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No. 1.

REVOLUTIONARY UNIONISM !

BY ...

E. J. B. ALLEN.

ONE PENNY.

1909.

Published by
THE INDUSTRIALIST LEAGUE, 25, Queensdale Road,
Notting Hill, LONDON, W.

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When a working man examines the situation in which he finds himself to-day, he has to admit that it is a precarious one. With the ghost of unemployment ever haunting him, with the prices of the necessities of life steadily rising, his position is not enviable. There is also the continuous increase in the use of machinery which throws more and more men into the ranks of the unemployed, reduces the wages of those in work, and causes that general feeling of insecurity that is characteristic of the whole of the working class, including those that are in so-called well-paid jobs, and who may happen to be foremen or charge-hands for a time. The mass of the workers are getting poorer and poorer and more insecure than ever, whilst our employers on the contrary are getting richer and richer and piling up wealth in an unprecedented manner. This then is the riddle that the workers have to solve: "Why is it, that though the workers are producing more wealth than has ever been known in the world's history before, they are worse off both relatively and actually to what they were in the fifteenth century?" The answer is to be found in the fact that the whole of the means of producing wealth, that is the necessities and luxuries of life, are held by a class who will not allow the workers to use them unless a surplus—pocketed under the name of profit, rent and interest—is obtained from their use. The whole of society is dominated by this one thought of profit, and it is expressed in the written laws and customs of the country. It dominates the whole of life, it stultifies the whole of social activity, it blights all the nobler instincts in men, paralyzes art, enslaves science and destroys craftsmanship, while to the workers it renders their lives one continuous drone of over-work or starving unemployment. There is no chance for us to cultivate the love of the beautiful, to enter the inner mysteries of melody, soaring through unknown fields of thought on the wings of music, or tasting the sweet joys of creatorship that the craftsman feels as he surveys his finished work, the concrete embodiment of his ideas. The whole of our relationships are besmirched by this ever-present demon of profit. Men and women cannot touch the freedom of life and action that they should possess as real men and real women and not the puppets of commerce. In order to live healthy and happy lives, in order to have healthy and happy children, in order to cherish the love of beauty in form and mind, the entire overthrow of this present commercial system of life is necessary. To the workers there falls the noble task of being their own emancipators, and at the

same time becoming the emancipators of the civilised races. When the working class have taken possession of the land, the mines, the railways and the factories to be used in a co-operative manner by those working in them, they will be able to inaugurate a new social life—a social life of manly comradeship and equality. All the resources of science and invention that are killed to-day can be called into service to decrease the amount of labour where desirable. While on the other hand, the only object in producing things will be to satisfy social want, and not to make a profit, handwork could easily be used where the knowledge of the handicraft existed. Men, no longer tortured by physical want, and no longer harassed by the unnecessary cares of to-day, will have their minds free to develop to all the boundless extent that Nature allows. We shall be standing upon the threshold of the most glorious future the human race has yet had. Mankind, erect and dignified, no longer the slave of Nature, but its master, and men no longer the slaves of men, will be able to truly claim that they are the real Lords of Creation. For the first time of its history, Humanity will be really free, and boundless vistas of a new Heroic Age will unfold before the eyes of men. In order to accomplish this gigantic task, both real and at the same time most ideal, the workers must commence at the root of it all. As it is they who actually carry on the world's work, they must get together in those places where the work is carried on, in order to take over the plant and materials generally. In other words they must form unions, and those unions constructed for the revolutionary purpose that has been briefly sketched in the previous pages.

At once many workers will say "We have Unions already existing." So therefore, before we can develop the idea of revolutionary unionism, it is necessary to examine, to some extent,

THE OLD UNIONS.

The majority of the old Trade Unions were set on foot about the forties, though some had existed long before them. They were purely craft organisations, as at that time machinery had not sub-divided the different trades like it has to-day. Associations such as the Operative Bricklayers' Society, the Amalgamated Society of Engineers and others, were established.

While Robert Owen's—that early English Socialist—influence was to some extent felt by nearly all the different workingmen's societies, none, with the exception of the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union, were at all imbued with a class spirit. The skilled craftsmen united themselves chiefly for benefit purposes, as can readily be seen from their titles such as "The Philanthropic Society of Journeymen Millwrights of Lancashire," "The Smith's Benevolent, Friendly, Sick and Burial Society," and many others too numerous to mention.

Take for example their devices such as "Defence not Defiance," the "Clasped Hands of Capital and Labour," while on their banners are pictured allegorical groups with the inscription, "I was sick and ye visited me."

Many affirm in their Prefaces to Rules, and Statement of Principles that the capitalist is entitled to exploit the worker, even in the men's own ideas. For example, The Operative Bricklayers' Society say in their Preface to Rules:—

"Capitalists tell us that the true interests of workmen lie in saving money, in using every effort to desert their own class and become masters. For what purpose? What does it profit us that half-a-dozen of our fellows in a generation succeed in joining the war against the men who were formerly their comrades, and end perhaps by failing for half a million? No, we have another morality and a higher aim than this; a feeling of brotherhood is the principle on which we shall act, and our end shall be the elevation of our fellows—not into another class, but in their actions, their thoughts and their feelings. *If we do this we may elevate the masters as well as ourselves, we may teach them the duties of self-denial, humility and economy by our example of honesty, by refusing to put our hands to scamped work for their extortionate profit, we may show them their true position—useful and essential as we admit it to be—as onerous duties that cannot be got rid of, or sneered away, by talking of the labour market, or by likening living-men to pig-iron or cotton stuffs.*"

Needless to say, nothing of the kind has happened. There is far more jerry building to-day than ever there was. This is one example of muddle-headedness, and yet glimmering of class instinct that is fairly characteristic of these unions. The Associated Society of Carpenters and Joiners still prints this obvious falsehood on the front page of their rules, viz.: "All men are brethren." If this is so, it is strange that workers have to combine to protect themselves against their "brethren" the employers. In their Preface to Rules they say "it would be wrong to leave behind our original emblem of 'Peace and Goodwill to all Men.'" The concluding paragraph states: "Other important questions will demand our earnest attention, to each and all of which the Society will aim at a satisfactory and amicable settlement, and by the influence of a good and well directed union we will be able, *while allowing to capital a reasonable return*, to obtain for ourselves that share to which the wealth producer is justly entitled, and thus be able to secure that position in the State from which we have so long been debarred."

It is only necessary to contrast these statements with the manly declaration of the Industrialists—"Labour is the source of all

wealth; wealth belongs to the producer thereof"—to see the marked difference in principle that animates the revolutionary unionist as in distinction to the old "pure and simple" trade unionist.

Many of the old unions have such terms of apprenticeship that makes it impossible for them to organise the working-class. The Amalgamated Society of Engineers in their Preface to Rules say: "If constrained to make restrictions against the admission into our ranks of *those who have not earned the right by a probationary servitude*, we do so knowing that such encroachments are productive of evil, and, if persevered in unchecked, result in reducing the position of the artisan to that of the unskilled labourer, and confer no permanent advantage on those admitted. It is our duty then to exercise the same care and watchfulness over that in which we have a vested interest, as the physician does who holds a diploma, or the author who is protected by a copyright." Thus in 1850 they attempted to limit the number of apprentices to one for every four journeymen, which made the Bury branch of the Steam Engine Makers' Society ask them "What do you intend to do with your sons when they grow up?" It was likewise in accordance with this stupid spirit of exclusiveness that the A.S.E. refused to organise the repairers in the motor car repair shops in London in 1905 when requested by the workmen to do so. As a result their Executive Committee soon afterwards had to pass a special resolution to allow their members to work under price in Tilling's 'Bus Works, Peckham, even, as all along, none of their members got proper pay on the railways and motor-bus yards. These things are thoroughly typical of the old craft unions as regards their objects, preambles, and working rules. Let us now note the

DEVELOPMENT FROM CRAFT TO INDUSTRY.

The chief characteristic of the nineteenth century was the machine development. No matter which trade we take up, we can find ample evidence of this. In the engineering trades, first of all the horizontal lathes, and now the capstan lathes, amongst a whole host of other machines, have played havoc with the men. In the wood-working trades, planing machines, moulding machines, morticing machines, and mitreing machines have displaced hundreds of men and rendered their skill nugatory. In the building trades we find the huge mortar-pans driven by electricity displacing the gangs of labourers on the mortar-beds. The "Scotchmen" on the scaffolding, lifting hundredweights of stuff at a time, displace the labourers and their old "jenny-wheel." Huge blocks of stone and granite, cut and polished by machinery, terra-cotta figures, and other artificial stonework displacing bricklayers and masons. Whilst moulded ceiling centres, Lincrusta-Walton, Anaglypta, etc., removes alike numbers of plasterers, carpenters, and paperhangers. The road

sweepers and navvies are tackled by the motor-brooms and the scarifiers that are attached to the sides of the steam rollers; while the "steam-navvy" and the "German navvy" put still more out of work. In the printing trades the linotype, the monotype, and the stereotype mean trades are cut into. The huge Hoe rotary press, driven by electricity, likewise reduces the number of machine-minders, while half-tone blocks, "zincos," and various other photo-mechanical plates displace the old steel and wood engravers. On the railways the introduction of electricity as motive power, automatic signalling, besides heavier engines and heavier freights, make the railway workers wonder who is to be "sacked" next. Even clerks are being displaced by the different letter-copying and duplicating appliances, typewriters, and so forth.

In short the whole conditions of industry have changed. Whereas at the time when the majority of the old unions were formed, a man was a craftsman, and finished a job right through, and there was only one class of work performed in an establishment, we now find dozens of different sub-divided trades in the same factory. Lever Brothers, Port Sunlight, have sixty-nine different kinds of trades employed in the one industry of making and packing soap. Firms like Liptons, who in reality control many other companies, such as the Tee-To-Tum Tea Co., the Empress Tea Stores, and it is rumoured the United Kingdom Tea Co., and the Mazawattee and probably the Maypole Co., employ thousands of different workers, box makers, metal workers, enamellers, butter fakers, &c., &c. Whilst huge stores like Harrods' and Whiteleys', Barkers, &c., employ all kinds of workmen both on and off their particular premises.

The advance of machinery in every direction has made the majority of workers semi-skilled machine hands. Men can, and are, drafted from one job to another because machinery has subdivided and simplified the various processes. But in spite of this fact—patent to all who care to open their eyes to the real meaning of this machine development—the craft unions have remained organised on the same lines as they started sixty to seventy years ago. The marvellous advance of science applied to industry has remained a sealed book to them. They are hopelessly incompetent, they are even worse, they are positively criminal because they more often defeat one another than they are defeated by the employers. The fact is that the

TRADE UNIONS DISRUPT THE WORKERS.

The evil effects of having so many Trade Unions (about 1,138) duplicates in the same trades, overwhelming in their number in an industry, is to be seen in the long list of demarcation disputes and others, where the unions have blacklegged and scabbed on each

other. The Amalgamated Society of Engineers fought the Boilermakers in 1865, and the Associated Shipwrights in 1881. The A.S.E. blacklegged on workers in Silvertown in 1889. They had demarcation disputes with Boilermakers' and Plumbers on the Tyne in 1890-91-92. Disputes with the Scientific Instrument Makers at Weymouth in 1894, and fought the Steam-Engine Makers at Burton-on-Trent in 1895. In 1896 they had disputes with the milling machine hands at Earles, of Hull, and the brass-finishers at Thomeycrofts, Chiswick. In 1897 they were blacklegged on by the Boilermakers, because this union had their funds sunk in Armstrongs' Co., and were afraid to depreciate their stock by striking with their fellow unionists. During '97 also, the Moulders and the Smiths likewise scabbed on the A.S.E. men. In 1899 the A.S.E. fought the Co-operative Smiths on the Tyne, and in 1904 scabbed on the Electrical Trades Union, in Belfast, in Harland and Wolffs' Yards.

In 1893 when the Builders' Labourers were on strike in Norwich, the Bricklayers blacklegged on them, and naturally enough in 1899 when the Bricklayers were out, every labourer tried to become a "bricky" in revenge. During the London Labourers' Strike of 1896, Bricklayers', Carpenters, in short all the skilled trades, thought it nothing wrong to blackleg on the labourers by doing their work, and working with blacklegs. In 1904, The Amalgamated Furnishing Trades Association had to complain of the fact that members of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners were acting as strike-breakers against them. The Carpenters' delegate supplying the employer with union carpenters to take the place of the union cabinet makers who were thrown on the streets. In 1907 the Carpenters and Joiners, the Wheelwrights, the Electricians, the United Pattern-makers, and the Carmen blacklegged on some eleven societies who had struck in Vickers and Maxim's shop at Erith. The Steel Smelters scabbed on the Gasworkers at the Morewood Steel Works, Llanelly, in 1905, and during the same year in Dublin the Ancient Guild of Brick and Stone Layers were locked out because they refused to recognise the trade card of any other society of brick and stone layers. During 1905 also some members of the National Amalgamated Society of House and Ship Painters, etc., sued the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer of the Belfast Operative House and Ship Painters and Decorators' Trade Union for "wrongfully and maliciously and with intent to injure, etc., prevented them from following their employment." Verdict of £150 damages and costs were granted to the plaintiffs. During 1905 the Scottish Operative Plumbers' Society blacklegged on the Amalgamated Plumbers' Society in Glasgow and worked for ½d. per hour less. Whilst in 1907 in Aberdeen the Tinsmiths' allowed men to blackleg on the Plumbers'. In 1906 the South Wales Miners' Federation proceed

to treat the members of the Gasworkers' and other unions as non-unionists. In 1905 in Sunderland, when the members of the Operative Bricklayers' Society were on strike, all the other skilled trades remained at work. Many trades will blackleg upon one in an industry. For example, when there was the possibility of something like a general strike of railway workers just over a year ago, arrangements were made to have goods taken by canal, sea, and along the roads by motor vans, Renard trains, and horse vehicles. This of course shows how it is possible for workers, who are not even in the same industry, to be played off one against the other if they are not wide awake. These few examples, as well as the many others that will readily occur to the mind of the reader who has but a slight knowledge of the trade union movement, will amply justify our claim that the existing unions disrupt the working class.

Despite however, the severe handicap of the antiquated form of organisation and the general lack of understanding of working class principles, the spirit of revolt has often stirred the breasts of the workers, but just so soon as the revolutionary pulse beat high, so has it been stilled by the

TREACHERY OF OFFICIALS.

When in 1903 the A.S.E. men on the Clyde were whipped back, it was "sensible" labour leaders who did it, many of whom have the sheer audacity of professing to be Socialists; the same thing occurred on the Tyne in 1908.

It is these self-same "labour leaders" and M.P.'s, who have complacently watched or assisted the different Unions to get strangled in Sir "Strikesmasher" Furness' alleged "Co-partnership" scheme. When ever the men in different shops desire to express their solidarity with their fellow workers in other unions by a sympathy strike, their leaders have stopped them to the tune of "Remember our Three Months' Agreement." "Think of our contracts." "Consider our obligations not to strike under 'the sliding scale.'" "Think how easily it can be settled by the Conciliation Board" and so forth *ad nauseum*. A Conciliation Board with a capitalist as alleged "impartial" referee is set above working-class solidarity. Very often men of spirit and action are betrayed by the very unions that are supposed to support them.

In 1906 the following occurred in the Shop Assistants' Union. A member, by the name of Leach, who was employed by Wallis and Co., Holborn, London, was instrumental in getting a special City of London campaign inaugurated in order to better organise the Shop Assistants and Clerks, etc., in the City. On the Monday evening, when the first meeting was to have been held, Leach was suddenly called upon to work overtime, for which he would not be

paid. On account of wanting to attend the Union meeting, he objected to stopping, and several other assistants did likewise. They agreed that they ought to walk out—but they didn't. Next morning, Leach and one or two others were called to the office, and told to hand in their resignations. This of course they had to do. When Leach left his employment he claimed on the unemployed benefit of the Union. His branch, the City of London Branch, paid it, *but the Executive Committee—several of whom were members of the different Socialist political parties—refused the claim.* Their objection was that Leach had not complied with rule 23, which reads: "A member who intends leaving his or her employment, must first submit the complaint to their Branch Committee, provided the said member intends to claim out-of-employment benefit." In the official organ of this union for July 4th, 1908, under the heading of "London District Council," appeared this:—

"A discussion took place on the case of a member (Pemble, of Islington) who had asked for an advance and had been dismissed. *The E.C. refused unemployed claim on the ground that he had risked his situation without consulting his branch.*"

In the same report lower down it had this:—

"There were two resolutions on the agenda protesting against the action of the E.C. *re* Mitchell, of St. Paul's. This member had permission of his branch to resign his situation under the living-in system, as he desired to live out. The E.C. refused to pass his claim, their interpretation of the rule being he had no grievance."

The despicable treachery of this last act is more particularly seen when we turn to the Rule Book of the Shop Assistants' Union and find amongst its objects "The gradual abolition of the present system of boarding and lodging employés." What a damnable hypocrisy their so-called agitations for the abolition of the living-in system must appear after this. At the Para Rubber Mills, Aston Cross, Birmingham, in 1906, some members of the Gasworkers' Union had strike permit and came out. Other members of the same union, in the same shop, seeing it would be necessary to come out to prevent the strike being broken, likewise came out. *They were whipped back by the officials refusing strike pay on the grounds that the men had no strike permit.* This latter union claims to be a Socialist one, and the Shop Assistants' is supposed to be advanced, so we leave it to the kind imagination of our readers to guess what the "backward" unions are like. This kind of business is notably on the increase, particularly since the workers have been fools enough to pay this kind of official £200 and more per year to do nothing in Parliament, except betray their

interests, and run around after different capitalist politicians, assisting them under the pretext of Free Trade, Temperance, etc., in order to be kindly remembered when there are some Government jobs going at the Board of Trade. The capitalists recognise these gentlemen's utility to them, by either giving them £2,000 testimonials, like they did to Mr. Abrahams (Mabon), Labour M.P., President of the South Wales Miners' Federation, or raising funds for them like they did for Mr. John Ward, M.P., Member of the Trade Union group in Parliament, and General Secretary of the Navvies' Union, or pandering to their vanity by making them Justices of the Peace, to administer capitalist laws against the workers, like Mr. Pete Curran, of the Gasworkers, and many other "safe," "sane," and "respectable" labour leaders of the same bogus reformist type. Because the employers recognise these men as their chief bulwarks against a revolutionary movement. Mr. A. Henderson, Chairman of the Labour Party in Parliament is a J.P., and much sought after for temperance and religious meetings. Mr. Bell, General Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, is congratulated on being "A labour leader who can see there is two sides to the question," like he was over the Taff Vale decision. He and his fellow-officials were of great use to the directors of the North-Eastern Railway in 1906, when they prevented the men striking though a majority had voted in favour of so doing. He used his evil influence with Mr. Lloyd-George in order to get the men tied up in the six years' agreement, whilst the Companies were able to continue plundering the men under the "Arbitration Courts," as the men are not allowed to strike. After having lashed the railwaymen into a fighting spirit over their grievances he used his influence to run the agitation into the ground. As our space is limited we must omit many other poignant bits of evidence in support of our contention.

Naturally enough, as time went on, the workers themselves, defeated by the blacklegging of union upon union and seeing many other defects, attempted to remedy these evils by means of

FEDERATIONS.

But the method is wrong. When a society is only going to concern itself with its special craft interests, and follow them to the detriment of other trades, federations are going to fail. There are hundreds of unions, but, when the question of closer organisation has been brought up, it only results in some half-hearted federation. Now we are not opposed to the principle of federation, but we are opposed to the methods that have always been used. Now, as there are three national societies for carpenters, such as the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, the General Union of Carpenters and Joiners, and the Associated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, there is obviously two more than are really wanted.

Apart from the number of times they have blacklegged on each other, what happens when they federate? *All these societies retain all their existing officials, branches, etc., thus still keeping up the whole duplication of officials, salaries, rent and organising expenses, and then make some more jobs by having officials and their expenses for the federation.* This point can easily be seen when the unions in the metal trades are considered, or the large number of labourers' unions.

* J. Andrews, when Corresponding Secretary of the Navvies' Union, pointed all this out in a pamphlet entitled "Amalgamation or Federation?" The proposed amalgamation of certain of the Labourers Unions was killed by the officials. Mr. Davenport, General Secretary of the United Order of General Labourers, wrote in opposition to the proposed amalgamation as follows: "*Hitherto in all schemes of amalgamation, they have only dealt with the case from what I may say is the end of the question instead of from the beginning, and therefore, after having given this subject my earnest consideration, and believing I have arrived at a solution whereby the above unions can be brought together, I now submit what I call a preliminary scheme for bringing about the amalgamations of the unions above mentioned. In all previous attempts to bring about amalgamation the officials have been ignored. This I consider to have been a fatal objection to any scheme at present put forth, and therefore I attempt to deal with this objection by stating at once that I consider my union would not be justified in summarily dismissing me on the grounds that they had become amalgamated with another union, and believing this, how can I expect that anyone similarly situated as myself could look at such a position affecting themselves any different than I do, and, therefore, what I propose is: That an agreement should be entered into by the unions that, in the event of the members agreeing to amalgamate, that I should be general secretary of the union, etc.*" Our readers are to be congratulated on the naive and original candour of this official. He evidently summed up the situation quite well, for the amalgamation has never taken place, though it is about ten years ago when it was proposed.

What is even of more concern to us, is the fact that unions in federations blackleg upon each other. In 1900 the labourers organised in the National Amalgamated Labourers' Union struck Messrs. Finch & Co's shop at Chepstow. They soon complained that members of the Engineers' and Moulders' were not only working with blacklegs, but that their members (a foreman in each society) had helped the employers to get blacklegs; the moulder had gone as far as Bristol for them. The General Secretary of the

* Andrews pamphlet is quoted extensively in "The Industrialist" No. 2, Vol. 1, July, 1908. Price 1d.

Labourers' called the men out on June 30th, and wired Mr. Mitchell, Secretary of the General Federation of Trade Unions, four days later. Mr. Mitchell referred him to the Executive Councils of the Engineers' and Moulders'. The Secretary of the Labourers' wrote the E.C. of the Engineers' and Moulders' on July 23rd. The Moulders' replied on the 25th, stating that they could not stop their members working with blacklegs, they had enough to do to fight their own battles. The Engineers' also replied that they could not be responsible for individual members. All these unions mentioned were federated in the General Federation of Trade Unions.

On the Saturday before the holding of the last Trade Union Congress in London, a special delegate meeting of Labourers' Unions was held, and though amalgamation was agreed to, and a committee with W. Thorne, of the Gasworkers, as secretary, was appointed to bring it about, it has not yet taken place.

Likewise the old London Building Trades Federation was killed owing to a craft squabble between the Bricklayers' and Tilers'. When the verdict of the Federation was given against the O.B.S., they withdrew, and the Federation soon cracked up.

Within the last year or two—owing to our continuous onslaughts on the methods of the existing unions—federations, joint committees, recognitions of cards and free transfers from one union to another have had a revival. But we put them at their real worth, viz., only an attempt to dam our criticism. From experience of the past there is nothing very solid in these schemes, because nearly all the unions doing these things are tied up hand and foot in various "co-partnership," conciliation boards, and sliding-scale schemes, that even if they get a little smoother working its value is lost, because it cannot be used for fighting purposes. Federations as proposed by the existing unions only means more officials and more expenses, and leaves the chief evils untouched. The Trade Union movement—whether the old unions, or the new ones that have followed so quickly in the ways of the old ones—stand bankrupt as an efficient factor in the workers' struggle. The workers have undoubtedly lost under the existing union movement, but they can remedy it if they wish.

On the whole, carefully considering all the points in favour of the trade unions and possibilities of them coming together, we Industrialists have come to the conclusion that their permanent mending is well nigh an impossibility.

Over 1,130 different general secretaries, presidents, and vice-presidents, assistant secretaries and organisers, executive committees, and swarms of other officials, all with something of a vested interest in keeping this kind of thing going, stands in the way of their uniting and constituting a revolutionary movement.

When on top of all the old bad traditions we see so-called Socialist officials supporting all the various tricksters' schemes of "co-partnership," conciliation boards, sliding-scales, etc., whereby the workers will be still further deluded and robbed without being able to cry "Halt, enough!"; and the important admission of Mr. Mitchell, General Secretary of the General Federation of Trade Unions, that, while there are two-and-a-quarter millions of workers organised in unions, there are still nine-and-a-half millions eligible to be organised and are not, we say that it is the imperative duty of all sincere minded workingmen, who desire to see their class emancipated, to join with us to form a revolutionary Industrial Union for that purpose, independent of any political party, and if necessary of any existing trade society. We will stand side by side in support of the existing unions when there is a question of direct struggle with the employers, nevertheless keeping intact our own society, organising along industrialist lines, until the workers come together to effect that emancipation by taking and holding the tools, machinery and materials of wealth production and distribution through a union built for that purpose. Refusing to continue production for the benefit of a master-class, but continuing it co-operatively and enjoying the produce in common. The union to become the central spring of a new social system of a Workers' Commonwealth. We will now examine the method of

INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATION.

Instead of organising by separate crafts or trades we organise by industries. Thus in a metal shop like Vickers & Maxim, or Cammell & Laird's, pattern makers, core makers, moulders, fitters, turners, machinists, tool makers, electricians, smiths, sheet metal workers, braziers, wheelwrights, labourers, carmen, clerks, etc., etc. All workers, skilled or unskilled, would be organised in a local union of the metal and machinery industry. There would thus be only one union represented in a shop, and united efforts could be made, no matter which section was threatened. A solid body of men would be facing the "boss" on the principle that "An injury to one is an injury to all." All local industrial unions would be linked up in a national industrial union. Where there are similar industries like seamen, firemen, longshoremen, dockers, engineers, and all workers who are engaged in transport by sea, river, and canal; railway workers of all kinds, such as drivers, guards, signalmen, porters, platelayers, collectors, cleaners, mechanics, etc.; carmen, van-boys, motor drivers, and others engaged in transportation along the roads; though in three distinct industries, and would have separate national and local unions for their immediate concerns, yet they are all dealing with transportation, and thus there would be a national joint committee, and would thus unite them into a Department of Transportation. In all cases where the employers made an attempt to play off two sections

against the third, joint action would be taken and mutual support gained. There would be a Department of Mining, composed of all the industrial unions of the different miners, coal, tin, etc. The Department of Building would be made up of all the local industrial unions of building workers, these local unions grouping all the members of the different building trades in a given locality in one union, instead of splitting them up into the endless number of societies that exist at present.

Thus all workers would be linked up, firstly: in the local union of the industry in which they worked; secondly, with all the workers in the same national industrial union; thirdly, with workers of similar industries through the different Departments, as per the illustration of the Transportation Department; fourthly, with every other kind of worker, because all the different Departments would be united under a joint committee for the general welfare of the whole of the workers organised; last, but not least, for the purely local matters, industrial district councils composed of all the local industrial unions in a given district, similar to the existing trades' councils. This is, we think, an ideal method of organisation, both for immediate protection and for the final purpose of controlling and taking over industry from the class at present owning it. The workers, while still living in wage-slavery, will be able to lay the foundation of a workers' commonwealth by building up and organising these revolutionary unions.

In order to make the industrial method of organising more clearly understood, we will take the case of an engineer. We first find our engineer working, we will say, for Vickers & Maxim's at Sheffield. He would naturally be organised in the local industrial union of metal and machinery workers. He is a rebel, and, by reason of his hot temper and ready fist, he gets into trouble and finally leaves. He travels from Sheffield to Burton-on-Trent and finds a job as engineer in one of the breweries there. As soon as he is settled in his job, he gets a free transfer from the local metal workers' union that he belonged to in Sheffield, and joins the Burton brewery workers' industrial union. Though he is an engineer he is in reality now become part and parcel of the brewing industry, and his immediate material interests, are bound up with the maltsters, coopers, carmen, and others who work with him in the same plant for the same employer. The National Industrial Union of Brewery Workers would be composed of all the local industrial unions made up of all the different kinds of workers in the brewing industry. The National Brewery Workers' Union would be a component part of the Department of Food-stuffs, which would be composed of the National Unions of workers engaged in the production of eatables. But our engineer's life is doomed to be a wandering one, for no sooner has he been a year in Burton, than he has to move again. One day his manager had

been drinking too much of the Burton Ale, and had become quarrelsome, and had picked a row with our man, whereat our friend being of a rebellious type resented it and struck him and thus got dismissed. The majority of other workers in this particular plant not being organised industrially, do not close the plant down to support him, and trade being slack he has to leave the town. He travels through to Crewe and finds work in the L.N. & W. Railway works in the sheds. Once again he has a free transfer to the local industrial union of railway workers, which is part of the National Union of Railway Workers, which is part of the Department of Transportation. Thus it is easily seen that once a man has taken up his card in any local industrial union, he could remain a union member no matter how often he had to change his job. No continual calls on him for fresh entrance fees, he could be retained in the industrial organisation, whereas at the present time many men are unorganised because they cannot keep paying fresh initiation fees, and object to being so bled every time they may have to take up fresh work. Machinery is continuously creating this huge army of men who have to change from job to job, and we make it possible that once a man becomes a union man, he can always remain a union man. We shall enter into communication, as we are indeed at present, for the free exchange of cards with the revolutionary unions of other countries, so that even in the advent of having to leave this country, he can be organised with his fellow workers in the particular land where he may have to go to. Thus the phrase "The Solidarity of Labour" becomes an established fact. The Industrialists will also use

DIFFERENT TACTICS.

The orthodox trade-unionists only knows of one form of struggle, that is, to leave the works and see which will give way first, his empty pocket and stomach or the full ones of the employer. Needless to say it is generally the employer who gets home on this run. True; some unions go in for the accumulation of huge funds, but this seldom helps, as the funds are often invested in some commercial concerns where the men are employed, and thus a paralysis of that industry would hit the workers both ways. This was the case with the Boilermakers in 1897, as it was also with the Railway Servants in 1907. The latter had thousands upon thousands of pounds, invested in the different railways, and thus if they had struck and had to realise on the stock to pay strike pay, the unloading on the Stock Exchanges of so much stuff would have made prices drop enormously and thus they would have lost both ends.

Another result of the huge accumulations of funds is simply an invitation to the capitalists to sue the Union through the courts in one form or another, and annex several thousands of pounds

of the workers' money, like the Taff Vale Railway Company did from the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants about 1899, or like Messrs. Hammond & Co., Printers, of London, did, when they got a verdict for £600 damages against the London Society of Compositors, in 1908.

In spite of all the twaddle talked by Labour M.P.'s about their Trades' Dispute Bill, the evil has not been obviated yet. For as in the Taff Vale case, a judge rendered a decision that was against the understood ruling on the matter, and was upheld by the Appeal Courts, so can other judges "keep on doing it" while the union have huge treasuries to be plundered, and are "legally" registered to permit of being more easily done. What is more, they usually play into the legal sharks hands by paying out more funds to carry the case through the various Appeal Courts, until it reaches the Lords. When they uphold the "illegal" decision of the judge, the workers are "mugs" enough to pay about £200 election expenses, and over £200 a year for an alleged "representative" to go to the House of Commons to endeavour to make it possible for the whole damned farce to be repeated again in a few years' time.

The Trade Unions were legalised in 1869, 1871, 1875, and paralysed in 1900, partially legalised again in 1907, to be paralysed once more when it is wanted, that is if the Furness, Livesy, Lever Company of "Co-partners" have not completely broken them up, with the active assistance of the union members' ignorance. It is hardly conceivable that men who have been locked out and fought most bitterly by such a man as Furness, can be such imbeciles as to imagine that he ever intended parting with the least share of the plunder he robs from them under the name of profit. Co-partnership schemes are only traps for workers to fall into while their employers speed them up, and rob them to a larger extent than before, because the workers are unable to strike or protect themselves in the least.

The Industrialists do not propose to ask for high entrance fees or large weekly contributions to amass funds to invest in railways or alleged co-partnership works. Neither will the industrial union be a benefit society. The industrial union will be simply a fighting organisation to contest the right of ownership of the wealth created by the workers, which is now taken by the capitalists. The craft unions are well-nigh powerless to higher wages or shorten hours, or improve the workers' position in any degree. Their uselessness is disguised by the sick, and superannuation benefit offered. If a person described the Hearts of Oak Benefit Society, or the Ancient Order of Foresters, or the Oddfellows' as The Ancient Order of General Workers' Union, they would be about as equal in value as a fighting organisation as what the average trade union is to the workers to-day.

In cases of strike by leaving the shop, blacklegs must be prevented from entering, it is sheer stupidity to merely confine our persuasion to the kind used by "passive resisters," energetic measures should be taken, even if they are not quite in accord with the accepted ideas of "law and order." Now-a-days a prolonged strike is doomed beforehand, they have got to be determined, decisive, and short, or they are lost. To give employers from one to three months notice of intention to strike, is giving them just that amount of time to push work forward, lay in supplies, and hunt around for strike-breakers and other shops to get their work finished. Success is only assured by attacking the weak spots, when the boss has a time contract, and will be penalised if work is delayed, when there is a rush of orders, instead of in slack time, and short notice instead of a long notice, and above all concerted action. Therefore the more widespread, the more general the paralysis of trade, the more likely is success. The general strike of an whole industry, of an whole town, and of all industries, is the weapon the workers in France have used so effectively. They have won 83 per cent. of their strikes, while the British workers with their sectional methods win about 20 per cent., and are decreasing at that. The best strike is to strike in the shop, the men all ceasing work at a given time, the machinery left running useless, the men standing at the benches with folded arms until their demands are granted. If this is not successful at the first time, the same policy to be followed at different intervals, just as soon as the management thinks the trouble has blown over. In 1906, in Paris, the Electricians put Paris in darkness at an hour's notice, and very quickly all their demands were granted. Soon after, the Building Workers' were on strike, and the Electricians' again switched off the light to aid their fellow workers. More recently the Electricians' Secretary waited on an hotel manager, and asked for a rise for the men there. As it was not given the lights were switched off, and as a Cabinet Minister was there to dinner the hubbub was great. In less than twenty minutes the Men's Secretary was sent for and the manager promptly agreed to the proposed increase. The following illustrations are taken from the pamphlet "Industrial Unionism," by W. E. Trautmann, General Secretary of the Industrial Workers of the World, America.* A large number of unskilled workers were employed in a machine shop, they wanted an eight hour day and an increase in wages. One morning these hundreds of men were outside the gates, apparently waiting for the "buzzer" to go. The "buzzer" went, but not a man stirred. The manager came out to know what was the matter, and was promptly informed of their demands. He blustered, and telegraphed for police and military, and made arrangements for some professional strike-breakers. As soon as these appeared on the scene the whole of the men went in. After

* Industrial Unionism. W. E. Trautmann. rd.

a day or two, when the police and military and blacklegs had been sent away, the "buzzer" went at the conclusion of the dinner hour, but no labourers went in, and, to cut a long story short, the men pursued this policy persistently, never stopping away from the job long enough to have their places filled or starve themselves, and in the end, tired of the uncertainty and chaos, the "bosses" gave way. This is known as the "irritation strike," and is much used by revolutionary workers. The Russian workers found it of great use in their heroic struggles.

The other instance was of some navvies who had had their pay reduced, and had promptly cut a strip, about an inch to an inch and a half wide, off their shovels, saying "Short pay, short shovels." Then again, where the open strike is not advisable, either in the shop or by leaving it, there are the tactics known to the French workers as "Sabotage." This is a course of systematic "ca-canny" or "miking" supplemented by waste of material, doing faulty work, and having "accidents" with the machinery, until, for economy's sake, the employers give way. The more skilled a workman is, the greater his knowledge of how to spoil work without it being immediately detected and thus blamed to him. Moulders can turn out casts full of bubbles, electricians make faulty insulations or put in weak fuses, carpenters putting in windows need only slacken the sash cord instead of stretching it, and in a week or two another carpenter will have to go and put it right. Shop assistants, by giving full weight and measure and an accurate and truthful description of the goods supplied, can damage trade during the excessive hours that they have to work, and make the employer realise it would be more economical to shut up at a reasonable time than to keep open so long. Numberless devices can be adopted in this guerilla warfare, according to the ingenuity and daring of the individuals concerned. There is also the weapon of the boycott, which the workers can use in their capacity as consumers, and even carry from goods to individuals when wanted, as the Irish peasants do to-day.

An amusing way for the workers to "get their own back" is the "passive strike," that is to simply obey all orders, rules, and regulations to the very letter, and take as long as possible in doing so. Thus most railways, large factories, and mines, have so many rules that they can be made the cause of a general tie-up. Many railways have a rule to the effect, that passengers must purchase their tickets and be on the departure platform at least five minutes before the train is booked to start, and that the porters are to close the barriers at that time. Now let a person living in a large city try to imagine the result if this rule were to be followed by the porters. There would be a considerable number of "cuss" words uttered in that five minutes, and the managers would be bombarded

with letters the next day. The Italian railway workers by using the "passive strike" got all their demands and succeeded in compelling the Government to withdraw all troops that had been put on as strike-breakers. In 1903 the workers on the State railways of Austria and Hungary used the same method, in fact were the originators of the method. It should always be the object of the workers to use such tactics as will throw the bulk of the cost on to the employers instead of bleeding themselves. Naturally tactics will vary according to varying conditions, as there are many methods that can be used in moving towards the object of the revolutionary industrial union movement which is, the overthrow of the capitalist ownership of the means of producing and distributing wealth, and their seizure by the workers in order to inaugurate a

WORKERS' COMMONWEALTH,

wherein all shall labour, and none live on the robbery of others by means of profit, rent, and interest. When the Industrial Unionists are strong enough, that they can paralyze any or all industries by reason of their better method of organisation, they will struggle not merely for a rise here or there, or a little shortening of hours, but for the full produce of their labour. As no capitalist will run his business except for a profit that he makes chiefly out of the unpaid labour of the men he employs, this means in reality a struggle for the possession of the land, machinery and materials wherewith the necessities and luxuries of life are produced. This in short means the complete overthrow of the present existing form of Society, which is governed by and for the interests of the capitalist class. It means the workers will have to reckon with all those Governmental forces with which the capitalists have surrounded themselves, in order to retain their domination over us, the subject class, the workers. The Army, Navy, and Police, are the last arguments our masters use when we come in conflict with them. Our masters are not sufficiently numerous or courageous to fight us down themselves, so have they to rely upon men from the ranks of the workers to do it for them. No matter how patriotic our masters are, as a rule, when actual fighting has to be done, they stay at home and let foolish workers go out to act as bullet stoppers and as food for cannon.

The late Boer War was a good example of this kind of thing. Hundreds of workers allowed themselves to be lashed into a veritable frenzy of patriotism and righteous indignation against the Boers, because the Boers were not anxious to give the Outlanders the vote and make good, loyal, "God save the Queen" Britishers into naturalised citizens of the South African Republic. Well, the workers fought, the South African Republic was annexed, the international capitalists, who pull the strings of government in all

modern "progressive" countries, succeeded in running the gold mines (the real object of the war) without being taxed too high for their liking, and "oppressed" by 8 hours' day laws and other mining regulations to protect the workers there.

But the reward to the workers was to have the white miners displaced for the cheaper yellow and black labour, depressed trade at home immediately after the War, and general unemployment for the volunteers and reservists after they came home. Obviously it is the duty of all conscious workers to carry on an active agitation amongst their fellows, pointing out why they should never voluntarily join these forces that are *never* used in the interests of the worker, but always in trade and civil disputes directly against, as at Belfast, Featherstone, Hull, Grimsby, etc. If, as is extremely likely shortly, compulsory service is introduced, this anti-militarist propaganda will be all the more necessary and effective. On the other hand, the majority of men join the Army and Navy, not from any excessive amount of patriotism—that is, love of their landlords' country, not their own for they have none—but because they prefer the services to being starved through unemployment, or that the average prospect of a worker's life is not sufficiently enticing for them. The uncertainty of employment, the semi-starvation as a result, the continual struggle to make ends meet, the fact of being worn out by all this and then being too old at forty for an employer to engage, are the chief reasons why young men join the Army and Navy.

To-day the average "Tommy" or "Jack" thoroughly detests being brought out in civil disputes, and firing on practically unarmed men with whom they have not the slightest quarrel. As a rule, too, it means women and children are going to be wounded as well, and no man, who is not an absolute cur, likes the thought of that. This is amply proved by Belfast and Featherstone. In the case of Belfast the Government dared not rely on the Royal Irish Constabulary to do its dirty work, and, if the soldiers had fired to kill at Featherstone, many more would have been killed and injured. Our fellow-workers on the Continent, where compulsory service is in vogue, carry on their anti-militarist agitation with good results. In 1907, during a big strike of the wine growers in the South of France, one whole regiment, the 17th regiment of the line, absolutely refused to fire on the strikers, threw down their rifles, and arrested their officers. The splendid unity shown by this regiment was sufficient to frighten the Government from taking extreme measures against them. A few weeks back some 270 Austrian soldiers refused to entrain for the Servian frontier, as they had no cause to go as murderers there. We advocate the military strike and mutiny as a line of conduct for those of the workers who have to join the armed forces.

The increase of highly-complex machinery on the battle-ships and on the heavy guns of the Army, means that more and more mechanics will be wanted in these forces. This means more and more of the members of these forces will be brought into contact with the advocates of revolutionary unionism before they join the services. By impressing upon all union members never to forget that they belong to the working-class, born of working-class parents, with the whole of their relatives and friends in the ranks of the working-class, and that therefore if circumstance force them into the armed forces, they should never fire on strikers, as these men are simply fighting the same battles as they had to when in civil life. That even though they may be drafted from one part of the country to another, or even across the seas, their own relatives have to shift about the country for work, and even emigrate in search of a livelihood, so that it is really unsafe to fire on the workers anywhere, because they may be killing their own relatives and friends, and old companions of the workshop. With these lessons instilled into the workers minds it is not likely that when they are in the army that the troops will slaughter their relatives and friends when ordered to do so.

Considering too, that some curs will no doubt play traitor to their class by remaining "loyal" to our masters for a few extra paltry pence per day, we can gauge to some extent what power they would have if the workers inaugurated a *social general strike* and refused point blank to carry on production unless it was for themselves.

We saw in 1898 that the large strike of the South Wales Miners prevented the production of steam coal, and thus tied up the Naval Manœuvres for that year; naturally, if manœuvres cannot be carried on neither can warfare. Besides which even a few men on a gunboat can disarm it, for all practical purposes, by throwing gun-sights and signal books overboard; such has already happened on three British gunboats recently. The strike of the Postal Workers in France in March, 1909, absolutely paralyzed governmental administration, and M. Clemenceau, the Prime Minister, had to admit that for forty-eight hours he was absolutely out of telegraphic and telephonic communication with the rest of the world, and this in spite of the fact that a large number of telegraphists and electricians had been drawn from the Army and Navy to act as blacklegs and strike-breakers, scabs of the worst description. To the argument that is sometimes used against us that communications could be carried on by the troops running the railways, working the mines, obtaining food supplies making clothes, trying to manufacture arms and explosives, simply means that there would be practically none left to act as

soldiers, and as Arnold Roller points out in his pamphlet* "The Social General Strike," where the troops have to be spread over a wide area there is less likelihood of them being terrified into "loyalty" to our masters by military discipline, as officers could not keep their eyes on them everywhere, and even if afraid to openly mutiny and join up with their fellow wage slaves they could be made easy and willing prisoners, and their arms used for a better purpose than the Government intended.

In short, by organising and agitating along the lines suggested in this pamphlet, everything points to the workers being able to organise themselves in revolutionary unions, that they will be able to declare

THE GENERAL LOCK-OUT OF THE MASTER-CLASS,

and the seizing of the means and instruments of production through their own organisations, and by their own direct action. The unions both national and local can become the centres of a new social system of free men and free women.

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**"THE EMANCIPATION OF THE WORKERS
MUST BE THE WORK OF THE WORKERS THEM-
SELVES."**



*The Social General Strike, by Arnold Roller, Price 2d.

Fellow-Workers.

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wish to assist our Work by joining
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