kahnat of Bokahara and fed on slop a self-respecting buzzard would not eat. Down here, as in West Virginia, all the "powers of the State" have been freely loaned to the Lumber Trust, as there they have been at the disposal of the Steel and Coal Trusts. Here, too, private detectives and Trust lawyers have taken possession of our (?) courthouses and prosecuted (?) us in the name of "law and order," which means for rebelling against the Lumber Trust. Down here, too, all the "fundamental laws" and "unalienable rights," that could "never be abridged, denied or abrogated"—all, "constitutional" written, unwritten, human, natural, divine and savage, have been overthrown by the hellion sheriffs and gunmen of the alleged Southern Lumber Operators' Association Free Speech, Free Press, Free Assembly, Free Organization, all have been trampled in the dust; men have been murdered, slugged and blacklisted by the private army of the Association and its infamous Black Hundreds, self-styled "Good Citizens' Leagues," and then arrested, thrown into putrid jails, held there for months with bail denied, "sweated" and "third-degreed" by Burns' detective, and then tried (?) by the "State" (?) for appealing to the only law left them—the law of self-defense, a right respected even by gorillas, but not in this Satrapy of the Lumber, Sugar, Oil and Railroad Trusts called the "State of Louisiana." Day and night the Apaches of the Burns' Defective Agency have hunted our people, the lumber-jacks, as though they were criminals of the blackest dye, and, now, to these human hyenas, the Scalawag Sheriff of Beauregard Parish has added a pack of BLOODHOUNDS, but (and this is not meant for you), as we belong to the I. W. W. I suppose, though we are ALL "native-born Americans," for generations, it would have been a sign of "anarchy" for a lumberjack to have written such a poem and prayed such a prayer and that, being an I. W. W., he hasn't even a right to say "AMEN" to it. But it don't surprise US in the least.

WE know what hell is!—THE LUMBERJACK.

The hills are very bare and cold and lonely;
I wonder what the future months will bring?
The strike is on—our strength would win, if only—
O, Buddy, how I'm longing for the spring!

They've got us down—their martial lines enfold us;
They've thrown us out to feel the winter's sting,
And yet, by God, those curs could never hold us,
Nor could the dogs of hell do such a thing!

It isn't just to see the hills beside me
Grow fresh and green with every growing thing.
I only want the leaves to come and hide me,
To cover up my vengeful wandering.

I will not watch the floating clouds that hover
Above the birds that warble on the wing;
I want to use this GUN from under cover—
O, Buddy, how I'm longing for the spring!

You see them there below, the damned scab-herders!
Those puppets on the greedy Owners' String;
We'll make them pay for all their dirty murders—
We'll show them how a starving hate can sting!

They riddled us with volley after volley;
We heard their speeding bullets zip and ring,
But soon we'll make them suffer for their folly—
O, Buddy, how I'm longing for the spring!
—From the International Socialist Review.

A great poem that, but—WORKING CLASS POWER is in ORGANIZED INDUSTRIAL SOLIDARITY.

THE POWER OF THE BALLOT BOX.

GARNETT, LA., May 28, 1913.

Editor Lumberjack:

I noticed an article in the LUMBERJACK of May the 22d entitled: "The Power of the General Strike," by C. L. Filigno, in which he says that this is the only effective weapon in the hands of the workers. And, in proof of his argument, he mentions the great general strike of the transport workers of England and the great political strike of the Belgians. He seems to think that to strike is all that is necessary to free the workers. I agree that it is a great weapon. A very great one when used in the right way. Now, don't get an idea that I am opposed to the I. W. W., or the general strike. I believe that we should strike at the ballot box as well as on the industrial field. I can't see any good sense in striking for industrial freedom and then voting for industrial slavery. I think that Fellow-worker Filigno is radically wrong when he denounces political action and the Socialist party. The Socialists have always been our friends. It was the Socialist Party and their press that saved Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone in 1908. Had it not been for the Socialist agitation the I. W. W. would not have been half as powerful an organization as it is. I don't think we should fight the only political party the working class ever had. The general strike is great, but the ballot is greater. The Belgian workers realized this or they would have never struck for the ballot.

If direct action is all the workers need to free themselves, we Socialists wonder why England hasn't got Industrial Democracy. As he says that the English economic strike was won and all their demands conceded. We wonder if the I. W. W. knows what Industrial Democracy is? His charging us with being political job-hunters is absolutely false, and there is no one knows it better than C. L. Filigno. We wonder if he ever read a birthday almanac, or an orthodox sermon? Suppose that a majority of the people believed in direct action, would it not be necessary to have a government? Then, if it is necessary to have a government, is it not absolutely necessary to elect our government officials? We wonder how you would elect them without the ballot? If you elect the government officials in your Union halls, we wonder if you have got sense enough to know that would be political action? I look on a man who denounces political action as a traitor, not only to his country, but to his class. We wonder if you know the difference in Socialism and Rheumatism? If we had our class in Congress, on the Bench and in the Legislature, would it not be to our advantage on the industrial field? Your direct action alone is foolish; it won't make good decent nonsense. A man who will try to fool the working class has either been bought or has let the hook-worms get him down.

Yours for industrial freedom,
L. WILLIFORD.

COMMENT BY COVINGTON HALL.

First, Fellow-worker Williford speaks of "the great political strike of the Belgians." There is not, there never was, and never can be, such a thing as a "political strike," for, if all the politicians on earth were called on strike to-morrow, nobody except themselves would know a strike was on, and, for the very good reason that such a strike could in no way affect modern industry, which does not depend upon the STATE for its continuance, but upon the INDUSTRIAL WORKERS, a fact recognized by President Wilson when he stated that the "corporation is a new form of social organization and has already risen superior to and above the State." This is a FACT, which, though it more clearly vindicates the Marxian theory of Economic Determinism than all other facts in modern society, that is conveniently overlooked by all POLITICAL socialists. The Belgian general strike was not a "political strike," but an INDUSTRIAL strike for POLITICAL purposes. The WORKERS received no actual benefits from it, and late news coming from Belgium indicates that the strike was called off by the politicians, despite the wishes of the Miners, who were the backbone and the true working class element of the strike, on the simple PROMISE of the Government to grant manhood suffrage, which further indicates that the politicians had begun to fear that the strike would get beyond their control and assume the proportions of a true Revolutionary Working Class Demonstration, take on the aspect of a struggle between the UNION and the STATE, a thing the politicians of all parties are, by SELF-INTEREST, forced to attempt to prevent.

Second, a general, or any other, strike is "used in the right way" ONLY when it redounds to the MATERIAL benefit of the WORKING CLASS.

Third, there can be no such thing as a "strike at the ballot box"—at the best, there can be only a PROTEST there. Besides, there are TWO ballot boxes in modern society, one in the UNION HALL, and the other in the saloon. At the box in the Union hall we have, not only "manhood," but equal and universal suffrage, as well. There, "we are building the structure of the new society within the shell of the old" already.

Fourth, thinking Filigno wrong does not prove him so, nor abide by a single jot the charges he has made, nor does the statement that "it was the Socialist Party and their press that saved the lives of Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone" prove either the value or the valuelessness of so-called "political action," which is nothing more nor less than an attempt of the politicians of all parties to hold the modern labor movement within the narrow and stifling confines of the capitalist state.

Fifth, as for the statement that "the Socialists have always been our friends," that is only partially true, for it does not apply to the Party as such, which has always been openly hostile to the I. W. W., but only to the "Red Wing" of the organization, and this "Wing" in its ideas is so far away from orthodox political socialism as almost to constitute a party within a party. This statement of mine is fully proven by the recall of Haywood, the only workingman on it, from the National Executive Committee of the Party by an overwhelming vote.

Sixth, as for the statement that "had it not been for the Socialist agitation the I. W. W. would not have been half as powerful an organization as it is," that claim will not bear historic investigation, for the I. W. W. is the mighty organization it is in spite of the efforts of both the Socialist and Socialist Labor Parties to the contrary. As well might the priests and preachers say (and they will say it a little later on), "had it not been for the help of the church the I. W. W. never would have been the glorious organization it is to-day." Read Vic de Berger's farce "Parrots or Pulletts" to see if I am correct or not.

Sixth, as for "I don't think we should fight the only political party the working class ever had," I advise Fellow-worker Williford, and a few others who seem to be so cocksure of this working class ownership, to look into the moves of the Berger Machine and learn, as they will, that CONTROL and not OWNERSHIP is the vital thing to accomplish if you desire to have anything in the world of to-day, before they again make such statements.

Seventh, if "the general strike is great, but the ballot is greater," then, why did the politicians appeal to the general strike to force manhood suffrage? Why didn't they get it through "political action"? Why didn't they stick to the "civilized plane"? When was it that a GREATER power had to appeal to a LESSER to enforce its mandates? Never, in the history of this UNIVERSE. Further, within our lifetime, we had manhood suffrage in Louisiana, but the Industrially Organized Capitalists took it away from us. Unless the INDUSTRIAL is GREATER than the POLITICAL, how did they succeed in so doing? What have the WORKING FARMERS and WORKING-MEN of the South, or elsewhere, ever gotten out of a capitalist ballot box, except bayonets, clubs and jails?

Lastly, the fact that the Belgian workers "struck for the ballot" does not prove anything beyond the fact that "a sucker is born every minute."

Eighth, the English workers turned to Direct Action only when it had been proven to them, by bitter experience, that it was their only hope, and they won. They shook the British Empire to its foundations, made the greatest Gunman on earth come to the Union Hall and beg PERMISSION to transport food to the STARVING ARMY HORSES. If England hasn't yet got Industrial Democracy it is because "Rome wasn't built in a day," which is one of the vital truths accepted and acted on by the I. W. W., which account for the fact that no temporary defeats hurt or check the progress of the Union. If "the ballot is the greater," why didn't it feed England's starving army horses? The POWER that fed the army horses is the POWER that will, in its own good time, establish Industrial Democracy.

Ninth, if the I. W. W. does not know what INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY is, then there is no organization that does, for it was the speakers and writers of the I. W. W. who first popularized this term and gave it its present meaning. Not until they saw that the working class was taking to the idea did the politicians and craft union leaders take it up and try to distort it. The term is essentially of the I. W. W. It was created by us to distinguish OUR final aim from that of the POLITICAL SOCIALISTS and ANARCHISTS. IT means to carry the principle of DEMOCRACY into the last stronghold of the Aristocracy—INTO THE WORKSHOPS OF THE WORLD, to give the WORKERS complete CONTROL of all the INDUSTRIES, and the ONLY way this can be done is by DIRECT ACTION, ACTION on the JOB, against the BOSS.

Tenth, as for being "traitors to our country," not possessing enough of it to be buried in, we I. W. W.'s fail to see wherein we can be guilty of this crime. As for "treason to our class," the capitalists are as one with the politicians in bringing this charge, and because the TRUTH is always treasonable to the existing order, and for the further reason, as MARX has so well said, "when the working class moves all capitalist society goes up in the air." This "going up in the air" proves more than all else that the I. W. W. is the WORKING CLASS IN REVOLUTION, THE NEW SOCIETY BEING BORN. The NEW never asks the OLD whether it is traitorous, legal, foolish, good, decent, moral, sensible or otherwise; it simply does not care what the OLD thinks of it, and goes on its way to conquest as it best can and pleases.

Eleventh, in the sense of to-day, the INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY will have no "government", for it will deal with the ADMINISTRATION of THINGS and not with the RULERSHIP of MEN. The fact that we cast a ballot does not constitute "politics" and "government." "Politics is the science of government," and governments were instituted among men to protect the right of private property in and to that which should be common wealth. When the institution of private property falls, government falls, and so, there can be no such thing as "political action" in the Industrial Democracy.

Twelfth, WE do not "know the difference between Socialism and Rheumatism," but Filigno advises us that Political Socialism is Mental Rheumatism.

Thirteenth, ONE BIG UNION IS THE ONLY HOPE OF THE WORKING CLASS.

RICHES, NOT WEALTH INCREASE.

By BERNARD SHAW.

In "The Rebel."

It is sometimes said that during this grotesquely hideous march of civilization from bad to worse, wealth is increasing side by side with misery. Such a thing is eternally impossible. Wealth is steadily decreasing with the spread of poverty. But riches are increasing, which is quite another thing. The total of the exchange values produced in the country annually is mounting perhaps by leaps and bounds. But the accumulation of riches and consequently of an excessive purchasing power, in the hands of a class, soon satiates that class with socially useful wealth, and sets them offering a price for luxuries. The moment a price is to be had for a luxury, it acquires exchange value, and labor is employed to produce it. A New York lady, for instance, had an elegant rosewood and silver coffin, upholstered in pink satin, for her dead dog. It is made; and meanwhile a live child is prowling bare-footed and hunger-stunted in the frozen gutter outside. The exchange value of the coffin is counted as part of the national wealth, but a nation which can not afford food and clothing for its children can not be allowed to pass as wealthy because it has provided a pretty coffin for a dead dog. Exchange value itself, in fact, has become bedeviled like everything else, and represents no longer utility, but the cravings of lust, folly, vanity, gluttony and madness, technically described by genteel economists as "effective demand." Luxuries are not social wealth; the machinery for producing them is no social wealth; labor skilled only to manufacture them is not socially useful; the men, women and children who make a living by producing them are no more self-supporting than the idle rich for whose amusement they are kept at work.

It is the habit of counting as wealth the exchange values involved in these transactions that makes us fancy that the poor are starving in the midst of plenty of jewels, laces, equipages and race horses; but not in the midst of plenty of food. In the things that are wanted for the welcome of the people we are abjectly poor; and England's social policy to-day may be likened to the domestic policy of those adventuresses who leave their children half clothed and half fed in order to keep a carriage and deal with fashionable dressmakers.

But it is quite true that while wealth and welfare are decreasing productive power is increasing; and nothing but the perversion of this power to the production of socially useless commodities prevents the apparent wealth from becoming real. The purchasing power that commands luxuries in the hands of the rich would command true wealth in the hands of all. Yet private prep-prints so proudly to as the result of its power to scourge men and women daily to prolonged and intense toil, turns out to be a Simulacrum, with all its energy its Smilesian self-help, its merchant princely enterprise, its ferocious sweat and tears, what has heaped up, over and above the pittance of its slaves? Only a monstrous pile of frippery, some tainted class literature and class art and not a little poison and mischief.

When the BOSS puts on the BLACKLIST, YOU put on your WOODEN SHOES, remembering that AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL.

"ETERNAL VIGILANCE IS THE PRICE OF LIBERTY."