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THE WAR ON THE WORKERS

VICTORIAN LABOR COLLEGE
TRADES HALL, MELB

179

L. J. VILLIERS.

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By L. J. VILLIERS

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TRADES HALL, MELB.



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by
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Tramway Employees
Association
and
The Victorian Railways Union.

"Love linked with Labor,
The Hope of the World!"

L.J.V.

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PREFACE.

If by the way, when with a prize in grasp,
A leader's stricken from the workers' war,
The chill upon the hand we parting clasp
Stays not our hearts but stirs them to the core.

So wrote Leon Joseph Villiers, a few years before his own death at the age of 44, in April, 1918. The lines were from a poem to the memory of two Labor leaders, Arthur and Jolley, and in a note the poet says, "In each case death was mainly attributable to strenuous fighting for the cause he represented." It is only with the same words that we can describe the life of L. J. Villiers and its close.

The cause he represented was Labor, but he was not content to take Labor in its narrower sense. He was concerned not only with the immediate world of Labor, but with the Fair Country that is the dream of all who work for the emancipation of Labor. He did his day's work, as other men did. He was in the tramways, and stayed there for 18 years. In addition to that, he was a leader, an organiser, a writer who expressed the workers' point of view, week-in, week-out. Still more, he was a poet, and his thoughts when they were set free rose to other planes of experience. He was a man who lived the lives of three men, and none of the lives was wasted.

In this volume he appears chiefly as the man of affairs; for it is something worth while, the record of a man's ceaseless activity in analysing the vicissitudes of the workers' war around him. When we remember that the articles printed here were written not in leisure but at great speed, after a day's work, followed, perhaps, by propaganda meetings, and that they were written as journalism and not as essays, it is amazing to find what a number of important Labor conceptions they outline. They are the work of a man whose mind moved habitually and easily amid the first principles of his philosophy.

Nothing that he jotted down, whether sober detail or whimsical satire, or human-kindly description, was really at variance with the thought underlying his most transcendental utterance in serious verse.

As for his verse, the most finished and what one may call the most normal of his productions have already been published by some of his friends in book form. That volume, "The Changing Year," containing sonnets and lyrics, is only a few months old. In the present book, the verse is for the most part fragmentary. It seems that in verse he had not yet been able to decide on his own inevitable method of expression. He was still feeling about for a method, but he had his matter ready, he had titles inspiring in themselves, he had lyrical hints and broken melodies. One of his most arresting titles is that of an uncompleted work, "A Song Ship in the Ranges." His subject matter was, as he named one poem, "Songs of Labor and of Love." From that theme he never really departed. He wrote of it sometimes openly, in casual rhymes that he could not wait to make into the brief compact lyrics which he obviously intended. Again he wrote of his theme obscurely, in long poems elaborate as some ritual dance, but with words like these throbbing through the rubric:

Unwrought as sea-foam
Is her scintillant wonder.

It is a poem to celebrate Australia, *Pacis Regina*, the Wattle Queen, who personifies freedom and the healing of nations. These two lines in their beauty might have been written by some aesthetic poet who shunned propaganda as he shunned sin, yet they are in tune with all Villiers' ideals of moral harmony.

Here, then, is a book about Villiers and his ideals, written almost entirely by himself. In one sense it is a casual autobiography, a book of the reflections and recollections of no ordinary man. In another sense it is a Labor manifesto. In either case it is a book for the Democracy of Australia.

CHRISTIAN JOLLIE SMITH.
NETTIE PALMER.

VIII.

The War on the Workers.

Australians resident in Victoria feel something of the war that is being waged on the worker here. While we are shocked to such a pitch of emotion by the convulsive adumbrations of a world-war, that sensation can hardly be made to go further; and while the workers are bearing a superhuman part in the efforts of that war, that is almost beyond credibility here, side by side with the sacrifice of the lower-placed citizen and the stress entailed on the general community dependent on wage-earners or wage-earning, there is a sinister policy of opposition to the workers going on in the press and reflected in the sycophantic hosts of privilege, whose gospel is in the morning diatribes.

It is competent for us to look at this anomalous position. Why is it that now there should be special spleen vented on the worker? Why should there not be something of friendship—a truce to the clamor and claque of distortion that is the familiar weapon employed to keep the worker back, as far as may be, in his march towards his ever-widening portal of enlightenment and its concomitant of the wealth he produces?

We may take it that the clash of fiction, the cry of injustice against the modern worker in his organisation, is not one confined to Australia. But elsewhere in the lands of war there is continual disapproval manifested by the great conscience of the community against the pursuit of the worker at this juncture, and concession and amelioration is the order of the day. Here, then, is one text that leads the organs of public opinion: "Down with the worker!" No matter in what guise emergency compels change of employing conditions to the men and women who are engaged in keeping the wheels of industry constantly delivering to the needs of the day—and the change of circumstances in present conditions represents a decline of about one-third of the employees' benefits—there is a virulent outcry evoked to the four corners of the land

against a granting of anything to the changed position. All sacrifice is the workers'; all profit the right of privilege. Whether it is that flour-handlers notify cormorant-shielding authorities that there is urgent need of a lowered price scale, pending which they will not handle flour for the relegation of cheap food purchasers in other countries; whether it is that men determine, after years of agitation and procrastination, that compatible day work is to be adopted for their craft; whether it is that storemen are shut out in thousands, by means of a boycott on the part of a coterie of callous price-raising merchants; or whatever may be the object in which the workers' claim is brought into public prominence, all is distorted by bias. The goads of malice are thrust into the flesh of enduring workers; the poison of part-truth is sedulously used to embitter the great bulk of the people, who are necessarily dependent on the general press for a summary of the doings of the day.

Why all this most ill-timed local rancor? The reason is fear. Here in Victoria there is a final mustering of the forces of retrogression to stay the advance of the people. Privilege crowds to his last post of defence. Now that stronghold after stronghold has fallen from the hereditary keepers of government, not an opportunity must be lost by the remnant armies of reaction to regain some advantage wherever it may show.

Just now normal influences are out of plumb. Emotion and racial disposition have been inflamed by earthquake horrors, whose seismic terrors have arisen not from subterranean fires, but from the more dreadful flames of human strife. Change is over the earth. Conditions and control of placid years are subject to the unrehearsed revolution of martial needs. Here is the opportunity for the enemy of the worker. Here is the chance for the trembling upholders of privilege to make a stand against the iconoclastic workers, whose feet have marched over citadels of conservatism in frequent victory. And there is no mistake being made.

All the means at the disposal of lucre are made available for the fight. Daily distortion, so obvious and unashamed that in sane moments it would meet with general derision, is now allowed to circulate until it spreads far beyond the

light of refutation. Platitudinous orators, of what in sober hours was openly scorned as ludicrous class cant and treated as the garbage of decaying promulgations of Torydom, now flaunt figures of error and standards of wrong in open and unchecked brazenness. Now we have babbles from the most unstable Brookes lauded and columned to make the worker of this land appear a mendacious robber. Sir Alexander Peacock is lined up to keep a post, and, if possible, make a charge worthy of his scintillant compeer, Sir W. H. Irvine, so that coercion may be installed in this land while so many of its sons are fighting for more solid security of freedom abroad! Henchman Hagelthorn, huckstering for his rural coveys of blacklegs, with railway and other perquisites, is trained to protrude his not too retiring cheeks, with a glib tongue, on such topics as the alleged inefficiency of the local workers, and made to appear a public oracle superior to Mill or Saleeby in the cheap applause of a sycophant circle. And, as a climax, that junta of exploitation, known as the Employers' Federation, is magnified and glorified in diurnal headlines and prosy columns until its voices, that hitherto spoke to emptiness or scorn, are paraded as economic exhalations of great pith and moment. It is all so weak—so pitifully palpable.

And the pity of it lies not in its possibility of momentary success, but in the fact that such puniness could be fostered in our land at all. Has our declension gone so far that the doddering platitudes of half a century ago can be marshalled as powers against us? Are we become so destitute of manhood's virility that retrogression appears as something of vitality, and the scorned jeremiads of forgotten years can be resurrected as convincing factors for our hurt? Here we have our home living conditions bodily attacked. Mercenary hordes brazenly defy us. When we reply by stepping forward to meet the mercenaries, we are called by all the unsavory epithets that a figuring Brookes or a stuttering Hagelthorn can bring from the armory of vindictiveness against workers. The extremity of the times is the retrograde's opportunity.

Already our living standard has deeply depreciated. How far it will fall is not to be seen, but the long-borne efforts of countless men and women in the ranks of Labor

are being hurled backward under cover of the world-war. Labor is not decadent. It is full of vigor—as full of militancy as when the maritime strike ushered the first declared forces of toil into the halls of governmental authority. Never let us delude ourselves that the backward tendency of to-day is because we are growing enfeebled in our cause, or lacking spirit in our counsel.

The patent fact to-day is that the unabated Tory has an opportunity to hold us. Something so far from all anticipation has given him an advantage. And here in Victoria, when the fear of the onmarching worker had sent its enemies into a corner, affrighted lest that last Bastille should be taken—here is the bold stand being made to recover from Labor something of its conquest.

Here may shelter the price-manipulator, serene in the aid of its press mentors and employers' federations. Here arise the spectres of coercion ready to rattle bones of gone reputations at the bidding of the people's ghouls. Now stalk forth the unabating figures of dead years, clothed with the rustling nurse-sheets that, to some extent, once were their shrouds.

It is war on the workers. War and the workers is a general term of to-day, and undeniably the war is being prosecuted by the million-handed sons and daughters of toil. Problems of great concern are thrust on the world. Amongst the general fears of old-time privilege is that of the workers' wider admission to right. Lest the reign of capitalism may be curtailed, already the hands of decadence put forth bony clutches upon what is already granted as the right of the worker—a living wage. Standards raised so steadily are being lowered continually now, and the protests of Labor are placarded as evidence that workers here are against their country—foes of all decency and morality, and utterly unfit to breathe the free air that extends the nostrils of ostentatious but not sacrificing patriots. It is war on the worker already. Nay, it is more; it is a token of the war's effect; the sure indication of what war means to workers in the loss of well-being and reduction of present attainment. The worker must pay. Waste and cost are sure burdens. Payment will be forced by those who batten on secured necessity.

And what is to prevent this war on the worker from treading down workers utterly? There is one hope. Out of the implacable hostility that is being shown by a unified host—howbeit, a doddering one—there is a hope that workers will rally themselves into finer force. It is too late at this day to think that there can be unity between Tory hosts and toil's legions. Toil was, and is, prepared to work with all for the ending of the common martial war. But Toryism has seen, in this amenable attitude of the worker, something of a chance to wage a war within a war. So that the workers be not routed by the foes within their camps, it is imperative that they further strengthen themselves. There must be a stronger and more cohesive power. Organisation is more than ever the passport to fresh advantage, just as small and often disunited unions lead to weakness. Organise our organisations themselves. Get stronger unity, so that workers shall not be cleft, but will cohere and resist the forces that indubitably are now bearing down the outposts that Labor won in the past.

June 29, 1916.

THE AGITATOR.

And now we met: I on the outer fringe
Of moving life of which he was the hinge.
As little leaf was I within the wood,
And he the wind to sway its every mood,
To stir the stagnant atmosphere to wealth
And vigored richness of full-blooded health.
Some ear commands in every field of yellow,
Some songbird sings more sweet than his songfellow,
Some plaintive notes forbid the mind's forgetting
In arid hours of gain and loss and fretting:
And he, rough-nurtured as the millions are,
In crudest mould that shapes a life-long bar,
Won as he stood the yearning crowd among
A murmuring homage kings have seldom wrung.
With voice subjective to a power intense,
And mind a dictionary of teeming sense,
He cavilled at a stolid, dull content,
And told the gospel of enlightenment.

AN OCTOPUS.

Melbourne has seen the last of the M.T. and O. Co. It had a long harvest on the trams of the city, and it never hesitated to make hay while the sun shone. And it forked so much together for such little effort that it would be hard to find a parallel to its prosperity anywhere outside the biggest grabs in Yankeeland. If one could be retrospective, and go back into the days when the cable cars were established, noting the changes that have come over the city during the company's tenure, it would need something of a kaleidoscope to portray the movements of change. The great outcry at the time the scheme for street tramways was before the Victorian public was largely against mechanical vehicles being allowed on public thoroughfares, especially to be driven at a fast rate. At the time the furthest thought of speed was measured by cabs, and at last a nervous public accepted the tram project, assured that the trams would not travel beyond the pace of a cab-horse—estimated at eight miles an hour.

How fearful the people were of change and chance is wofully exemplified in the fact that after building the lines—on their own roadways—and equipping splendid steam power houses with the finest machinery, financing all with public money, the management and general benefit was entrusted to a lumbering company of 'bus proprietors, of whom Melbourne had no special cause to hold a high opinion.

However, this company, which was largely a certain astute Yank, known as "Clapp," fixed up a charter with the Parliament of the day, and in 1888 started the first tram. How kind and considerate the embryo Yankee Grab Co. proved itself is writ very largely on its employees. The terms of the charter made with the complaisant company stipulated that eight hours should constitute a

day's work for those engaged on the trams. This was plain, and it was thought that the provision was secure.

But the company didn't think so. It straightway proceeded to work its men 60 hours a week, and continued doing so for over 20 years.

The first check it got was from the bluff old charlatan Premier, Tom Bent. This was about 10 years ago.

The 60 hours week of the tram men had been well before the public at the previous State election, and a reduction was insisted on by the growing Labor Party. Tommy Bent set himself to fix things. After a fiery denunciation of the company by Frank Anstey, who came into the House straight from the ship that brought him from a trip to England, Parliament was made ashamed utterly of the 60 hours. But there were too many scrip holders in one or other of the Houses to seriously imperil the company. So a tentative plan for 54 hours was adopted as a compromise.

This worked until the Federal powers got a move on the men to form a union—a thing that had hitherto been out of their reach. Then came the long deferred eight hours day, and a couple of years later the Arbitration award, in whose hearing so much time and sensation occurred. The right of unionists to display the badge of their calling was one of the side issues on which great interest was fixed. The finding definitely showed that the wearing of the union badge is the right of a member of a union when at work. But though the case for the men was won in union interests the fact is that even yet there is one tramway system, that of Brisbane, on which a Yankee company is operating, and where no unionist may display a badge or give an indication of his intention of joining a bona fide union. But that is another story.

Now that the company has gone out of the tram business, there is an acute feeling that some consideration should be given to those men who worked for many years at 60 hours a week, and whose service was awarded on a 48-hour week basis.

There is no doubt that a very strong moral right is with these men—those that remain of them—that they should be paid the arrears that is represented in the sum between the terms of 48 and 60. It would be a large sum

certainly. But that would not make the need of meeting so just a claim any less. The tram union was hopeful that a considerable increase of Labor members would be elected to the last State Parliament so that the matter could be thoroughly reviewed in the State House before the end of the company's lease. That hope was not realised. So agitation in political circles is hardly possible or promising when both Houses are comprised of men whose prime interest is with the money side.

But the necessity for consideration compels action of some sort. A large number of the employees on the cars are men who have given long service, and who, in the common course of nature, are rapidly approaching the day when some physical factors will depreciate, and their occupation be gone. The best of their lives has been given to a money-making monopoly, which evaded a Parliamentary charter by working them 12 hours a day virtually for nothing in the way of wages, but a heritage of debility in the way of physical result.

The company is out of the business of car-running certainly. But it is not yet wound up. There are many adjustments to be made, both with the Government and with innumerable financial interests, before the actual undertakings and responsibilities will be closed. Meanwhile the claims of the men who so long toiled without due recompense are not being heard. Should it be so? Should this shekel-raising cormorant company be allowed to take the youth and vitality out of hundreds of men and depart with the depredations untouched? What of the near drawing day when the energy of so many of those men, which was expended for the fortunes of this company, will fail, and there be nothing for the worker but the dole of the stricken?

To give some idea how great must be the sum of profits that the company has been making, it is only necessary to refer to the fact that £200,000 a year was recently offered for the right to continue the lease of the cable roads. Now, on the capital of £480,000—the sum put into the trams by the company—this represents a high interest. To that, however, must be added another sum before we can estimate how much the business was paying. Suppose we assume that 10 per cent. was wanted for

profit. Ten per cent. on £480,000, with the sum before mentioned, shows £240,000 a year. This on less than £500,000. A nice profit for an undertaking registered under the Public Companies Act, which only allows a profit of 10 per cent. on capital, with a bonus of not more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

Surely out of this Eldorado store, the store that has been accumulating until there is an unknown hoard of dimensions we cannot speculate upon unless we risk the ban of exaggeration, there is a measure of recompense to be given to the men whose strength, whose youth and manhood is there. It is not usual to look for sympathy from a public company any more than it is logical to look for bread from a stone, but there is an account to be settled between this particular company and the Parliament of Victoria—the two parties to the charter now drawn to a close. In the final days of adjustment it is surely to be expected that the remnant body of democrats that is in the State Parliament will make itself heard about this matter, so that where legality has failed, a form of special taxation may be introduced to at least ensure the men of the tram company that they are not to be cast aside as outworn and useless. This could be done without a scintilla of injustice to accrued financial rights. Unless some fair compensation is given the time-cast servants of the company, for the life-sapping years they worked, virtually without pay, then the perpetration of an undoubted injustice will be allowed.

July 6, 1916.

VICTORIAN LABOR COLLEGE
TRADES HALL, MELB

OVERLOADING.

Divine authority tells us that man cannot serve two masters. Yet that is what our daily task as conveyors of a travelling public frequently compels of us. We are licensed by the master that controls the streets in which we ply—the City Council—to carry up to a certain number of passengers on the cars. We are paid by another master—the car company's manager—to get the fares of all the people who may, and do, crowd on the cars. So our duties conflict. We are to carry in safety, for the profit of the latter master, all that come along, for which service we obtain a set wage.

True, we are provided with a certain notice to enjoin a most indifferent public that we are "Full. Take next car!" The said public gives us and our placard about as much regard as a citizen of an ant-hill would pay to a finger-post indicating the road to a water hole.

But the consequent profit is not ours. Ours is the added responsibility, the heavier work, the increased nerve rack, and more active pressure all round. We show no gain: we are the losers by the deal.

When the cars, licensed to carry fifty-four passengers, produce revenue from a much larger number, we do not enhance our prospects by one penny piece. We damage them, in fact. By accepting all who struggle on to a foothold, we condone an inefficient service, and so tend to keep our fellows from a livelihood. In this day when "each for all and all for each" is becoming a practised truth, we show ourselves lacking in principle when we do anything that unfairly affects our fellows. On most lines more cars are wanted. They are built. A considerable proportion lie idle almost every day. There is hardly more than one line where the maximum service is attained at ordinary times. Even should there be one

line working its full complement of rolling stock and then failing to cope effectively with the traffic requirements, the management must be blamed.

Surely managerial capacity has not arrived at the dead end of incompetency in any part of the tram system of Melbourne.

To make us, the running staff, accept legal responsibility for overloading while the accruing benefit goes into other channels, is surely so unjust that a simple statement of the position will compel a remedy. It is the present law of both our masters. We neither invite nor encourage excess. We repeat that we lose by it. And now the sword of the law hangs suspended by a thread over our heads every day. Our objection is not to the law—that, no doubt, was framed in wisdom. Our protest is against the threat under which we conduct our necessary vocation. To maintain the law is the duty of every citizen, and we desire to be law abiding. But there's the trouble. Our work is the manipulation of the street cars. They are so devised that while they accommodate a certain number of passengers a greater number frequently finds a lodgment upon them in our despite. We did not design the cars. We were not asked to approve of the regulations. But we surely may claim to be protected in our work. Those that prosper by our risk should ensure us from its cost.

That, then, is our single request. The employer being solely advantaged should bear the full consequences. The onus is unjustly put upon us. Our shoulders should not rightly bear it, though it was placed there by our two masters.

We ask that the first master whose license we carry shall arrange that the second master, whose pecuniary interest we forward, will take the full responsibility that now attaches to us. We want to be free from fear that the odium and costs of the law will not be over us in the pursuit of our calling.

THE WORKING-CLASS.

To us who are accustomed to labor for Labor, the term working-class is, perhaps, generally understood as "the people." To those who use it most it is one of the most unappreciated phrases of casual understanding. They of open Conservatism look upon any form of progressive reasoning as a further invasion of the iconoclastic working-class—the rude, easily agitated, horny-handed and unrefinable beings who can never be admitted to the inner circles where the obsolete is worshipped and privilege is glorified.

Samples of such crass thinking can be seen in every club that caters to exclusiveness, in every adherent of the "good-enough-for-my-father" dogma, in our very institution of law. Our Australian Federal Constitution is a flaming placard of such lack-faith pessimism, and this creed of the bygone has its mentors, chief of whom is the press, "the great dailies of the young Democracy," as the world is taught to regard the Australian general press.

As propagandists we cannot blame these various agencies for their adherence to the cult of retrogression. It is their rightful attitude to espouse the do-naught policy, and to rest content with such progress as obtains—won for the most part in their despite. Our charge is that the workers are themselves capitalists. It is a serious one, because it is levelled at home. If we could believe that the term "working-class" was no longer accepted by workers as a derogatory appellation, but was held as a proud and wholly ennobling description of right-living men by those who are ostensibly of the workers, and who can vote and organise with the workers as workers!

We cannot believe in our immediate advance or special gain while our army, the great host, whose one dependence is continual work, is not at heart imbued with this sole aim of the workers. What general would win a great

conquest if his soldiers were only nominally with him? Not all the guns of Woolwich, not all the ardor of a Nelson, would avail if there was not behind the leader and the arms the strong impulse of faith in the cause that brought the action.

Labor as a creed is an avowed enemy of Capitalism. Labor's champions are quite convinced that the aspirations they hold, the policy they adopt, can never be fully realised while Capitalism endures.

But the highest hope of many working men is that the day will come when they will live on other workers—become Capitalists. The great value that accrues to a people is the value that grows on the lands of the community. The finer the aspirations of the people and the higher the development they attain, the greater is the price that is put on the people's land. Thus, when the workers express themselves as anxious to live by acquiring property, that the rents may make them superior to work, or when they join in speculation that depends for prosperity on the increment that the community brings, how can we believe that the object of Labor is realisable? Before any policy can be fully achieved it must be expressed in the hearts of the people.

Oh, what is the light that is bringing to-day
 The Hope of the World?
 That gleams through the night all the darkness to sway,
 The Hope of the World?
 Oh men, it is Labor! 'Tis Labor and Love,
 That glories the distance with beams from above,
 The light that's to clear all the shadows and prove
 The Hope of the World!
 The Hope of the World,
 The Hope of the World,
 Love linked with Labor,
 The Hope of the World!

—From "What is the Light."

DEEDS OF VALOR.

Australia is proud of her heroes. She exults in the distinction of her sons as mighty men of valor. But proud as she is, she is not surprised. As a mother who keeps a fond maternal eye on the growing youth of her upbringing, she knew that the lads of her family were strong-sinewed for high achievement and indomitable for duty.

She knew that they were not kind to the trapperies and superfluities of conventional get up in proportion as they were determined to might by the living reality for action. The goose step had no charm, but the strong stride to hitherto unscalable heights was sure when the cry "Advance" came insistent to their ears. Australia's sons had little of the training that shows itself in etiquette, but the virility of freedom is a sure sponsor for the impulses of strength in the time of real need.

Nature, the mother, knew her children. She had seen them win their way against the distances of untrod plains. She had watched and hardened them to service in their fights with her in her days of drought. She had developed their hearts of combat in her red moods of fire, when the roar of grass flames or the blue haze of gum smoke tells of the encroachment of a foe who so often destroys the labor of bands of pioneers.

She had seen, too, how they carved their way in another sphere and against an agency more stern than Nature—men.

These sons of Australia had made way to social progress against foes who have held and still hold all other nations in check—foes of poverty, child labor, long hours, illiteracy and degeneration. How far they have advanced in the teeth of a set force of reaction, in the face of the legions

of capital—by the strike, even when starvation, imprisonment or boycott was the immediate result—every step of social amelioration is standing testimony. And in the daily tasks of common toil, how many times and oft have the sons of Australia shown a degree of valor unknown to the heroes of Homer? The records of the mines are gleaming with tales of miners' bravery. In the bush, how frequently is there a story read of some great feat of valor in the everyday doings of battle with giants of the forest?

We hear of deeds of valor and strength so often that they have become almost commonplace; and the simple course of routine life has so many episodes worthy of high chronicling that are never written. When the monarch of our Empire speaks acknowledgments of the deeds of Australia's sons, giving a cross here, a medallion or a ribbon there, we know that it is but the publicity of a tithe of the fine achievements of Australia's men. That they are physically capable of so much is due in great part to the vigor of their lives, the salubrity of their land and the social progress won that enabled them to live and develop somewhat better than the herded workers of other climes. We never wonder, we that are of Australia and have helped to fight for the progress of the community here, we never wonder at the distinctions our fellows gain in the fields of war. We know how vimful our hearts must be at all times to win any advance over the set conditions of workers elsewhere. What we have got we won, even in the face of those who now applaud the continuance abroad of the valor that distinguished Australians in their working advance here. And even as the deeds of Australians abroad win plaudits, so are the efforts of Australians at home maligned and contumaciously reported.

Last week, for instance, a few Victorian wharfmen set out to advantage the people of the State by refusing to handle foodstuffs being consigned away from these shores while the costs here were abnormally high. With the law or prudence of the action we have nothing here to say. The fact of a few men offering themselves as a sacrifice for the good of the community is a Spartan example of fortitude that even the most obsequious of conventionalists,

whose text of life is found in every morning's "Argus," should acknowledge.

But last week also there was a crowning deed of individual valor performed on a railway line in Tasmania. The Launceston and Hobart express met with a fearful accident. One of those catastrophes that seem to visit the works of men with unexplained cause and inexplicable severity.

Driver Goodchild was in charge of the engine. He noticed that the accident had very seriously impaired the boiler of his locomotive, so much so as to make a boiler explosion imminent, and so turn an already fearful accident into an inferno of death and devastation a thousandfold worse.

Shaken and bruised as he had been in the accident, Driver Goodchild made no delay. He knew that every moment was precious. If the great force of steam were not relieved from the strained plates that held it yet in check, an explosion would ensue that would be greater than the burst of the mines of marine war. Climbing to the stranded engine, he turned on a valve to let a great rush of steam escape. To do so he had to take a position that brought the steam over himself.

But what of that? The explosion was prevented. He was scalded to the last inch of skin upon his body, to linger on for a few hours in excruciating agony. He need not have touched that valve. Personally, he was safe. He could have gone away to immunity. Being already hurt, it was perfectly feasible for him to have done so. He was not driven by the pangs of remorse to commit a culminating deed of bravery that would condone a great fault. So far as is known, he had not committed a fault. The accident was not of his making. And his deed was not one impelled by the strong rush of blood that overpowers the sense of men where comrades fall and a foe is rushing on. It was no do-or-die deed that was done by that valorous Tasmanian enginedriver. It was do and die. Die after suffering voluntary torture of almost incredible pains. Is not that action, that deed of sacrifice by a grime-stained worker, a supreme illustration of the

greatness of heart that actuates our men to duty—simple duty, not conventional array? Truly, peace hath her victories, and as truly she has her valors. Was not that deed of valor worthy to stand as the climax of courage and sacrifice? One man, acting in the quiet calmness of full knowledge, and with complete sense of the awfulness he was bringing upon himself, climbed unhesitatingly, simply to do his duty.

However we applaud our medallioned brothers, the sons and comrades of Australian workers, this deed of Driver Goodchild's stands as an example of unparalleled courage even in the days when valor is a tribute cast indiscriminately everywhere.

February 24, 1916.

THE LABOR MOVEMENT.

What Is Its Leader?

What is the Labor Movement? Is it something so adaptable to any individual that it may be contracted into the diminitiveness of one man's personality? Or is it the nation-spread manifest of millions of workers—men and women; a woven epitome of their political plans for the betterment of living and realisation of humanity?

Of course it is the latter. The Labor Movement is too great for any person to be more than a unit of it, even though it may exalt some entity into such prominence that he appears to be clear of the elements that uplifted him, and to be sustained by the vigor of his own ego.

The Movement has taken great strides since the time when the aspirations of its industrial founders appeared in dim visions in the far mists of the unknown. It has sprung into coherent might and has taken hold of the highest offices so long held as the dearest preserves of Privilege. Leaders have brought it where the mass directed. State after State has been as fields of conquest for the on-marching army of Labor; and the continent itself has yielded control to the militant power of the peace-led ranks of Toil.

Such conquests have known many men who were high in authority. So great was the personality of some of these chiefs that brought the Labor Movement along the road of victory, that they were sometimes better known than the Movement itself. Certainly this was so in circles outside the ranks and councils of Labor. J. C. Watson was such a one. His place as a Labor leader, the first Labor man to scale to a Prime Ministership, was one that was often painted as belonging to himself as a personality. He left the leadership of the Movement abruptly—and what happened? It was as though he had not been. Andrew Fisher was installed as political leader. He, too, was paraded in turn as an indispensable personality on which Labor utterly depended for political action, if not existence.

The day dawned when Fisher gave over his leadership. So came William Morris Hughes, the present leader of Labor, and as thus, Prime Minister of Australia. This leader, no more than his predecessors, is the helm of Labor. He is the man at the helm. But the vessel of the Movement is manned by tried and trained experts in such a way that no one helmsman is an indispensable factor to the conduct and existence of the ship. No one knows this better than those within the Movement. The element of the person is subjugated in the Labor vessel to the well-being of the whole.

And now myriad voices are calling "Hughes"! Voices that never sound praises of the Labor Movement exult in the singing of Hughes's name. Hughes is great; Labor is nought. This is a strange contradiction in terms. How can the deputed helmsman of the vessel, doing his work as a skilled entity of the party commissioned to carry the destiny of Australia—how can such a man be all-worthy in his office while the Movement of which he is an integral atom is something to be condemned—if possible, wrecked?

There is only one way by which the leader of the Movement could merit encomiums from those who are ever hostile to the Movement. That way is one dear to the hearts of anti-Labor. It is by the leader forgetting his office, and serving those he was elected to oppose, turning down the Movement itself. This is, no doubt, the desideratum of anti-Labor, and it is very natural tactics that the press clamorers of the day should endeavour to indicate that the Labor leader is a proselyte. Very good tactics. But so obvious that only those who are willing to be deceived would be taken in.

It is evident that the purpose of those opposed to Labor is to defeat Labor's object. The workers are not to be allowed to reap the full result of their toil, nor any greater proportion than will suffice to sustain them, even though they gain political prestige. It is also clear that the Labor Movement cannot be long defeated by frontal attacks. The plan of checking the Movement by inveigling its leaders into renunciation of the ranks is one so natural that any neophyte can follow it.

William Hughes is no neophyte. He has had little actual

experience as leader of the Movement; but as an astute, quick-seeing man, one sensible of guile and quite able to combat it, Mr. Hughes is well proven. He is a man on whom it is vain to spread the net in his sight. But if the tone of the anti-Labor press were a criterion, Mr. Hughes is already netted. His personality has been so paraded, so exulted over, that the four corners of the continent hear of him as of an inspired champion come to the aid of our land in its dire crisis. The Labor Movement is never belauded, its fortunate charge of the country is never hailed in terms other than of fear or calumny, however loud be the syren song hailing the Movement's man. Indeed, Mr. Hughes is most commended when in some fine frenzy he uses words that may be taken as aspersions upon some members in the forward lines of Labor. Then his words, promoted from their context, are paraded as the deliverance of an oracle. The familiar description of parasite used so often and aptly by Mr. Hughes against those who batten on Labor, is applied to some at the furthest end of the poles from capitalists. Who they are the press does not say directly. Neither did Mr. Hughes. But the application is placed by the former on all those who are not ready to follow the pack now in full cry after conscription.

It matters not that Mr. Hughes is Prime Minister merely because he is Labor's leader. Labor has emphasised that *conscription must not be* in this country. Though the general platform did not express the term, recent declarations have been so clear, general, and emphatic, that Labor, industrial and political, cannot possibly be misunderstood on this issue. Yet it is made to appear that Mr. Hughes may adopt it. Labor leaders are Labor entities. The Movement made them and the Movement guides them. An act in direct opposition to the express voice of the Movement would be such a treachery that its committal would be the deed of Labor's foe. Now, all manner of devices are being used to beguile the Labor Prime Minister that conscription is for him to adopt. A willing country and a waiting Parliament will endorse it! Those syren singers of Plute, Sir W. H. Irving and Mr. William Watt, hail the returning Labor Prime Minister as a man after their own heart. They will follow; let him lead!

There is little fear that Mr. Hughes needs inspiration or assistance from these syrens of Torydom. If they sing, he is no Ulysses. He is bound not to their grim mercies, but to the sure safeguard of the Labor Movement. No matter how the key of apostacy may be pitched, it is useless to ask a safe man to throw over his allegiance to principle. Harping on the necessity of the Empire is fashionable where there is a project to hurt the workers. Lip patriotism is a familiar whip for the back of Toil. The relevancy of such a note is doubtful at this juncture, in view of the fact that the most vigorous anti-conscription unions are those who have furnished and are still providing the greatest number of recruits to aid the Empire.

Workers have built the Labor structure in order that their working lives would be more equitably followed than was possible under the regime of other political sections. Having won to power, Labor was in command of the industrial destiny of the whole population. Those who fought Labor every inch of the way were repulsed thoroughly. But they were not subdued. They have set to work to destroy Labor by covert machinations. Conscription became the fetish of these vigilant anti-Labor forces, and patriotism was stalked out to help to down the real saviours of the country—the workers. To introduce conscription here would indeed be a triumph for the foes of the worker. Under it there would be a subjugation of the toiler, such as the most retrogressive Tory never hoped to encompass in this country in its furthest success. So every voice of Capital is crying it: Conscription. From the advertisement-bossed "Bulletin" to the ultra-classy "Argus," the press clamor is raised incessantly: Conscription. Mr. Hughes has been away. He has delivered many orations containing much perfervid wisdom. Some of these utterances are said to have committed the Labor leader to the introduction of conscription in Australia. What he has not said it would be difficult to guess at. But he cannot have given any assurance such as is the fond hope of the forces of Capital—unless he has abandoned his profession of Labor and betrayed the workers, who comprise the Labor Movement. If he did that he would not be a Labor man.

August 10th, 1916.

GOD IN THE MIRE.

Men to raise broad and high
 Walls 'twixt the earth and sky,
 Deep from the surface line,
 Deep from the sunny shine,
 Dig in the soil;
 Weary must days be done
 Ere yet the founding stone
 Stands for their toil.

Men who in vision wrought
 Temples of crowning thought,
 Deep in the soil would turn,
 Dig, and in depths discern
 God in the mire.
 Soon then the walls arise,
 Growing to meet the skies,
 Higher and higher.

Know from the stain of soil,
 Know from the sweat of toil,
 Know from the depths lowhid,
 Dank in the dark amid,
 There lieth strength;
 Thence to the air we build
 Shrines to sunlight filled,
 Standing at length.

'Tis by the serving roots
 Flowers come and filling fruits;
 Deep from the pleasance seen,
 Fields glad with waving green,
 Win all their life.
 While in the dark we tread,
 Near in the way ahead,
 Beauty is rife.

THE UNIONIST AS A CITIZEN.

There is much talk nowadays about the principle of Unionism being overdone. In our Parliament we hear of members lauding some form of Unionism they may have in their minds, but lamenting that Unionists of this day are going too far, and sowing much harm, particularly in respect to the cost of living. We suspect that those who voice the Jeremiah wails about Unionists and profess admiration for Unionism, to a certain extent are conscious or unconscious advocates of that scabrous variety of worker whose advent in a community is an excrescence, one with whom contact is moral vaccination, before one can join ordinary citizens.

Certainly such members have never been conspicuous to aid the establishment of a bona-fide Union, nor have they ever sided with a worker when a question of gaining improvement has been debated. Conservative papers are continually proving the present-time claims of Labor are not conducive to public good. They say by raising the cost of manufacture you simply pass the enhanced expenses on to the consumer, who is mainly the worker, and so the benefit is unreal.

Just how far the argument is sound is worth examination, for the repetition, even of a flagrant falsehood, begets a doubt of the truth. In the first place, there is now no public speaker or organ that denies the value of Unionism; the criticism is solely against some tendency of the Unions. What a great conquest is there! When Conservatism admits that the principle of Unionism is sound, it acknowledges the falseness of itself. Every form of public progress has been brought forth in spite of the ablest energy of Toryism. It showed that shortening hours of labor meant crippling the nation, for by giving the workers more leisure they would spend more time in drunkenness and evils natural to idleness.

Our free and compulsory education was combated for a similar reason. The ordinary laborer's child was not adapted for learning, and to compel its attendance was a waste of time and inducive to moral harm. Only those children of the general worker who showed special proclivity for learning should be catered for, and as the old system did that to a certain degree, we were always assured that it was best to "leave things alone."

The Factories Act, introduced in Victoria about 1900, was condemned in the interests of the workers. To cover wages and hours of work in accordance with Wages Board principle; to restrict or regulate child-workers; to insist upon a trade paying a living rate to its employes, were all good-sounding things, but were sure to hurt the employe because they hurt the employer. The two interests were identical. If the employer suffers, his injury is repeated ten or perhaps a thousandfold, in his employes, and the whole community is the loser.

Well, all these things have been operating over wide areas for a long time, and have the predictions of the opposition been born out? Not in a single case. The shortened day of labor has been in vogue for over 60 years in Australia, and the Australian worker is the most able, moral, temperate, and studious in the world. Education has been free and compulsory for over 40 years, and the cry to-day sounds on shore for more and more. Its value to citizenship is now so well established that every nation is striving to have its community the best educated in the world.

So with Unionism. It is within the memory of some yet amongst us when men were transported, or even hanged, for daring to attempt to form a workers' society for effecting improvements in labor conditions. All along the line, Unionism has fought Conservatism. Conservatism has always declared that the law of supply and demand makes it impossible for the principle of Unionism to conduce to good in the community. Unionists have always stated that theirs is a recognition of obligations that life imposes on each, and fairness renders imperative to all men: To assist one another. It puts into practice the precept of Paul, "Ye are members one of another." By so doing, the status of the citizen is raised. He lives better, and thinks better,

and is better by the influence of fellowship. He cheapens cost by inventing improvements; he increases trade by accelerating needs: he widens knowledge by compelling education, and establishes improvement in morality by showing what is its remedy.

Now, Conservatism admits that Unionism is valuable, and limits its opposition to certain phases which it declares are not true to the principle.

Well, is not that a triumph? To make the crass mind of Torydom acknowledge that its past statements were wrong, that its economics were falsely founded, is a feat worthy to be called a conquest. To heed the jeremiads of such futile reasoners, who, by their present attitude, acknowledge their past weakness, is to be unworthy of the Unionism that won through their despite.

THE MARCH OF LABOR.

Who can watch the march of the worker in the ranks of his trade, behind his banner, beating a rhythm to the strong voices of his band, and not feel exhilarated at the progress of which the march is a vivid illustration? To see the lines go by, minutes drawing to hours, and an unbroken column still swelling along—a titanic army, marshalled for emblem of true advance, and at war only with decadence—is to be lifted into exaltation with the thought of what great good and mighty power is in the hands of the people, to be swayed into heights, according to their purpose and their worth.

A mighty army, without dread; an army of life, not death, is the Army of Labor.

The force that moves the world towards its never-attained goal is there. Peaceful toil, ever militant, ever revolutionary, and ever evolving the days to horizons that extend into newer brightness, where the sun sets and the stars arise, but the night is not a pit of dreadful blackness. Such an army makes itself manifest in that march, coming from bench and mill, desk and counter, wheels and furnace, emblazoned in true pride, and conscious strength

of deeds done, but a world yet to be gained. It is truly a grand force, for, with the consciousness of its might, it moves on in peace to win the world to ways beyond the power of sabres and belching artillery. Its purpose is enduring. Not to gain from loss and suffer loss again, according to the way of martial conquest, but to gain continually, expanding to newer concepts of men's value, and going on further as barrier after barrier is lifted away.

It is no force to be dreaded. None should fear it who have hearts that beat in accord with humanity. It might indeed be said that the pulsing sound of the workers' feet, in their onward march, is the sound of the heartbeats of humanity, invigorated to new life. Certain it is that the tramp, tramp, expresses a clear resolution of earnest goodwill—peace on earth. True peace, not lethargy, not indifference, nor the cowed surrender of stricken weakness. Peace that gives to every man the opportunity to develop his manhood and takes from him the lurking crudities that are flamed by war into devastating repulsiveness. Peace that ensures the equality of citizenship and the fraternity of interests that were the lodestones of this country's pioneer democrats and are the hope of every true heart amongst mankind.

Not less, but more, is our fellow-faith wanted. Not less, but more, are wanted the exertions that won such material gains as are shown in the placed strength of our achievements. And not less, but more, must we endeavor, even though many are weakened momentarily by disappointments at home and hurt by evils abroad. Labor is one everywhere. Let its march of triumph in this outpost of its gains be the stirring signal that none herein are faltering in the high hopes that fruitified in its demonstrated triumphs.

A SONG OF THE PEOPLE.

Wrought by the years and schooled by tutoring ages,
While fell the flourished rule so seeming strong,
Inspiring seers and life-perspective sages,
While passing voices yearned with freedom's song,
Thro' weakness we are winning
To might of Right's beginning,
When blood nor tears shall mark our action's pages.

The lancet probe and Rontgen rays' revealing
Give weighty conquest for regardful eyes;
No Beauty's robe rare beauty is concealing,
And wine is woe, if Ill may analyse.
Tho' knowledge fair is golden,
To love we're more beholden;
We'll link the globe by faith and fellow-feeling.

Let knowledge grow—no wall should compass learning—
Make broad the way lit Reason has to tread;
It must be so to wide the world's discerning,
Where steel-eyed Science scouts in depths ahead.
Tho' Science serve with Reason
To rule the flood and season,
She cannot know high Hope's exaltive yearning.

Let Knowledge serve; she is the elder daughter
Of Love, the lord of omniscient light;
Her pulses nerve—the mammal wooing sought her,
Then forth uprose to scale the Infinite!
But tho' with wonder laden,
She's but the day's handmaiden,
Whose knights deserve, and win o'er land and water.

No sword we bear, but Truth so long corroded
In jewell'd sheath by draped Convention worn.
Not kill, but spare! tho' memory whipped and goaded
With spurn and suffering impotently borne.
Tho' scotch of harm hath wrought us,
Not hate, but love is taught us;
So Labor's share is life with riches loaded.

Man is divine, e'en tho' the primal creature,
Made simian-wise or wallowing in the mire
Of depths condign, grew one with primal Nature
Before the call that raised him high and higher.
He comes thro' test and trial
Till past the world's denial:
Man is divine—the God's in every feature,

LABOR AND LOYALTY.

Many are the expedients used to frighten the people from Labor. We have always the cry of impracticability with us—and Labor in office does more business for the nation than its Governments had even known before. We hear of the depressing effect of shortened hours of toil on industry—and Labor's short day of toil so raises the standard of work done by emancipated Australians till the result of a day's labor per unit in this country is infinitely beyond the output of individuals in any other part of the world. The bogie of moral and physical degeneration was long paraded as a reason why the ideal of Labor should not be pursued. To give men leisure would make them turn their idle hours to drink and profligacy, and the second generation would be tainted with the evil of alcoholism; and so the nation would degenerate!

The lurking poison of present-time Conservatives—Liberals is the word in vogue, but it is too misused to suit a pen working on the lines of truth—is to cast a doubt on the loyalty of Labor. At this time there is more than ordinary meaning in the word "loyalty," and a hint of disloyalty is an easy means of damning any citizen or section. So Labor is disloyal! It is declaimed so in ponderous paragraphs; it is hinted so in news items; and suggestions that certain incidents that occur from time to time are disloyal are always made to infer a point against Labor.

Mr. Brennan's free denunciation of what he saw wrong in certain phases of public action was interpreted as a clear case in point—and so insistently did the clamor sound that Mr. Fisher so far forgot the saving prudence of his nature and the requisite caution of scepticism in regard to press accounts that he actually took action on the press reports.

Mr. Blackburn has lately been censured for a certain statement he made with regard to the condition of workers from war. The censure was from the table of a property coterie of Bumbles; but if its voice was small its echo was resounded with clarion fierceness until what should have been credit was made to appear as most murderous blame.

"The disloyalty of Labor" is a favorite stick with which to beat the people into the ruts of retrogression. Even though Labor plans a scheme of defence for its trust—Australia—and that scheme is adopted and becomes unprecedentedly popular, so that it is the admiration of nations all over the world—still the old rod of Labor disloyalty is applied! When it was proposed to train the growing lads of Australia so that, if need be, the manhood of the nation would know something of the rules of martial working, such press organs as the "Argus" declared that there was danger in the proposal. To adopt it would be to put the arms of the country into the hands of working-men, who would turn them against Capital! It is a very few years since our Melbourne contemporary made that assertion—indeed, it is less than five years since its antipathy to the Labor-created Defence Act was dropped.

The fact of connecting the word disloyal with a Labor organisation in Australia, in the face of what is being done by workers here at the call of country, should be sufficient to show how far from reason, from right, from justice, a press inured to Conservatism can really descend.

The descension is made daily. In order to quell the people in their raving for local freedom, the brazen voices of our retrogressive press blare it by insinuation and unashamed statement every time its sheets are circulated.

The fact that Labor desires to let the people have the right to fully rule themselves is interpreted as proof of disloyalty, because, forsooth, there are extreme occasions for thought in the conduct of war.

Laborites have shown that in general practice they are like unto all other people—their country is their motherland; and, when a war is upon it, theirs is to do or die. But while so vast a proportion of workers is in the hosts that are doing and dying, the great forces that our Capitalistic press organs speak for are waging ruthless war upon those Australians who are yet held to the duty of home. There is nothing disloyal in that! Nothing disloyal that the indispensable food of elemental life should be held and manipulated so that citizens of Australia who are the kindred of her fighters should pay many millions to private tax-gathers if they would live! The sacrifice of the workers in the fight; the patience of those who are yet here is dis-

loyalty. The rapacious seizing and withholding of the staple foods of life here, unless tribute to an unheard-of amount is paid, is loyalty!

1915.

Free men are bound to each,
And in the tie
There's wide result not cramp and cult,
But faith fair as the sky.

LOYALTY.

A famous man once exclaimed: "Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name." If he lived now he would probably change the word "liberty" to "loyalty." Of all the phrases cant loves to roll for his enjoyment, none is exercised so frequently and efficiently. Men everywhere, in companies and organisations, purposed to get all they can for themselves let who will go to the wall, use it as a text of special virtue.

Society has so habituated democracy to the word "loyalty," that he who calls it to his help in public is apt to be taken at a very low valuation by all hearers who can estimate worth by its works.

"Loyalty" as a general term can now be regarded as a cover for duplicity, under which communities are inveigled to their hurt. It is a haven for every politician who would go fast—if, like a crab, he would go backward. It is the final resort of the renegade, who, deserting Progress, unctuously fawns on Reaction. It may be true that the term is often used and accepted in good faith. Is it not an axiom that one fool makes many?

What is more depressing to those who are launched on the ocean of high purpose—those who are earnestly striving to raise the standard of life, that humanity may realise something of the grandeur of itself than to view a seething crowd, excited beyond the possibility of reason, waving flags and bawling staves of a song that is framed as a prayer, but thus used is more akin to a sacrilege? And next day the press will report such a pandemonium as a meeting of special loyal significance, and in columns of pabulum make attempts to show its important effect.

In Victoria one of the most powerful political associations besides Labor has for its motto, "For God and Country." That body invariably supports the monied element. Every influence it casts is for the suppression of Unionism. Since Labor is for the upraising of men, and Unionism is the way, that which hurts these injures the race. "The King" is a term signifying the community—the people. Though there is, of course, a personal monarch, the King we speak of is not so much a single individual as the corporate person—the community. So an institution making its first plank allegiance to the Throne, as does the political association spoken of, and known in all its works as irreconcilably against the people, is such a paradoxical curiosity that it cannot be seriously considered. Were it not that the members are composed of women—who have not long enjoyed the franchise, and may perhaps be excused knowledge on that account—the league would be laughed out of court. Yet that organisation claims special prominence because of its loyalty.

There is another form of loyalty of which many of us have often been more than full. That is the loyalty between employer and employe. How often have we been told that Unionism was disloyal to our employer? For years we heard it; and during those years we know that the loyalty the employer owed the employe was not existing. Loyalty—and a man was thrown on the streets without a minute's notice merely because he ventured to have some opinion distasteful to the palate of his master. Loyalty—and for years he was worked against the moral right of a charter this employer had signed and made his fortune by.

"Fear God and honor the King" is a text of every unionist's faith. If he were not consciously or unconsciously guided by such belief he would probably be outside the pale of unionism. But with him the Deity is not an emblem to be used for the parade of special self-judged fitness for heaven, nor is the King a term to aid the grinding of the people.

We have lately had a surfeit of lip-loyalty. A little opportunity lately came along to injure those who try to work unceasingly for the suppression of evil, and such a great babel of sound arose that it was hard to distinguish an atom of sense or pick a trace of sanity.

Many of us, too, have a keen recollection of the word loyalty being misused in connection with unionism. We have known it to be called loudly by those who were by no means loyal to their fellows.

It has served sophists in our midst to make war upon our principles, to violate our high trust and confidence while keeping our best servers under the odium of suspicion. But we have risen superior to the mockers of our faith, and if we remember the occasion of distrust, it is only to be guided against the deceit of fair-sounding terms.

GOD SAVE THE KING.

(Sonnet)

God save the King! Thou great supernal Guide,
 Leading mankind from depth to eminence,
 To thee we pray in holy reverence,
 The sovereignty to guard, whate'er betide.
 To save is Thy prerogative, allied
 With toil that strives in consummated sense,
 That, highest blessing crown each why and whence,
 As strength and wisdom are for grace applied.
 Make thou the foe his virulence to cease,
 Guard Poverty till Lucre gives increase,
 True worth that wilts speed on with holy wing;
 Shield thou life's monarch—who is every man
 In toil that life perpetuate thy plan,
 Earth-moulded, but divine; God save the King!

SONGS OF LABOR AND OF LOVE.

Sing the worth of every deed
 Planned and toiled, till wholly
 Life has gained a thing of need,
 High or routine lowly,
 Charged with weal and burgeoning wealth,
 Mind and happiness and health,—
 So shall power
 Turn the hour
 For an age love-sceptred solely.

* * * *

Sing in soothe of river song,
 Where the wool-weighed barge is;
 And the dreams that come along
 Where the fey mirage is;
 Of long vigils kept thro' night,
 Shared with solace stars of white,
 While unstirred
 Lies the herd
 Folded where the shadow's marge is.

Of the whirring sound of wheels,
 Speeding quick and quicker,
 As the Mail with firebreath reels,
 Where the lone lights flicker,
 Of dim stations wide between,
 Brief illumining the scene,
 Like a star
 Falling far,
 Dying where mist-dark grows thicker.

Sing the strength of men who band
 For high purpose common,
 To ensure thro' every land,
 Unto all that's human,
 Peace by pass of regnant ill;
 Never wearying to instil
 Fellow faith,
 Till love hath
 Made of each a strong and true man.

Love's a coin that's never spent
 When with Labor blended,
 Not a glittering ornament,
 But for wealth intended.
 It is never made of gold,
 But is of an earthly mould;
 It is free
 All can be
 Raised by it to creatures splendid!

THE LABOR GOVERNMENT AND THE LABOR PRESS.

The Sydney "Worker" has given the Federal Government notice that it can't follow it any further in its course of anti-Labor. One can imagine how the slashing editor of the "Worker" must have been driven by the political "heads" of the A.W.U. to have followed the Government so far. Time was when this strong organ of democracy would have been vigorous to show how futile was this Federal Labor Government to carry out the purpose and platform of Labor. The pen of Boote would have been a journalistic javelin, piercing into the opportunism and Toryism that now shows itself through the hides of so many of the Labor Ministerialists.

After all is said and done, perhaps the fall from grace of Labor in office, with notable exceptions—Queensland's State triers, for instance—is attributable to Labor having the government of the people before the people are really shaped for the advance that Labor means; and, while there is no medium between the people and advance, some of the leading spirits of the movement are ready as may be for any stride the programme allows. Others—and these are the millions whose vote brings Labor into office—see very little difference in the candidates, and vote to-day for Labor, to-morrow for anti-Labor. These are the votes to be wooed. And, having placed Labor in office, the men of fortuitous emoluments see to it that, as far as possible, they will stay there.

To make a Labor Government conform to the standards of Labor, it is necessary to have something more than mere members in the House. You want a driving force behind the members. Not merely a driving force, such as obtains in the few leagues and militant trade's councils. You must have a power behind your Labor Government that will bring the points of vantage of such Government always before the people at their breakfast-tables. You don't expect that an ordinary citizen, suddenly invested with many hundreds a year income, is going to turn himself into a sacrifice. Principle? Pooh! He was elected by the majority, he tells

you, and he will serve the majority. If any persevering militants bother him he will soon give them the information that they are not the great body of the people.

See how he will distend his chest, and show how already flatulence has marked him for its own. How can you expect such a favored son of fortune to make a sacrifice of himself? Parliaments are not altars; they are havens of rest.

If you want a Government to be as good as its promises, you must have a sleepless power always working by the force of public opinion. Give us a Government made up of members who are dependent on a public that is educated in politics by a press wholly hostile, and sooner or later that Government becomes meaningless.

If you want your energies reproduced by the elected gentlemen now extending themselves in nothingness, you must put forth more energy yourself to keep more of these liege people energised for right action.

Why fulminate against the Government? You are beaten very soon if you have no consistent and persistent voice ever propagating the claims of advance. The press is the living fire of modern society. Public opinion is largely press opinion phonographed. Even if the inner consciousness of men tells them that certain courses are not as they should be, the constant reiteration of the great newspapers overcomes the fears and impulses that are true guides of humanity.

The moral of all this is to start a new campaign for a democratic daily press. The men we have elected would do our will all right, if they dared. What stops them is the fear that the public is working against their plans. So, holus bolus, conversion comes. Expediency is the master of many men.

Let us do our turn in conversion. Convert not ourselves, but the great body of the people, who are actually in sympathy with us, but who are turned so readily by the insistent activity of the press of Capital. We have a case for presentment every day. We have a cause that is the people's. Can we not give the people a presentment of their case each day, and make our cause understood and our case—and theirs—successful?

February 10th, 1916.

THE CHURCH AND THE WORKERS.

This is one of the great questions of the day. Perhaps it is because of the many lights centred upon it, the question is yet obscured—dazed by brilliance.

Certainly there is an impression that the Church is not with the workers. That cannot be the truth, though some members—it may be leaders—of differing sects declare themselves against the march of Labor, and step forward with dubious force to oppose it.

Such declaration is a warrant that they are of the Pharisees and money-changers—not the Church, whose Founder we, as workers, take for guide and example, and whose teachings we are endeavouring to incorporate into everyday life.

One of the readiest forces wielded against the workers in the fight to free life from the shackles of Capitalism is internal jealousy. That is accomplished by playing the sects or divisions of the Christian Church against each other. It is the common rallying-cry of reaction, known as Sectarianism.

In every country where Labor has risen to stride ahead for humanity's emancipation, it is opposed by this hydra-headed monster. In Germany, where education has shown the widest influence, expressed by the tremendous force of the workers elected to Parliament, it is the constituted Church party, known as the Centre, that has frequently saved the Government from domination by the workers' power. It is so, too, in Italy and France. In Russia, the official Church is the political agent for almost all the degeneracy of that mighty nation.

To leave nations afar off and view the happenings of our own land, one is not inspired with high grace towards all our clerical teachers and guides. It is granted that the press aids the least occasion to disparage Labor. A press paragraph is an excellent fan for the smouldering embers of sectarianism. While splendid service is rendered the people in their cause by numerous noble-hearted, self-sacrificing and masterful clergy and laymen, the publicity given shallow utterances of feeble pulpiteers serves to foster the divisions

that rankle in so many campaigns, retarding so many fights where success is within view, so that the law of Christ may be embodied to a greater extent in the works of the world.

As the voice of a considerable portion of workers, we do not hesitate to speak on such a debatable question. Our definite: We are with the Church, but it must be a Church whose creed is expressed in the Lord's Prayer. If that prayer is not a mere string of pleasing sentences, then the creed of Labor is the doctrine of God. How, then, can sectarianism be logically used to our injury?

We care not in what form a man may worship—that is largely a matter of inheritance. It is not the form, but the substance, that concerns us. It is the faith we live, not the forms we declare, that counts. So long as we are animated by the impulse of fellowship—so long as our actions prove that we are inspired by the gospel of fellow-faith, earnestly to forward every energy for advance—so long do we know that our creed is good, and care not under what forms we may bow to the Creator of all good—the common Father. That there will be a difference in detail is not a great matter, so long as the essential is not clouded.

The Church, if it be the Church of God, cannot be against the worker. Wherever workers are striving for general betterment, there is a living Church in action. If the Church be the Church of Mammon, its attitude, naturally, is opposed to all forms of common good, consequently it is anti-Labor. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." That text sometimes helps to keep the worker outside the walls of a church; it sometimes serves, also, to prove to the humble that those within it are not of his life.

We do not attack the need of Church teachers of high ministering for best development. "Is not the life more than meat and the body than raiment?"

We need continual help of finer minds in our battle for the material progress of life. We are striving all the while for the realisation of the utmost that man may know of worth. To discountenance fine teachings that stir the inner consciousness of our hearts to the unrevealed heights of brightest thought is not our purpose. That would be boorishness, only fit for a stock exchange. The annals of man who, while laboring in humblest guise, has risen to the fairest altitudes that humanity knows in every realm of advance, are proof that we do value wisdom and understanding.

CAPITAL AND LABOR.

This is one of the commonest terms of the day. In whatever company you find yourself the phrase is sure to appear. The most fossilised Conservative will excuse his opposition to the need around him, and air his sympathy with those he hurts by saying, "Yes; I believe in Labor getting a fair share, but Capital must have a fair share also." All along the line, wherever thought expresses itself—in churches, societies, newspapers, and on various platforms—attempts are made to adjust the proper quantity that Labor should take, and allot Capital its rightful portion. The two are accepted as necessary factors for the maintenance of man: each worthy of his hire.

Capital is generally represented as the governing, Labor as the servient body. "We must have Capital or there is no Labor." "If Labor demands too much, Capital grows timid and will not operate, so Labor loses all." These are the platitudes of every Liberal, and the beliefs of many, even of those who support Labor in its political sphere.

Yet the term is a fallacy. Its general acceptance goes to prove that you have only to persevere with a statement and make it broadcast to find it admitted, however far it is from fact.

Capital and Labor are not two forces; they are one. Labor is action that men put forth to aid Nature's productive power: the outcome is Capital. We may say that Capital must supply the means for development before Labor can use its force. Not so again. The whole of all development is—Work. The grandest ship, the noblest building, the most involved machinery; every plate and rivet, every girder and stone, every wheel and lever, has been resolved from the crude forms of Nature, and been made of value by living Labor.

If all the shares of all the brokers, all the traffickers in paper bills, all the trucking and plotting that are the itinerary of Capital, ceased, or never were, Labor, as a creative force, would not be affected. All the high values of property in any form are not made by Capital, but life.

Capital is an extraneous institution. It lives on, not for or by, Labor. When Labor realises its position and power, and goes without it, we will wonder why Capital was ever allowed to be.

Of course, Capital is not necessarily money. Capital in modern life is an assessment or estimate of value that may be made by the effort of communities, to be enjoyed by those who did not produce it. Every movement that Capital helps could be better attended to by the community acting together and taking the risks and rewards. If the venture is unsuccessful, the community is the sufferer now, though it has not commensurate benefit by prosperity.

If the community that makes the value decides to keep it for its own good, there is an end to present-day Capitalism. Money is an excellent means of exchange, and while it is used so it is not Capital. As a matter of common knowledge, there are half-a-dozen families in America reputed to be drawing incomes from a larger amount of Capital than exists in actual money in the whole American community of 90 millions of people. Yet all the millions pay tribute to those few.

Capital is a recent invention. A very few centuries ago it was unknown. There is not one amongst the world's greatest teachers commend the principles that make reward without effort—usury.

Christ, Moses, Paul, Confucius, Plato, Mahomet—every one of the mightiest of man's teachers—condemn the practices that are the life of Capital. Each teaches the good of Labor and the value of effort, single and communal.

Labor is the might that makes all the usages of our existence. The planning, managing, and working of the facilities of Nature are the means of all the added wealth the world knows. Yet they who are not lilies—toil not, neither do they spin—hold the wealth of the world.

The great function of our most advanced law is to weigh the portion that Labor should receive and leave Capital in possession of "its own." To suggest that Justice needs no scales in this matter is to run the risk of being regarded as a highly dangerous demagogue or harmless lunatic, according to the notice such a doctrine may receive. Yet it is a truth as sound as Truth itself.

HOW FAR CAN PRODUCTION BE STRAINED?

This is not a dissertation for conscription of wealth. Our political leaders have apparently decided that wealth is not to be conscribed, however equitable it may now be in incidence or necessary to a fair adjustment of service.

It seems of little use to belabor the question in the face of the stolid antipathy of those who alone can bring the need into effect, as in many aspects of current thought there is less inclination evinced in Australia's Government to touch the perquisites of wealth than in other countries, where Labor is not even nominally ruling.

Perhaps this sacrosanct attitude of Labor towards wealth is the expression of the intruder into sacred domains, or it may be an excess of politeness. Having obtruded into the places of privilege, the truly gentlemanly newcomers are fearful lest they appear offensive to former holders. This super-courtesy may be very well received by the people who were not responsible for the intrusion of Labor into such exalted and exclusive circles. But it is not kindly taken by those whose efforts were strained so that the change came about. Strained courtesy fits worse than no courtesy.

To those outsiders it is hard to reconcile the mild and urbane attitude of Labor in office to the energetic and iconoclastic mind of Labor out of office. There seems to be an ocean of difference between the two. And the difference is all the more remarkable on comparing the work of this Labor Ministry to the performance of the former Labor regime. It is clear that the present failure is not due to the vain whims of impossible visionaries. However, that is for another occasion. Criticism of general policy is easy, and floods of it will inevitably be loosed on the heads of our Labor Ministers in due time. No! Not a word is here to conscribe wealth. We are like our elected leaders now, far too polite to hint of such a harsh measure of equity on the long-suffering rights of privilege. What we would dutifully inquire is: Are our political masters quite sure

that the relation of wealth—production—is so founded? So far we have stood the undue claims upon our workers very well. If production has not kept pace with demand during the last two years, we are willing to ascribe much of the shortage to other causes than war. But even such excuse does not overtake the shortage.

There is already a vast amount of wealth, tangible or material, over our needs. The flotation of bank notes is now somewhere near fifty millions. When it was less than a fifth of that sum such respectable economists—the adjective is used more in chivalry than respect—as the "Argus" insisted that the danger zone was crossed, and that further incursions into the field of paper flotation were only steps into insolvency.

It is unpleasant to recall the criticism of such good friends as the "Argus" circle is to the Government now, but our memory is not so amenable as our manners—and, besides, we are outsiders. But if we must be self-contained, producing wealth in as great ratio as consumption or obligations need, how can we expect that conscription is not going to hurt us vitally? Our wealth producers are of our own land. We are not an investing community, drawing interest from the undertakings of other countries. We have our primary industries, mines and general manufactories only for our wealth. It is all local. Apart from the commitments of war, Australia owes something like £300,000,000 at various rates of interest that has to be paid yearly. Of course, we never believed the economic principles of our critic, the "Argus," but we are not prepared to give carte blanche to the flotation principle, and at the same time cut deeply into our productive resources by curtailing the supply of producers, as well as reducing our exporting facilities for surplus lines. As things were going in peace time, the Commonwealth Note Issue was a very fine thing to take a part in, although some of the ladies of the league, calling themselves National, dubbed "Fisher's flimsies" as something too valueless to pay for the washing of their poodles.

The Labor press never did, and will not do so now. Unless there is a policy of waste allied to a policy of non-production, there is not much fear that the Government paper money will greatly deteriorate in value, or that its

solvency will be questioned. But war does hurt production; and it does induce waste. No matter how economic principles are applied, both of these disparities are inevitable to war.

And assuredly some of the heavy cost of living essentials in Australia are due to the operations of these factors of waste and reduced productive power.

It has always been noted that war-organised countries are poorer individually than those lands where production is not seriously checked by martial exigence. Even in such a land as France, where the people are diligent and skilled in husbandry, and patient in toil beyond anything we know of in Australia, and where the soil and climate are both much better than England's, the wealth per inhabitant is far below that of Britain's.

The three countries with a very high value of production value per inhabitant are Great Britain, America, and Australia.

How much of England's power is due to the preponderance of her wealth is not easily calculated. That her naval supremacy is almost entirely attributable to that economic advantage is generally allowed. And her power of wealth is, and has been, a remarkable source of strength to her Allies. Her freedom, the freedom of which we sing, and, more effectively still just now, for which so many of us are fighting, has been founded on a non-military nationhood. True, she has accepted a measure of national service, but before doing so she financed herself and other countries to the extent of billions of money.

England, however, has one material financial advantage over Australia. While Australia is compelled to raise about £15,000,000 a year interest money and send it away from her shores, England is continually drawing fabulous amounts from other lands for investments and securities placed there.

To introduce a measure that would more seriously affect Australia's productive power is a matter that would have consequences that may not have been contemplated by our Federal authorities. We have not great faith in the guardianship of the "Argus" school in this crisis, or any other. It is significant that, while such critics strained at a gnat

during the regime of the efficient Fisher Administration, they are swallowing a camel now that a Hughes Ministry is on the benches. Export was high during most of the time of the Fisher Administration, and wealth production was at its topmost rate. Now export is very much below the normal condition, and local production is by no means at a high standard. Does not all this need earnest consideration? The voluntary system of enrolment is not of so serious a nature, for, even if as many men offer for service, there has usually been some form of arrangement made with the interests they have been connected with, so that there is not cessation of work or disruption of the value of the production of which they were the instruments.

South Africa and Canada—the other two of the great trinity of British Dominions—are governed by a political section synchronising with our Liberal party. It is unnecessary to say that they are fully as patriotic as Australia, and fully as well informed as to the Empire's position in the war.

Is it too late to emphasise that the complete duty of the Australian Government is to review all the effects so far as they may be seen by ordinary observers before the wealth-reducing forces are applied to this land? Labor does not regard itself as greater than the nation. Laborites are ready, much as they love the movement, to abrogate all present objects, so that no essential harm come over the land. It is not unlikely that the Labor movement is so greatly detested by those present friends of the Labor Government. The hatred that Torydom has for the real Labor cause is so implacable that many of the Fusionists would even imperil the soundness of this country, if, by so doing, they wrecked the movement of Labor.

August 31st, 1916.

CHERRY - RIPE.

Dark-red and round and luscious they are to-day in their bounty. The street reveals them in tons—barrows (where civic bumbledom permits) are ranked with their fulness; windows show their piles, and myriad bags are rustled into a circle for the gratification of a fruit-hungry pleasure. Plenty and prime is the mark of the season—but not cheapness. They are not cheap. Fruit this summer is abundant; cherries are the first manifestation of the bounty; but there is a mark on every show of the luscious splendor almost as prohibitive to the stinted purse as when a drought had stricken the year.

Supply and demand are the rules of infallible Nature in business! Ay, ay, we hear that story, but we scarcely see proof of it. When fruit is scarce it is dear—it was last year; we all remember. It is plentiful this year—and still it is dear. What has Supply and Demand done now? What evil influence is greater than infallible Nature? It is surely some factor of wondrous power that can at once thwart the people in their longing for a feast where plenty is, and falsify the savants of Conservatism who are so ready to convince us at all times of the immutability of the natural order to our supplies and prices.

Nature this year has eclipsed herself in prodigality. As though she repented of her meanness of last summer, now she loads the trees with fruit, and presses down the cornstalks with the weight of ears. Last year the law of Supply and Demand ran true—at least, prices rose to a famine pitch when supplies were low. This year Nature has made amends—and do we find a swing of the market accordingly? Hardly. The price of fruit is 100 per cent. above normal this season, taking the average price of the last 15 years, excepting last year. Cherries are not readily exportable. There is a brief day for that harvest, and a narrow compass for its distribution. Cherries are like a compound of dew and sunlight made

luscious for a moment and plentiful only when sun and moisture wed in right harmony. If they abound they should be cheap. And here to-day in Victoria there is a pageant of them—behind barriers. This year, as we see everywhere in our cities, the harvest of the gardens is most bountiful. Then why does not the "immutable" law of Supply and Demand keep in step with the prosperous step of production?

It is all very well to blame the war. A mighty scape-goat the great war is, but it is not to the overwhelming scourge of war that the present prohibitive fruit prices can be attributed. Cherries, at least, are not largely used for canning—jam and preserves are not open ways for cherry gluts. If there is a marked surplus of that fruit, then there should be a correspondingly depressed market, for it does not lend itself to far-off distribution.

How we have regaled ourselves in fancy with the fruit feasts of this season! How we were to compensate the family for the dread abstinence of last year! And now the fruit is here—the abundance is on view, but the feast is only a vision. With a shilling we thought to fill a paper bag so that a bulged parcel would be hailed by the watchers at home, but the expectations of the family are not fulfilled. When the purchase is unpocketed, it is very small. A shilling bought so little that we still think of last year's drought. It is remarkable that so passing a commodity as cherries—one so restricted to locality of production for its consumption—should be hoisted up to the edge of famine prices at this prolific season.

It certainly seems a flagrant act of exploitation somewhere. It is not by the workers, for the cost of labor in regard to picking and marketing fruit this year is certainly not abnormal. As one with long farming experience, the writer knows that a case of fruit can be picked this year at a much lower cost than usual. The fruit clusters so thickly on the boughs that a picker can fill his vessel in quick time. Last year the reverse was the case. The fruit was so scarce that most of the time of the harvester was not spent in gathering the yield, but in finding it. The cost of picking the sparse fruit of last year, pound for pound, would be much greater than this. Certainly Supply and Demand ought to operate there again

to the advantage of the buyer. Why don't it? The grower is not grudging a good price, but there is not need that there should be extortion of the public in order that reasonable prices be given the grower. We all know that it is not the man who produces the fresh fruits that takes the toll from the people who pay so high for the privilege of using his wares. It is not the worker who hoists up the market. There is another power—the non-worker. There is the force of harm. Just who the constituents of that force may be in Melbourne it is difficult to say. But the very fact of high rates where there is such a lavish production of local foodstuff is sufficient testimony of that force.

We hear a good deal of our duty now. And, for the most part, the people do not cavil at the call of duty. But how bitter it is to feel the screw of harpy working influence upon us right in the midst of our common cause for service as citizens! And how sinister it is to feel the impotence we suffer under to remedy the ill of price-manipulation. What can we do? Simply suffer, it seems. Suffer in scarcity; suffer in plenty; suffer and make rich a few who are pulling the levers of price in scarcity and abundance alike. What can we do? We pride ourselves on our sense of liberty; we glory in our strength for a fight for freedom. Yet here we submit to be kept from the bounty of our production unless we pay heavy tribute to some unseen and unproductive force that is battening and growing more obese daily.

We submit. More. When a little effort is about to be put forth to quell such unwonted elements as now distend themselves upon us, we passively cry: "Not now."

Lest some of the band of rooks should be disturbed by our appeal to make the people the arbiters of themselves, we allow the representatives of the said rooks to beguile us with croakings about improper time or some such temporising platitudes. Then we go right on as before, suffering and submitting—helpless as the sheep in the picture of "Anguish."

What people are we to talk of freedom? Of what advantage is the bounty of Nature to us?

SEASON'S RHAPSODIES.

The summer's in power, far away is the night—
 (Green peas and noo pitaters!)
 And earth is a gleam with beneficent light—
 (E-ya-ah! rubob a penny!)
 The creepers festooning each portal and casement
 Lend foliage fair to the stucco effacement
 And temper brick-red from the roof to the basement—
 (Cabbidges and corliffowers!)

The world's an arena for young zephyrs' play—
 (Wile rabbey; wile rabbeys!)
 The sky is obsessed with itself in the bay—
 (Barrycouter! Barrycouth!)
 The bee robs the bud for his saccharine ration,
 The fruit petals rain for the young fruits to fashion:
 Arise, O my soul, 'tis the heyday of passion—
 (Oysters, three dozen a bob!)

Ensconced now, al fresco, in Bush haven's calm
 (The ants are in my socks)
 The breeze softly circles with life-breathing balm
 (Oh, these infernal flies!)
 How fine 'tis to ponder where grass like a mat is,
 As sunbeams enthrall through the branch-making lattice,
 How dear is old Nature, how lovely and *gratis*—
 (Some dogs have shook the lunch!)

THE LIVING WAGE.

Pushing a Stone Uphill.

Does the "living wage" mean continual advance in cost of production? If it does, then the principle is a false and unrealisable hope that Labor has held. It seems so to-day, if one regards superficially the conditions arising out of the efforts put forward by workers to obtain a minimum wage in proportion to living needs. If the aspect to-day is true, then it is time leaders of Labor gave over their exertion to obtain for workers fixed standards of wages according to evidence given in a tribunal of Justice, for all that is now necessary to defeat the law is to change the conditions on which allotments were based.

It is as well to say at the outset that a living wage never was the ultimate end of industrial agitation. It was put forward as a principle of humanity that those who did the work of the world should get at least sufficient to keep them as citizens while they were employed. The goal of the worker is not merely a "living wage"; it is the product of the work he does.

The living wage principle was a step towards the goal. And as a principle it was so sound that it was accepted almost unquestioned in this country.

Those that opposed it did so timorously, declaring that some industries might not be able to stand the impost that living costs would amount to. Even these objectors were silenced by the general acceptance of the principle that an industry that could not pay those who worked it a fair wage was not worth a community's retention.

Conditions, nowadays, have so changed by high living costs that many industries are indeed stricken hard to keep up a commensurate wage. The day has come, say the opponents of Labor, that the living-wage principle is breaking down. It was only a Sisyphus load. The agitators who incited the workers to clamor for it may not have known that they were only rolling a huge stone up a steep hill, and with every step it would fall back on them.

That is what has happened—and what anti-Labor declared must happen.

And in this case anti-Labor was right—while the guidance of our community is along anti-Labor roads. There is the difficulty. The job of the living-wage emancipationist is a job for a Hercules, while the Augean loads of private monopoly and anti-social competition are pouring on the people. The one way to cleanse the stable of its ever-recurring accumulations is to turn a river through it—the river of public control. Take the job as Hercules took his, and cease crying about the inefficiency of ourselves to rid ourselves of a long-heaped-up system of injustice.

If we really intend that the people shall be able to fully enjoy their work by living as clean and wholesome citizens from the reward of their work, then we will have to see to it that each penny or shilling we add to the wage allotment is an addition in value. It is naturally the opposite now. And it is natural that it should be—as society is constructed to-day.

If we make the wage circulation greater by 10 per cent. we at once raise the values of land, rent and stable charges by that amount. If a hundred people spent £200 a week to procure living essentials ten years ago, and those same hundred now spend £300 a week in the same endeavor, what do we invariably find? The places they traded in have grown more palatial; the ground they tread over in their rush for bargains has advanced many pounds a foot, and everywhere the stone that they try to push up the hill is falling backward upon them. There is a rush of competition locally and unseen, but inexorable; there is a crush of Monopoly at the head.

It is absurd to expect anything else while present principles of society are adhered to. Just as absurd as to expect that the law of gravity would cease to operate on the Sisyphus stone when that burdened worker took his fainting rest.

Is it only possible to make improvement by bringing about a complete revolution? The answer is the epitaph of George Reid. Yes; before we can fully realise the aspirations of Labor a complete revolution from the ways of waste and war in social living must come. No; workers

HISTORY OF THE EIGHT HOURS' DAY.

The first trade union to be established in Australia was the "Operative Masons' Society," which came into being in Melbourne in 1850.

The principal duty it set itself was to reduce the hours worked, which were something similar to what prevailed in England.

After a year or two the agitation took definite shape, and a straight-out fight was made for an eight-hours' day, which had, however, been adopted in 1848, in Otago, N.Z. It was a town association in Otago that pioneered the New Zealand movement, and thus instituted the great reform of industrialism which has been so widely followed by forces of workers throughout Australia, and which is now being extensively copied throughout America and elsewhere.

In New South Wales the first eight hours' day was won in 1855, after a strike; but there was very little development in the movement until 1871, in which year four trade unions held the first Eight Hours' demonstration in Sydney.

In Victoria the first Eight Hours' procession was held in 1856. Six unions—the masons', bricklayers', carpenters and joiners', plasterers', painters', and slaters'—taking part. The next year saw three more unions in, and about 700 men marched in the procession. From that time the Eight Hours' principle has been recognised in Victoria, and new unions made it a feature of their obligations.

Queensland was slower to get a start, and it was not till 1866 that an Eight Hours' demonstration was held in Brisbane. It was the masons that pioneered the movement in Queensland, as in Victoria.

South Australia came in later again. The building trades combined there in the first demonstration in 1873.

Until the goldfields brought a rush of men to West Australia, in 1896, unions and eight hours were little

known there. The great change came then, however, and from being the slow, decadent spot in the South, West Australia got going industrially, and has since been the most forward of all Australian States.

Trades unions started in Tasmania in 1874. In that year the shipwrights of Hobart pioneered the movement, but they were not able to obtain the eight hours' boon for many a long day. It was not until several other callings had formed unions, and a straight-out fight ensued in the form of a strike, that the shorter day of labor was adopted in the Apple Island. The first Tasmanian Eight Hours' demonstration was held in 1890.

While the eight hours' system is so popular, and its working has proved so admirable, it is a fact that not even to-day is there a State in Australia where the system is universally in operation.

No State, not even New South Wales, has eight hours on the Statute-book, although that form of legislation was given 20 years ago in New Zealand, and works well, even in farming pursuits.

Of course, the principle of eight hours is recognised by law in Australia. Both the Wages Boards and the Arbitration Court incorporates it in their findings, but no State Government or leader has had the temerity to rise to the democratic height of Seddon in New Zealand.

The consequence is that the system is by no means general in the working of the various undertakings in Australia. The industry of tram working has generally adopted it, but the eight hours' day came into the tram calling only in very recent years. Even yet, the system is not strictly in vogue, for in our charter with the Arbitration Court some of the agreements only allow over-time after nine hours have been worked.

There is a long way to go before the full value of advance is secured by all, although we do rejoice in the annual demonstration of our Eight Hours' Movement, and take part in it with a feeling of pride.

AS IT WAS.

They had been to a presentation night. A delegate had received a recognition of his service from his comrades, and old Bill and Harry were warmed up to exchange reminiscences, after the manner of patriarchs, since Adam told his sons of the wonders of his youth, when everything in the garden was lovely.

"Ah, yes, these young fellers think they're big shakes." Harry was slow and not strong on words until the right influence was touched, but he was evidently well keyed to-night.

"I remember some goes we had in the old 'bus days, before anybody thought of trams," he went on.

"What about the one out at Brunswick?" queried Bill, keen on the scent of a yarn.

"Brunswick. Yes. I ain't goin' to talk about Brunswick now, though. Before that. There was a meetin' we held in the city, Lonsdale street, at the stables then—they're a motor place, garage they call it now. It was a go we had to form a union."

"Oh, I think I heard o' that. It's before my time, though," said crony Bill, ruminatingly encouraging Harry to the tale. His history was a year or so less than Harry's, and that friend never lost a chance of airing his pride of record.

"Yes; they all met in the city, an' they had speechifying; after they fixed up to have a proper union." Harry was enjoying the recollection, but he had to stop to gather words. "Oh, yes, that's the Lonsdale street meetin'."

"I know, I know," says Bill, interrupting; but apologetically added, "It's before my time, though."

"I should think it was before your time! Why, I can just as much as remember it. That's why I got to stop to think," says Harry. "Well, we fixed it up all right. There was 18 men made what we call delegates now. Each of 'em took up the work. It 'ud be a hard job to find any of 'em now. John Stanley was one of 'em—the

last—and he's gone off, too. Anyway, that was on Sunday. In the next week out comes word that some 'buses has to be taken off. Just 18 men was to go."

Old Bill lifted up his head for another interjection, but Harry whipped on the pace to continue, "Yes; and them 18 was just them that had to do the union work."

"Oh, you can bet on that," responded Bill.

"Bet on it. O' course you can," said Harry. "But you couldn't bet how quick we all fixed up to strike, and none of them was sacked after all—not that time, anyhow."

"It was pretty strong they picked all the right ones out always," said his crony. "Did you ever hear how they got wind of the names so pat?"

"Yes; old Prowl. He told it. He hid in a tree in the yard at the meetin'. They made him a boss afterwards. He's about yet, but ain't much better'n you an' me, Bill, if he did have a few more quid. I saw him a few months ago, and he wasn't game to talk to me."

"Ay, ay," said Bill. "We had some tough tries in our days. These fellers, now, they rile me when they sit on the old 'uns as if they was no sort with 'em. I suppose they do the best they can in their days, but we did the best we could in the old days, an' did more than most o' them would."

"It's a good job things 'a' gone as they are," said Harry. "Lots o' them that are gone would be glad to see it, Bill. Let's have another to their memory, Bill."

DOWN AT THE BANK.

There is little congenial to bright minds of visitors at the Yarra Bank. The place is cast away from habitation like the walk of a penitentiary. A blank grey wall of corrugated iron holds the northern line, beyond which rise serried buildings, gaunt brick adjuncts of the railway that sends intermittent trains thundering and shrieking past during the whole day. The ground is a waste of mire—a few acres that has not yet fallen to the demand of reclamation. The usage of half a million feet and

thousands of hands have made the natural field a dismal place of sodden garbage. But it is yet open; and there speech is given more freedom than is allowed to truth seekers elsewhere. On the southern fringe a road takes flying electric trams and multitudinous vehicles along the river's brink. Across the stream is another world; green-flushed lawns, parterres of bloom, banks of shrubs, statues, groves and grottoes, and every artifice of beauty have been placed there as a setting to the high official home of viceroyalty that crowns the prospect and waves the flag into dim vistas of the southernmost heaven. Eastward again the world is still another place; a place of gleaming distance that is only held by the confines of the Dandenong ranges setting purple bounds to the misty vision of Ideal.

October 12th, 1916.

Where do Yarra waters flow
When the light is leaving,
Eager for the to-and-fro
Of the ocean's heaving?

Passing swift with swirl and swellings,
Huddled lines of human dwellings,
Where the nation herds the masses
From preserves of other classes,
Where the babes—Love's greatest guerdon—
Come as heavy labor's burden,
And to-day is as to-morrow,
Each a fight with sordid sorrow;
Yet, withal, where happiness
Softens many an hour of stress. . . .
On thro' banks reserved as forum
For the rebels of Decorum,
Where they stand to jeers and jostles,
Proud to serve as Light's apostles
Flowing on until emerging
To the sea-waves, foaming, surging,
There to join the vain endeavor
Of the assailing tides forever.

—From "Where Yarra Waters Flow."

TRADES HALL.

There is something of history in the council chamber of the Trades Hall, the venue of the conference. The ring of many a fiery debate, in which great good for the workers was formulated, still echoes there. The chairman of this concourse, keen, courteous and conspicuously fair, might be the reincarnated figure of the first president of the Trades Hall Council, C. B. Hall. That name heads long lists that enscroll the men who have been most prominent in the workers' crusade since Labor organisation was firmly established in Melbourne. And within the walls so marked one may well fancy that the ring of energy, of enthusiasm and of fraternity still sounds for inspiration. From 1858 to 1916 is but a day in the history of some lands. In this country what has it seen? It has marked the era of the worker, bringing him from the chrysalis stage of a chattel to the period of an equal-righted man with any citizen. The names on those walls are chronicles of that transition. It is no small honor to be in that chamber, watched over by the records of the undying men whose names are thereon set forth. And there are other influences beside the long scrolls or the echoes that memory or mind may conjure up. Some few figures have been singled out to shine as golden lights for guidance and hope in times of doubt, and to men who are in need of an inspiring influence. Dave Wiley, the pioneer Labor legislator, is there, looking on, a quiet spectator at the right hand of the chairman. There are many men in the movement who knew him. It is always in one key that they speak of him—reverence. His young face is there enshrined in the sphere for which his influence was so strenuously exerted. Another, G. Higinbotham, looks on that conference from the height of the wall. His epitaph is written in the word that shows beneath his name on the picture, "Democrat." So common a word to-day, and so sacrilegiously used! We see it battened upon by the press that would keep the people from their development, making their progress serve the god that that press must serve—the dominant god, Capital. There is grandeur in that word democrat that no sophistry can diminish, however it brazen forth its false sounding note. But though

"democrat" may be applied to many here, its simple application to that portrayed figure in the council chamber of the Trades Hall gives it the serene splendor of a single shining star. And there is another figure on those walls. It is of one that needs no man to tell his name to the workers of to-day. It is the lineaments of Laurie Cohen. Looking with peering eyes from the veil that lately shut him from the material presence of his comrades, he endures in that chamber as a never setting sun.

THE COAL STRIKE AND THE I.W.W. TRIAL.

Two notable Australian events culminated last week: the settlement of the coal strike and the sentencing of the "I.W.W." prisoners. The first-named event bids fair to be writ in Australia's history as the extreme farce of that loud-voiced great one, Mr. W. M. Hughes. It showed the Australian Prime Minister in a most unenviable light. Where he had been paraded as "the" Empire statesman he showed such utter ineptitude that his every effort to settle a local disturbance could do no more than make bad worse. The coal miners struck for the full recognition of the eight hours' day—which has long been a principle of work in this country. Instead of taking prompt and decisive action to keep the mines going, even if to do so involved their temporary nationalisation, Mr. Hughes called for conferences, at which he poured oil on flames to such extent that the continent spread with burning. The coal was deemed the paramount essential for the transport of troops. Instead of nationalising the coal in the pits, our vaunted statesman seized the stocks of trading citizens and so peremptorily shut down the commerce of the land. Then this leader of the day agreed upon one fact: That the solution of the coal mining problem was too complex for him. He decided that a State judge should arbitrate upon the matter. This was done; and immediately the whole complexity was simply solved. An obscure man did in a few hours what the paraded great one had failed to do in several weeks. History, no doubt, when it mentions the name of W. M. Hughes, will illustrate his true worth as a statesman by such telling proof of futility—except for mischief.

But Australia's history will have a black page of in-

justice from the transactions of last week. The I.W.W. charges were finally "dealt with" by a gentleman of the New South Wales court of law, Mr. Justice Pring; with the result that fifteen years' penal servitude was allotted to seven of the twelve men, and terms of ten and five years' imprisonment were given the other five.

We have no word to say for the upholding of criminals. Wanton men are a pest that society must keep under. But the men who have been so crushingly sentenced in Sydney were never treated so. If they really were criminals, the evidence given in court did not prove it. What had generally been taken as proof was the countless witnesses of the great press, the anti-workers' platform, and even the preachers of religion.

It became the fashion to call these men criminals while they awaited trial. During the Referendum campaign the one cry for obloquy raised against the workers in their plea against conscription was the empty watchword of the privileged parties—"the I.W.W."

The coal strike showed that Mr. Hughes can make a farce. The I.W.W. case proves that he can be associated with a tragedy. If justice was to be satisfied in the I.W.W. cases, why was not Mr. Hughes charged with contempt of court when he assailed the men?

Is justice so frail in New South Wales that men who are to be tried can be assailed as criminals until the very land is assured of their guilt? Not so long ago a Melbourne doctor was charged with being implicated in the disappearance of a girl. Circumstantial evidence was printed daily in the press to show the girl had died as a consequence of an illegal operation, and the doctor in question was indicted as the guilty person. But his case was not decided until the newspapers casting suspicion upon him were brought to book. If contempt of court was committed in the Dr. Peacock case, how much was it accentuated in the I.W.W. cases? The whole of the men charged have been found guilty, and are now incarcerated for the serving of almost life sentences of imprisonment. We have no hesitation in saying the sentences were a bitter tragedy. The one offence those men now so officially impugned were shown to be guilty of is the present crime of advocating unpopular working class opinions.

December 7th, 1916.

AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL SONG.

Just at the moment Australia has a national song. Last year she had another—but it's a long way to last year, if we look over the lists of ephemeral whoopings that serve in the garish superficiality of present surroundings. Now, at least, she is Australia, even if she embraces a brazen medley in ecstatic outpourings on the way.

In a sense this song of the present day is our national song. It expresses the reigning emotion of a transitory populace, and it unconsciously voices the apparent emptiness that lies in the national need at this time. What matter if the song of to-day is as shallow as "Yankee Doodle," is bare of the true sentiment of humanity as a hymn written to the Stock Exchange? Its raucous, bellicose unoriginality, its complete absence of national traits will make it well worthy to be sung and played in the parades of the moment.

From time to time Australia has sought a song to epitomise the breadth of the southern continent, some sparkling harmony of sky and sun and soil to vocalise the strength and beauty of each and suggest the latent grandeur of the South. A song it might be of the rising worker at the portal of Freedom, of virility, of plenty, of independence—yet complete fellow-dependence—a song of Youth crowned universal in the halls of Peace.

Such a song could not be heard *now*. It may be that it has already been poured forth unheard in some desolate suburb, or in the lone length of the plains to the accompaniment of strains from the invisible hands of Hope. To sing it in the city to-day would bring the poet into Pentridge—and cast his melody to scorn that is more insufferable than silence.

We are told that we learn in suffering what we teach in song, and that from a nation's stress her singers arise. Australia has often heard that she has no literature—and to prove it a rhyming jingle utterly void of national inspiration or beauty is advertised as the work of Australia's first poet. To-day Australia knows suffering. She has sent

her sons into a palpitating charnel house, and they have eclipsed the legendary light of old Troy in deed and daring. Nothing is lacking of their courage and enterprise. What any men may do Australians do, not in the grim despair of driven strength, but in a spirit of exhilaration, wild and admirable, even if it is so cruelly far from the daily peace victory over plain and bush, in mirage and drought.

Australia will have her song. It is yet to be sung, but it will not be a Marseillaise. It will be no exhortation to death; it will be the song of life won by liberty—of peace established by peace—none other can endure except as suffering. There will not be a stone cast at mankind in other frontiers by the singing of Australia's national song. It will not be suffering that attunes the harp that will vibrate the chords of the song of the South. It will be no cry for peace like the Russian Anthem—a cry sung to a heedless heaven to the ceaseless accompaniment of blood gurgles from bayonets and knout wounds. It will be a song like the song of Miriam when the slaves of Egypt left their lords and came across the sea to labor-won freedom. And it will have something of the joy of humanity that impelled Mary when she sang, "He hath put down the mighty from their seats and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things and the rich He hath sent empty away."

If Australia has no national song, it is because she has not yet dawned to the day of her strength. She is voiceless as the potential, not dumb as the brute. And when she sings it will be a song made gorgeous without the echo of battle cries in its staves. It will be joy that articulates, not pain. It will be a conquest by example, not force. What land has ever known so vast a promise? Greece was bright, but her history is writ with blood. Rome was a triumph, but it was not a triumph of the mass; it was rather the might of the few made dominant by the sacrifice of the many.

Not even "Hail, Columbia" is a song of wide and free stainless joy. It has been the death wail of millions fighting in fratricide. No country has been so nurtured in supreme peace as Australia. No land has been lapped by Time in favored security until it can take a full-grown

estate with the world unblemished by the old world's trials, unstained by its records and unhampered by its trammels. Thus Australia's literature must be new in theme. It will not be set in caskets of war, nor sealed in traditions of blood. It will tell of effort, privation, strength, triumph. Its voice will be inspired by the might of work and the conquest of Labor into new zones of humanity. War has served to prove that the way of peace is not the way of decadence.

The gains of Australia in Labor standards have all been won to the cries of laggard lamenters. The good intent of each step has been ridiculed, and certain injury to the stamina of the people been foretold.

Nothing has come of Australia's advance but vital strength to her children. War has proved this—if proof were needed. When war ceases and the land is let upon its pristine course of peace, the note that will sound may be long in forming. It will not be ephemeral nor false. It will be a song of the soul of light inspired by the unstained glory of the sunlit land. There is no need to look for it now. If it were here it would be rejected and reviled as is all forethought of advance. It will come. When it is heard it will be known, for then it will be the voice of the people—the people grown to the worthiness of the land they live in.

THE MIGHTIEST MIGHT.

If fame should seek to call me to her throne,
 And say, "Choose thou the means, I will bestow,
 "Wouldst thou the might of Alexander own,
 "Or Nelson, or the gentle Angelo?
 "Wouldst thou have wit and wealth as Solomon,
 "Or conquer seas like navigator Cook,
 "Preach out like Paul when heavenly gifts came on,
 "Or as Copernicus read heavenly book?
 "Wouldst patriot be inspired as Washington,
 "Or work a language as old Webster works,
 "Labor the elements as Edison,
 "Or gain explorer's crown like hapless Burke's?"
 I'd answer, "Goddess, if thou wilt, grant then,
 "Grant me the vantage of a master pen."

CLOSING STANZAS OF "THE WATTLE QUEEN."

No lines to be writ
 In the rubric of vassals,
 Nor chant for uplifting of sorrow,
 But waved spontaneity chorussed
 To welcome the day,
 Yet song ne'er to flit
 As the calling of throstles—
 The song to endure thro' the morrow,
 While shrines of perennial forest
 Re-echo the lay.
 Grey pillars and green vibrate 'mid the sheen,
 A canto each way.

That song we would call!
 But a Thracian lover,
 Whose rave thy transcendence embraces,
 Whose music is thee, manifested,
 Ecstatic, elate,
 Sublimity's all!
 Whom pined Echo gives over,
 Each cadence and chroma retraces,
 Till Dulness has quickened and wrested
 From Durance his fate,
 Whose measures are ringing Love's regnant upbringing,
 His lyre we await.

BERYL LEE.

As sweethearts love the solitude,
 And thrushes love the plum trees,
 As flow'rs approve while breezes move,
 And bees love blossom'd gum trees;
 As thirsting grain loves fresh'ning rain
 While soft from heaven it presses,
 As loves the Spring her wealth to fling
 When she the world caresses;
 So I love thee, my Beryl Lee,
 And more than these my love for thee,
 In day and night my heart's delight
 Is Beryl Lee, is Beryl Lee.

As motherbird bestows the brood
 Her hours and hours of duty,
 So love has brought my every thought
 To pleasure in thy beauty;
 And birds that high in tree and sky
 Their carol joys are making,
 Have songs for me of thee, of thee,
 In sleeping or in waking;
 They sing to me of Beryl Lee,
 No other maid so fair as she;
 No wind may greet a flow'r as sweet
 As Beryl Lee, as Beryl Lee.

FROM "ODE TO THE MAGPIE."

When primal man had joy of sovran powers
 O'er all the Garden's underthings,
 Eve's court was made of myriad birds and flowers,
 To wend the while on airy wings,
 The God ordained it so, and bright with pride
 Of Fatherlove saw all was fair,
 That every weal of Heaven be undenied
 His full reflected Presence there.
 He gracious toned the buds with dew,
 And bade them ne'er their souls refuse
 Unto their queen.

The birds he tuned,
 With super chords aeolian angels crooned
 Or choired in praise;
 Impowering all by varied ways
 High loveliness to minister along the emergent days.

And then, O Warbler! thy commission came!
 Vestured in cherubic whiteness,
 Leavened with sun morning lightness,
 And exultant sway and brightness
 Of meridian flame;
 Vestal thou of lyric glory,
 Charged with keys of golden story,
 That in numbers amatory
 Tell Elysian fame.

Was it anguish made thee still
 As the serpent had his will?
 Did inceptive wiles of Passion lull thee into listlessness?
 Was thy fluty organ rifted
 That thou ne'er one call uplifted,
 Raised one sounding song to shield her, warn of consum-
 mative stress?

* * * *

So I have heard, as with imponderate sleep,
 By hovering want from me distrained,
 Recurring rounds of sodden toil I keep,
 To law's inconsonancy chained;
 When every loaded leaf and rim of grass
 Gives forth a scintillated shower
 Of errant star-rays, eager as I pass
 For silver stairs their lord will tower,
 To mount the ambient sphere again,
 And leave the grind of battling men
 And sorriness:

So I have heard
 Thy joy commune with kindred joys, sweet Bird,
 In euphony,
 And, hearing, vision comes to me
 To banish thought of mundane mould with wing'd felicity.

I would ofttimes that I could learn thy song!
 To be, as thou, the Day's upbringer;
 Of new-born light the lucid ringer,
 And like thee, Bird, a votive singer,
 Unvibrative of Wrong!
 To give the waiting world thy spirit,
 That men in every clime would hear it,
 And lit with incandescent merit,
 Leave dark, where warrings throng:
 End their grieving
 By perceiving
 Love has come the way along!

THE IMMIGRANT.

A new chum's came and settled at our kipsey,
 He's just completely made himself at home;
 An' since he's been there's some that think I'm tipsy,
 Perhaps that's why I try to make a pome.
 He seems a star a nuzzlin' in an' guzzlin',
 Then sleepin' off effects the most of day;
 Or lyin' still as tho' his mind was puzzlin'
 On wonders more than ever I can say.

He only found his way with lots of trouble,
 God! Men dunno what women have to bear!
 But now the missus says he's Daddy's double,
 An' gone is all the killin' pain an' care.
 The neighbours coo as round him they foregather,
 The ole maids, an' the sweethearts an' the wives,
 So reckon all—"How very like his father!"
 Tho' some has never seen me in their lives.

His eyes they lift me up above myself, sure,
 When screwin' me with understandin' search,
 They're fairer far than pitchers on the delf, sure,
 Or in the painted winders of a church;
 They tell me more than any sermon teaches,
 Among the Sunday saints an' meetin' folk,
 That livin's more than any feller preaches,
 An' much of mighty good is never spoke.

He doesn't seem to worry what his luck is,
 Nor how the chances stand for play an' work,
 He couldn't tell what bootin' in the ruck is,
 Or from a goer spot a spieler's lurk.
 I tip he's just the immigrant that's wanted
 To let the country have a bloomin' show,
 The more of him the less we need be haunted
 By fret and fear our land should never know.

You wouldn't think a kid 'ud much affect me,
 I ain't the sort you'd fancy for a dad,
 But for the softie kind you'll not suspect me
 Although I buckle to the tiny lad.
 He'll be about as good a man as any—
 What if I have no gilt to skite about,
 I promise you he'll go as fair as many
 That make a shinin' show when startin' out.

THE CATTLE YEARS.

Away beyond back o' sunset skies,
 The cattle stations lie;
 A mob is ready the road to take,
 The chartless route that the drovers make
 To suit the pasture or weather break
 Of rain, or spells of dry.

Then oh, to ride when the rounding horse
 Goes thro' the nightwet grass;
 As each star dies out like a risen spark
 And day is striking the tent of dark,
 Where the light inside showed wan and stark,
 As the shadows fade and pass.

The mist of dawn is a wreath of smoke,
 When camp is broad awake.
 Old kooka's laugh is a scale of fun
 Proclaiming night is over and done,
 As miles of glistening greet the sun
 When morning's track we take.

The mob comes slow thro' the damp of morn,
 And slow thro' the dry of day.
 No galloping hours do the cattle need,
 The times that turns to the rush of speed
 Is never the time that cattle heed
 On their ruminating way.

It's oh! to camp when the river's full,
 In a band where trefoil's deep.
 It's oh! to dream as the hobbles clink,
 And the camp-fire glows to the shadow's brink,
 Where the cattle merge as they silent sink
 To the fold of caring sleep.

The Cross hangs low in a velvet haze,
 And the Way its dust sheds round;
 And low the watcher must bring his ear
 To catch the cropping of grazers near—
 The heart of the night throbs true and clear
 To him that knows the sound.

But what for stages when creeks are dry
 And thirst has gripped the herd!
 The whips ring out and the dogs strive long
 As leaders lag and the stragglers throng,
 Till breathing scent of a billabong
 The cattle fresh are stirred!

We keep our tally and keep them sound
 Along the mulga miles,
 We strain in saddles as over logs
 We chase at lead of the minding dogs,
 The rebels heading for swampy bogs
 Where luring danger smiles.

The creak of saddles I hear it still,
 The bridle rein I feel;
 Old Rover's lifting his pointy ears
 In dreaming hours of the flighty steers
 That filled his toil in the droving years
 As his teeth touched many a heel.

COME TO ME NOW.

Mist o'er the hills
 Is pierced with tree spires,
 Dips are a-chord with antheming choirs,
 Morning instils
 Pure fragrance of light
 Up from sweet depths and level and height:
 Come to me now, 'mid sunburst and song,
 Oh, I have waited long.

Shimmer of blue,
 Like sky over cloud,
 Softens the distance when noon reigns proud
 In garish hue.
 Light toned with haze
 Soothes unto dreams the far-running ways:
 Come to me now, with visions athrong,
 Oh, I have waited long.

Deep burnished gold
 O'er realms of gum-green
 Uplifts the trees with aerial sheen,
 Shadows enfold
 With purple and grey
 Valleys where even uprises from day:
 Come to me now, heaven's glory among,
 Oh, I have waited long.

THE SONG OF THE SHEARING.

Sing oh, for the click of the shears,
 The click-clicking-click o' the shears.
 Now we station-ward trend
 For the wethers are penned;
 The season of shearing appears.
 We steady our nags in the clover,
 'Tis there that they paddock the studs,
 Then straight for the huts canter over
 To fix up the doss an' the duds;
 To-morrow the shed is commencing,
 Full-handed except for the pen,
 For two of the team outback fencing—
 They lean to the old season's men.

Sing oh, for the whistle has sung,
 Each man to his billet has sprung;
 Clicking blades disappear,
 And with pelt smooth and clear
 The sheep to the race is outflung.
 The fleece on the board lies a-shimm'ring
 Like a layer of surf at the beach,
 That soft in the sunlight is glimm'ring
 Where rolls of the tide barely reach;
 A twist o' the wrist of a picker,
 Away on the table 'tis thrown,
 All spread like a web, hardly thicker
 Than wattle bloom breezes have blown.

Sing oh, for the rouseabouts' cook,—
 May never his batches go crook.
 Who turns out the brownie
 More sweet than a townie
 Has tasted or read in a book.
 The pannikins go to the bucket,
 And tea by the ton is consumed,
 I fill my old clay then, and suck it.
 My mate's pipe is lost—how he fumed.
 The "Blow-up" again sets us going;
 The air down the board's getting thick;
 This eight-tooth I'm at is hard-blowing—
 The cobbler—my cobber's too slick.

Sing oh, for the rustle of lace,
 When Beauty comes into the place;
 Each form is a treasure
 Of bountiful pleasure,
 Such presence sheds charm by its grace.
 The classer puts on special swagger,
 A cheeky tarboy gives a cheer—
 He's worse than a man on the lager,
 Kids fancy they're men when they're here.
 The drummer's yarn makes sudden ending,
 'Twasn't meant for the feminine folk,
 An' we shear as tho' lives were depending
 On the length and the strength of each stroke.

Sing oh, when we've finished the day,
 And we see what the tally can say;
 We've started with vigor
 To run up a figure
 With wet, the rain, and the wrinkleys away.
 Our rep. yarns of old Barrawidgee,
 The shearers' cook tells of a fish
 He caught in the cool Murrumbidgee,—
 For the station 'twould be a day's dish.
 There's lovers an' homers at letters;
 A picker shows musical powers;
 And cardsmen an' draughtsmen an' "sweaters"
 Are trying their luck till all hours.

Sing oh, for the shearing is done,
 We've cut out the last wrinkle one
 Of the big-bodied rams,
 An' we're thro' with the lambs,
 And the rolling of swags has begun.
 We saddle the nags and are ready
 For toil far away from the shed;
 The plains we take cantering steady,
 There's rises and ranges ahead.
 Still keeping the track, never tripping,
 The clearing—and there is the grain
 Rattle red with the ripeness for stripping,
 We're home from the shearing again.

TAKING HER HOME.

Broke yer leg? Ur, stop yer guyver,
 Git up on yer pins en see.
 Kid yer racin' fer a fiver,
 All yer got ter beat is me.

Come on, mum, it's time we're gettin'!
 'Ow erbout the ole man's tea?
 'Ow erbout young Linda frettin'
 On ole Mother Jones's knee?

She's alright ter leave ther kid wif,
 But it's gut ter 'ave its feed:
 Linda she can lift yer lid wif
 Bawlin' strong when she's in need.

Mother Jones is just ther glassy
 W'en yer want 'er fer a turn:
 Never kids herself she's classy,
 Though she ain't got much ter learn.

She's a monte ter be thinking
 Thet yer gone upon the shick:
 Don' she alwuz tell yer drinkin'
 Ain't the way ter keep in nick?

Don' she say it gits yer under,
 Knocks yer down en keeps yer there,
 But our life it makes 'er wonder
 Thet there's any on the square?

Here's a John, mum, ain't he screwin'!
 'Ere, 'e's comin'. Yessir, mum
 Isn't drunk en ain't been doin'
 Nothun so's fer you ter come.

We wuz goin' 'ome together,
 Me en mother, en she fell:
 Trod upon some slippy leather,
 En she's hurt er foot like 'ell.

Yes, I go ter school, I'm nine, sir,
 Father's workin' every day.
 Think 'e's in the bottle line, sir,
 Don't git on ther shickerin' lay.

There, she's right, we don't live far, sir,
 She don't want no amberlunce.
 Now she's walkin'. There you are, sir,
 Yer the sort thet takes ther bunce.

THE WORKER'S WRITER.

Mayhap my pen has ne'er increased
 The fatness of a wallet,
 Nor viands offered to a feast
 For cloyed and spurning palate.

No mind have I for Bacchus' crews
 Or pandemonium laughter—
 The ship that will her charts abuse
 Must soon have seas abaft her.

I've never strummed for patron lord,
 Or recked of ire, my masters;
 Nor clanged a word of flaunting sword
 And reign of blood disasters.

(I'd sing a love o' country chaunt,
 In patriot mood exulting,
 But ne'er a preening power to vaunt,
 Another pride insulting.)

I've looked not for the subtley phrase
 Of dim, esthetic musing,
 Nor ever willed to sound the lays
 Of blare and loud abusing.

I've worn no veil of seers occult,
 Nor far prophetic sages:
 I seek a present-day result—
 NOW is the best of ages.

I've lingered not in amorous dell
 With mystic lays consorting,
 Nor dreamed to briny surge and swell
 Of ocean nymphs' disporting.

I bring no dainty ballad for
 Sweet Fancy sentimental,
 Nor frenzied adulations, nor
 Soft languors Oriental.

If there is scenty flower o' blue,
 'Tis of the field and forest;
 If there is balm of falling dew,
 It is for heart the sorest.

If there is charm of breeze and bird
 In vale and woodland glories,
 It is for ear that never heard
 A Melba or Dolores.

If I with free, unstudied note,
 Allow my burdened brothers
 To see earth's joy, I would devote
 No line of care to others.

'Tis not alone in plushy tiers,
 And with bejewelled convention,
 That Melody can rule our ears
 And Beauty crown attention.

The common road is lined with bloom,
 There's song in every byway;
 There's music in the factory loom
 And grace in every highway;

The sky in arched sublimity,
 The grandeur of the mountains,
 The glory of the gestic sea.
 The plash and flash of fountains;

The gamut of the throstle's throat,
 The bell bird chords a'quiver,
 The gurgle of the magpie note,
 The glee of creek and river;

They all are free: and every tree,
 And sprout of plebeian grasses
 Is fashioned with a harmony,
 Nor graced diploma passes.

And hallowed happiness still thrives
 Thro' round of duties homely,
 At caring hands of cottage wives
 With dimpled bairns and comely.

Why drag the day in hodden drab,
 And brightness ever living?
 And why be servitors of Grab,
 When substance comes with giving?

And, oh, to key the mighty thought
 Within the waking masses,
 Where pain has full experience taught
 The ill of clans and classes.

And ill it seems that only such
 May be our days commanders,
 As at the counters of How Much?
 Become new Alexanders.

To wring the planet of its worth,
 And keep in ways exclusive
 Fair propagations of our earth—
 And still find joy elusive!

For others hold yet never taste
 What life may yield of treasure,
 And where the many want have waste
 In lassitude of pleasure.

I'd sing that love in life doth dwell,
 And freed from saws didactic,
 Proclaim love's gospel must excel
 The altared creeds dogmatic!

And so I would articulate
 The sigh of Labor's yearning,
 Unkeyed by sordidness and hate
 And sorrow and heartburning.

MY CREED.

I have no heart for faith
 That gives me task
 To seek thro' doom of death
 Hope's crown to ask.
 My faith is life; I know not other—
 Its works are man—on earth my brother.

I have no prayer to raise
 Thro' voids of blue;
 No rituals of praise
 To grace endue,
 That holds my course in sufferance deep
 When reason's flight would onward sweep.

I have no heaven to gain
 That knows not earth;
 No penalty of pain,
 Nor joyous dearth,
 To make me subject and by tears
 Life circumscribe in rule of fears.

I have no cross that saves
 For after-realm,
 So surge of sorrow's waves
 May overwhelm
 Each impulse of onstriving breath
 Till strength is sunken low to death.

I have no God who stands
 In awfulness,
 And makes by high commands,
 All pitiless,
 The gain of strife and drought of woe
 That bring our earth than hell below.

Of sin I have no count
 From creed of love:
 The heart has welling fount
 Of worth to prove,
 For height and depth, all undefiled,
 When faith rules as the faith of child.

The creed I would out tell:
 Love is its name;
 Not law, but principle,
 Its sons proclaim!
 Sufficient realm and time on earth
 Has man to noble prove its worth.

Stars yet may guide whose beams
 Lead far our way,
 Till distance comes from dreams,
 And dark from day.
 But in the present paths we tread
 The sun suffices clear o'erhead.

FROM "THE AGITATOR."

The day is dawning, men,
 That we must be
 Designers of the living mould
 Of our own destiny.

The time is going fast
 Where we are just
 As things to moil around the soil
 For covering and crust.

No more will we be driven
 Unknown, unseen;
 Nor ever from our strength stagnate
 In puny ways and mean.

The past is of the past
 Yet from it we
 May gather bounties to prepare
 For benisons to be.

We'll quit the might-have-been
 And dead despair,
 And show our race that Love has place
 In other realms than air.

* * * * *
 Some set as hath the God
 Set to the Sea
 Strong barriers to hold the land
 From massed humanity.

So with a futile force
 The tides of man
 Surge in the swarming areas
 Permitted them to span.

To myriads now are born
 In form divine
 To live a stunted life of loss
 Ignoble as the swine.

Pawns in the game of blood
 Food for their guns
 Cheered by a flag deep hell to drag
 Proclaimed as patriot sons!

Oh, God, that man should be
 By man abused:
 Oh, God, that earth where Eden was
 As hell should e'er be used.

FROM AN IN MEMORIAM.

If by the way when with a prize in grasp
 A leader's stricken from the workers' war,
 The chill upon the hand we parting clasp
 Stays not our hearts but stirs them to the core.

Some labor long: early must others die;
 The task they serve can scarce be ever through;
 Living we strive impulsed with purpose high
 By what is done, and what remains to do.

WILL MILITARISM END SOON?

The ending of militarism, what does it mean? All of us cry the phrase as a panacea for present ill action. From Viviani to Lloyd George, from Andrew Fisher to Gustave Herve, the wide hope of the words is expressed with reiteration daily—nightly. We of the ranks of Labor are no less taken with the exalted worth that is thus ventured to our hearts as a fitting reward for the sacrifice and untold suffering now upon us. An end of militarism! Can it be? Is the present age to witness the Utopian lion feeding with the lamb and vultures of bandit-men living in permanent peace with all mankind?

If it is, the era of the present is the dawn of the world's vastest glory. Well may proud scions of the earth cry The Day, if it is to be That Day. Well may armies be bled and navies be burst into atomic fragments of pulsations, if the reward of all their hurt is to be such a crowning of humanity. What visions will be realised! What hopes will be fulfilled! What immense reaches of worth will be the common breath of general men if from the ashes of this mammoth sorrow of war there spring the eternal laurels that will keep the brows of peace perpetually wreathed!

Ah! the grand hope of it. In the depression that follows the sickness of our being when we dwell upon the stern atrocities that are now heralded as the sole virtues of might, we would gladly taste the elixir, and, imbibing its potency, gain strength to go into the chaotic shambles that are to be its gateway, thence emerging with the long hope of the world, installed and irrevocably throned. It is this high hope that inspires many to believe that out of such dread as they enter upon shall come proportionate good. It is the same vision that lights the Teuton, the Slav, the Gaul, the Briton; and, maybe even among the men of the Orient, there are white flames of the great desire animating them to the present work for the universal crown that is to be the reward.

Is the darkness breaking? Surely all these aspirations are not mere incantations of a service of sacrifice. Yet, if the dawn is at hand, the Morning Star is clouded. What splendid portents are there across the heavens while racial hate is being promulgated? What augury of happiness may we detect in the misery that our Christendom is letting its people drop deeper and deeper below? In Australia, this most advanced outpost of the workers' progress, there is an unmitigated orgy of preying on the workers, and the little authority that might supervene is as impotent as it is exalted. If the light that is to come is now working for a burst of effulgence—if peace is to be enthroned and militarism for ever cast into the utterly rejected pale of barbarous antiquity, men may be ready, but are they proving it?

Militarism is not a term for the moment. Just now it is used as an imprecation on the lips of most men. Yet those who most condemn it in others will fight hardest for its retention for themselves and the privileges it brought them. For military suasion is the old and familiar suasion of brute force. Backed up by armies, it is repellent now; backed up by the forces of wealth for wealth's continual "peaceful" aggression, it is a natural—the natural—law. The concept of society is the same in most of the circles wherein range the "Argus" or the "Times," or any of the high-placed monitors whose daily thunder is that misguided voice we call "the Press." That is the doctrine of Bernhardt—

"They may take that have the power,
They may hold who can."

Yet our smug leaders, while holding Bernhardt up as a calamitous vice, will shriek ever stronger for the virtue of strife in all the general avenues of living. Finance is for the strong man of monetary association—though the whole wealth of the people, developed and potential, is the only asset upon which the finances of the world may form or endure! Trade is a sensitive agent, obeying the demands of the public with infinite nicety, and waste and ill-supply are conditions so common that they are not worth comment!

Militarism is not merely a matter of belching artillery. It may be fashionable to inveigh against war and to soothe

our conscience with loud declarations against the principle that arms men for slaughter and makes a dread devastation in any and every place. It may be self-consoling to charge certain folk with the present crimes of humanity, but, in the trial of time, how hardly will any side be cleansed from the stigma of blood? Let him who is without the sin of strife cast the first stone.

If the faith of men is against strife, now is the opportunity to prove it. The present conflagration will burn itself out in due course, and from the ruins of myriad homes a new principle might be established. Dare we hope that it will? Dare we hope that a great fundamental change will evolve while we yet see the Governments conniving at the people's injury even in the thick of the fray? If we are to cease the barbarous hand-against-hand system of society that finds its logical outcome in militarism, the time to change it is NOW.

But we will not end militarism while we suffer strife. The finance and lands of the people must become governmental, else the internecine war of daily life will continue with unabated ill. The concept of brotherhood must be lived, not preached. While we are content with texts to trade upon, we make a mockery of our faith. It is, indeed, a new era that is to dawn, but the light of the day of fraternity cannot break while every man deems it his duty to strive against every man.

Do not think, O comrades, that this is the ebullition of vainness. It is surely more consistent with Christian creeds, with Labor ideals, with man's intellectual progress, with the world's advance in production and the bond of blood that is beating in the strength of all workers' hearts, so it is the more inconsistent and antithetical that the wasteful strife we so abhor should continue. Continue it must while men are trained by the taskmaster of life to war continually man against man, worker against worker, nation against nation. But when the community is beguiled with platitudes about the ending of militarism, while the terms of living are being cemented in strife, then may we say, Why do the people imagine a vain thing?

THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE.

Is it yet permissible to tell of other things than destruction? Are discussions of peace still taboo unless that peace comes only by request of a foe stricken to death and denied any attribute of further national liberty?

It has appeared so. But there are indications that the blood mania that has engulfed reason may be reducing in force, so that a review of the plans as spoken by the Paris Conference may be permitted.

We will not expect that anything less than a permanent peace can be even discussed in any plan for a settlement of the present war. What we want to be assured of is the peace plan as was outlined by Mr. Hughes and his Paris colleagues—the Trade plan it might be called—such that a permanent peace might reasonably be expected to ensue from its adoption.

It is not apparent from the publication of such details as have been given that a satisfactory peace would be produced from such a plan. Quite otherwise. No peace is worth acceptance unless it gives a fair assurance of permanency. Does the plan that prohibits certain international trade and commerce under all conditions to a country of 60 millions of industrially trained people conduce to the hope of a continued peace?

The plan is not to be entertained. First of all, it is impractical because national frontiers are so indefinable in the dealing transactions of commercial life. Bremen is near Christiana or Copenhagen; Hamburg is within easy freight touch of New York; and goods of Teuton origin cannot well be banned, even through the edict of a Hughes, when they bear the stamp of Norway or America or Denmark.

Then the present plans, as told us, are not practicable. Assuming that they were, from a commercial standpoint, would they still be likely to be successful in the stated object of creating an era of enduring peace? They would not.

May we look a moment at history? Turn, then, to Scotland, who was forced to a pact with England that denied her religious liberty; to Ireland, who was subverted entirely by iron measures that did not take into account the natural forces of freedom that are inherent in strong people; to Poland, who was crushed by tremendous neighbors into geographical nullity, but was never subdued to more than negative stillness by invincible, unsleeping restraint. No; history tells how Scotland had her incessant rebellions, culminating in Culloden; then gaining her religious liberty. How Ireland's turmoil made for national weakness, that constituted a danger not yet dead. How Poland's subjection was always of nominal quality, that called for more coercive energy on the part of the captor than the prize was worth.

History tells us that peace is not going to be made permanent unless it is founded on justice. We have shown that the trade of Germany would not be stopped by interdictions of the Allies. But such interdiction would be the perversity of natural laws of liberty, and would create an undying hatred against the people or nations who even impotently attempted to do that which was fundamentally opposed to justice.

Those upon whom an injustice is perpetrated are naturally compelled to resistance. They nourish hatred and cherish ways of strife. We cannot expect that a trade embargo with the Allies will be the means of preventing Germany from building up the organisation of war as she did in the years preceding the present Armageddon, when arrant lords of dominance had their arbitrary will. The wealth of trade would still come to her through sources not within control of the Allies, and the generations succeeding this would nurture continual plans for the removal of the imposition—that could only be effective in the development of strife.

If the wit of the counsellors of the Allies cannot evolve something of a firmer peace texture than the vaunted trade proposal of Paris, then indeed this war is not by any means the last great war of the Caucasian races.

But the people are wiser than their counsellors. Evidence, even in this period of suppression, is on hand that indicates that the people of all the European nations do not

want to enforce terms of peace that are opposed to justice, and must, therefore, be shortlived. Their eyes are being turned to the international control of force. The element of strife must be made subservient to all the nations for the upholding of great racial integrity. No nation shall be permitted to break the bonds of peace without incurring the quick chastisement of the combined peoples of all the other nations. Just as communal laws will further develop society among the nations for the advantage of their people, so intercommunal, or international, processes will operate to deal with international duties.

If the forthcoming terms of peace allow present national laws to obtain in regard to war, the burden of cost for "preparation" would go on increasing in even greater ratio than ever. With every advance in discovery in all the multifarious sections of science and industry, new projects would be called forth in arms and armament. Each nation would have to run a continually accelerated race with its neighbours in the same fashion as hitherto. But science is ever changing; material is ever rising in cost. These factors alone would make the struggle for supremacy by competition so extravagantly costly that soon the wealth production of the various nations would not be able to keep pace with the necessities called for by the rapacious maw of "preparation."

Per contra, international control of force would allow natural advance for the people along peaceful ways. Such expenditure as force would require would not be excessive, for the simple reason that invention would be the general factor, and science would be an instrument of service to all, instead of an unknown dread to every neighbor, against which feverish competition must always keep laboratories and arsenals working and wasting.

It is not expected that a world federation will ensue. At least, the day of such unity is not in sight, except to the vision of a Utopian seer. But a drawing together of the peoples of the white races is inevitably near. It is the corollary of the present conflagration. Demarcation between Gallic, Saxon, Teuton, and Slav is really a very difficult line to draw. There is so much affinity in the intermingled types that the one is the other. There is no biological reason why these great sections of the white family of the earth should

not be bound internationally, retaining such distinctions of country as are of worth. The peoples of Europe have not fixed international barriers to overcome. Such as grow up are the creation of unnatural agencies, that make their habitat in courts of diplomacy.

This terms of the permanent peace that we are told to look for must allow of international control of international subjects. Certainly there must not arise any plans that harbor injustice. Else the war of to-day is only a passing phase of recurrent wars, and a social advance, against which wars war, is grown more chimerical by the mists of this strife.

November 9th, 1916.

PAYING.

Who will pay for the war? That question is not heard so often now as in the days before the costs had accumulated to such overwhelming heights. It looks as if no one dare survey the terrific mountain of debt and plan paths whereby it may be dealt with. But though workers the world o'er have a greater interest in the war than the matter of money, it behoves us to view this aspect. For once get the inevitable fact of the war's colossal debt duly comprehended, it is apparent that we cannot discover the way wealth winners—the workers—can pay the commitments involved. That fact may do more to turn capital from its present darling than all other means of agitation.

Naturally, the wealth must be made if it is to be paid. If in the winning of products of essential wealth sufficiently to meet the interest of war debts a nation makes more than it can consume or sell, then the products will not be wealth, and the debt they are to pay cannot be paid thereby.

That is just the present position. Not with one nation; that would merely invite the others to swoop down and rend it—veritably vultures upon a stricken body.

How long it is since Germany passed the line of solvent possibility we cannot say; but her loss of £900,000,000 of export trade at the beginning of the war left her with a load of impoverishment that is crushing, quite apart from the burdens accumulated from the actual war. This ex-

plains the feverish intensity the Teuton war lords have for securing great avenues of trade, but so far as the general payments of war are concerned such security would not make the position better—that is for other nations; for it is by excluding Germany from her markets that other nations hope to gain fabulous amounts, requisite in their turn.

As capital is international these national vistas make a will o' the wisp.

Get this obvious truth assimilated. Let it be spoken, so that the realisation of its significance may be general. It is patent, of course, that the impost of war must offer inducements to capital or capital will not maintain its business of essential finance. Let the salient figures of the war's cost be set alongside of the wealth of the world's production and it will not need much argument to lighten the darkness of the most capitalistic mind as to the impasse created. Take a glance, for instance, at the specific case of Great Britain. Her war responsibilities now reach £6,000,000,000,000. This means that a much greater sum than the normal British revenue is required to pay the interest of war's debt—to leave nothing for all other requirements.

Financial experts early foresaw where the excess of costs might lead the war. During the first and second year of the war reference was occasionally made to the breaking down of ordinary ways of financial ethics to meet the greatness of this war's commitments. But now there is a silence. Hope, perhaps, is buoyed up by the rotten props of conquest. Each nation or group of nations tries to delude itself that its requirements may come at the cost of the others. This cannot be, from the very nature of the mutable interest of the various nations in what is produced by all or each. It is an axiom that when production becomes so abundant that it teems, then it is a drug and not a great source of wealth.

The question of repudiation has been touched upon. Bolsheviki have definitely placed it upon their programme. This is, of course, something unthinkable to the average mind of a capitalistic community. The fact of the Russian workers placing such a revolutionary departure on their scheme of action no doubt serves to account for the hostility engendered in the capitalistic press everywhere against

the Russians. To many such a general outcome of the war would be regarded as more dreadful than a complete victory of the Huns. This explains why Lloyd George so significantly turned down the peace striving Russians in his latest and otherwise greatest statement of the British war aims.

Who will pay for the war? The answer touches forbidden ground. But we may traverse paths that lead to it, and if we do we will find that the matter of war costs has a greater prospect for social revolution than the most militarist-minded scion of capital wots of in the continual clamor for more and more commitments on war. Like the tower of Babel, its height will be its downfall; and with its fall a sounder form of society, risen from the chaos of overweening capital, will be built. Thus may we see a social community growing from the basic soil, where to-day un-social competition crushes down the finer instincts of life, clouding ideal and treading on the face of humanity. That peace will evolve this revolution is the great solace of the day, inspiring the workers of humanity to press on however hard is the road to their feet.

A LOOK AHEAD.

It is the purpose of the day to get the war over. When its over and done with we may settle to our domestic affairs and local considerations. This is what we hear daily, and whether we view the coming time of peace with complete satisfaction or not, we are ready to accede that our first duty is to get the war over. The big thought that obtrudes in many minds is, "What will the war result in?" Not what territories or commerce it will bring, but what will be its result to the condition of the people's lives? Prognostication is busy daily, and the general view seems to be that the harvest reaped by the people cannot be immediately beneficial. And it cannot. Victory will be shallow, so far as material gain. Loss is the immediate certainty of the avalanche of waste that this war is. Whatever comes, conquest cannot be glorious except we take pride from

the historical records that chronicle events from day to day.

Already economists are employed in forecasting what is to be. The day when workers will have what they produce would seem to be further than ever from its dawn, if the old principles of financial adjustment are to be followed. The great change that is to follow on the re-establishment of peace must depend on the readjustment of our financial concepts. If the prevailing plans are to be followed, who can see anything but a morass of slavery for the workers of the world? Great as is the agony of war, its heritage of debt would entail greater agony on the world if familiar plans are not changed by those who must make the wealth to pay the bills that war leaves on the counters of the world.

A writer in "The Round Table" sees this poignant feature, and as a remedy, says that capital will have to submit to new forms of taxation, and Labor resort to finer schemes of power in production, so that enhanced wealth may be forthcoming.

Such a plan must obviously be utterly futile. It would not be noticed here only that it is the common cry of the day. If Labor multiplies production manyfold, will not, naturally, the corollary of that added power under the present system of business be to lessen the cost of the matter produced? The article in "The Round Table" asks that workers must make more of the commodities of usage, so that so much more wealth may be added to capital, and that capital will give that super-gain to pay the interest on war commitments. Plainly, that plan could only be involved in the brain of one so obsessed by the rights of capital that it is not accessible to the rights of Labor.

If production, say of wool, increases threefold, must we expect that two-thirds of the new gain be allotted to the extinguishment of the war debt? If wheat is increased by double, are the people that grow and mill and cut to pay as much as now, so that 100 per cent. of the added wealth be given the perpetrators of a vast calamity? So of iron; if we develop our iron production so that the mineral is much more common, are we not to have the advantage of our increased resource?

Certainly such a plan—were it adaptable to the powers

of the world—would mean that one section of the world would shoulder the payments of the war. That is the present principle passed on in perpetuity.

It is not by such a plan that the war cost can be met. All that the unfolding of this callous writer's mind discloses is that the worker is the producer of wealth. We did not need to read "The Round Table" to be convinced of that.

Another publication, a book by Edward Carpenter, called "The Healing of the Nations," makes a much more worthy attempt to assess the ways and means of the world when the war crisis is past. This writer is not obsessed with "class." He says: "Commercial prosperity means only the prosperity of a class. . . . Let us remember that wars for world markets are made for the benefit of the merchant class, and not for the benefit of the mass-people. . . . There has been a pretence of the Governments all round—a pretence of deep concern for humanity, and the welfare of the mass-people committed to their charge; but the real moving power beneath has been class interest—the interest of the great commercial class in each nation, with its acolyte and attendant, the military or aristocratic."

Carpenter strikes the nail aright in this—will he drive it home? He goes on with: "A terrible and serious crisis awaits us, even when the war is over—a crisis probably worse than that which we are passing through now. We have to remember the debts that are being piled up. If the nations are staggering along now under the enormous load of idlers and parasites living on interest, how will it be then? Unless we can organise Western societies on a real foundation of actual life, of practical capacity, of honest and square living, and of mutual help, instead of mutual robbery, they will infallibly collapse or pass into strange and alien hands." This summarises the financial questions of the coming crisis. It is useless to speak of the powers of augmentation of production. Not a new basis of production, but of allocation, is the supreme demand of change. If the true values of present means of production were realised and held by the people, there would not only be ample for the whole of civilised nations to have comfort in, but the quantities of the excess would allow of a sane pace. In the mad rush to keep up with the wholly ridiculous waste of the present

system, over-production goes on, and under-supply is the common experience of the workers.

To quote further from the "Healing of the Nations": "When these hundreds of thousands of men return home after the war is over, do we expect them to go meekly back to the idiotic slavery of dingy offices and dirty workshops? . . . Now at last arises the opportunity of our outworn civilisation to make a fresh start."

There is the crux: "A fresh start." But can we hope that the immediate decade will make that start? It should. The burdens of the war must inevitably be greater than the world can bear. When we remember how the Atlas-loaded people are already strained by the weight on their shoulders, it needs no flight of imagination to perceive that the added impositions of this super-weighting war are as far beyond the capacity of men as is the hewing of a tunnel through a mountain of granite to the powers of a single pick.

January 28th, 1916.

THE DEAD DOVE.

The flood raged high, and long the peaceful dove
Sought for her feet a branch of homing rest,
But sought in vain. High turbulence possessed
In dark dominion, all the space she strove
To find from weary longing room where love
Might settle for the haven of a nest—
The call insistent of her rounded breast—
But rage inundant ruled where'er she'd rove.
Still on she sought, till myrmidons of blood
Termed her a vulture and her purpose crime.
Love was their dread, full menace to the flood
That swept for crowning homicide of time.
And now rude tossed on carrion-bearing mud,
The dove is dead and mingled with the grime.

A FIGHT FOR FREEDOM.

It was a beautiful Sunday night. That holy calm so beloved of beneficent city councillors held the streets. Not a flicker of gas or a flare of electricity showed in the facades of the picture palaces. Quiet, serenity, peace made the key of last Sabbath. Imbued with its passive calm hundreds sought a shrine wherein they might regale the sense of duty that always hangs on the Sabbath—even though it may drag much of the world into dreariness.

I went with the rest along a tiled hall at whose entrance was a placard with the words "Miss Pankhurst. Should men enlist?" Up, up and around interminable stairs and landings, then into the sound of an orchestra and the wide light of a great assemblage. Already the service had begun. It was to the gallery that I had been directed—the rest of the auditorium was filled, and only a few tiers of seats remained for the "gods." These were soon crowded, for the habitues of the heights were coming, coming to their abode in a strong current from regions far beneath.

The music ceased, and a man spoke from the stage, then there was more music. But it was not the stage that held me—the people: there was the interest. What a full congregation, and how easily they took their devotions. There was scarcely a face that showed a trace of the pains of sanctimoniousness. Hardly a pursed mouth or a compressed brow, or a straight religious whisper. The sanctity around was one more in keeping with ease: the plain expression was that of keen expectation.

Not curiosity or ennui or fashion was showing in the faces. Interest and ease were dominant, and the pose of all was in harmony with each and with the music that swelled from the cavern below.

This was early. Soon another note came into play. While I had been scanning my neighbour "gods" a few khaki-clad auditors came into the crush. These ranged along the farthest wall, beyond the prospect of the stage. One of the khaki divinities managed to reach a plane beneath his comrades, then, by clapping his hands, a fresh interlude was signalled in opposition to the music below,

and discordant with all around. It may not have been melodic; it was emphatic. "Boys of the Bulldog Breed": "One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine—out." "Australia will be ther-er-ere," and such unconnected fragments were sent in a medly stream of raucity by the new force of topmost divinities to clash with and quell any notes that would dare ascend from the stage.

As yet there had been no defined address from below. Women for the most part were there, a bevy of attendants waiting to sing or otherwise entertain the spirits afar. Presently a lady was seen to be speaking. This gave new impetus to the voices above. What was said there no one knew. "You can't build boys of the Bulldog Breed" got fresh vigor around. The numerals were salvoed intermittently. Australia was there more stridently than ever. And presently the last "gods" of the heights swarmed into the boxes, crushing others less concerned in unannounced items, and as yet eager to take in what had attracted their original interest.

Away went glass from windows, for your "gods" must be appeased with crystal burstings when they are enraged. Medley took charge in undefined riot. Women were hustled by force stronger than sound; men were hurled hither and thither by the high pressure of the offended supremities. A small, young, white-clad woman essayed to speak in the spaces below. Her gestures told of her intention, but nothing was audible except the chaotic fury of the elements of wrath.

Order was gone. Those who could were flitting quickly away down the lengthy flight they had ascended in Sabbath expectation so lately.

This gave space for greater freedom, which flowed itself into a stream that spread everywhere, enveloping even the stage in its tumult. Here the white-robed, frail-figured woman was jostled, threatened and pressed back—but she was as one of the greater divinities among the lesser. Though thrust into chaos, she still showed her light. And for a few minutes she managed to exude a glimmer that partially held the throng around her. But her light was soon submerged in the multitudinous storm. The rush of furies that clashed around showed how far was the soft divinity from holding them.

How many blows were struck is not recorded. What are facial abrasions to non-combative mortals in such high combat? How many mortals were thrown off the island of the stage into the seas of chairs and such immobile obstacles? It is only given to the vendor of linaments to tell.

Freedom was in charge, and pandemonium was rampant. A word—a blow. No word—but still a blow. One color alone was a passport in that descended fury. If you were garbed in the style of war, then you were the son of freedom—if not, you took your chance as to the injury freedom's fighters might do you.

December 23rd, 1915.

BILL'S LOGIC.

Bill had finished his job, with his kit of tools on his back he made for home, not sure where the next job might be, but taking the chances with a philosopher's sense of optimism. "If one thing's cut out, another's sure to start. If I must keep the tools idle for a day or two it's the luck of life. It's rough, with so much depending on every day being put in, but it's all in life."

So Bill made for his cottage. Just before he turned at his corner a motor car stopped in the centre of the road, and out stepped a lady.

This was unusual. Not alone for the condescension of the passenger, but for the manner in which she came straight over in his direction. She made no small impression on Bill. No wonder. What man is so devoid of chivalry that he is not susceptible to the advances of beauty? And this advancing stranger belonged to a class of human right out of the range of Bill's personal acquaintance. Charming she certainly was—there was an emanation of subtle charm in her manner—the same attractiveness that catches the breath of rough-used seers when a conservatory glory is exposed to their view. No beauty of the wayside or bush may ever have caught their attentions, but an exotic display commands instant homage.

It was plain she felt she was conferring a favor, but wished to delude herself that she gave no indication of that

feeling. With all the gracefulness of art she took the few steps between the car and the now stationary Bill, and in those moments he noticed the simple "effect" of elaborate plainness—the dress not lavishly ornamented but telling of care and costliness. The single feature of ostentation upon his visitor was a long, white trailing plume on her hat. Bill was no specialist in such things, but he had enough knowledge of lesser feathers that had figured on his wife at certain times of extravagance to let him believe that the drooping plume he now saw would cost the matter of a week's wage to him.

This summary was, of course, a matter of moments, for as soon as her quick steps brought her within easy audience the lady inquired, "You have finished your job?"

Bill was taken aback for a moment, thinking that here, unexpectedly, another billet was being thrown at him.

"Yes, ready for another," he said.

"That's right. There's another waiting for you, you know," said the lady, with quick, low-toned accents.

"All right. Where?" replied Bill.

"At the front, you know. Everybody is wanted to do a job for the country now to help. Aren't you ready to do your part?"

"Well I've thought of it; and since you speak so plain, I'll tell you I'm not ready to go yet." Bill said this in hesitating tones, at a little loss in refusing the direct request of so fair a questioner.

"Not ready? You must get ready, and now," said she. "Everybody is called on to do an equal part for our honor and the honor of the nation."

The words came freely as platitudes will to the lips of inefficiency or inexperience, and their sound braced her into enthusiasm. They also had a challenging effect upon their hearer, whose answer was a rumination of her last words, "Equal part for our honor and the honor of the nation."

"Equal part, eh?"

"Yes, everybody, you know. There are no classes now. We are all threatened by a dreadful foe, and we've all to do what we can," was the explanation.

"Equal part," still repeated Bill. "Then you are doing yours?"

"Yes," she answered, in certain self-satisfaction. I'm trying to."

"'Spouse your husband or sons are at the fight?"

"No, my husband is over age—and I have no son."

There was a moment's silence, and he took up his theme.

"Well, if I fight at so much a day and lose my life or become crippled—my all—what would you lose? You must let me speak on equal ground, you understand," Bill explained. "I don't mean you, as a lady, but as a person of a country who is rich. I am to give my all—are those who get wealth as well as a living giving their all at the call of honor?"

"Of course you know," she said sweetly, "we are giving of our wealth?"

"Oh, that's not it. You said 'equal' a while ago. Now, if our honor requires us all to give equally, where do the rich people—those who draw big incomes from investments; land, shares, and those things—come in against us who must give all its possible to give—our suspended wages—our lives?"

"What do you mean? We all give liberally, of course."

"Yes, you make donations; but the wealth out of which you draw the money to make the donations still stays with you, and we must defend it for you."

She said nothing, and he went on:

"You ask me to fight for the honor of the nation," said Bill, quite at home now with his unusual visitor. "After the fight your wealth remains. Mine is gone, for I am dead, and my family have nothing of me to aid them. Where is the equality?"

"There's honor, you know," said the lady reprovingly.

"Honor. Where is the honor of those who have wealth asking and taking sacrifices from the general people in order to keep that wealth intact? That's very unequal honor."

"But we can't give everything. We give freely, you know—that's our duty," said the fair, would-be recruiter.

"If you speak of duty, I'm with you, madam. But duty is a sacred guide, and leads none of us to inequality. Say that duty requires that all people able to fight or aid should do so. If they don't, the land will either be taken from them altogether, or it will be so taxed down by levies that

the users of it won't get the value it produces. The fight is to retain this wealth. Now is it duty or honor that only a few of the people—those who happen to hold deeds and bonds and such, now—should get the benefit of defence when all of us have been put up to retain the rights of the nation? Shouldn't what we retain for the nation belong to the nation? We're equal in the fight or in loss—why shouldn't we be equal in gain?"

She listened with interest that was palpably assumed—the well-bred interest that endures rather than insults. Plainly she thought her working-man auditor was presuming on her condescension, and was in no way appreciative of her attention.

"Can't you see," he went on, too absorbed in his subject to notice personal points, "it's not honor at all, but self-interest, if the land is to be the prize of those who happen to have a lien on its deeds? Of course I have rights here, and I'll fight for them. But I'm over age too, as things are. I've two sons gone and more of us might be going, and there's my other four children to look after. My wife mightn't think you are quite right in talking about honor to me."

She flushed at this—but he did not intend it to have the significance it conveyed to her.

With a touch of reprimand she rejoined, "Your country is your motherland. Every man would fight before he argued if his mother were endangered."

"Quite right. My children would fight for theirs. I believe that. I know I'd fight for my old mother. But honor comes in there again. After all her sons fought splendidly and equally willing for their mother, do you think she still ought to give one or two special favor, leaving the others to get along at a great disadvantage?"

She had come to the end of her patience. Beckoning to her car, it rolled to her, and in a moment she was whirred away from the road, while Bill took up his tools, feeling all the better for having spoken his thoughts to one who was not often within sound of such arguments as his.

INNOCUOUS MATTER.

Candidly the gag department is too much for the "Call." Suppression is master now, and we are its bondsmen.

* * * *

Last week the weather was fair. That is, it was rainy in some places and some times, and elsewhere and otherwhiles, it was quite fine. Altogether, the season is good. Grass is green and lambs are young, and in many parts of the country crops are growing. Wool is thick and fleecy on various sheep, but it is a positive fact that the wool market is high. Let it not be thought that this is any reference to censorable matter. We know our place.

Mr. Hughes has returned. His hatter reports that there is no enlargement wanted in his house caps, but the sweat bands have been removed from his bowlers, and his phonographs have been wound up.

Since the fowls have started laying there has been a marked drop in eggs. It is expected that accumulated stocks will soon be available for service against any person who may be so foolish as to speak contrary to the wishes of those who are echoes of privilege. This should ease the metal market.

Women and others who have been misguided in their views are expected to show a better sense of the fitting in future. There are still vacancies in the jails.

The war is still on. A fearful engagement took place to-day in our back yard between the office boy next door—a fair-haired darling, with his mother's curls—and our printer's devil. There were many witnesses, but no other participants, which proves that the proverb from the Talmud: "Those that go last to the war are first home," has believers amongst us. The devil won, as usual. The view around our window is circumscribed. The right-o'-way at the back is very narrow, and the lanes at the front and sides are frowsy with dust-bins and dull echoes of the street. Near-by there is a stately church, so that no scent of garbage may profane our nostrils against the odors of sanctity that pervade our atmosphere. Just at the corner there is a pub—the indispensable pub. It is a modest shanty, and unless you are careful you might miss it. It is thought that

certain censor officials, on their way to the "Call" office, are detained there by pickets for a considerable time, which accounted for their late arrival in the healthy pursuit of their new profession. The pickets have never so offended against us. There is something of the look of a printery about that pub. Probably it has begun to feel the influence of its patrons in the same way as a healthy old couple assume identical appearance with each other. The wouser wave threatens to sweep over that corner, so all those who desire to quench something of their thirst for fame had better get a move on. Be early—earlier than early closing. Our friends, suppressive and supportive, are well posted in the brands on tap, and there is now no fear that anyone will get lost there.

Adam Lindsay Gordon has been holding receptions of A.N.A. members at his grave—at least they went there as pilgrims, barefooted and with ropes around their waists, and long, unshaven faces. Strange things happen in graveyards.

The first of September passed off beautifully. Nymphs patrolled the streets dressed in filmy white, and transparent and transfixed blushes. Such sights were winning. It is satisfactory to say that, as a result, charity has again had a fair cheque handed in. The wattle is in bloom on every hill, also on every flat. There is nothing of note to report from Flemington, though Caulfield got going again last Saturday. Prices generally ranged from much to little or from little to much, according to fancy. Winners showed no such disparity, being invariably amongst the little. Which goes to prove that Fortune's vagaries are not affected by the suppression gear now in operation on the movement. Fortune's vagaries were not quoted in the betting ring.

There is going to be a ——— (we daren't mention what) taken on October 28th. We would like to mention, if we may, that those who are not on the rolls have only a few more days to get there. Rolls are in request again. Fortunately, the grass is dry, provided you don't get up early. But with early closing spoken of so much, there is a marked tendency for people to go in for early rising. It is better not to rise, then you will not be able to fall. This is no reference to our betters. Meanwhile, rolls are available. Enquire at the post offices, police stations (if you are safe) and railway stations. The rolls you get at the pub. are not the right rolls for this occasion. But if you are not on, see to the job yourself. It's your business, and no one

else will do it for you. All over twenty-one, male and female (if living) are eligible. Don't forget; rolls are ready for your inspection and inclusion.

Senator Pearce's eye has got new spears of fierceness fitted on. The job of keeping down the bands of people who would try to be heard, in spite of their betters, has necessitated further armour on his breast and a more pointed spear in his glance. He must not be obstructed in the execution of his duty, even if that duty is a number of persons of most innocent habits. Let the execution go on.

Dairying is now a busy pastime. Milk is flowing freely wherever udders are full. There is a painful rumor that soon milk will be cheap. It is not wished that the rumour should get circulated in the country districts lest the farmers organise their herds into striking. There is enough trouble nowadays without having country cows on strike. Besides, where would we get our cream from when the strawberries come in? Pigs are in clover this season, the bacon market is fair, and ham is steadier than it was on the ark. It is said Shakespeare's ghost is bringing an action for damages against bacon on the ground of robbery after death. As usual, the rumor has only frail support. The office boy and the printer's devil (who has washed the crimson from his boko—to use his own expression) are waiting with a truck to take this copy down to the master's department, so, although our subject is not fully dealt with, it is necessary to call a halt to our treatment of it here.

September 7th, 1916.

Twilight and evening star,

And one clear call for me:

"Get out! Get out! We've got to close the bar!

Go home and swill cold tea!"

AT THE TABLE.

The lodger, so devout,
Says: "For this butter
Thanks for Thy care,
My God."

The landlady, so stout,
Is heard to mutter,
"Touch, if you dare—
By God!"

RULES FOR PASSENGERS.

Note.—In order to heighten good feeling between passengers and the men working the cars, the following set of rules have been formulated. If not adopted by the tramway's managers, and posted in the cars, it will not be because the rules are not necessary:—

1. Never be in a hurry. You have plenty of time and no one else counts.

2. Always make the tram stop specially for you, even if to do so requires that you separate yourself from others waiting. It makes you feel as if the tram belongs to you.

3. Enter a car by the furthest entrance by walking slowly from one end to the other and round again to where you started; you get exercise before rest.

4. Leave a car by furthest exit. In moving, go slowly, as if you were departing from a good home.

5. If you so desire you need not complete your toilet before catching your car. Conductors carry safety pins.

6. In giving children cakes or sweets, passengers are invited to leave liberal samples on the seats. Don't be mean.

7. Young lady passengers who are being seen to the tram should not delay for the kissing. Most of the staff are guaranteed adept at osculatory exercises.

8. Umbrellas should be kept in such a way that they cannot be missed. They are excellent trippers.

9. In travelling with a child you should always escape paying half fare whilst the child is in short clothes. They prove it is under three. Half-fare ceases when the children begin courting.

10. In tendering fares, never state your journey or what you require. Conductors must know what you want; they are paid for being thought-readers.

11. When desiring to stop pull the conductor's coat or butt him with your umbrella. That's what he's there for.

F R A G M E N T S .

Let no men and women think that the bubbling promises of such a speaker as we examine mean anything but desperation for the interests of property he so long has upheld. . . "Save, O save, is the cry. Come forward, workers! Property demands it. Whatever else is at stake, consider us! We thwart you in your aspirations. We scorn you in your ideals. We calumniate you when you prove your power to raise the standard of humanity. We hire farmers to break down your claims for better living. But now we are not safe. The foe is at our gates. Hold him off. Property itself is imperilled. Anything that we can promise you is yours. We implore you, we trust in you, and we are sure that your reward will be great. Trust us for that, but oh, never think that the rights of property are not more sacred than the rights of life."

* * * *

Mother love is without motive. It is inherent in its latent stage. It bursts into power from pain unknown to men. It is a continual sacrifice, and a never-ending pride. It is at once the glory and abnegation of beauty, just as birth is the object for which beauty is given.

* * * *

We are apt, metaphorically, to regard Australia as a queen crowned by modern Progress. In the days when children scramble in hordes for the privilege of programme selling, we are inclined to think that our picture is somewhat of a delusion.

"Card or book? Lars one! Lucky lars!! Sixpence!" so runs the medley. That little brown-eyed, galatea-garbed blossom of six is having his baptism of the street. He is decisively beaten for customers by the trained insistence of his neighbour of seven, who has plied himself into adeptness by the practice of many months.

Both of them have been whipped into the round of chance by the same taskmaster. When poverty makes demand the child must be availed of, so that the family may keep going. Gone are the little Nubian boys that were whipped to explore the chimney stacks, but is it progress that has removed the child chimney sweep and substituted a precocious army of street vendors?

Smithson Bros., Printers,
Warburton Lane, Melbourne.

