

QUESTIONS · OF · THE · DAY

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STRIKES:

WHEN TO STRIKE

HOW TO STRIKE

CROSBY

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# STRIKES

WHEN TO STRIKE  
HOW TO STRIKE

A BOOK OF SUGGESTION FOR THE BUYERS  
AND SELLERS OF LABOUR

BY

OSCAR T. CROSBY

AUTHOR OF "TIBET AND TURKESTAN"

JOINT AUTHOR OF

"THE ELECTRIC RAILWAY IN THEORY AND PRACTICE"



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## PREFACE

CONCERNING Strikes, this treatise inquires as to what *is* moral and what *ought to be* legal. It endeavours to classify the causes that lead men to strike, and to measure the profit and loss involved in a struggle for higher wages, shorter hours, better general conditions, or for recognition of a Union. It points out that this struggle is between different classes of workers, all of whom have an almost constant relation to capital. It seeks to put all men on guard in respect to their leaders, those necessary yet dangerous elements of any organisation. Violence is presented as a proper monopoly of the State. The boycott, or refusal of all commercial intercourse between commercial contestants and their respective allies, is found to be within the reasonable right of all men, as it is, in fact, within the actual practice of a few.

No formula is found by which endless contest may be avoided, except that which leads to some form of tyranny. But the true evil of contest is found to flow from violence, lying, and hate. To attempt even a very small diminishment of this evil, might worthily engage far greater abilities than have been employed in preparing this book.

In so far as the reader may discover error in the author's views, it may be ascribed to lack of understanding, rather than to want of experience or of sympathy.

A shred of vanity prompts the request that crudity of treatment (which the author recognises) should be, in part, ascribed to the fact that these pages have been written in the short intervals of many distracting occupations.

May this work, in spite of its defects, help a few busy men, wage-earners and wage-payers, to clearer vision and wider charity!

O. T. C.

WARRENTON, VIRGINIA, U. S. A.

March 1, 1910.

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STRIKES







# The Question of Strikes

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## CHAPTER I

### DEFINITION

IN the word "Strike" there is something manly, inspiring—violent.

It suggests the blacksmith's hammer, the woodsman's axe, the patriot's sword—a trinity of tools with which man has made for himself, poor savage that he was, a home and a country. He has struck against Nature who would starve and freeze him; he has struck against his fellows who would enslave him.

From the deep hollows of the past we hear an echo of many blows; they blend into a song of achievement—of man achieving civilisation.

But the blacksmith has forged manacles for the free; the edge of the axe has been laid against the sheltering roof-tree; the sword has been in the assassin's hand. Men have struck for bad things as well as for good things. It is always so. Every force, every instrument that may be used to help, may also be used to hurt.

We cannot win the life-long struggle by any easily-made rules; we cannot follow the uncertain path before us by the flash-lights of occasional inspiration. But with patience and courage man has found paths that are fairly pleasant leading from the cradle to the grave.

Let us then cheerfully, and hoping for a little gain, attack the problem before us,—How to strike—Why to strike.

And at the beginning, let us define the word "Strike" as it is to be used in these pages. It shall be taken to mean, "A pre-arranged cessation of work by several employés, intending thus to cause an unwilling employer, through fear of loss, to accept demands made by the strikers on behalf of themselves or others."

This formal definition is compact and hard, like the soldier's emergency ration; but it is not without value. We may at once discover in it several branches of our inquiry. We find: the cessation of work, pure and simple; the prearrangement leading up to such cessation, that is, the *union* of several employés; the object of the union; the division into sympathetic and direct strikes; the opposition between the interests of employer and employé.

These are the definite elements giving us the hard skeleton of the strike. Do you not also feel its warm body, made of human hope, despair, rejoicing, hunger, heart-ache, love, hate, selfishness, and sacrifice? These are the very substance of life. They are immanent in every dry legal discussion, or else that discussion has no value. But the flesh and blood part cannot always be kept before us in complete form. We must sometimes strip to the bone, in order to understand the structure of the organism. So it is that if in these pages there should seem to be lack of sentiment, let it be remembered

that this is a study of the *anatomy* of the strike.

Ligaments, muscles, veins, bones—these are not pleasing to the eye, yet is it useful to know something of their composition.

The definition<sup>1</sup> does *not* involve *violence*, or *deceit*. These may, and often do, enter into the programme of one or both of the parties to a strike. But they are not necessary incidents to the mere cessation of work—which is the strike proper.

In the following pages we shall consider

<sup>1</sup> Minor objections to the definition might be made as follows:

First—Why is not the “strike” of a single employé included? Has he not the same motives as the “several employés,” and may not his cessation of work be sometimes of capital importance in enforcing his demands?

Yes, but in this treatise, the *co-operative* strike alone is considered. It breeds a host of difficult legal questions not raised by the single striker.

Second—Is the employer always “unwilling”? Must he always be injured?

Usually the strikers' demands have been made and refused before the strike is “on.” In the rare cases in which the strike precedes the demand, unwillingness is supposed and injury is attempted, even though the employer be found at once ready to yield.

the various accessory actions that may be connected with a strike, and we shall try to separate the sheep from the goats.

## CHAPTER II

### MORALITY OF THE STRIKE

THERE are many persons to whom the question of the morality of strikes presents no difficulty whatever. These may well pass over this short chapter, unless they prefer to judge the author's moral standards by what he may say concerning this particular question.

Having clearly stated just what a strike *is*, we may ask ourselves, in the first place, not "Why to strike?" or "How to strike?" — but, "Shall we strike at all?"

This question can be disposed of by answering three sub-questions about the strike—first, "Is it moral?" second, "Is it legal?" third, "Is it profitable to those who strike?"

A fairly good man is unwilling to do an

immoral act, though it may be both legal and profitable.

A fairly good citizen is unwilling to do an illegal act, though it may be both moral and profitable.

A fairly good business man is unwilling to do an unprofitable act, though it may be both moral and legal.

A fairly wise man is unwilling to do an act which is not at the same time moral, legal, profitable.

As to the first question, "Is it moral?"—

That is "moral" which is believed to benefit, more than it injures, the majority of men who are our neighbours—using the latter word in a very broad sense.

We have proved the "morality" of only a few general principles of conduct.

"Thou shalt not steal." This is reasonably easy to apply after we have established elaborate rules for determining what is yours and what is mine. It restricts the happiness of a small minority. It even denies to them at times ordinary comfort, and it may require acute suffer-

ing or death. But observance of this rule has been found by centuries of experience in human society to increase the general average of comfort and happiness. Hence we insist upon it as one of the moralities, and we pardon an infraction of the rule only in extreme cases.

“Thou shalt not kill.” This also is relatively simple after elaborately providing for exceptional cases, such as killing in self-defence, in war, on the official scaffold, etc. The danger involved in killing often makes of this “morality” its own policeman.

“Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.” This is fairly clear if we can agree upon a definition of “neighbour.”

Thus, it is generally thought good morals to lie to a public enemy, or about him, provided the state to which you belong (you, the liar) is to be benefited thereby. It is also good morals in certain cases to lie in defence of a woman's reputation.

This “morality” is, as yet, but weakly



established in the minds of many men, even when we consider the mild prohibition quoted from the old Jewish code. If we make it more stringent, thus, "Thou shalt not bear false witness, whether or not thy neighbour be injured thereby," we shall find the number of adherents woefully small.

The simplicity and finality of even these fundamental rules is thus found to be only in their statement—not in their application. When we begin to *live*, the code presents many doubts.

But it may be thought that before determining the morality of an act we should turn from the "*Don'ts*" of the Decalogue to such positive rules of self-abnegation as were preached by Christ.

Does a strike conform to the principle which requires the right cheek to be turned to him who has struck the left? No!

Does it conform to the less drastic requirement of the Golden Rule? No!

It is plainly a contest of interest waged by inflicting injury upon the employer,

with the hope that this strike-injury may seem to him greater than that which would be suffered by yielding to the strikers' demands.

In the effort to do harm there may be no hate, no bitterness; but also there is in it none of the spirit which would give the coat to him who has asked the cloak. If that standard of morality be applied, then is the strike immoral—and all the rest of the ordinary conduct of life goes with it.

In our hearts we reject the perfect self-sacrifice of Christ—we do not believe that we can live by it *here*. Possibly such conduct might give us treasures in heaven—but not an increase of wages on earth. And meanwhile, we argue, the wife and children must be fed and clothed. They will be in want if we do not make good bargains for our service, or our wares. We must now and then refuse the offer of the purchaser and maintain prices by withholding our goods or our labour.

This is plainly an expensive way of

reaching the desired results. It is "charitable" only to those who are near us in interest, whose battles we must fight.

Is there indeed any Christian charity in *any* war, in *any* competition? No.

Yet when the people of a Christian nation want something very badly they fight for it—and square with Christ by calling it a "holy war."

And as to commercial competition, upon which society now depends for its daily bread, its practical motto is "Each for himself." The ideal of "Service for all" is indeed gaining ground, yet now the community receives only the surplus remaining after the satisfaction of large individual appetites. Such is the general idea and practice of morality this side of the grave; and as judged by it, the strike needs no apology.

## CHAPTER III

### IS THE STRIKE LEGAL?

THE legal status of all labour questions varies widely from State to State. Indeed, in any one State, judicial decisions fluctuate over a wide range. In endeavouring to apply old principles to new conditions, society is feeling its way through a tangle of conflicting claims.

The general object of this treatise is gained not by discussing the *present legality* of any of the acts considered, but rather their wisdom; their fitness for being made legal, if they are not already so; or their fitness for being prohibited if they are now permitted.

If the reader be helped to form an opinion as to *what ought to be legal*, this "ought to be" may be turned into "is," when that opinion shall have been

adopted by a majority of his fellow-citizens. Their formally expressed will is law.

To ask, "Is it legal?" is not the same as if we should ask, "Is it moral?" We call those things immoral whose bad effects are so generally recognised that they would be condemned by public conscience whether prohibited by statute or not.

There are immoralities, most important immoralities, which cannot be made the subject of written law. How shall I be compelled to be kind—to be respectful—to be charitable?

On the other hand, many legal requirements are without moral character in themselves. They are mere regulations. The determination of the form and colour of ballots does not raise a moral question, but it is an important subject of legal enactment.

We know, too, that in the slow process of "guessing" at what is good, our law-makers must often err—must often prohibit things which should not, for the

common good, be prohibited. Hence, an act may be illegal which, in itself, is righteous enough.

And again an act may be prohibited by a small majority of law-makers while a large minority declare for just the opposite course. In such case it is clear that the public conscience is not yet formed in respect to the matters in question.<sup>1</sup>

Hence as against mere legal enactment men are often tempted to follow their individual opinions, and more particularly their individual interests.

If in adult life one cannot classify a desired action as falling somehow within the morality-prohibitions which were

<sup>1</sup> Morality also may be said to vary in time and place. It undoubtedly does vary in the sense that a list of moral prohibitions, if made up for France in 1900 A.D., would not be the same as for France in 1100 A.D.; or for Rome in 400 B.C. Legal codes, however, fluctuate so much more violently than the moral code that the latter seems relatively fixed. Men may experiment legislatively for ages before elaborating a single new principle that will take its place among the moral principles whose sovereignty is recognised by the national sense of righteousness. Meanwhile, the law gives and withdraws her favours most freakishly.

learned in childhood, one is tempted to gratify the desire, and spurn the restraint. The man's conduct is governed by the child's conscience.

Yet withal, there is some uneasiness felt in the mind of the enlightened citizen when he runs counter to any of the laws of his country.

There is a *taint of immorality* in all *illegality*. The law may be esteemed foolish, but *obedience to law* is at the root of the tree of social life. If I base obedience only upon my approval, I am standing for anarchy, against government. Protection for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness can be given to me only within the conditions set down by the law and only at the price of general obedience to the law.

Not many of us would refuse to escape from the death penalty, as Socrates did, for fear of cheating the state; but most of us feel mean after lying to the customs officer?

Have we not given false witness against the interest of our neighbour, who ardently

desires us to pay taxes for the general good? Have we not broken the law?

If, in their folly, legislators should ever declare strikes illegal, we shall find it easier on the conscience to use our votes for changing the law, rather than to break it.

Not only can the right of striking be preserved by agitating and voting, but we can see to it that no other than a money damage shall be assessed against an employé who, in order to strike, may have broken a contract for service during a fixed period. Such a contract must be classed with other commercial engagements.<sup>1</sup> If made and broken *without fraudulent intent*, no commercial engagement carries with it, in its breaking, any punishment running against

<sup>1</sup> In this view of the matter, unions which order strikes in violation of contract obligations should be required to have such legal organisation as will permit penalties to reach their treasury funds. This is already the case in some countries (Canada, for example) and no other condition is consistent with fair dealing. We should not try "to have our cake and eat it too." The effort to indulge our appetites in that way always fails in the long run.



the body of the delinquent, but only against his property.

An exception to the rule that an employé's contract should be considered as purely commercial, is to be found in any contract for service involving quite directly the lives or the comfort of many persons who have rightfully placed themselves within the power of the employé. Such engagements cannot be broken in a manner that would seriously imperil or discommode third parties without introducing an element of criminality.

Thus, a locomotive engineer should not be permitted by society to quit his engine save at the end of his run. His contract must be understood as being in part with the public,—not solely with the railway company. The loss, discomfort, and danger suffered by a trainload of people when left between stations cannot be compensated by any money award which the engineer could pay. Hence we must punish a man who would do such an evil thing, as one punishes a naughty child.

Imprisonment is properly decreed against him who, in immoderate self-seeking, gravely imperils the happiness of others by cessation of his accustomed work at an untimely hour.

Save for this condition, complete control of any man's labour must be left to himself.

Much folly, much wrong toward himself and toward others will result from the exercise by the average man of this simple right. He will often inflict serious monetary losses for which a damage suit offers only theoretical compensation.

He who has liberty without property resembles a man with fleshless body—he may strike without fear of his foeman's steel. He may cause inconvenience, pain, illness—perhaps death—a whole series of wrongs which cannot be expressed in terms of money. They must be borne for liberty's sake.

Lacking wisdom, this average man of the populace must often wound his own interest with the sharp knife of unfettered liberty. His wife and children will be

stricken down by the blows of his own folly. And in his course of errors he will not be alone. On his right hand will be the rich man; on his left hand the educated man. Only a little wisdom is given to any of us.

The old ways of childlike docility are definitely forsaken. We know that Superior Intelligence, if enthroned over an inarticulate multitude, soon degenerates into Tyranny, which ceases to be wise and remains selfish.

So it is that we prefer to stumble painfully along *free* paths rather than to be led by the hand of a Fixed Superior. The safety to which he brings us is servitude. Our study, therefore, should ever be to leave as much freedom of action as is consistent with the maintenance of order, which is the solid foundation of society.

As to *just what* restrictions are necessary for the preservation of this social order, we must guess our way in detail. The light of absolute knowledge never shines very far ahead or very deep into the

darkness on the right hand and the left hand.

We do not now doubt our course in respect to the question, "Shall a man be legally free (save in the special cases of peril above noted<sup>1</sup>) to cease work when he chooses?" To this we answer, "Yes, he is and shall be free."

But let us change a little the question just answered. "Shall a man be legally free to *solicit others* to quit their employment with a view to some benefit which is to be gained only by injuring the employer?"

This is a right that has been questioned, yet without it the strike, as an organised effort of many, would perish.

He who solicits me to leave my work may cease his own employ without in any way passing the long-established boundaries of freedom. The injury which he may do to another, the wrong he may do to his own interests by his isolated action, have been accepted by society as

<sup>1</sup> It will be seen that important service of the state, military and other, falls within this exception.

the price demanded by shrewd Nature for the jewel, liberty.

But is this further license of soliciting others to be likewise excused?

We have learned that no great and general harm—no great and general good—can be accomplished by any one of us *acting alone*; we have learned that co-operation gives us the big results; we have learned to apply an ugly word, Conspiracy, to such co-operation as seeks an end by us condemned. And for co-operation seeking what we call good ends, we reserve the inspiring word, Union.

Union means strength, and it means leadership—strength of many voluntarily placed at the disposal of one; hence, danger—danger of that very servitude from which we have determined to escape at any price.

Against this we guard by reserving *free choice of leaders*. They must be subject to dismissal. That is the secret of successful democracy. It must have leadership; it must have that which

imperils its very life. ELECTIVE leadership solves the problem.

It may be asked—"What has this to do with the question as to the right of Smith to solicit Jones for his co-operation in a strike?" And the answer is this: The co-operation which he establishes through his solicitation is, in fact, a *union*. It may be temporary; it is generally permanent.

The desire to strike may have given birth to the union, but once formed, the union becomes the father and the mother of future strikes. The question "How and why to strike?" becomes "How and why to form and conduct a labour union?"

Hence it is that no inquiry such as our title suggests can be made without making a study of the unions.

Substantially, the organisation of employés into a great union becomes a state within a state. The comfort of society is largely affected by this smaller state. Its action may be opposed to the will of the larger body, the true sovereign of all. There is here a possible danger—Shall it

be avoided by crushing the egg from which may be hatched a bird powerful for good and evil? No!!

The same principle which permits us to form democratic governments, will permit those governments to view without alarm the establishment of various "unions" among their citizens.

Reduced to its skeleton, the argument may be thus constructed. Free governments are based upon the principle that majorities shall rule themselves, *and* the minorities. This rule is, for convenience, placed temporarily in the hands of a few men—legislators, judges, and executive officers, who govern in the name of the majority until dismissed. This principle is now the basic one controlling the public life of England,<sup>1</sup> the United States, France, Italy,<sup>1</sup> Holland,<sup>1</sup> Belgium,<sup>1</sup> Sweden,<sup>1</sup> Norway,<sup>1</sup> Switzerland, and with some restriction (constantly lessening) Germany and Austria.

<sup>1</sup> These are included, although in form the executive is not subject to dismissal. For the most important matters the Prime Ministers of these countries are the real chief executives; and they are subject to dismissal.

It is believed to be a guide between tyranny on the one hand and wild license on the other. Its application to minor organisations will render them relatively harmless, provided their object in itself is not sinister.

The members of any one such body may have interests special to themselves and more or less antagonistic to the interests of certain other citizens; but in the main these members will be actuated by the common interests, the common humanity, and the common sense which at the same time are influencing the general public to which they belong. If their association is of such character that the many who compose it may promptly control the few to whom power has been delegated, we may safely assume that the lesser allegiance thus created may be indulged without ultimate injury to the larger vital allegiance owed to the state itself.

And, on the contrary, however harmless may be the avowed object of an organisation not founded on this general



democratic principle, it is to be viewed with suspicion. Thus the Catholic Church, potentially one of the most benignant institutions ever known among men, has often been betrayed into most harmful activities because its form of organisation bestows upon a few individuals vast, secret, and life-long powers. Happily for it and for the world, the democratic principle did not completely abdicate and leave the delegated power hereditary in those families first receiving it. Excesses due to its peculiar form have often been checked by some outburst of the democratic principle acting within the organisation, or through pressure exerted by democratic force from without. Under these influences the Church is everywhere becoming less tyrannical—more beneficent.

When the great union, the state itself, has done all that its wisdom (or its folly) permits to be accomplished by its direct action, much that may be beneficial remains undone. For the

accomplishment of this large remainder, are churches, guilds, lodges, societies of all sorts.

And, now, already highly developed and ever growing stronger, are the labour unions. In them we see everywhere the rule of the majority fully established.

The government of these various unions exhibits all the strength and all the weakness of sovereign states which are controlled by their people.

In the fierce battle of commercial competition the humble of the earth are marching in regiments and brigades. The impotent appeal of one struggling man or woman for higher pay, more light, shorter hours, or kinder supervision, has grown into the dignified demand of compact thousands.

They speak through ambassadors; they are inspired by chieftains; they are served by executives.

And sometimes these ambassadors misinterpret; these chieftains lead to folly; these executives betray, even as it has

ever been in the slow progress of governments among men. But also fidelity, intelligence, courage, self-sacrifice, and, in the main, fair service are found in those who are trusted by their fellows.

The walking delegate is often an ignorant mischief-maker. So also is the constable or the parson. More often they are, all three of them, sincerely devoted to the duty of their office.

The great labour-leader is sometimes corrupt, or vulgarly ambitious. So also is the great statesman. More often both are weighed down with an honourable sense of their responsibility.

Even if the record of their fine conduct were lacking, one might assume that the elected chiefs of the unions could scarce fail to possess in marked degree at least one qualification for their duties—namely a full sympathy with those who select them. In education and experience they are close to those whom they represent. Far easier for them than for individuals drawn from the “ruling classes,” to know the joys and sorrows, the hopes

and fears of the masses whose power they wield for a time.

Judged, then, by its form of government the labour union is found to be in the spirit of the age, and hence need fear no charge of illegitimacy on that score.

## CHAPTER IV

### PURPOSE OF THE UNION

LEAVING the form, let us examine the purposes.

We shall not tarry long in arriving at a conclusion that in this respect, also, society must put no ban of illegality upon associations which work for the betterment of so large a fraction of the whole body. And the fraction in question is precisely that whose uplift in material things seems most important.

Without the constant struggle of the humble masses, a complete stratification of society would soon be established. There is a fixed tendency in that direction. The powerful force of inheritance, natural and artificial, works toward this stratification.

Strong individuals obtain control of large amounts of physical property—of

the things which feed and clothe the body. These, *together with something of the superior intellectual equipment*, go to their descendants, and soon we see, in all its terrible meaning, that "to him that hath it shall be given, and from him that hath not, it shall be taken away, even that which he hath."

And we hear men say of other men, "They are not born." A French Revolution was necessary to remind those who were "born," that parturition is common to the race.

The struggle against this tendency is the very work of democracy. Indeed this uplifting of the relatively weak is democracy creating itself. It should be ever extending; but not up to the point of seriously curtailing the efforts of those naturally superior individuals who must lead in industrial progress as a general leads in military work.

These generals find themselves; they take command and produce results. They are to be rewarded by society in material things, and in public esteem.

Just as the leaders who traded regularly in war were wont to demand a considerable part of the booty yielded by a bloody victory, so now the generals of industry demand a considerable part of the bounty which is captured in the struggle of man with nature.

It is the work of highly civilised peoples that their chiefs put a relatively greater value upon reputation, and less upon material wage, than is done among warlike societies, whose armies are predatory bands.

The pay of the common soldier is much nearer that of the general in the year 1900 than it was in 1600 when dukedoms and principalities went to the leader, while a pittance went to the ranks.

The industrial army is developing in the same direction. The adjustment is seen in the fact that great corporations yield phenomenal fortunes only to their founders; those who subsequently direct them are partly paid in the coin of public esteem.

The ordinary worker receives none of this. He escapes the wakeful care and

cannot claim the glory. He must aim to have a comfort-making share of the total product. Out of this a quiet content may be enjoyed, and young ambition may find its stimulus and support.

No peaceful means looking toward the attainment of satisfying food, warm clothing, comfortable housing, and moderate amusement should be denied to a man willing to work. It is the purpose of the union, often acting through the strike, to help the worker toward this end. It is a good purpose.

Finding then that the union (and its child, the strike) is democratic in form and democratic in its purpose, democracy has decreed its legality. Only in such statutes as may indirectly and unintentionally question the right of striking by co-operation, should that right even be mentioned; and then, only to assert it as inviolable, thus saving the delicate conscience of a judge who might find himself embarrassed in dealing with some uncertain phrase, such as "combinations in restraint of trade."



## CHAPTER V

### WHY TO STRIKE

WE have shown that the strike is not immoral. We have shown that it must not be illegal. According to the strict order of our inquiry as set forth in a previous chapter, we should now ask, "Does it pay?"

But the answer to that question will depend somewhat upon the object of the strike. Hence, we shall first discuss the question "Why to strike" and shall also consider whether arbitration may not be always substituted for the strike, thus, perhaps, rendering useless any further inquiry under our title.

A few weeks ago the following report appeared in a number of American newspapers:

The hello-girls in the Central Telephone station at ——— struck yesterday because the manager

refused to raise the shades covering windows that look out upon the street. The girls declared that an occasional glance into the life of the street did not interfere with their work. The manager thought differently.

The reader will find it very easy to re-write for himself the various press comments suggested by this paragraph. The quick journalistic mind could make from such a substance a hundred jests. Others would more seriously point out the growing unreasonableness of the "working classes." And yet others would lament the unfitness of women for the steady work of the world.

A few, more imaginative, would go with these striking girls into their nine-hour-a-day seclusion and would feel the youth of them yearning for the outer world; for movement, for light, for life. The dulness of it all, relieved by the fretful click of signals and the insistent whisper of subscribers; the weariness of it all; the pathos of imprisoned girlhood and womanhood,—can you understand these?

It is not given to us that life shall be a merry-making in a rose garden. Men and women must toil if they would live. Nor is there despair or repugnance in all labour.

Happily, too, youth is flexible; and in real life the burden is often marvellously adjusted to the shoulder that *must* bear it. No strained compassion is sought for the army of young women who are part of a city's nerve centres.

Yet withal, unless your heart be unduly hardened, you will, with but this word of admonition, agree that even the raising of window shades—a glimpse outward into life and light—may be such an object of desire as to reasonably lead to a strike, *when one has no other means of influencing those who control one's welfare.*

It will be urged that the great inconvenience caused to others should hold in check a body of employés whose occupation has to do with a public convenience. And in this there is truth. The perfect practice of self-abnegation would prevent all strikes. But in the world as it is, this

theory will be vainly urged upon the relatively weak, who sometimes hear it loudly proclaimed by the relatively strong.

Without preaching an impossible unselfishness, we may feel assured that the self-interest of the strikers must make them fairly cautious before resorting to a certain loss in order to accomplish an uncertain gain.

Subject to this check of self-interest, it may fairly be stated that *any object*, legal and moral in itself, may be sought by means of the strike.

Thus viewed, the question, "Why to strike," requires no *specific* answer. Let us strike for *whatever we desire*, if it cannot otherwise be more easily obtained; and if the thing desired be not wrongful.

Since very few objects wrongful in themselves are at all obtainable by means of a strike, we may eliminate this rare case. Leave it to the general conscience; and consider "why to strike" only from the selfish, profit-and-loss point of view.

## CHAPTER VI

### SPECIAL CAUSES OF STRIKES— ARBITRATION

WHILE recognising that anything *may* properly be the cause of a strike, it will be well to have before us the principal causes which have, in fact, produced our "labour wars."

Demand for: (1) Higher wages; (2) shorter hours; (3) more agreeable conditions of employment; (4) reinstatement of discharged employés; (5) recognition of the union (in various ways); (6) discharge of non-union men. These are the principal alleged causes of strikes. The last two are, in fact, only means employed for accomplishing one or the other of the first four ends. The union exists for raising wages, and bettering conditions. A struggle for the union is an indirect struggle for the *objects* of the union.

We must add a seventh cause, that is, the sympathetic strike.

In truth it is not exactly what its name suggests,—as will appear when we analyse the matter.

With these headings before us, we may now ask whether arbitration should be accepted universally, once for all, as a cheaper, wiser mode of settling differences than the strike, with its necessary losses imposed upon both parties?

From the employé's point of view, *yes*. No official board of arbitration, no fair-minded men specially chosen for an occasion, will, in the average case, fail to do as well or better for the wage-earner than he can do for himself by a wasteful strike. He should always try for it.

But the employer must hesitate; sometimes he must refuse to submit to *any one* other than himself the determination of an intricate question involving his financial existence. He knows that, in general, no arbitrator can be supplied with full information as to the special branch of industry which is involved.

And if this be supposed, it remains that the arbitrator will almost certainly be unable to seize the intricate conditions surrounding the *particular* case—conditions which must be *lived with* in order that they may be appreciated.

And if, in turn, this also be supposed, he must hesitate to submit to another, who has no further interest or responsibility in the matter, questions of judgment such as the quantity of reserve capital required; the rates that may (or must) be paid for borrowed money; the character and extent of repairs; the character and extent of new plant to be purchased; the character and extent of experimental work to be done; the character and extent of changes to be made in the product itself; the character and extent of effort and expense to be made for acquiring a wider market; and the character and extent of efforts and expense to be made in meeting competition—that foe which threatens unceasingly! Yet all these are factors determining the possible wage rates.

The employer knows, too, that at times the disclosure of intimate facts affecting his credit, even to some official (but always human) board, may be followed by prompt ruin.

In a hundred ways which every man recognises who has himself had to face a balance-sheet, the relation of the employer to his business is more complicated, more delicate, more attackable than is the relation of the wage-earner.

For the latter there is but one question, "Will this employer give me more money for a day's work than another?" Or, in another form, "Will this employer pay me in future more than he now pays me for a day's work? And if he refuses me an advance, can I get it from another?"

As being one who is the weaker (considered individually), the employé can generally rely upon the sympathy of arbitrators and of the public. As being one of many, all having political power, he can generally rely upon the play of interest in his favour—as that



play proceeds in the secret thoughts of any ambitious arbitrator.

To decide against the workman's demands, the investigator must patiently dig into many details of wearisome complexity. The simpler and the more popular course is evidently to grant the demand.

All this current that runs against him is known to the employer. He must therefore be very careful, if he submits to arbitration, that exact and limiting conditions shall be set about the power of the arbitrators. And much as he may deplore a contest of time with his employés, he must in self-preservation frequently prefer such a contest to an arbitration in which he surrenders his judgment and his fortunes to men whose knowledge and information must be less than his, and whose fortunes are in no way involved.

Often enough it is not the *willingness* but the *ability* of an employer to pay higher wages that is the real question at issue. Even in the interest of the *wage-earners*

*themselves*, it may be better that an enterprise should be temporarily shut down by a strike than that it should be subjected, by arbitration, to impossible conditions leading to ruin for all concerned.

It is plain that many of the objections to arbitration, from the employer's point of view, do not hold in case he be enjoying a monopoly. And in such case the public as well as the employés may rightfully desire to know all the facts and, substantially, to determine the larger lines of the conduct of any legalised monopoly. But this control cannot be carried to its limit unless at the same time a profit be *guaranteed* to the enterprise. If a *risk of loss* be involved, then must those who conduct the enterprise be allowed a wide discretion in return for that risk.

While it would not be unwise to make arbitration obligatory upon certain statutory monopolies, in making such a provision it should be recognised that effective arbitration really involves *publicity*, intentional or consequential.

In respect to this question of the fairness of publicity, the most vexatious cases arise when a *practical* monopoly is known to exist, though not founded on any statute. The so-called "Trusts" bring this difficulty sharply before us. It is perplexing to deal with any hybrid. They are partly public, partly private enterprises. In treating them justly, in the one character, we may treat them unjustly — even destructively — in the other.

It will be difficult to frame a law requiring this publicity of practical—though not legal—monopolies without at the same time laying an almost insupportable burden upon many enterprises, truly private in practical as well as legal aspects. A grave discouragement would undoubtedly be added to the many others which always threaten, if dissatisfaction among employés should necessarily be followed by two separate evils,—that of having every weak spot exposed to one's competitor, and that of having control of one's property put into the hands of

those who have neither the knowledge nor the interest to assure wise action.

V It will always be difficult for employés to understand the seriousness of these considerations. Those whose business experience is limited to a discussion of the simple question of "How much will you give me for a day's labour?" will always be unable to comprehend the thousand complications surrounding the conduct of a large business—or even of a small one if it is truly independent and competitive. The employer's objection to publicity will be construed as indicating that he has something dishonest to hide. His objection to having arbitrators fix rates will be construed as indicating that he is unwilling to be fair.

As a matter of fact, publicity would more frequently put some struggling, *honest enterprise* into the hands of its competitors than it would reveal any misdoing.

It is indeed a question as to whether competition and publicity can go together. The very end which the public in its own

interest wishes to preserve would often be defeated by such a requirement.

Many a young manufacturer or merchant keeps his position safe against attack just because his more powerful competitors do not know how and where he obtains help, and how closely he is "sailing to the wind" in the matter of capital reserve.

✓ Experience has taught the author that all this phase of our subject presents an immense difficulty in the way of effecting a sympathetic understanding between contending parties. So great has it been found by others, that if the employés be particularly restricted in experience, it has often been thought best to enter into no argument or explanation with employés making unreasonable demands, but merely to say, "We cannot afford the advance you desire. If you insist upon it, and if we cannot get other workmen, we must shut down."

This seems an unlovely conduct. It is excusable, however, when the assertion that "publicity may be injurious" is met

only by the assertion that "publicity cannot harm an honest man"; and when the assertion that "arbitration by impartial men may yet mean control by incompetent men" is met by the assertion that "no special competency is required to run any business; any unprejudiced man can wisely settle any dispute between any other two men."

The difference between the opposite points of view herein disclosed comes largely from the difference in the complexity of the affairs of the contestants. It seems almost ineradicable.

We cannot, therefore, look to arbitration as the cure-all for labour troubles. It is useful. It is the *cheapest* medicine of all. But in some cases it would kill instead of cure.

## CHAPTER VII

### DOES IT PAY?

WE may now return to the question, "Does it pay?" Let us first consider the case of a direct strike for higher wages.

Suppose we want a ten per cent. increase. And suppose we get it at the end of a month's strike, during which there has been a total loss of wages. It will require ten months at the higher rate merely to put us even with the loss. Beyond that period, the real *net* gain is enjoyed, but not before.

A three-months' strike resulting in the same increase (10 %) does not yield a net gain before the expiration of *thirty months*.

Changes in the general business conditions of any country make it difficult to rely upon the maintenance of any general

wage-scale throughout a period as long as thirty months. Even if general business conditions remain steady, the particular industry in which the strikers are employed may be disturbed. And if the particular industry should remain in good condition, yet the particular employer in question may fall into trouble.

Consider these facts, and it will appear that a three-months' strike for a ten per cent. increase, *even if successful*, is matter of doubtful wisdom.

The doubt becomes greater when we take into account the probable suffering or discomfort that may be borne during the three months of idleness.

These months as well as those that shall follow are parts of life—as important as any other. They come, and they pass. Their chief value is in being filled with happiness while they pass; their secondary value is in being filled with sacrifice for future possible happiness. Some of those who have made the sacrifice will not live long enough to reap the due reward. How narrow,



then, is the margin of true profit in a long strike!

It becomes even less when we remember that the very act of enforcing more pay for the employé, by a strike, diminishes the ability of the employer to *pay at all*. The real fund from which he and the employés draw their wage is the capital created by their combined work. Plainly enough if there be no combined work there will be no wage fund. And if the work be done irregularly—now a strike, now a period of work—it may be impossible that the employer should compete successfully amid the uncertainties and discouragements of such intermittent operation.

Many an industry needs *every favourable condition* in order that it may meet the tireless foe of competition.

Every wise labour leader will strive to see the employer's side of a controversy, and every wise employer will try to see the workman's side. For they are in partnership. Friendship, not enmity, should be the normal relation, profitable for both. It is unfortunate

that he who has always worked only for wages (however high) can never understand the trials of him who is the principal of a business and must find the money to meet the pay-roll.

It may be thought that whenever an employer is known to be making profits higher than the average return to capital, the employés should demand wages higher than the average paid to workmen of corresponding class in other enterprises. In such an idea there is, indeed, this much of truth: strikes can succeed *only* when directed against employers who are prosperous. Striking for higher wages when a business is barely meeting operating expenses is almost as foolish as trying to gather grapes from thistles.

Several reasons may be stated why unusual profits should not be at once absorbed by higher wages.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In systems of *profit-sharing and risk-sharing*, the special prosperity of the employing enterprise is automatically distributed between Capital, Management, and Labour. This is the ideal condition toward which all efforts should be directed, but it is difficult of attainment.

Thus, it is necessary that occasional profits to capital and management should be large in order to cover the losses which occur all too frequently. In seasons of general prosperity, when labour is in sharp demand, risk of loss in a particular enterprise is borne almost entirely by capital and management, not by the particular wage-earners who may have been employed in the unfortunate venture.

It is safe to say that if the hope of unusual reward were taken away from those who initiate enterprise, the world's progress would be tremendously crippled.

"But," you may say, "does not this hope lead men to make foolish ventures?"

"Are not all ventures which fail proven to be foolish ventures?"

"Are not the losses properly apportioned to those who have shown lack of wisdom?"

"Would it not be just as well that no enterprise should be permitted to earn more than the present *average* return to capital and management?"

And the answer is: "Who shall

determine what are wise enterprises and what are foolish?

“Who can know absolutely to what depth a vein of mineral goes until large sums of money have been spent in exploring or working the mine?”

“Who can foresee all the wars, all the drouths, all the pestilence, all the migrations of people from one country to another or from one street to another?”

“Who can know, without heroic effort and great expenditure, whether a new invention, which may be a universal blessing, has or has not the merit which it seems to possess?”

The mines from which men draw wealth are tombs of broken hearts. The “scrap-heaps” of the inventor’s workshop are the wrecks of overworked minds; the deserted factories are monuments of dead ambitions.

The world receives and enjoys the successes; it forgets the agonising failures which have marked the way out of ignorance to knowledge, out of weakness to strength.

These failures are the involuntary sacrifices made by individuals to the progress of society. No one is wise enough to teach or to learn success in one lesson.

Some who read these pages may inquire, "But cannot 'Government' direct all these things more wisely?" And in answer we need say only this: "Government is no other than you and your neighbour. Can you and he set it all right?"

No, we must go on in the future very much as in the past. Something more of co-operation perhaps. And this movement may constantly approach the general co-operation of Socialism. But if that is the goal which Fate has set before us we must be content to slacken the pace of scientific progress. When every man shall be relieved from great risk and debarred from great success, there will be less effort, less ambition; less waste (perhaps) and less gain; less product and—we hope—more happiness.

Let not the honest worker who *thinks*, begrudge an occasional reward beyond

the average to those who strive beyond the average.

Another reason standing against the immediate absorption of unusual profits lies in this, that in many enterprises ultimate safety is to be had only by building up large reserves. Without these, ruin may fall upon employer and employé alike.

No man can be sure as to just how far such a policy should be carried, but before striking at the profits of an employer, this matter of reserve should be well considered. At a later date, when some great change in plant is needed; when some exceptional competition is to be met; when some great disaster by fire or flood is to be covered, this reserve fund may be the very force which must be available in order to keep the enterprise going. And in that case, the employé is benefited, quite as much as any one else, by the prudence of the manager who did not at once pay out in dividends or in increased wages every penny that was earned above the ordinary returns to capital.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CAPITAL AND LABOUR

WIDESPREAD misunderstanding of the real battle of labour is largely due to the common phrase, "Capital *versus* Labour."

Is it really *Capital* that has an interest antagonistic to that of Labour? The matter is worth investigating.

Labour means the active working man of to-day. Capital means the raw material of Nature, either unmodified or modified by the man of yesterday, be he dead or alive. We have a considerable stock of modified raw material (capital) because yesterday did not immediately consume all that it produced.

Some of the world's capital is held by idlers, generally through inheritance.

The idlers exist largely because of our

vanity, and our parental love. Vanity may be hurtful, but it is universal. Parental love is helpful, within limits, and is almost universal. Both are "human nature"—found alike in prince and pauper. Acting together they endow children with more property than they need—if the parents be rich. It is probable that this right of endowment must be severely limited. For the present, the subject goes over.

But most of the world's capital is held by workers.

The workers must be roughly divided into two classes. The larger class, numerically, consists of those who have very little capital, and who require an immediate return for their labour. They are those usually known as "wage-earners," "working men," "operatives," or "employés." Generally they work under the direction of others. These others constitute the second class of workers. Directive workers we may call them. They may have had from their parents even less than the average



support given to the children of wage-earners.

In the beginning of many enterprises, the man who furnishes the Direction is just as much without capital as the labourer whom he employs. But if this directing man (or boy) has health and brains and energy and thrift, he generally earns more than he spends, and thus becomes a "capitalist."

Every man who earns more than he spends is a capitalist. Every wage-earner with a few dollars in the savings-bank is a capitalist, for these dollars represent property. Every carpenter owning a set of tools is a capitalist. His tools are iron ore (natural resource) modified by the labour of yesterday.

The average safe return to capital, *as such*, is from two to five per cent. per annum.

Is there any serious quarrel with that?

Many thousands of capitalists—that is the saving people all over the world—never get as high a return as four per cent.

And it is to be remembered that this average return is made up of the high and the low. If you prevent the occasional high returns without preventing an equal proportion of low returns, the average must be less than it is now.

If capital, *as such*, could not continue to have the average return now received by it, the savings-banks could not pay the current interest on deposits.

The wage-earner who fights against reasonable returns to capital is fighting against the majority of his class. He is fighting against giving reward to thrift; against giving a rental for the use of tools. Without a rental they will not be supplied by Smith, who may have them, to Jones who wants to use them. Jones is generally benefited, more than he is injured, by paying rental for tools, or he would not take them.

*The real competition is between workers and workers.* As owners of capital, all individuals of both classes are interested in allowing fair returns to that which is lent for hire. The question between

them is, "What wage shall you get, and what wage shall I get?" rather than, "What return shall we pay to Capital, as such?"

That which confuses many employés as to their relation toward capital is this—that often the "capitalist" and the "boss" are one and the same. If Mr. John Smith invests \$100,000 in any manufacturing business, and, being his own manager, makes profits of \$50,000 a year, Mr. Smith the capitalist gets \$4000 and Mr. Smith the manager gets \$46,000.

By a strike for higher wages you may force him to give up some of the \$46,000, but you do not expect him to cut into the \$4000. If you do, it would be wise to withdraw your money from the savings-bank at once, and take the sluggard rather than the ant as your model citizen.

To put it in another way—assume that Mr. Smith has \$100,000. He can have \$4000 per year *without work*. Somebody will pay that for the use of his capital. If he wants more, he must work. He may employ himself and

lend to himself the \$100,000. If he be not an intelligent worker, he will lose his capital. It would have been wiser to have lent his money to some one else. If he be clever and very industrious, then we have the case of the strong man getting rich by enterprise.

His position as a capitalist follows from his efforts as a worker.

He is a bigger capitalist than the average man, because he is a bigger worker. Then his capital-holding reacts, in the total result, upon his work done, and we behold again that "to him that hath it shall be given."

Capital—his own capital—may be worth more in his skilful hands than it could be when employed by average industrial capacity.

So it is with the skilful carpenter. His tools, cleverly used by himself, will do far more work in a day, than when hired to the average journeyman. The happy marriage within his own home of native capacity to good tools, becomes a fruitful one. He is on the high-road

to wealth. His companion, less gifted than he, may have equally good tools, but makes only half the *value* created by the brighter man.

So it is throughout the working world. One lawyer is paid ten times as much as another for a day's work.

One man-of-God is paid ten times as much as another for preaching the same gospel of poverty.

The clever labourer, the clever mechanic, the clever telegrapher, the clever clerk, the clever lawyer—all these, when they have only a little capital, are known as labourer, mechanic, telegrapher, etc., etc. When they have much capital—though workers in one way or another—they are known as “capitalists.” They lead the other workers and divide the proceeds with them. But not always is there happy agreement as to the division. Those who have gone up from the ranks of “Labour” are found, all over the world, as employers, striving with poorer workers to settle questions of compensation. It is worker against worker.

## CHAPTER IX

### WHO WILL FURNISH HIGHER WAGES?

WE may assume that the capitalist, as such, is retired from the field of inquiry. He is not in question, because all of us are capitalists—all except the tramp, happier, perhaps, than we.

How much more can ordinary wage-earners take from the general product than is now received by them?

Moral and legal is the strike for higher wages. Profitable it may be, and sometimes is. But to what limit may it—or any other wage-raising device—be pushed before reaching the point where failure will be due to an exhaustion of the supply of product assignable to the pay of labour?

Between what classes of people is the product now divided?

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It has already been pointed out that there are two classes of workers,—those who *plan* and *direct*, and those who execute, the world's work.

*Is not this true within the labour union itself?* Let us develop the subject somewhat further.

Some workers will be found in a neutral ground between the two well-marked types. The foreman who controls a gang of ten or twenty labourers; the locomotive engineer who controls a fireman; the railway conductor who controls a train-gang—all these wage-earners have mixed functions. In part they merely execute, by hand or tongue, the directions of others; in part they are themselves the source of direction for subordinates. No hard-and-fast distinction can be made.

However, we may say that those who *plan* enterprises, and those who must largely exercise discretion in the guidance of their own acts, or those of subordinates, constitute the class whom we designate as directive labourers. They may be railway presidents or newsboys,

promotors of railways (that is, those who conceive the idea and raise the money), bankers, contractors, merchants (whether running a corner grocery or a big department store). Even the newsboy, who is a self-directed worker, taking the risk on his purchase of morning papers, may be said to be in the same classification with Mr. Rockefeller, who risked his young fortune in oil. The highly-paid mason, who waits for some one else to plan a building and find the money for its construction, is put under less mental strain than the youth who ventures *his own judgment* and his own small hoard in some humble, but independent enterprise.

The one, when he lays down his trowel, may dismiss every care for the day. The other must ever be ready to burn the midnight oil in planning for the morrow.

The one lives in a ready-made world. The other helps to make it. Each, in his own way, is essential to the life of society as we find it.



Vain would be the projects of a Rockefeller if there were not strong arms and deft hands to tap the oil, to lay the pipe, to shovel the coal, to steer the ships, to write the accounts, to send the telegrams, to tighten the barrels, to drive the waggons, to collect the bills, to cook the food.

A thousand capacities, talents, and fortitudes must be enlisted, together with mere brute strength of arm, in order that a single train may speed over the railroad which has been planned by the far-seeing promoter and financed by the courageous banker. We are, indeed, all companions-in-arms, and our battle is against hunger, thirst, cold, and a myriad of desires for love, power, beauty. That is the battle of *Life*. Generals, colonels, majors, captains, lieutenants, sergeants, corporals, and privates are we—many grades, and but one army.

No booty can be had except by combined effort of all those grades. Not every man is capable of planning the campaign. Not every man is capable of

controlling a regiment—a company—a platoon. Not every striker can wisely conduct a strike. Not every wage-earner has the qualities that make a labour leader. And if, indeed, these capacities exist in many, yet economy in the use of available forces, and effectiveness of execution, would require that only a few should actually be assigned to directive functions, while the many must be employed in carrying out the plans of the few.

It is probable that the relatively free competition of our present organisation of society affords an excellent means of selecting the officers of the army. The process is in large part that which takes place in the "struggle for existence" among all living things. In large part it results in a "survival of the fittest."

There is indeed one serious departure from this process—that due to the inheritance of fortune. The son who is permitted to take his father's wealth becomes either an idle holder of capital, or he becomes an "officer," whether capa-

ble or not. Even though unfit, years or generations may pass ere society can eliminate him from his post. This serious question will be relegated to a later inquiry, in another work. No final adjustment of wealth distribution can be made before the inheritance question shall have received attention. But the scope of this treatise forbids its thorough study.

Another disturbance of the rule of sound choice of leaders results from the caprice of nature. The prospector who chances to discover a rich vein of gold is not thereby proven to be more capable than his companion who just misses it. Yet he becomes an officer of our industrial army. Here again we shall now merely touch upon an important subject.

It will be possible to conclude an inquiry for present guidance in the matter of strikes without reconstruction of society.

Let us assume that the method of choosing officers is not now to be changed. We may yet inquire—and we do now

persistently inquire—how the relative pay of officers and men shall be determined. To-day it is a catch-as-catch-can determination.

To a large degree, it must remain so in any competitive, private-property organisation of industry. For if the state shall undertake to determine the profits of each person, it makes itself responsible for all individual remunerations, and must control all industry in order to make good its guaranty. Just in so far as it now fixes the remuneration of its direct employés, so is it forced correspondingly to intervene in private business, and raise money for the payment of its salaries.

As to how far the state shall go in employing individuals—hence in paying them and in taxing citizens to provide this payment—is not this the very heart of most of our political struggles?

Here again we shall assume no immediate and considerable change in present conditions. We shall suppose about the same ratio of state activity to private

activity as now exists in Europe and America. In these states the amount of property which each man may call his own as the sun goes down on his labour must be chiefly determined by *private contract* between himself and others.

What indication have the wage-earners (the privates and corporals of our industrial army) as to the limits of demand they may wisely make in these contracts?

It is plain, as has been indicated, that neither could afford to lose the service of the other. The private needs the general; the general needs the private, and both *want all they can get*.

Such a declaration may seem harsh; it may seem equivalent to a refusal to recognise the common human kindness of our race. Yet how can we fail to accept it as expressing the usual rule of action? How can we fail to see that this rule, and not its exceptions, should be considered in a serious study of our problems?

The man who receives one dollar a day wants more because his crudest necessities of life are in peril.

The man who has five dollars a day wants more because a hundred tempting comforts and little luxuries are just beyond his means, and old age waits in front to take away his income.

The man who has twenty dollars a day is in full rivalry for the "good things" of life, and seeks to "establish" his family.

The man who has five hundred dollars a day has full provisions of all luxuries, but aims now at power or large philanthropy.

The man who has five thousand dollars a day *is* a great power, and, though perhaps giving lavishly with one hand, must continue to make prudent contracts with the other, else he may debauch the industrial system around him, bringing disorder and distress into thousands of less successful lives. So long as he buys and sells, he must see that he gets a fair "value received," or he will corrupt his surroundings.

Indeed the very service which he may best perform for all of us might be lost

should he cease to observe the methods by which he has, presumably, contributed to the wealth of society. He may continue to be an ideal leader of a brigade of our army, but only on condition that downright charity shall be in one department of his activity, and productive business in another. Liberality, but not charity, should mark his *business* dealings.

Often must he *refuse* the demands of *some* who look to him, if he would remain in position to profitably direct *all* who look to him.

And so it is that private contracts, even with the philanthropist, must generally result from contest and compromise. And contest is of the very essence of liberty. We may, and do, profit our weary souls by giving up some liberty and escaping some contest. Let us remember that if we entirely escape the contest we shall entirely sacrifice the liberty.

If the man who is earning five dollars a day desires to know whether society can

afford to pay him six dollars; instead of five, he should look, not to what the generals are *receiving*, but to what they are *spending*. Under our present system of private property, the very *efficiency* and *usefulness* to *you* of the Captain of Industry is (generally) measured by the amount of property which passes under his control.

Save by way of inheritance or the rare chance of adventure, or of special privilege from the state, no man becomes the *owner* of large fractions of society's product who has not largely served society in production. He is commanding more troops than another (in the handling of his property) *because he has proved his ability to command*.

He who has wealth measured as five thousand dollars may command the services of about four thousand common labourers for one day. Or he may command, let us say, two thousand *average* wage-earners, for one day.

Now our true interest lies, not so much in taking away these commands from



competent leaders, as in seeing that the two thousand men be employed usefully to the general average of us. The mere power over these men may be left to a leader, provided he keeps his brigade at what we shall call useful work.

Well, what shall we call useful work?

Shall we thus class the one hundred men who may be serving our leader as lackeys?

And the twenty men who may be engaged in digging and polishing diamonds to deck the bodies of our leader's women?

And the twenty men who may be engaged in singing and dancing for the amusement of these women?

And the thirty men who may be engaged in decorating and repairing the sheltering roof of the leader's family?

And the thirty men who may be engaged in trapping birds in the tropics, beasts in the Arctic, and worms in the middle zone for the head-gear and body-gear of his women?

Nay, these are not *usefully* occupied.

But, say they of small vision, does not the rich man *support* these two hundred? Is he not doing well to keep them alive? And the answer is, that these men eat grain which has been planted by other workers, and are clothed by the labour of others.

The rich man, who controls many, virtually directs certain farmers and weavers to support these two hundred who live for his pleasure. He has the *legal* right to do this. Perhaps he has added the value of two hundred men's work—and more besides—to the world's wealth.

*But as long as he does it*, the man who receives three dollars may hope for four, and ask for four, and strike for four.

Why? Because if the two hundred men would stop hunting diamonds and aigrettes, if they would cease running a thousand futile errands, if they would in general end their task of painting the lily of luxury, then they might be engaged in making more ordinary coats and hats, in building more ordinary comfortable

houses, in producing more ordinary comforting food. And if there were but more of these common comforts in the world (and not so many diamonds) then our three-dollar-a-day friend could have more of them. And that is what he wants. And that is what is meant when an increase of a dollar a day is properly interpreted into the language of the household.

Let us suppose that the two hundred men who have heretofore served the leader's personal wants be now directed to the supply of materials desired by the "common herd." Let us suppose that they do nothing more than support themselves in the true sense of the word.

That is, instead of hunting diamonds or polishing automobile brasses, they raise corn and weave clothes, and make shoes sufficient for two hundred ordinary people. Then it is clear that the common materials heretofore supplied to them by the labour of others may be kept by the original producers, or, in part, distributed to other wage-earners—a consum-

mation most devoutly to be wished for.

From this point of view it may be said that the employer of these two hundred men does really consume their possible product in the common things of life.

Until we give a full belly, a warm body, a separate room, and a good book to every human being willing and able to work, we may doubt whether diamond diggers, aigrette hunters, lace makers, and lackeys are being profitably employed.

It is not forgotten that the poor have always delighted in display. To them it is at once a symbol and a reality. It is the very substance of things hoped for, and the sign of a state of bliss vaguely imagined and intensely longed for. To destroy display would take out of the lives of many the visible proof of value in human life as they measure it. So powerful is this sentiment that the majority of those whose lives are unadorned do willingly vote supplies to their Rulers, with express condition that these other chosen lives shall be adorned

with pomp and tinsel. These Rulers become priests of the poor, gorgeously to officiate in the temple of the God of Plenty. Only a few may enter there, but the presence of even a few inspires all with hope, and assures them that a material Heaven *is*. So there is no envy when the priest is *chosen by the people*.

Corrupting extravagance has been excused by many political economists, because "it gives employment to the poor." In all the arguments to this effect there is no truth save this, that those workers who are actually now engaged in the production of luxuries for the rich might indeed suffer somewhat during any period of sharp decline in the demand for such luxuries. The present would suffer for the sins of the past.

So grave might this suffering be, so difficult any quickly enforced adjustment that even the most Spartan reformer must hesitate to advise any course which would at once throw out of work the thousands who are skilled only in the crafts patronised by Dives. Diamond

diggers, aigrette hunters, and lackeys cannot, in the twinkling of an eye, turn to farming, weaving, or shoe-making.

But we should not permit these considerations to obscure our vision as to the future. We should not fail to urge voluntary diminishment of extravagance; and if this be not effective, to urge for continuously higher wages to the ordinary worker, so that the *means* for extravagance shall not be so largely placed in the hands of those who take joy only in the tinsel things of life.

Yes, we may urge this restraint and this redistribution of labour and wealth.

But what if the gifted inventors and the great organisers of business (true "labour leaders" these) should refuse their service unless they be permitted to keep the two hundred men busy in the supply of luxury to themselves and their women?

Truly, we must bargain with them. How great their value is to us no man can say.

The three elements of the problem are:

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First.—How much does the superior man increase the world's production over that which would be due to the average work of the ordinary man?

Second.—How much does the superior man consume (in necessities and luxuries) beyond the average consumption of the ordinary man?

Third.—How much of the world's production does the superior man merely control (without consuming it), satisfied with the power of directing capital for further production?

More briefly we may ask—What does he add? What does he subtract? That which he merely holds and directs as our agent is still ours, and its use must be of general benefit. Curtailment of this control may be important politically—that is, he who thus controls may offend merely by being too powerful—but just now we are inquiring as to how much of production is consumed away from us, thus rendered unavailable for increase of wages.

How much does the superior man add?

We cannot say exactly. Yet a little thought makes one feel that without him the ordinary man would probably starve in all parts of the world save a few regions of easy climate and "volunteer" crops. Remember that to the common labourer or other employé at the bottom of the series, his foreman is the first superior man. To the foreman his superintendent is the first superior man. To the superintendent, his manager; to the manager, his general manager; to the general manager, that employer (president or owner) who has planned and toiled and risked *all*. And there are the inventors, toiling in garrets—later, perhaps, in palaces—to materialise the ideas, which are the forces with which we conquer Nature. How shall we measure their production? And there are the pure scientists—*poor* scientists sometimes, in property—who study the intricacies of Nature's laws, turning over to the inventor the information out of which his ideas are born. Without such men, might we not still be in breech-clouts—all of us?



Must we not exercise the very greatest care to preserve conditions permitting these superior men to be born, and permitting their faculties to be usefully applied? Even if we charge them with selfishness in respect to the rewards they demand, must we not, in our own wise selfishness, hesitate long before we reject those demands?

Should not the ordinary man study the "human nature" of the much-needed extraordinary man with the same cold utilitarian motive which directs the study of climate and of soil? Shall we shut our eyes to the fact that in order to live at all we must deal with a thousand varying capacities among men, and a thousand varying motives?

Among those who work under foreman, superintendent, and manager, are the millions of wage-earners for whom and by whom the strike and the union exist.

They act together; they may seem to be a uniform mass, yet a thousand grades of physical and mental value go to make up their aggregate productive capacity.

Whether we will or not, we *are* various; we are *not* uniform in strength for the battle of life.

Now let the stronger and the wiser, even of these millions of *directed* men and women, ask themselves this question—“What would become of us if every one of us,—dirt-diggers, dish-washers, street-cleaners, stokers, coal-miners, farm-hands, brakemen, mill-workers, packers, teamsters, longshoremen—were reduced in capacity to the level of the least efficient among us?

“What would be the world’s production if none of us—locomotive engineers, painters, machinists, carpenters, masons, typographers, stenographers, telegraphers—were cleverer than poor Smith, whose dulness and laziness almost exhaust our helpful sympathy? We may know that he can’t help being what he is, but what would the world be if all were like him?”

Let the foreman of ten ask himself this question—“What progress could I make on this job if I did not give the word of

command to every thoughtless, careless workman?" Let the superintendent ask himself this question—"What progress could I make on this job if I did not continually lay out and inspect the work of each foreman? And what waste and loss in the world's production would occur if I could not shift these foremen and draw the *better men* up from the ranks?"

Is not every employer on the alert to discover *competency, industry, reliability* among his subordinates?

Is not the history of the race full of sad stories of loss, of failure, because the *right man, the competent man*, was not in charge of this or that enterprise?

Is not one housewife, one general, one business manager found to conduct admirably a house, an army, or a business, with resources not larger than are in the hands of another housewife, general, or manager, who miserably fails in the task?

Is not one locomotive equal in transportation work to thousands of men? And is not the locomotive, in its

invention, in its design and manufacture, and in its operation, the child of the *unusual man*?

Let the whole world of salaried people ask themselves these questions: "Have I the strength to bear the strains of risk? Have I the peculiar quality of leadership? Have I the imagination, controlled by judgment, which must go to the planning of this enterprise which, somehow, furnishes me employment? Can I invent a machine to cheaply shape this stubborn material?"

Truly, one cannot measure the value of what he adds—he, the superior man. Some glimpse we may have of it by noting the poverty of those societies in which ambition for military or political or religious honour has for a time drawn away from production a large majority of the active minds found in the land.

Europe in the early Middle Ages tells us how poor in value was the average human life when the commercial classes were despised; how vain were the efforts of religion to cheer ignorant peoples until

the *trading* republics of Italy had relighted the torch of civilisation. That torch was seen to be held in the hands of *him who directed* human labour to high production.

Accuracy in this matter is indeed beyond us. Yet reflection will cause most men to agree that a great invention, a great business plan, may annually add to the general fund much more than the value of the labour of two hundred ordinary men. And observation will tell us that the men who thus add to our store are rarely those who largely waste that which they have helped to create.

Power over it they desire, and that respect which special ability commands when it shows the fruit of its labour. But senseless luxury is usually despised by the real workers—those who have spent weary hours, days, years in planning and directing the great workings of their time. Sometimes they gratify a costly whim. Often they cater to the vanity of their women. Generally, however, the habit of reasonable economy

is fixed upon them. It is only when special privilege or effortless inheritance have endowed the slothful with much property that we see those glaring examples of luxurious waste which stir the philosopher in his study and the workman at his bench.

It has already been said that those two questions must be later treated by society. The issue is more urgent in Europe than in America, because privilege and inheritance have there exerted more widespread influence than in the new world.

Just now we may perhaps conclude that the true labour leaders—that is, the inventors and the managers (in all their grades)—probably add to, far more than they subtract from, the general store of wealth.

Now the principal tools which they use for production are *other men*. The figure of speech may be permitted, although it is not forgotten that these tools are the co-operators of him who uses them. They are men who will

share with their Director the common fruit of their toil. And both will contribute to the support of certain parasites whom we have not yet learned how to kill without hurting ourselves.

Now, if the Director's tools are good, the total production will be high. If they are bad, total production will be low.

The wants of the Director for his own consumption will remain substantially the same in either case. That which is left over after this approximately constant consumption has been satisfied constitutes a store from which increase of wages may be drawn.

*Hence if you, the wage-earner, would have a larger wage-fund, let your work in co-operation with him who directs it be as productive as possible. Do not restrict, but endeavour to augment your individual output. Then will your share be greater in a greater store.*

If the brick-layer will lay one thousand bricks per day, instead of six hundred, there will in the end be more comfortable

quarters for all workmen. Nothing can defeat this rule, always saving the effect of special privilege and effortless inheritance, both of which causes should be (and one of which is) fairly well limited in our modern democracies.

But to all this you may say—"Do we not get the services of judges, of cabinet ministers, of legislators for a small fraction of the sum *paid* to, and *consumed* by, the great captains of industry? Are not those public officers called upon to work as severely, and with as much originality as the big employer? Should he not be held within those limits of compensation which satisfy those public servants? In the United States may not that limit be, let us say, \$25,000 per year?"

And the answer is—first the work is *not* as hard or as original as that of the captain of industry. And it does not involve the strain and risk that go with private enterprise. Every wage-earner, *in private life*, is under greater strain than the most elevated state-employé, whose



“job” is practically secure. Second, without destroying the present basis of our whole fabric of industry, without upsetting the little groceryman, as well as the merchant prince, you cannot put these men *on salaries*. Nor can you practically contract with them that they may control, as their private property, but for your general use, five million dollars’ worth of wealth, while consuming only \$25,000 worth of this property every year.

Something of the sort has been attempted by various sumptuary laws; the effect has been generally disastrous, though the efforts have been less drastic than would be involved in such a rule as that just suggested. The sentiment of *service* is growing—of service by each for all. Those to whom nature has given strength now tend to use it for others.

*This sentiment of service, aided by the steady pressure of the wage-earners’ demands, will limit the material compensation exacted by the superior man. Partly*

through compulsion, partly through desire, he will take a little less property—a little more popularity.

Accepting then the theory that *leaders generally* add more than they subtract, and that their product will increase with the efficiency of their employés, and that the actual consumption by them will not increase in due ratio with this product, we see that the *efficiency of the wage-earner sets the limit—more than any other one controllable condition—to the fund out of which may come any increase of consumption by the wage-earner.*

So the leader of a labour union is supposed to add in value to the labour movement more than he subtracts by consuming his salary. And so also his results will be greater in proportion to the enthusiasm, intelligence, and industrious co-operation of the members who elect him. The product to be manufactured is improvement of the wage-earner's condition. The labour-leader's tools in the manufacture of this product are his

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constituents; dull tools make poor product; keen tools make good product.

How far away is this conclusion from the theory acted upon by many unions!

How mistaken is the principle which causes them to hamper the individual in his output!

How much richer would all of us be by virtue of unchecked individual production, paid for on the piece-work system!

How beneficent will be the final triumph of Co-operation!

How fatherly and motherly will be the future union enfolding together general manager and common labourer!

Yet not even then shall we see equality of compensation, for we shall never see equality of production. In such case, *equality* would be *inequitable*.

And as to co-operation—fairly easy when the farm has been cleared; when the ship has been launched; when the factory has been built and the experiments paid for. But where is the group of workmen who can, or will, “co-oper-

ate," in the uncertain stages of an enterprise? How can they be held together over the long periods of preparation, of doubt, of struggle, of disappointment?

When, in anger, they cry out against the present system; when, in their inexperience, they vainly imagine that the upbuilding of enterprises is only sitting in an office to sign letters that somebody writes—then let them ask a mother what it is to bear a child and nurture its infancy. Let them propose "co-operation" as to its up-bringing—after the age of fifteen! From her they may learn that the pain and the cost and the risk of things is borne when the thing is young—be it boy or business. From her they may learn wisdom.

Verily the way is long, but let it not be darkened by hate.

Will it be possible, by any means whatever, to permanently fix the wage-scale as between these two competitors?

No; unless perhaps through the establishment of a tyranny, which shall impose its will upon both parties. If we are to

be free we must anticipate constant struggle.

Perfect peace is had only in a perfectly accepted slavery.

Even the democratic tyrant Socialism would be unable to settle without turmoil the disputes of interest, between classes and between individuals. For the will and the power of the Socialistic state are but the resultant will and power of clashing desires among the people. Its action must always flow from compromise; and compromise is the fruit of struggle.

Jones and Smith have different capacities and conflicting desires. They are not given the wisdom to measure each other's capacity, nor the will to yield to each other's desires.

We dream vainly if we dream of stopping the contest between them.

We work wisely if we strive to make this contest orderly, and to free it from bitterness.

## CHAPTER X

### CONCLUSIONS AS TO STRIKES FOR HIGHER PAY

SEVERAL chapters have now been devoted to discussion of the strike for higher pay. If our reasonings be correct, the lesson from all this may be put thus:

Strikes for higher wages should be directed only against prosperous enterprises, but against even these there should be moderation; and understanding should be had of the following facts: (1) There must be failures where there is progress. (2) Without occasional special rewards men would not risk capital and brains in ventures which make progress. (3) Reserves made up from special profits are valuable to wage-earners as well as to managers. (4) The sacrifice of pay during the strike-period should

be carefully weighed against the proposed increase. (5) Against any employer who is having a hard struggle, no strike can pay. (6) The strike is a two-edged sword. Every time it swings, it clips a feather (or a wing) from the goose that lays the golden egg. (7) The true title of our case is not "Labour versus Capital," but "Labour versus Labour." It is a family quarrel. (8) Some increase of pay to ordinary wage-earners may come by way of subtraction from the pay of Directive Labour, but chiefly such increase must come from increase of production. (9) High production comes from high efficiency of both classes of workers. (10) No permanent rate of pay as between the two classes can be fixed in a free competitive industrial system.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE EIGHT-HOUR DAY

THE strike for shorter hours is usually made with the condition that the pay *per day* shall remain the same. It is desired to receive the same amount for nine or eight hours' work as had been received before for ten or nine hours.

From the workman's point of view this is almost a necessary condition. Except in a few highly paid services, he does not receive enough to permit a reduction without dropping below the scale of comfort and enlightenment which are necessary to make him a good citizen.

He likes to believe that his shorter hours of labour will be so much more effective than a longer day that the employer need not calculate upon a loss of income should he yield to the demand.



Undoubtedly there has been much truth in such an argument when applied to reducing working hours from twelve or fourteen to the lower average which now exists.

Undoubtedly, many employers were blind to the facts; they often opposed those reductions which changed a tired animal into an intelligent workman. Nothing but good has resulted from the change; good to master and to workman.

But, all this being granted, it remains true that somewhere the line must be drawn. A man will not produce as much in two hours per day as in ten hours. Ten hours may be longer than is good; but two hours, or three, or four, or five—these short working periods will not suffice in the present state of the industrial arts.

The employer must calculate the values at stake. An error in this calculation may mean ruin. In any particular case, the values are fairly definite, from his point of view and must be weighed.

But from the workman's point of view

it is different. For who can measure the value in happiness of one hour's leisure? And who can weigh this coveted hour against the months of privations that may be required to obtain it? A wife's welcome, a child's caress—it is in this coin that the cost of the sacrifice shall be repaid.

If the love of work itself be destroyed by the narrow, impersonal, uninspiring relation of modern machinery to the artisan's thought; if the human bond of companionship be destroyed by the narrow, impersonal relation of the master with the great working groups whom he employs; if *work* thus degenerates into *drudgery*, then this hour of leisure may mean, not one twenty-fourth, not one twelfth, of the *value* of life, but one third or one half of it—nay, all of the value worth struggling for. If uncongenial labour fill ten hours; and dead sleep fill nine hours; and the body's care fill one hour; and the noisy shuttle of tram-car movement fill one hour—then only three are left for *living*. In this short term

is the soul of the day. What shall it avail the world to gain a mountain of merchandise and lose its soul?

Here we need no accuracy of comparison for balancing of profit and loss. If physical comfort can at all be had through eight hours' work of the general body, then so let it be—that the race may *live*. The adjustment is difficult. Competition makes it so. A single employer is almost helpless in the matter. He may believe in the righteousness of an eight-hour day, or even a shorter one; he may long to yield to a demand; or, before the demand, to voluntarily give increase of pay and decrease of hours. But if the factory, or the mine, or the railway be on the trembling edge of bankruptcy; if the manager's days are spent in travail and his nights in thoughtful vigil; if the pay-roll be a nightmare, what can he do? He is called the master of his own business, but the true master is Competition. Under its compulsion vast efforts have been made; vast results have been obtained, and vast sacrifices

have been exacted. To put a limit upon these sacrifices, Combination is called into the struggle against Competition. But not until the whole power of a sovereign state enters into league with a Combination, thus making legal monopoly, is it possible to find complete protection from Competition. It is always a sleeping peril, if not actually in motion against any particular enterprise. No matter how great may be a "Trust," it is not entirely its own master unless joined directly to the power of the State.

Both these principles of action, Competition and Combination, like all other laws which govern us, are good when kept within limits and become bad only when left in exclusive control of our actions.

So it is with the law that "with the sweat of his brow shall he eat bread." Some "sweat" in every man's life is a blessing. The "curse of labour" exists only when labour absorbs *all* of man's life.

Slowly this "curse" is being lifted

from the world—a rift in the cloud—then darker; always, in the end, a little brighter. While invention and organisation increase the productivity of every work-hour, thus promising relief, man's growing desires call for more and more of the things produced by labour and the work itself becomes more mechanical, less individual, more numbing, less inspiring. Yet withal, the gain has been clear. The world's typical workers, the humble day labourers, have shorter hours now than ever before. This progress should not cease until eight hours (possibly, thereafter, seven) shall be, in all irksome, indoor, treadmill, uninteresting occupations, a maximum of regular demand.

To gain this, if it can be gained in no other way, the strike may well be tried. No more worthy object can be proposed in answer to our "Why to Strike?"

The argument is rude. The dispute hurts both parties to it; many innocent, well-wishing employers, many needy wage-earners must suffer in the struggle.

The forces which are involved can not be confined to any one industry, to any one country, to any one latitude, to any one race. If the object is to be attained without the slow, wearing, hurting process of strikes, concessions, arbitrations, secessions, failures, revivals, successes, sacrifices,—then it must be had by virtue of some World's Congress of Labour.

Perhaps the governments will not be first to move. The subject is full of difficulties. Many diplomatic traditions, many consecrated legal proverbs, many deep-seated prejudices must be burned in the fire of reform ere the end may be thus gained.

The fetich of protection will muddle the issue; the spirit of individualism will cry aloud.

Yet it is possible that this should happen: in the civilised, industrial lands, men of all classes may associate themselves in vast eight-hour organisations, no other object being sought or considered.

These may study to determine the

occupations which are to be excepted from the ultimate general rule. Such organisations may correspond with similar bodies in various countries, looking to the fixing of the terms in which appropriate legislation shall be expressed and the date when it shall become effective. A concerted and emphatic expression of their will may thus be given by the European, American (and possibly Japanese) democracies.

That will, duly registered by legislatures, is law. To it must yield all previous prejudices. It may declare that it has weighed "freedom of contract," "right of man to determine his own labour," and all other opposing forces; that their value is known; that a sacrifice of lesser things to greater is to be made; that one more hour of *real* liberty has been decreed as more valuable than twelve hours of freedom to sleep and twelve hours of freedom to work.

Then shall one great issue die from among those that keep alive the great question "Why to Strike?"

## CHAPTER XII

### GENERAL IMPROVEMENT OF WORKING CONDITIONS

HIGHER pay and shorter hours raise very directly the question of the cost to the employer that may result from satisfying the demands of strikers.

The demand for more agreeable conditions of employment may or may not raise any question of cost. This point should always be carefully investigated before striking. Misunderstanding in respect to it has often caused much bitterness.

The *method* of doing a thing may have relations to the *cost* of doing it, unseen to all save those who have planned the business from foundation to pinnacle. It will pay the employé to investigate these relations very closely and with an open



mind, before demanding even those changes which, at first glance, seem obviously easy and of no cost.

Only those employers who are very shortsighted and very selfish will refuse to grant demands which *cost nothing and please the workmen*. Only those who are harsh of nature will refuse to please their employés, even if it should cost an amount that may reasonably be borne. That there are such employers—alas, is all too true. And many there are who have not learned, and by virtue of the characters born in them will not learn, that the best strike-preventative is *kindness*.

When, in a hundred little ways, employés see that their happiness as human beings is of no concern to the employer, a sensitive and exasperated mood is produced. This may lead to contest over some trifle which, under more considerate management, would be cheerfully borne. It may lead to a strike which in itself cannot find justification or wisdom. Both parties suffer for the selfishness of one. Thus it is with all ugliness of nature.

Until universal sweetness and light shall be established among men, it shall ever be necessary to contend against such evil. In such case, the employé may choose submission, persuasion, or a strike. There can be no specific rules for the contests which we must wage with meanness.

It may be that the strike will still seem worth while even if a money value to the employer be found involved in a demand which at first seemed free from any relation to a profit and loss.

But a knowledge of the real interests at stake will permit a wiser conduct of the strike than would be possible without such knowledge, and in any case there will be less bitterness felt by employés if they know that a serious question of cost is involved in a demand which, when first considered, they supposed to involve only some easy adjustment that could be made at no expense.

As in the case of a demand for shorter hours, so for any other betterment of working conditions, not expressed directly

in wages, the workman has no definite, calculable problem set before him. The *sacrifice* involved in making a strike may be definite enough. But it gives only one side of the problem. What is the value of the thing demanded? It may be the relief from some outrageous condition which makes an unbearable bitterness of soul. It may be the satisfaction of some normal yearnings, which might indeed be suppressed, but why?

Such was the case of the telephone girls already cited. Who shall say how much it was worth to look out of a window into the living street? Whether "it pays" to strike for these indefinite things, each must decide for himself. Undoubtedly some of the best values gained by the unions are to be found in the conquest of better conditions of employment.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE SYMPATHETIC STRIKE

EVEN more vague than in any other case must be the answer to the question "Does it pay?", when that question is asked concerning the "sympathetic" strike.

It has already been pointed out that the term "sympathetic" in this usage does not signify as much of unselfishness as the general meaning of the word would suggest.

Medical men speak of "sympathetic" pain, when it occurs in one set of nerves, while the original disturbance is found only in another set. There is, of course, a fixed physical relation between the two, but the doctors can not as yet trace it in any definite manner.

The sympathetic strike resembles the

sympathetic pain. There is a real bond of mutual interest between the original strikers and their sympathisers. It is not obvious, but it exists.

In the case of any secondary trouble of our nervous system, it is extremely difficult to treat successfully unless we apply treatment to the *original disturbance*.

It is generally better to put poultices or hot-water bags, or whatever expedient, upon the spot where the real irritation exists. Of course, since there is *some sort* of relation between any one set of nerves and any other set, we *may* learn how to cure sciatica of the right leg by treating the nerves of the left arm. But many a weary day and month and year must pass before such wisdom shall come to us.

We have indeed learned to go as far away from the pain-spot, in some cases, as to that particular ganglion in the spinal cord to which the troubled nerve is connected. But let it be repeated: a counter-irritant applied to the nervous

system of the left arm is not likely to cure sciatica of the right leg. That treatment "does not pay"; certainly it does not usually pay the *left arm*, which is *you*, when you go into a sympathetic strike.

Many high authorities among labour leaders could be cited against the whole "sympathy" theory in labour troubles. As this treatise, however, is addressed to the *reason* of each reader, rather than to his veneration for authority, we shall omit the quotations, and leave you to consider how little you can thoroughly know of the affairs of employés in an enterprise with which you have no direct connection.

How hard it is to thoroughly know our own business! How much harder it is to know the other man's affairs!

Discouragement to sympathetic strikes is expressed not only in the words of great labour leaders, but also in the statistics showing the number of such strikes which have failed. The very practical lesson taught by these figures should

be in itself enough to largely eliminate such indirect efforts from the program of labour struggles.

It is not meant by all this to deny that a solidarity of interest can be shown as between one set of employés and another. On the other hand the mere existence and continued activity of "Federations of Labour" demonstrate that such a bond does exist. But there are three serious difficulties attending every sympathetic strike, in spite of any general "community of interest" which may be shown.

The first, to which attention has been already called, is ignorance concerning the merits of the original trouble.

Second, miscalculation as to the possible effect which *your* employer (you being the sympathy-striker) can have on the employer of the other man. He may be threatened with ruin by your strike; he may want to influence the other employer to yield, but he may be quite unable to do so. Your leader may have made a grave error in judging the relations between the two. Obviously

he *cannot* have all the facts needed for forming a sound opinion in such a complicated question. How many people must suffer when he makes a wrong guess!

A third and very powerful reason running against the sympathetic strike is found in the fact that it is, toward the employer, the most *un-sympathetic* of all strikes.

Think of it a moment. Think of the despair which would seize you if the children whom you see one day happy around you, making no complaint, should the next day revile you, assail you, and leave you.

And when you ask, "What have I done?" they answer, "Nothing have we against you, Father, but Mr. Jones's children declare that he has not treated them fairly; they are in revolt; there is a community of interest between all children as against all fathers. We may want help from the Jones children sometime in the future. The oldest Jones boy has talked to our big brother, who is here to tell you for himself, and they



say if we give you a great deal of trouble you will influence Mr. Jones in behalf of his children, because you and he live in the same block."

Would you not think that your children had gone mad? Would you not question their capacity for "self-government"? Would you not feel that the fairness which you had always tried to show toward them had been thrown away? And would you not feel some bitterness, some doubt as to the possibility of ever having harmonious relations with such inflammable material? And if you re-established the household, would it not be through an "armed peace" full of suspicion?

Such have been the sentiments created in the minds of many honourable, fair-minded employers by the sympathetic strike.

You may object to the comparison, saying that the relation between father and children is not similar to that between employer and employés. Nor is it necessary that a close similarity in all respects

should be established in order to draw useful lessons from the comparison of the two cases.

They are similar in this:—The employer and the father must both provide the general means of carrying on the affairs of the factory or the family; both must do the thinking required for determining various problems as they arise in the struggle of life maintained by the factory or the family; both have a certain superiority of intelligence over the average of those whom they lead.

But if you reject this comparison entirely, think for a moment how it would affect you *if this sympathetic action were reversed*. Suppose an employer calls together his workmen, saying “I am quite satisfied with your work; I am quite willing and able to pay the wages you have been receiving, but you are all discharged this morning. Mr. Jones is having some difficulty with his men. I have an idea that you can force them to yield. Until they do yield, I shall not employ you, but shall find others to take your place.”

Obviously this apparently unselfish sacrifice of one set of interests to another must generally lead to the creation of more trouble than it can cure.

And it is tainted with hypocrisy—with deceit. Being generally unprofitable, it becomes, through this taint of hypocrisy, more or less immoral.

In the "brave days of old," knights-errant wandered over Europe seeking to put themselves into other people's quarrels. They soon became a nuisance, and in spite of the halo which poets threw around them, they were among the first of the many fantastic institutions of their period to be destroyed by the awakening intelligence of the European civilisation to which we belong. So let it be with the sympathetic strike—the false knight-errantry of the labour movement.

## CHAPTER XIV

### SUMMARY

WE may now summarise thus:—The strike for higher wages may be calculated, as to whether or not it pays, in fairly definite terms of money lost during the strike-period, and money gained by the increase. It pays sometimes.

The strike for shorter hours cannot be thus calculated but it often presents a most convincing case of the strike that “pays” in the best sense of the word.

The strike for better general conditions of work should be closely studied as to its possible effect on cost of production. As against selfish and short-sighted employers, it may pay well.

The sympathetic strike does not pay.

It remains to consider whether the strike for recognition of the union does or does not pay.

If the union be worth a struggle and if its value cannot be secured in any other way, then a strike for its recognition may pay. We shall treat this subject in another chapter.

Here we shall only say that many strikes of this kind do not pay because they are actuated merely by a too delicate sense of the dignity of the union. Bloody wars between states have been similarly caused.

Does it seem to the militant workman, to him who has won and who has lost in the passionate struggle of "labour," that these pages breathe discouragement rather than inspiration to those who are ready to sacrifice the present to a larger future? Does the author seem, when counselling close calculation of the debit and credit of each effort, to be unmindful of the *value of failures*? Does he seem to forget that a regiment must be sacrificed here, a battery there, a squadron sent to death on the flank, in order that the whole line may advance? Does he seem to forget that the *losing* strike sometimes pays?

And the answer to these queries is that he who has learned the lesson of his own life, he who has read the larger print of History, must know full well that the defeat of to-day prepares, often enough, the victory of to-morrow. No planning can be so clairvoyant, no courage so stubborn as to assure immediate success to every venture.

The enthusiasm to try, the willingness to sacrifice, these are more largely supplied to every great cause than the wisdom to calculate and to conduct the enterprises that lead to success.

It will always be easier for a labour leader to have a thousand men follow when he cries, "Let us strike!" than to have half a dozen who will carefully consider with him the "why" and "how" to strike.

It is with the hope of supplying *counsel* rather than *courage*, that this work has been undertaken. Its tone is fixed, not by any lack of sympathy with failures, but by a desire to see strikes *reduced* in number and *increased* in value.

## CHAPTER XV

### STRIKES FOR THE UNION—DO THEY PAY?

No question will be raised in these pages as to the value of the union. That will be taken for granted. It will be instructive, however, to discuss some of the prejudices against unionism. If it should appear that these may be removed and that by removing them there would remain practically no opposition to the union, then plainly the strikes now so frequently made to enforce recognition would no longer be in any way suggested.

And even if these prejudices were not removed, inquiry should be made as to whether strikes for recognition are, in fact, useful in strengthening the unions.

Suppose one were in a group of men composed in part of employers of labour; and in part of professional men who look

at labour questions from the outside, as neutrals. Suppose the question were put to such a group—"Are you opposed to labour unions?"

The majority would answer, "No, not in principle. We know they are useful and will continue to exist; but—" and then would follow various statements from which we might make the following arrangement of objections to the principles or practices of trades unions:—(1) A reasonable fear that universal unionism would create a monopoly in labour, exercised by a few tyrannical leaders. (2) Radical disagreement with the union principle (or frequent practice) which leads to persecution of those wage-earners who desire to remain independent. (3) Radical disagreement with union principle (or frequent practice) which prevents the clever employé from doing more or better work than can be accomplished by the least competent. (4) Radical disagreement with the union principle (or frequent practice) which requires the payment of equal wages to men of unequal



value. (5) Opposition to the intrusion between employers and their employés of persons not directly concerned with the business in question. (6) Radical disagreement with the union principle (or frequent practice) which upholds the negligent or insubordinate employé simply because he belongs to the union. (7) Condemnation of the fact that some strikes are called for furthering the personal ambitions of union officials. (8) Condemnation of the fact that some strikes are called by corrupt leaders for the purpose of exacting blackmail.

Let us suppose that a wage-earner joins the group while these objections are being uttered. He is a man earning, on an average, something between two dollars and six dollars per day, if he be an American; he is a bricklayer, a telegraph operator, a mechanic, or other employé performing routine work under the direction of another; and he is a union man. The employer, the wage-earner, and the other man who is neutral then begin a discussion. Their

names are Smith, Jones, and Thompson, respectively.

Mr. Smith:—"So, Mr. Jones, you want me to discharge those of my employés who are not members of your union. You may force me to do so, but can you expect to continue in friendly relations with your employers while demanding that they help you to create a monopoly of labour? Try to look at my side of the question a moment. Suppose your union should control *all* the labour supply. Would it then be possible for me, as an employer, to succeed in business if one of the principal articles used by me, that is, labour, be monopolised by your union?"

Mr. Jones:—"It is true we aim at a monopoly of labour; we want to sell it for as high a price as possible. But even those railway companies having a monopoly of transportation in certain territories found that reasonable limits had to be recognised in fixing the price of their article of sale—that is transportation. They were controlled by the principle of

the 'tariff which the traffic could stand.' In several countries (particularly in the United States) there was great commercial development while railway monopolies were controlled by no other force.

"It is even yet doubtful in many minds as to whether the government control of rates has really helped matters, except as to *inequality* of rates. We, the wage-earners, shall find also that you, the employers, who control capital (which we buy with our labour), and who have a certain capacity to conduct business (which we may not possess), cannot pay more than a certain maximum rate of wages. But we must always be watchful and insistent, or we shall not get that maximum possible rate."

Mr. Smith:—"And while you are experimenting with us, must not many enterprises fail because of the mistakes which your inexperienced monopoly will make? Must we not pay for your education by our ruin?"

Mr. Jones:—"Not necessarily. Of course some hardships must be borne on

both sides. But remember this—in general you can hold out longer than we. Our mistakes will be made in the form of unwise strikes. Do we not suffer as much or more than you, when we cease purchasing with our labour the bread which must be had day by day? Our necessities will be our teacher.”

Mr. Smith:—“Yes, there is much force in that. But you can carry on the contest in detail, each branch of industry or each locality supporting the other while you force special industries or special individuals to ruin.”

Mr. Jones:—“Again I say, some hardships will certainly befall both sides. Let us consider, on the other hand, an example of an almost complete monopoly of wage-earners in a particular industry, which has not resulted badly for either party. I mean the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers in the United States. This union has on its rolls practically all of the men capable to run locomotives in the United States. Their position, then, is substantially that which you so much

fear in respect to other trades. If they used that position unwisely they could for a time disorganise the transportation of a great country, but as a matter of fact they have given less trouble to the employing companies than many of the less thoroughly unionised trades. Why then should you be so much disturbed by the progress of unionism?"

Mr. Smith:—"It is true that the union of which you speak has been generally well conducted, but it is not such a monopoly as is desired by many labour leaders. They declare that *all wage-earners* must be organised and all trades carefully pruned of surplus members by a system of apprenticeship. They wish to destroy that body of free labour, ready, in time, to adapt itself to any trade, and which, while it exists, tempers the tyranny of all unions. I do not wish to take away from the credit due the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, but you cannot be sure that they would have been so wisely moderate but for the knowledge of the fact that the indepen-

dent workers everywhere would soon furnish a new army of men for the locomotive cab, if the present "regular army" should push its advantage too far. This body of free labour is the balance-wheel of the whole labour movement. Do you expect us, who so understand the case, to help you to destroy this balance-wheel? And again, do you expect us to approve the methods resorted to for forcing men into your unions? Quite apart from any interest in the question as an employer, I object as a citizen to the social pressure, sometimes the physical violence, used by union men against those independent spirits who prefer to stand on their own feet. They have a right to join your union or not to join it. You try to nullify that right. You have even asked in various ways that only union men should have a legal right to certain employments. It was such attempted tyranny that was in view when I formulated the second objection to unionism which you heard on coming in."

Mr. Jones:—"You have made me see

your side of the case better than I did before; yet we can never, I fear, look at the 'scab' as you do. To us he seems to be a sneak. We think the unions have helped to raise all wages—the scab's as well as ours. He is benefited by our sacrifices.

“When a country is imperilled by foreign attack, he who refuses to fight is despised by all. The scab is worse than such a non-combatant. By working when the union orders a strike, he is actually going over to the enemy. You say he is a necessary balance-wheel. We think he is a chock, set in the way of the wheel of progress. We believe if labour were altogether unionised that a more just, but not a destructive, division would be made of the product of labour, capital, and direction. So far as you object to using violence to get rid of the scab, I agree with you. The cool heads among us have come to regret the violence and lying sometimes used by our brethren. We are trying to eradicate both. But as to using social or business pressure to

accomplish our aim, we shall continue to do so."

Mr. Smith:—"And does it really seem fair and manly to you to ostracise the wives and children of men who simply exercise the right of independence? Does it seem just to pursue such a man in his effort to make a living?"

Mr. Jones:—"Of course the social persecution is open to some question. It has never been ordered by the unions. It cannot be stopped by them when feeling runs high. Does it not appear whenever men are powerfully and diversely moved? Was it absent from the intercourse of Cavalier and Roundhead in the 'brave days of old'? Was it unknown in France even among those who, before the Revolution, had a monopoly of 'birth'? Was it never seen in the American colonies when Patriot and Tory glared at each other?"

"As to the 'business persecution',—yes, I think it is fair. Do you not try to take away the business of your competitors? Is not this 'persecution' of the small



concerns by the larger ones the very reason of the formation of the so-called trusts? Are they not, in fact, capital unions, just as ours are labour unions? You use all the brains and all the influence you possess to keep your competitor from getting a contract which you want. You leave him to look out for himself as to whether or not the loss of the contract may, or may not, produce his ruin. Yet he does you less harm than the scab does to us, and he will not be able to benefit by your success, as the scab will benefit by ours, after working against us."

Mr. Smith:—"You state your case against the free man very well, but have you reflected that if you exterminate him you will have largely undone the work of democracy in the last hundred years? I mean the work of *destroying classes*. If *all* wage-earners are held to iron rule in the unions, how are men to work up from humble positions to higher ones? Do you want the *employing* class to become hereditary? Do you want to destroy the class to which I personally belong—

I mean the class of men who start in life as poor boys and by various sacrifices and superior efforts rise from the wage-earning to the wage-paying class? Does not the frequent rise of such men prove that no great systematic wrong exists? Do you not know that most of the world's industrial progress has been due to such men? Do you not see that with all this organisation, classification, stratification, ossification of men, the mainspring of effort may be broken? Are the children of all wage-earners to suckle the milk of a caste? Are they to be taught that he is a traitor to his class who dares to struggle harder than his fellows; that he is a traitor who gives to some inborn superiority of brain its due exercise? Are prudence, thrift, industry, and intelligence to be moulded in uniform tablets for the uniform consumption of uniform men and women? How are the captains of industry to be found if they may not come up from the ranks? In your haste to put every wage-earner in a situation from which he cannot rise without

'treachery' to his family and friends, be careful that you do not organise a society of purely hereditary classes, in which your children will be permanently fixed at the bottom."

Mr. Jones:—"We cannot afford, we who are the wage-earners of to-day, to concern ourselves too much about the future. It is true that our cast-iron rules require a sacrifice on the part of the more capable among us in favour of the less capable. But the number of the former is small; the number of the latter is great. Do not all the great democratic countries illustrate this principle by giving equal political franchise to men of unequal citizenship value? You have more intelligence, but not more direct voting power, than your bootblack. Your indirect power is, of course, greater. In this respect the parallel is not exact between the sacrifice of political power and the sacrifice of wage-earning power, but it is an approximate parallel. And, moreover, it must not be forgotten that a considerable number among us is now

in favour of establishing the piece-work system with a minimum wage for unskilled labour.”

Mr. Smith:—“You mean the system which was forced upon the Australian unions and which many European and American unions are still resisting?”

Mr. Jones:—“Yes, that is what I mean—that or a modification of it by which extra pay is given for work done in excess of an agreed minimum, or normal, daily task. Concerning this we are not all agreed. We have our differences of opinions, like all other live organisations. We learn from our opponents like all other intelligent organisations. We must feel our way like all human organisations.

“When I speak of the piece-work system as being favoured by a considerable number of workmen, I mean those who are the most liberal and enlightened. I mean those who see, at least in part, the dangers which you set forth a moment ago. With this system we can insist upon a living wage for all who are willing

to work, and, at the same time, give some play to the superior capacities of the few. Of two brick-layers one can lay no more than eight hundred bricks in an eight-hour day. He is presumably doing his best. He must be paid a wage sufficient to give him reasonable comfort. Another can lay, and is willing to lay, twelve hundred in an eight-hour day. Under the piece-work system, the second man would earn fifty per cent. more than the first. If he is willing to live as economically as his less clever neighbour must live, and if he has the proper capacity, he may pass into the employing class, the unions meanwhile holding up the man at the bottom and also helping to maintain a good price for each unit of piece-work, whether done by a clever or a stupid workman."

Mr. Smith:—"Indeed, if you, the thoughtful wage-earners, can bring your brethren to concede the piece-work system in all its bearings, you will have accomplished a great work. You will have saved the unions from the destruc-

tion that awaits all who would cripple the natural capacity of men to produce; and who would systematically deny the due reward of merit. You are evidently getting away from the crude notion that there is a fixed amount of work available at any time, and are reaching the sounder position that a thousand bricks laid in a useful building are able to breed another thousand. Let us hope that you may succeed in bringing all labour bodies to your point of view. You would thus cover the fourth and fifth objections which you heard me announce. They are perhaps the most serious; but have you any really good suggestion to make concerning the other points?"

Mr. Thompson:—"Let me, as a neutral third, make answer for Mr. Jones and permit me also to sum up the discussion to which I have listened. As to your last four objections to the unions:—first, the use of the walking delegate or other intermediary agent between employer and wage-earners; second, the upholding of unworthy employés if they

belong to the union; third, the calling of strikes for blackmail; fourth, the calling of strikes to further the ambitions of labour leaders. In the first case it seems to me that you, Mr. Smith, should insist upon the right of keeping walking delegates away from your employés during working hours, though I can easily understand conditions in which their presence might not be harmful to you. On the other hand, Mr. Jones should insist upon his right to transact business with you through an agent, who comes to *your office* in the proper way as representative of your employés.

“Would you refuse to transact business with the attorney of another manufacturer? And in the case of your employés, it is, from their point of view, more necessary to have an independent representative than is ordinarily the case as between two manufacturers.

“If your employés are restricted to choosing a committee from among themselves, they may be seriously handicapped in two ways:—

“First—such representatives may not have the requisite ability to set forth, as against your more highly trained mind, the merits of their case.

“Second—such a committee is almost certain not to have the necessary independence in their dealings with you. Their judgment of the general situation must be clouded by their needs, or by their anger. Is it not *better* for both sides that the wage-earners be represented by agents, *provided they be well chosen?*

“Indeed in this matter of choosing good leaders it seems to me that we come to the most important single point brought out in your discussion. Thus, in respect to Mr. Smith’s last three objections, they practically fall to the ground in case labour-leadership be wise. I think Mr. Jones must admit that these last charges are occasionally well-founded, and yet in doing so he is only admitting that the labour unions are like other human organisations.

“Of course there will be some corruption.



“Of course there will be some sacrifice to personal ambitions.

“Of course there will be some support of the unworthy.

“Is this not true of the state?

“Is it not true of the Church?

“Mr. Smith must admit that it is. He may add that the labour unions show more of these weaknesses than other organisations; and indeed that may be true. But it is true of labour unions, as of states, that the general body of members must suffer for mistakes made in the selection of leaders, and that the suffering slowly teaches its own cure. There is no other way open to man. And if Mr. Jones will permit me to preach a little to him, I shall ask him to preach to his fellow-workmen from these two texts:—

“First—The strength of the strong man shall not be brought down to the weakness of the weak man, but it shall strive with nature for a reward that shall be divided between the labourer and all other men to whom the earth belongs. And the

practice of this text is to be found in the piece-work system with all that it implies—equal pay for equal service; unequal pay for unequal service; due reward to superiority of intelligence, strength, industry, and prudence.

“Second—Leaders should be well chosen, well paid, well followed, *well watched*. Not character alone, not intelligence alone, not energy alone shall be demanded of them, but character, intelligence, and energy combined.

“*Watch the leaders; watch them ceaselessly!* And to you, Mr. Smith, I need say only one thing: You *must* deal with your employés, to a greater or less degree, through their organisations. It is inevitable.

“Perhaps the whole body of wage-earners will never be organised. Perhaps the useful work of the unions will be accomplished long before the union movement can become universal. Meanwhile you will avoid much trouble if you frankly ‘recognise the union.’

“Afterward you may—you must—con-

test many of its pretensions, for are not its leaders human beings, even as you are?

“To you both I would say this: Be as frank as possible with each other.

“This does not mean, Mr. Smith, that you must disclose all the secrets of your business to the union, for that would mean giving it to the public, which means in turn giving it to your competitors. But go as far as you can.

“Nor does it mean, Mr. Jones, that you must inevitably disclose the strength (or weakness) of your organisation, and the terms which, in the end, you would be willing to accept. Human nature seems not yet ready for such counsels of perfection. But, with the usual reserves on each side, you may treat each other honourably and good-naturedly. If you cannot arbitrate your differences, and if you cannot agree without a trial of strength, then enter upon the strike, shaking hands before and after.

“And finally, the mere recognition of the union may be a legitimate cause for

a strike, as against particularly stubborn employers. But wise management of the unions will make this an almost negligible case. Strikes made for *the objects* of the union, when successfully conducted, will, in the end, bring all the 'recognition' required for the good of the members of the union. And in such strikes you, the working member, will be less likely to sacrifice yourself to the glory of your leaders."

## CHAPTER XVI

### HOW TO STRIKE—VIOLENCE AND LYING

WE have shown that the strike is moral; that it *should* be legal; that in certain cases it is profitable. We have considered the question "Why to strike?" What can be said in answer to the question, "How to strike?"

We have shown that the organisation of the labour union is generally sound; that its object is generally good. Shall we conclude from this that its methods must always be approved? Certainly not.

It is much easier to carry in our hearts a noble purpose than to find means for executing that purpose. The real rub of life comes in action.

When the conduct of a strike goes no further than *merely to abstain from*

*previous employment*, no serious question of *method* arises. That is the simple strike—and all that would be covered by our definition. We have seen that even though the necessary co-operation for bringing about a strike may sail close, in definition, to a prohibited “combination in restraint of trade,” yet no legal obstacle is likely to be set up against such action. Bitter contests have generally arisen, not from the mere cessation of work, but from the things that have been done to accomplish objects which the strike pure and simple could not accomplish. Let us inquire as to what means have actually been employed to this end:—

First—Picketing; that is, endeavouring to turn away, by persuasion, those who apply for the places made vacant by the strike.

Second—The same, with accompanying threats and violence toward the applicants.

Third—Boycotting; that is, severing business or social relations, or both, with

the boycotted<sup>1</sup> person, and influencing others to do likewise.

Fourth—Destruction of property belonging to the employer and his friends.

Fifth—Injury to the persons of employers or of fellow-workers who refuse to join in the strike.

Sixth—Injury to persons and property in general (riot), with a view to forcing the general public, or their officials, to intervene for the sake of peace in behalf of the strikers.

Of the six items thus given, four contain *violence*. We may put these four all in the same basket, and make a general inquiry as to the merits of violence in the conduct of strikes.

Shall employés kill men and burn houses in the effort to obtain higher wages or shorter hours?

Since the reader of these pages has already discovered that the author is not

<sup>1</sup> Captain Boycott played a disagreeable rôle in certain Irish land troubles. A conspiracy was formed against him. The case became famous, and the Captain's name was applied generally to movements of like character to that which resulted in his ruin.

a red revolutionist, he may feel sure that the answer will be "No!" and consider that the question should be at once dismissed. It is true that the author can not counsel violence in an ordinary strike in a free (voting-citizenship) country. But he recognises that many of his fellow-citizens demonstrate a contrary opinion by cracking the skulls of men who take their jobs. And it seems worth while to argue with such as hold this view.

It is the hope of the author that some who have been violent strikers may read these words. It is hoped that they will thus change their views and learn to consider other violent strikers as being less wise than themselves.

Of course this recognition of misguided honesty is not made for *all* who break the heads and burn the houses of their opponents. Many among the violent are mere rowdies who rejoice in a row, as most gentlemen did a few generations ago. These may join in the turmoil, having nothing at stake save loot or



excitement. But some of the rioters in every violent strike are men who for the most part are quiet citizens, working industriously for the support of "Molly and the kids." When the strike is over they will be back in the mine, on the trolley-car, in the shop, on the cab, again seriously and peacefully concerned about the same woman and the same children. While he is yelling and destroying, one is tempted to call him a savage, a criminal—perhaps a murderer. So one might call soldiers—so they have been called by those who suffered from them. Even the dread authority of the state, setting them a duty to kill, cannot make of them angels of light in the eyes of their victims. How much the less shall he be forgiven whose only commission is his anger, whose officers are the hot thoughts of a mob, whose rules of war are the frenzies of an hour!

As soldiers, we become beasts trained by a state, set upon its enemies to destroy them, yet ever held in leash. Order is not destroyed. Indeed there

is a very maximum of order produced for a maximum of destructive power and the mind rests on that, confident that, when the killing shall have gone far enough, true social life may be renewed, because *order* was not lost.

As rioters, we become wild beasts let loose, striking blindly; destroying that very Spirit of order which alone can give value to the multitudinous life of civilisation.

So we see it who look upon it from the outside. He who has been swept by the strong currents of hate, sees himself as a soldier fighting for a Cause. Selfish, you say? Yes, his own wages are at stake, and he would offer no apology for some very vigorous effort made solely in his own behalf. But he feels also the solidarity of his interest with that of many others. On a larger scale we call that sentiment patriotism. Whenever we can thus dilute our selfishness with a thought for the welfare of others, we drink it as a sacred draught, and the acts of our intoxication pass unimpeached by conscience.

So the striker. He has, as you have—you the employer, the man of leisure, the big-salaried employé—several concentric zones of selfishness. At the very centre he has his mere personal existence, then his family, then his class, then his trade, then his church, then his country, then, vaguely, beyond all, humanity itself. And though the very centre does not change, these other zones are not fixed in their relations; they are not perfect circles; they shift; they overlap; they intrude one upon another. To the man's central vision, one may temporarily obscure the other.

And he, the total man, is made up of the resultant forces from all these varying influences, unsymmetrical, struggling. He is sometimes all for class; again, all for family; again, all for church; again, all for country. If he has great enlightenment and but little hunger, he will not be a violent striker. He will learn that violence and lying are the most dangerous weapons against all government; so dangerous that wisdom reserves their

use as far as possible to the largest independent units—to the governments themselves: so dangerous that wisdom is ever seeking ways to lessen their use, even when thus limited, and the closer association of all states is ever diminishing their value to the individual state.

Violence and lying—these were the first and ready resort of primal man; they lurk as a disease in man when organised into social bodies. That which may be useful to the unit isolated, may become harmful to that unit when grouped with others, because harmful also to the group as a whole.

Perhaps the most practical argument to urge upon you, the reader who may sympathise with violence as an aid to strikes, is this: The only *immediate* reply that society can make to your violence is, *violence*. If one of the two be not promptly crushed, you or society, then between the two we shall kill the goose that lays the golden egg for all. Peaceful Commerce is that goose—she cannot live in war. We may grumble about the

distribution of the eggs, but let us have some eggs to distribute! Then we must keep Peaceful Commerce alive. Even you, the victor, will grant that the riot-state cannot last long. It is a means toward an end, and that end is peace, with some new distribution. The resort to violence is, in fact, revolution.

If a man be intent upon destroying the political organisation to which he belongs; if he has come to believe this change to be of vital importance to the happiness of many people; if no peaceful effort can effect the change; then perhaps his conscience may be clear in striking at existing order. He may convince himself that in laying waste he but clears the way for reconstruction of a fairer edifice.

That is not the case of the violent striker whom we are considering. He is not a revolutionist. He has no new plan of government. He would not harm any one, if *only he could promptly have his wages raised*. That is his political program—his revised charter, his new Constitution. He wants more money.

This he *might* gain without violence if he controlled all labour of the kind in question. He does not control it; the employer can live without him. To supplement his weakness as a would-be-monopolist, he attacks the man who rightfully offers to fill the vacated job. Or perhaps he menaces the employer by fire and pillage. The public security is threatened, yet the public is practically helpless to raise his wages. Only the employer can do that; and perhaps even he can do it only in case certain complex commercial conditions permit.

The strike-riot is not a beginning of political revolution, but of political anarchy. You who make this attack upon the foundations of society do not offer to me, whose whole existence you imperil, a new political program to which I might adhere.

You do not propose an object which might lead large numbers to fight with you for the establishment of a new order of government.

You are like unto one who would enter

the public garden destroying the fruit which supports us, and having no seed which you would plant in its stead.

Plainly I must resist you to the uttermost. The wrong you do in striking at order is universal. You yourself do not escape—yea, even if the increase of wages shall somehow come at the end. All have suffered. The public may, with clear conscience, suppress you, honest though you be. Even when you win you are not always helping yourself. Your indirect loss, due to the lowering of state efficiency, may be greater than your direct gain.

Leave violence entirely out of your thought, your talk, your action. Then the “sympathisers” will also drop it. Resist them, these impossible sympathisers, and they will soon cease to bring discredit upon men who do not wish to become bad citizens because they are dissatisfied with their wages.

Avoid Violence—that is the first rule in How to Strike. And let Lying go with it. They are twin monsters—children of War.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE BOYCOTT AND THE PICKET

IF then it be true that sound policy requires of those who strike that they should turn aside from man's primitive path of violence, let us now consider the peaceful and persuasive aids to a strike movement. These have been given as the boycott and the picket; in the present discussion they are presumed to be pursued *without violence or lying*. In considering their legality, we study to learn rather what *should be* legal than what *is* legal. It has already been pointed out that nearly all questions are found to be tangled in a maze of differing statutes if we survey the whole legal field, going from State to State, from country to country. Let us then determine what *ought to be*. Our votes will do the rest.



As in the case of that form of co-operation which brings the union into existence, or which declares the strike, so in these aids to the strike, we are met by those ever-present sprites—"Combination in Restraint of Trade," and "Freedom of Contract." Again we must consider whether statutes can be (and should be) framed to prohibit certain other combinations, and leave these picket and boycott combinations untouched. Again we shall find that the problem is not easy: separation of goats from sheep—anybody can do that; but to separate good sheep from bad ones, that is harder.

In this task it must be understood that no rigid adherence to any stated principle can be our guide. All formulas of human action fail in some circumstances. If we cry "Freedom of contract must be preserved!" it is only to discover that every contract which is permitted prevents some other contract from being made. Every combination that restrains the trade of some is intended to enlarge the trade of another. Every condemned

“combination in restraint of trade” is itself born out of the exercise of this sacred “freedom of contract.” Whereupon the freely made contract may be declared null and void. In a word we are free to contract only for such aims as the law authorises:

Is the boycott a “combination in restraint of trade”? Yes.

Is systematic picketing the result of a “combination in restraint of trade”? Yes.

Whose trade is “restrained” by the boycott? That of the person who is boycotted.

Is anybody’s trade augmented by the boycott? Yes, that of those who are in competition with the boycotted person.

Is the price of any commodity supposed to be increased by it? Yes, the price of the labour of the strikers is usually sought to be raised indirectly.

Is the total volume of trade *directly* diminished by the boycott? No.

May it be indirectly diminished thereby? Yes, an indiscriminate and extreme

use of the boycott might discourage seriously the spirit of trade.

Is this likely to occur in the absence of any legal enactment running against the boycott? Not more likely to occur than almost any other excess growing out of a normal action.

Are all normal and now legalised actions of such character that they may become harmful by being carried to excess? Yes.

For example?

The right to eat and drink; the right to correct wives and children; the right to converse.

What is the spirit of competition? The desire to get ahead of another—to injure the trade of another for one's own benefit.

Is this supposed to be helpful within limits and harmful when extraordinary success has been achieved? Yes.

What is the spirit of combination? It is generally to enlarge and strengthen the unit which competes.

What are the largest competing units? The nations of the earth.

Is competition lessening within the nations? Yes, in the sense that many individuals, through combination, cease to compete with each other as individuals; and further, that some competing combinations have in certain countries practically driven all others from the field, for a time at least. No, in the sense that such big combinations generally continue the fight among themselves.

What, essentially, is this fight that goes on in business?

It is a struggle to increase the price and volume sold of my goods and to decrease the price and volume sold of your goods.

Is this true of the labour struggles between employer and employés? Yes, labour is sold, and food, clothing, lodging, etc., are bought by employés.

What classes of weapons are barred by the State to competitors entering the commercial tournament? They are violence and lying.

Are all others admitted? In general terms, yes. In special cases, no. But

each special case existing should be challenged.

May not the boycott and picketing be conducted without resort to violence or lying? Yes.

If a boycott should bring a successful issue to a strike, thus benefiting thousands of wage-earners, and should not permanently injure the boycotted business, might it not, in such case, be properly called a "combination in *enlargement* of trade," quite as reasonably as a "combination in *restraint* of trade"?

Certainly.

In what manner would it enlarge trade?

The uplifting of wage-earners to comfort and education has always been accompanied by an increase of general trade and prosperity.

Can a more familiar instance be given in which a combination, technically one in "restraint" of trade, becomes in fact a combination in "enlargement" of trade?

Yes. In the case of two railways connecting the same terminals with substantially equal facilities. Their rates must

be the same—or they must be different. If different, one must be higher than the other. The advantage being public and obvious, it follows that all traffic between terminals will go by the lower rate. Should this traffic be very large in proportion to local traffic, the railway which maintains the higher rate will be ruined. If, on the other hand, their charges be equalised through combination, both may obtain reasonable support, and by continuing service, increase the trade of the region through which they run. And it must be remembered that rates cannot be equalised except through combination, formal or informal.

Is this illustration valid for many other cases?

It is valid for many in which a product is offered to public consumption in a limited market, the price-advantage being equally available to all purchasers.

What is the object of citing these cases?

To show that the formula “combination in restraint of trade” is too vague

and misleading to find a proper place in the vital legislation of any country.

And in cases such as that here considered, the "law," instead of being the clearly expressed will of representative legislators, must often flow from the opinion of one or more judges whose duty requires that a definite meaning shall be given to indefinite language. Or they must, when the law is clear, sometimes refrain from applying the strict letter of a prohibition to customs which common-sense recognises as necessary to the public welfare.

Just so long as men try to legislate against bad(?) combinations, just so long will they be forced to use language which will, when strictly interpreted, include good(?) combinations.

The courts must, then, *legislate*, in two cases—that of a very vague statute, and that of an impossible statute. They will usually act in rough conformity with the educated opinion of their surroundings.

You can share in this judicial legislation by helping to form the educated opinion of your country.

The catechism above recited may be taken as indicating that no clear and positive proof can be set up *against* the wisdom of legalising the boycott. We shall now state a substantial reason in favour of legalising it.

*Equality before the law* is a more important principle to be preserved among citizens than that which is formulated in any particular law.

In respect to this matter of boycotting, the powerful few enjoy a privilege which is attempted to be denied to the many weak ones.

Half a dozen great financiers, yes, half of half a dozen, may effect a more disastrous boycott against some doomed man or men, than can be brought about by the combined efforts of half a dozen thousand workmen.

This can be done, and it is done, and it will be done. Sometimes it *ought to be done*.

When only a few individuals are concerned in the plot, when it is laid with the cigars and coffee after lunch, it seems



only a normal "agreement among gentlemen." It is accomplished without organisation and without record. It may easily escape the eye of the law; yet it may be a full-fledged boycott.

Its morality will be judged differently by various critics, all being honest.

The limit of its intended action, among financiers, may be the very ruin of the victim, not the mere yielding on his part of some contention urged against him.

Such is rarely the case among working men. They are generally satisfied with a gaining of the original point of dispute. But in order to accomplish their aim they must organise. They must appeal to thousands of their own class, since the power of each standing alone is so small as to be ineffective for injury. They must use the printing-press—that action is necessarily public. It falls easily under the observation of antagonists; and before the courts is easily proved to lie within the legal definitions of "combination" or of "conspiracy."

In both cases, namely that of the

*boycott by three* and the boycott by three thousand, their moral attitude toward the adversary is the same. An injury is desired to be inflicted for a supposed benefit to the boycotters, or for revenge. And the mode of attack is essentially the same.

All the commercial and social force available to the three, or the three thousand, may be directed against the adversary. Violence and lying excluded, these forces are of such nature that their legality is never questioned when exercised by a single individual in his own behalf. In the more or less secret and complicated program of the three, violence will rarely appear, though lying may play a great part. In the more or less public and simple program of the three thousand, violence will generally be more prominent than lying.

Both parties tend to use, and largely do use, all means that would be legal if exercised by an individual, though perhaps now technically illegal when used by several individuals in combination.

The statutes of Great Britain have finally recognised and legalised this tendency. It was enacted in 1906, that in a trade dispute several persons in combination may legally do that which would be legal if done by an individual acting alone. Thus the boycott without violence or fraud stands firmly based in English law—unless judicial interpretation shall nullify common use of words.

It is to be regretted that the word *boycott*, which was born in violence and to most minds still suggests violence, should be applied to an act of peaceful commercial competition. True, the act is a harsh one. So is its complementary act, black-listing. Here are two ugly names, covering two harsh acts—or rather the same act usually performed in one case to injure a trader or employer; in the other to injure a working man. Both are animated by belief that the injury done to one will result in good done to another, or others. They stand or fall together—in logic. They are, in fact, interchangeable words. Neither one of them appears in the

British statute above referred to. Textually it runs as follows "An act done in pursuance of an agreement or combination by two or more persons, shall, if done in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute, not be actionable unless the act, if done without any such agreement or combination, would be actionable."

He who proposes a new word, or an old word for a new and specific use, is essaying that which is beyond the power of kings to perform.

Nevertheless, we may try—any of us—where Alexander, Cæsar and Napoleon failed. Suppose the acts now best described by "boycott without fraud or violence," and the acts now best described by "blacklist without fraud or violence," be henceforth known as "refusals."

We may combine to organise a "refusal" against Smith whose hats we determine not to buy. We may put Jones on the "refusal" list, because for various reasons we think he should not be employed by ourselves or others in our

line of business—that is we have determined not to buy his labour. The hats of one, the labour of the other are “refused,” not boycotted or blacklisted, by ourselves and those who stand with us in the “furtherance of a trade dispute.”

Such a word thus substituted might lay the ghost of Captain Boycott whose Irish neighbours forced fame and infamy upon him. Their fevered minds made war for an immediate and special relief from hardship. A local rent-quarrel gave to the English language a new word in which the ideas of “refusal” and of “violence” were unfortunately welded together. It is worth while to sue for a divorce in such case. One idea, that of “refusal,” must survive as long as we have the competitive system as basis for our industrial life. The other, that of “violence,” specifies a lurking disease which society constantly endeavors to abate.

Let us now return to a discussion of the relation between the boycott, or “refusal”

by three, and the same thing by three thousand.

In both cases the organisers may be tempted to use such illegal methods as are best suited to their organisation; violence in the one case, lying in the other, occasionally both. *Essentially*, the morality of aim and of method are closely similar, yet one will easily escape the meshes of law; the other will easily be caught therein. And this is not "equality before the law."

Will you say that, since the letter of the law (in America) would condemn a "refusal," whether by three or by three thousand, that equality *does exist*?

And the answer is: of what value is this theoretical equality if, in practice, certain activities be permitted to one class of men, while to another class these activities are denied?

Are not these activities used for the *advantage* of those who use them?

Is not the *actual* ability to use activities the real test of equality before the law?

If this special privilege were used by

the employing class only in contests among themselves, tearing down or building up one as against another, then might we pass by this point of difference in status. But as a matter of fact, the refusal by three may be used, and is used, and will be used, through the blacklist and the lockout, against the three thousand. Then let the contest be waged with equal arms.

So far as the proscribed weapons are concerned—violence and lying—it will be easier for society to suppress the former than the latter; and in so far as lying cannot be suppressed, if there be advantage, it will remain with the three, rather than with the three thousand.

Leaving the state to continue its world-old contest with these two foes, let us put before our minds, in familiar phrase, just what we mean by “refusal,” that is the boycott shorn of violence and lying:—

Jones and Brown go to Thompson and say:—“We have a dispute with Johnson as to the price of our goods. He is in the

position of a privileged buyer of our merchandise,—our transportation or our labour” (or whatever else it may be). “In order to put pressure upon Johnson we have decided to ask all our friends to withdraw their patronage, as purchasers of his goods; and further, we shall restrict all our business dealings, as far as possible, to those who will aid us in carrying our point. We therefore want you to know that you must choose, in your own business, to ally yourself with us and our friends or with Johnson and his friends.

“We are sorry if this decision should be attended with any temporary loss to you, but the purchasing power of ourselves and our friends is the only leverage we can use in this matter.

“We are free to dispose of it where our interests lie. You will decide according to your own interest.”

There is the “refusal.”

When Jones does it alone, it passes without challenge. It seems to be the exercise of the most ordinary freedom.



When powerful Jones combines with powerful Brown and a few others having common interests, statutes *may* be found to run against such action; but these statutes are substantially dead letters, falling in the ambush of coffee and cigars.

When weak Jones combines with a thousand others, using the printing-press to address a thousand Thompsons, then the big public act challenges attention; then may the statute if it exists be easily applied. *But should it be applied?* Should there be such a statute? Has the British Parliament been wise or foolish in its enactment of 1906? Let all citizens think it over. Shall we not be content to stamp out fraud and violence, leaving to Jones the Many such activities as will certainly be enjoyed by Jones the Few?

Are we so sure that the use of *all* his commercial influence by Jones the Many will be harmful to the state that we should deny him at least a trial of the system he demands? If his course,

when unrestricted, becomes in fact generally injurious, will he not suffer in that general injury?

Will he not aid in correcting an evil when the evil shall have grown as big, as obvious, as his critics declare it will be?

Let us follow, for a time at least, the example set by British law. Let us give *practical* as well as *theoretical* equality in fighting methods to Jones the Many and to Jones the Few.

It will not be necessary to argue separately the case for establishing the reasonable right of strikers to use the system of picketing, without violence. Although probably a "combination in restraint of trade," although probably a "conspiracy" under strict construction of certain statutes, it has thus far been more leniently dealt with by the courts than the system of boycotting. When the doors have been opened wide enough to permit the latter to pass into undisputed

territory of right, the former will have no difficulty in following.

The statute above quoted will certainly legalise the peaceful picket. Probably all who would approve the "refusal," would also approve the picket. The legal right to this form of strike-aid should everywhere be established. When employed fairly, decently, good-humouredly, it should give good results. It will naturally be tried at an earlier stage of contest than the "refusal"; it may win the strike without other aid.

We may now review the argument.

It has been shown:

- (A) That the strike is moral; is or ought to be legal; may be profitable.
- (B) That arbitration cannot be considered as an universal cure for labour troubles; but that, when offered, it should generally be accepted by workmen.
- (C) That any desire, not illegal or immoral, may rightfully be given as an answer to the question—"Why to strike?"

- (D) That the cases in which the strike may pay are, chiefly: (a) for higher wages; (b) for shorter hours; (c) for better general conditions; (d) for recognition of the union (rarely).
- (E) That the sympathetic strike does not pay.
- (F) That the piece-work system, liberally applied, will go far toward solving labour questions; but that perfect peace means no progress.
- (G) That the competition in which Ordinary Labour is engaged is with Directive Labour, rather than with Capital.
- (H) That efficiency of workmen largely supplies the fund from which higher pay must be drawn.
- (I) That, except for self-defence, violence and lying are to be excluded from all programs of private action.
- (J) That the laws of the land are first to be obeyed, then, if objectionable, changed through peaceful political action.

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- (K) That the boycott, or refusal, and the picket are, or ought to be, legal, and may righteously enter into the program of "How to strike?"

## CHAPTER XVIII

### OBLIGATION OF LEADERS

THESE pages have upheld the strike, the union, the boycott (without violence or lying), and the picket (without violence or lying). The unwisdom of violence and lying on the part of any citizen has been shown. But it remains to point out a special responsibility on the part of labour leaders; and to allege a shirking of this responsibility by many such leaders.

Obligation is the other side of Right, and Right becomes Wrong when freed from Obligation.

The right of a father to correct his child stands with his obligation to protect and support it. The right of men to vote stands with the obligation not to sell the vote. The right to hold property stands

with the obligation to prevent nuisances, to pay taxes and debts. A further obligation to use property for the public good is rapidly forming. Sovereigns have rights of rule and obligation of justice. Tyrants, *for a little while*, enjoy right without obligation, then they fall.

Men first grasp Power, enforce Rights, and may then bitterly learn that neglected Obligation rises to punish their forgetfulness.

So it has been with many labour unions. Leaders have combined the Many into One. With the Power thus gained, they have secured the Right to direct the Many as units of production. They enjoy these rights of direction by virtue of the general calm and cohesion of society.

The spoken word of the state—the Law—protects them in a thousand activities. Some of these activities are perilous to peace. Yet the state does not forbid.

It sees its citizens swear a new allegiance. It does not forbid, because it is a *minor* allegiance.

It sees its citizens directed in their most serious relations by union leaders. It does not forbid, while the directed acts are yet legal.

But the state does forbid *Violence*. It forbids destruction of that which it was born to protect.

The rights which have been granted, by statute or prescription, to the unions, are in general the right to urge the citizen to certain *lawful* acts directed against his employer, and to perform those acts by co-operation. These rights are, in practice, directed by the union leaders. Indeed, we may say that the leader is the organ of the many for the enjoyment of rights of action. He who enjoys this right, while neglecting the corresponding obligation to restrain his followers (as best he can) from *unlawful* acts, is disloyal to his trust, and an enemy to the state.

Can it be doubted that many union leaders have been guilty of such disloyalty?

Can their denial of responsibility for



violence be taken as anything but a flouting of the law-abiding members of the union?

How long would union men be burning and killing if they knew that their leaders would, as far as possible, punish such conduct?

Have those who burn and kill and pillage been expelled from the unions?

Vain and cruel is leadership which permits excited men and women to wrong themselves and the state, unrestrained even by the fear of losing membership in that union which set their strike in motion!

The wrong to themselves flows out of the wrong done to Society—for Society must treat Violence as its enemy, save only when Violence is its slave.

When strikers break the bonds of law, they change a commercial dispute into a sort of civil war.

To abate such disorder is the leader's obligation.

And there must be a certain hostility toward the whole union movement as

long as men suspect that the passions of strikers are not generally restrained by their leaders.

This hostility must be felt even by those whose sympathies run strongly toward the true objects of union activities. For is not violence a threat against *all of us*? Is not he who breaks the head of Jones and burns his house (defying Law) an enemy also of Smith? When the Law is wounded all men bleed.

But, it may be asked, why is this adjuration directed against the leaders? Why are they held to a special responsibility and smirched in a special blame? Are not they generally innocent of any overt physical act of violence?

Why should not the sermon of peace be preached only to the men who actually hold the bludgeon and apply the torch? And, indeed, the sermon is to them.

Yet it is known that the many are wayward; that the unaccustomed leisure of a strike may beget mischief.

The soldiers of a patriot army may become marauders of the most vulgar

type if discipline be relaxed during days of easy march or of idle encampment.

It is known that the forward demagogue will seize the moment of sullen idleness to inflame restless minds.

True leadership seeks to check the waywardness of the unthinking and to defeat the schemes of the cunning demagogue.

True leadership knows that at times it must oppose the passions of its followers, and be ready to sacrifice popularity of the present to prosperity of the future.

To make such opposition to endure such sacrifice, is the *obligation* of leadership.

It is often the *only* business of leadership—for why need we a chief if our own passions are to lead us?

And it is an obligation, not only toward the general public, but toward the excited body of followers as well. Our whole building up of society is based upon an understanding of the fact that each of us may, in his own interest, require some restraint when wisdom has been burned up in wrath.

So the striker should be able to feel that his leaders will be calm when he is wild—will be wise when he is foolish. The benefit which he gains from union should be put at risk when his folly threatens not only his own welfare, but that of his associates as well. To that end leaders should direct the discipline of the union. During seasons of quiet, they should urge the adoption of rules which, in times of trouble, would tend to repress the violent. Perhaps the only formal means available for this purpose will be found in fines and expulsion. These, however, are but aids to an educated sentiment in favour of peace and order. When this sentiment shall fail, then let the union purge itself, by expulsion, of those members who sin against themselves, the union, and society.

Happily for the cause of Labour, many of its most influential, and all of its most enlightened leaders have striven for the establishment of the principles here stated. They have seen that even if violence should gain immediately some

coveted point, it wastes the material capital of society, and the immaterial capital of the unions—their reputation as legitimate children of the Law.

And unhappily for the cause of Labour, some of its most influential, and many of its most ignorant leaders have striven for the establishment of principles little less than anarchistic.

Wage-earners are in a majority in our modern states. If they are indeed oppressed by a minority, if they have equal intelligence and courage with that minority, then the equality of civil rights now enjoyed by all classes makes it easy for the majority to enact, by peaceful means, any change in our laws. Even an unjust change is within their power. Easy then must be such changes as are deemed just, not only by the employé class, but by that large professional class neutral between employer and employé.

Under a tyrannical form of government, mob violence may be the only means of enforcing Right. In a free government, it enforces Wrong.

Political freedom would not justify the sacrifices made for its obtainment did it not bear the fruit of Intelligent Order.

It is the duty of those who lead in Labour's cause, to understand that Liberty and Intelligent Order are bound together, to stand or fall together. The perilous experiment of the Rule of the Majority was made, in France and in the United States, by the will of Superior Men. They endowed masses of men with a wisely contrived Liberty, whose forms, fitted to Order, those masses were not cunning enough to devise.

Let us continue to use those rights which aristocracies of the past believed would be engines of destruction when put into the hands of common men. And in using them let us remember that Right without Obligation becomes Wrong. Meanwhile, let no leader beguile us away from this truth, that we are, above all, dependent upon the stability of the state for our happiness—yea, for our lives. The commands of the state must be upheld, for even in its usual errors it is

more helpful to us than would be the anarchy of each-for-himself.

In the light of such an obvious fact how dark is that counsel of leaders which has, occasionally, declared that the wage-earner should be an enemy of the military force of the state!

Think for a moment what this means.

It means that the government of a country should be deprived of the power to govern.

In a society of angels, there will be no need of force.

In a society of men, order must, at times, rest upon force. A government must be prepared to resist violent attack from within and from without.

As nations grow in mutual understanding, the danger of external attack grows less. The dream of international peace may soon become a blessed reality.

And as individuals grow in mutual understanding, the danger of internal violence does likewise diminish, and the dream of a world-wide tolerant fraternity may, long hence, be realised.

But as yet the malefactor is among us; as yet the well-meaning but passionate man is ready to seek his ends through the destruction of life and property. To-day the thoughtless mob may be led to crime which to-morrow it shall abhor.

Against such possible disorder as these elements may produce, the state must have at hand organised bodies of men pledged by solemn oath and by disciplined habit to aid authority in the maintenance of order. Such bodies are the police of cities and the militia or standing armies of states. He who would destroy them *now*, would destroy the state. They will diminish in importance and in numbers as the need for them diminishes.

The spread of knowledge, sympathy, and tolerance among men will, in the end, victoriously destroy military force—if ever it is to be destroyed.

By our temperate lives, by our votes, by our wise choice of leaders in all co-operative effort, we may lessen the difficulties of government and the need for force.



In some far-off day, the man with the club or the gun will be as useless to society as is the vermiform appendix to our digestive system. Meantime, he is as useful as our teeth.

Until all food is found soft and pulpy, ready for assimilation, let us not be toothless—unarmed against the tough particles.

## CHAPTER XIX

### HOME-BUILDING

THE difficulty of obtaining wise leadership has been so emphasised in these pages that it may seem inconsistent to suggest any extension of union activities beyond those which are now familiar.

Often enough the members of labour unions place themselves in the hands of foolish men. Sometimes they are led by bad men.

Yet withal it may not be unwise to impose upon officials new duties which will for their proper performance require the labour leader to learn something, very directly, of the employers' side of constructive work.

If at the same time a specific good is to be accomplished for the membership,

a second valid reason is found for the experiment.

And if, in addition, the ambition of officials may find opportunity in other fields than those of turmoil, we may have added, through such new functions, a needed element tending to insure conservative conduct of unionised energy.

Let us suppose that every labour organisation should become a Home-builders' Association.

What follows?

Economy must be encouraged among members of the organisation. The holding or the investment of building funds would put proper officers in contact with financial men and institutions. Something would thus be learned of the laws governing return on capital as such. Increase in the value of town lots would not be unwelcome, when falling to the Co-operative Building Association, which at once becomes a capitalist—as does each of its members.

On the other hand a rise in the price of lumber, bricks, or glass, just before

purchases are made, suggests an inquiry into the source and distribution of higher wages, generally considered.

Suppose it appears that window-glass has gone up in price because of a successful strike in that particular industry. Then the purchasers, who may be cloak-makers or railway employés, begin to learn something of the answer to this question, "Who pays the wage-fund?"

Then come the contracts with builders. Let us say that, through their union, twenty cigar-makers have arranged to get into suburban homes on the first of May. Visions of flowers and fresh vegetables come to them while the March snows are being shovelled away. The children will have a dog and will play ball without fear of the destroying automobile. Everybody is keen and happy.

Then the contractor reports that his lumber is delayed by a switchmen's strike somewhere—a thousand miles away—in the distant pine forests of Georgia or Norway.

Also the painters have gone out,

because of a boycott (or refusal) against the manufacturer of a particular brand of paint, which had been contracted for when it could be had as the most economical supply of its kind. Also the electric light fixtures cannot be installed because the electrical workers are out on sympathetic strike with the street-railway employés.

Altogether, the fat is in the fire; and the contractor points to a clause in his engagement which relieves him from damage due to delay caused by "strikes, riot, fire, or act of God." Without such reservation he would never have signed the agreement to complete the houses on or before May 1st.

So the dream of springtime in the country is only a dream. Hasty arrangements for extension of our lease of a flat are made. We patch up with the furniture dealer who has our promise to take and pay for some cottage furniture "not later than May 1st, 1910"—and we begin to see the other side of the labour question. We shall not, for that reason, cease

to urge our cause forward. But we shall urge it with more wisdom, with less bitterness; with more money in bank; and with less faith in the fiery oratory of our leader. He, in turn, has somewhat cooled his ardour. The "unreasonable" action of the painters and the electricians comes in for some condemnation as well as the "greed of the capitalist." Nay, even the capitalist seems a different creature—for to-day we must try to lend, on good terms, our accumulated funds, which must be held now until the strikes are settled—all the way from the lumber-camp to the paint-shop. When everybody has been pacified, the contractor may begin again.

Perhaps a whole year must pass—another May-day must come before we shall plant roses in the front yard of our pretty cottage. Meanwhile if we can get a good rate of interest on the "fund" we may in part make good the money losses caused by delay.

As to our disappointment, that must be swallowed. So we dicker here and there

as money-lenders, and learn what it is to "grasp" five per cent. from the borrower.

In the end we shall be wiser, happier, better citizens for having built our homes. Had we bought them ready-made, we should have learned far less. We have studied, *from the other side*, some of the elements of our problem, "Why to strike—How to strike."

In that fact lies the reason for introducing this topic, which, at first glance, seems to be outside the title of our treatise. So important, indeed, is this subject, that another word of advice will here be added.

Let the leaders consult with legislators to find a plan under which ownership in fee may easily be acquired in city apartments.

The majority of all employés must live in large tenements. The inertia of the law makes every tenement dweller a rent-payer, willy-nilly.

These are difficulties in the way of individual ownership, but they can be worked out.

The "leader" who will build the first co-operative tenement, with final individual ownership in each flat, will have merited as much as he who has won a strike.

As much, did I say?—Nay, vastly more.



## CHAPTER XX

### CONCLUSION

WE place before our view the ideal industrial organisation and action of employés receiving relatively small wages. First, the unions—democratic institutions within the state proper. For the special purpose of raising wages of a particular class, they become what the state is for the purpose of accomplishing the general welfare. In each such organisation (as in the state) every member lends to, and borrows from, the general store of energy created by co-operation. Such co-operation is the mother of civilisation. We see these unions, through elective officers, urging the interest of members, by argument, upon employers and upon the public.

When argument fails to obtain a par-

ticular thing demanded, we see the labour leaders again carefully investigating; they are weighing the probable cost of a strike against its probable gains; they are specially concerned as to the *ability* of the employer to grant the demand without committing commercial suicide. When conclusions have been reached, we see them submitting these conclusions, in calm words, to those who are to bear the burdens and receive the benefits, if gained.

They recommend to their constituents, in the strongest terms, that the issue be submitted to arbitration. An effort in this direction will be authorised to the proper officers. If within reasonable time agreement can be had as to arbitrators and as to the conditions they are to observe in their work, the difficulty is then left to be solved by them and their finding is accepted in good faith. If this agreement cannot be had, report of that fact is made. We then see the final determination, by democratic methods, of the question,

“Shall the demand be withdrawn or shall it be urged through a strike?” If directly, or through representatives, a majority of those most nearly concerned should conclude to urge the demand, then a study is made by special officers as to the most suitable time for ordering a strike. In due course, it is declared. And now nearly all decisions must be left to chosen officers.

Peaceful solicitation of all competitors for the vacant places is at once begun to the end that these competitors shall withdraw. That is the picket. At the same time, or perhaps later, if resistance to the demands continues vigorously, the boycott or “refusal” is declared. The strikers themselves agree to sever, as far as possible, all relations with the employer. They ask those who are thought to have interests with them to do likewise; they extend this effort against those who may have interests with the employer.

A contest of all the influence wielded by the two contestants is now in full

action, save any that would involve fraud or violence; or any that would involve the lives or the health of the public.

During this time the strikers, having much leisure, watch closely the conduct of their leaders. If these cannot show character and intelligence, they are changed. Free discussion and free action are given and demanded by leaders and followers with respect to each other. The public also is taken much into confidence and its interests are preserved just as far as an intelligent self-interest will permit. Gradually one side or the other loses ground. Finally a compromise or a surrender is made.

If the wage-earner has finally to yield after a long contest, he may generally feel sure that the employer would have gladly yielded if he *could*. His victory was probably necessary to the life of the glorious goose who lays the golden eggs *for all*.

And in turn if the employer yields and if in the end he finds that the business

stands up well under the new order, he also is content to have lost.

Hate, violence, lying—what have these to do with contests thus waged?



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