

A "LABOR DAY" DEMONSTRATION.

OPEN AIR MEETING ON THE YARRA BANK.

An open air meeting was held yesterday on the south bank of the Yarra to formally celebrate for the first time in this colony what is known in European countries as "Labor Day." It had been arranged that sympathizers with the movement should meet at the Herby and Wills statue at 2 o'clock. About half an hour after that time there were some 250 men at the rendezvous, and about twice as many apparently careless onlookers. A little later a march was made to the Yarra bank. The Knights of Labor, members of the Single Tax League, Melbourne Democratic Club and the unemployed fell into a straggling procession, which wended its way down Bourke-street and over Princes-bridge. The behavior of those joining the procession was quite orderly. When the men debled on to the river tow path two red flags were unfurled to the accompaniment of a freer cheer, and the procession moved on to the open space just opposite the Government House grounds. There a platform and the regulation table had been arranged, and by this time there may have been some 500 men present, half of whom, at least, were intent on acting more revolutionary than passing an idle hour of a Sunday afternoon. A brass band played the Marseillaise and other selections of music. The meeting was presided over by Mr. Max Hirsch, among whom were gathered several leaders of the unemployed.

The Chairman said the meeting had been called in order to demonstrate the awakening of labor to a sense of its duties and of its rights. The day they were celebrating marked the universal of the laboring masses all over the world. Those who were present were but a small battalion of the great army that held its review; but the same thoughts, the same hopes and the same aspirations that filled their breasts would find a response in the hearts of the multitudes who were assembled that day in every country and in every clime. In every language of the civilized world there arose that day a demand for justice and for right. (Hear, hear.) There arose a declaration, that although seas and mountains divided them, there was a bond which united the nations of the world—the brotherhood of labor. Too long, far too long, had the masses of the people meekly bowed their necks to the burden that had been laid upon them. In infinite toil and striving they had not achieved some measure of political right, and some voice in the management of their common affairs. That recognition they were determined to extend until the full principle was acknowledged that inasmuch as all men had equally to obey the law, so had all men an equal title to join in the making of those laws. (Hear, hear.) That right could not much longer be withheld. The full recognition of the equal right of all men to a voice in the management of their common affairs was near being conceded in this country, beyond all countries in the world, was aware as a community that unjust laws must injure every class in the commonwealth. What had become of the wealth that had been extracted from the sweat of the people's brows? It had vanished like a dream, leaving nothing behind it but troubles and cares. Where was the happiness of the men who, although they might be clad in fine laces and fared sumptuously every day, were yet aged before their time by monetary worries? The growth of injustice could not produce good fruit, neither could security arise out of legalized theft. (Hear, hear.) The unrivalled natural resources of this country, the gifts which the Creator had showered upon us, were barred to-day. The hands of the monopolists were upon them, and labor was excluded from their enjoyment. The workers were deprived of the enjoyment of the wealth which they made, and stagnation, universal stagnation, was the result. But those who suffered most from deeds of injustice, the masses of the people, had worse things to complain of. From year to year the army of men who were denied the privilege of earning the bread which they and their children wanted was increasing. By the thousand could be counted the men who could contribute by their labor to the wealth of the country, and who were yet condemned to slow starvation. The civilization concerning which we boasted degraded thousands upon thousands of fellow men and women below the level of the meanest savage. Against that system they raised their voices in protest. That crime they were sworn to abolish. They called for reform, not for revolution. (Hear, hear.) They were not waging war against individuals, but against unjust laws. Those laws they intended to repeal, and they knew they could repeal them in a constitutional manner. Whether the same could be said for the workers in other countries was, at least, doubtful; but they hoped that their example and the work which they would accomplish would save their brethren in other countries from that worst of all evils, a social revolution.

Mr. D. Finn said he was glad to see so many present taking part in a general movement which must result in the ultimate emancipation of humanity. He moved:—

That this meeting send fraternal greetings to the workers of all lands, and rejoice that the celebration of Labor day by the workers of the world has become a bond of international brotherhood and a sign of impending emancipation.

All thoughtful men must to-day have come to the conclusion that the labor movement was international. It must be realized that the interests of labor in all lands were identical, and that the only enemies which the workers had belonged to the exploiting and appropriating and monopolistic classes. Even the most Conservative of thinkers believed that the present system of society was wrong and rotten, as the condition of things forced the masses of the people to resort to crime to make a livelihood. Something like a revolution was needed to bring about a better result. His resolution was intended to encourage his fellow wage slaves all over the world to combine to abolish the capitalistic system. Let all workers in Victoria agree on a political platform, embracing "one man one vote," equal electoral districts, annual Parliaments and the entire and total abolition of the Upper House. Then the administration of the State would approximate to democratic government.

Mr. H. Leonard seconded the motion. He addressed the meeting as "friends and comrades in the great army of discontent." On behalf of the Knights of Labor, he said, he desired to tender all a happy new year. This was the birthday of a new unionism that considered that every man was his brother in the sense of expedi-

The problems of the world are solved when workers unite.

The motion was carried unanimously.

Mr. R. Houston moved—

That the meeting declares the equal right of all men in the national opportunities of America, that it proceeds and monopoly as the main cause of existing social injustice, misery, and crime, and that it therefore demands the gradual nationalization of the land by means of a tax on its rental value, all improvements being exempted.

A more important or far-reaching resolution could not be moved at any gathering. The great fact that the Latin American countries was laid by a few, and that the misery, want and crime of the world was all by the best authorities to be due to this, invited a general expression of opinion against that state of things with importance. The workers here should initiate those of South America, by whose actions at the late elections the plutocratic owners of the land had been thrown out. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. H. Taylor, of South Australia, seconded the most important resolution of the day. "It is called the 'most important' because until the workers were able to bring the object about, in vain would be their labor contests with the employers and their political contests with the ruling class."

That the meeting demands legislative recognition of the absolutely equal political rights of every adult member of the community; strenuously protests against monopoly and privilege in every form; and that while declaring the solidarity of the interests of all workers everywhere, pledges itself to strive for the substitution of a co-operative for the present industrial wage system of industry.

He exhorted men not to waste time this season in the football field or in the cricket field. Let them work by living a state of society about which equity and justice might subsist between man and man. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Hamer seconded the motion. He referred to the collection being made under the auspices of the Mayor of Melbourne, and supplemented by the Government, for the foundation of a labor colony, as a movement to enslave and oppress every working man. Were they going to stand by and see established in their midst a paper firm; in refusing to allow people to express their opinion, the Mayor of Melbourne had deprived them of their civil rights.

Mr. D. A. Andrade, who supported the motion, said that before the meeting could get the land they would have to have...