

# The Bull-Ant

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THE BULL-ANT OFFICE,

WARBURTON'S BUILDINGS,

POST OFFICE PLACE W. MELBOURNE.



### TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION

(Strictly in Advance.)

Per Annum	...	...	£0 13 0
Half Year	...	...	0 6 6
Quarter	...	...	0 3 3

All business communications must be addressed to the Manager Bull-Ant Printing and Publishing Co  
Literary communications to be addressed to the Editor.

The Editor will be glad to receive and carefully consider the literary efforts of young aspirants, and short tales, sketches, pieces of verse, and paragraphs about current events, written in a bright racy style, will always be acceptable.

All unsuitable M.S.S. will be returned when accompanied by a stamped and addressed wrapper.

### ADVERTISEMENTS:

Rates of advertisements will be given on application.

To ensure insertion in the current week's issue, advertisers must forward their orders to reach the office at six o'clock p.m., Wednesday.

### COMMENTS.

The working men of Australia, if they gain no more material advantage from the big struggle in which they are now engaged, will, at least, have learned the extent of the friendship the so-called democratic papers feel towards them. The journals which have boldly and unflinchingly espoused the cause of the strikers, careless of the prejudices of the wealthy advertiser, and the *no-dieum* aristocracy of the community—the section that toils not nor spins, but is always robed in immaculate black and well lined with the fat of the land—could be counted on one hand, if the census taker were to travel the continent over seeking them. The well-to-do class that have professed their righteous horror of the system of boycott, and flouted it as the great pet iniquity of Unionism, are not backward in exerting the principle to work their own ends, as the paper that unreservedly takes sides with labour will soon discover to its cost.

It is not difficult to say which paper, the *Argus* or the *Age*, has been the greater enemy to the men since the inception of the strike. The former has been avowedly and determinedly opposed to the cause of the "lower orders" as becomes its antique conservatism; the men expected nothing better, and could afford to laugh at the journalistic fossil flaunting the political rags of a dead generation; but the *Age* has won a certain credence amongst a rather numerous section of the producing class by the occasional display of a specious liberalism, and an aggra-

vating habit of taking severe fits of democracy and throwing off the head and the gill of ponderous respectability at long intervals, with a diplomatic idea of keeping the confidence of the people. It had power to strike heavily at the cause the men are fighting for, and it has done so—not openly, but in a sly, deceitful way peculiarly its own. Its policy has been that of Job's comforters. Whilst the men were facing the foe, square-shouldered and full of confidence, the *Age* was snivelling over them, and prognosticating disaster. Its aim has been to dishearten the soldiers of toil. All the cunning lies of the masters have obtained ready publicity through the medium of its columns—startled intimations of secession from the ranks, incompetency at head quarters, and general dissatisfaction, have been its daily news. In a miserable, shuffling way it struggles to cloak the uniform of the "Employers' Association" under a sad and soulful sympathy for Unionism, and figures in consequence as a wretched, lachrymal, invertebrate thing deserving only the contempt of both parties.

The employers' manifesto has been read by all who have patriotism enough to be interested in the strike or are affected in the pocket by the struggle, and the people can now judge of the generous and conciliatory attitude of the men who but for the labor of the workers would never have been in a position to say yes or nay to their requests. The manifesto is defiant: the masters, relying upon that abject creature, the blackleg, haughtily arrogate to themselves the right of saying whether or not their employers shall band

together in their own protection. The manifesto of the labor representatives published on Monday utterly confounds the few shallow pretences to argument in the document of the masters, and forcibly reiterates the justice of the claims of the Seamen's Union and the Marine Officers' Association. The Masters, with the besottedness of riches, pook-pook arbitration, the men have fought it all along—not in a spirit of subjection, but uprightly and honorably, confident in the justice of their cause, and hopeful of terminating a struggle that carries misery into many homes.

A Women's Trades' Union is on the tapis, and we wish the movement health and strength. Women workers are in sore need of protection, and with the advantages that men have gained from Unionism constantly before their eyes they would be mad indeed to neglect their opportunities. Without combination the future offers them nothing better than to toil, and struggle, and starve, and every man whose daughters will have to work for their bread or who recognizes the possibility of his leaving a widow with young children to clothe and feed is wanting in the commonest instincts of a father and husband if he neglects to give the movement his encouragement and support. The horrible truths of the working woman's degradation in the old world are not impossible to our civilization here, as the recent sweating disclosures amply demonstrate. Combination is the only preventative now available, and prevention, we know, is better than cure. The workers can trust only to themselves for their salvation. Their unity and strength are their only hopes. Every step in advance has been fiercely resisted in the past—it will be so in the future. The London Dock Laborers struggling up out of the sloughs of starvation, and their heads of gaunt misery were met by the masters with elaborate arguments, and the many hands of monopoly were at their throats as one to choke them back. Capital failed then, but masters all the world over, and the section of the press by which they are represented, proclaimed the cause of the dock owners a righteous one. It will be so right through the chapter. In time those laborers will demand more—they will fight for it, sermons will be preached on the iniquity of their proceedings, well-to-do society will be moved to fury, but the laborers will win. The tendency is upwards: the movement is slow but stubborn; checks may come, but the upheaval of a people is mightier than an avalanche, and with unity, the privileged classes must go down before them or join in with them. Unity is power. Let the people know their strength, and they will insist on their rights. Disunited they are only a strength to their enemies. Whilst labor is down the master is merciless; he resists its demand for bread, even, with ferocious energy. He is a system. You cannot take one master out of the crowd, and say—"You starved that woman to death! you killed that child!" He may be a sufferer himself, but he is the embodiment of a great wrong which in his blindness he struggles to maintain. Thank heaven! the people here have not had to fight their way from the depths known to the poorest of the great cities of Europe. Here the battle is not far trend, but it is none the less for the rights of man and woman. Our women are in the worst plight now: the men have left them behind. This is a disgrace—they must rise together. The women have their remedy at their hands. They will get nothing till they are strong enough to take something. That is the lesson of the past. Let it be combination, then co-operation, the State the landlord, and the glorious possibilities of the future.