

The Tocsin
The Victorian Labour Paper

To Democratic Writers, Union Secretaries and Others

The Editors wish to point out that the Tocsin is conducted solely with the desire to further the Cause of Democracy in Victoria. ... Such Democrats are, therefore, cordially invited to help the men who are already writing for the Tocsin, as workers in the struggle to obtain proper recognition of the rights of Labour and to permanently establish an organ to effectually [sic] voice them.

The Functions of a Labour Paper in a new community like Australia are necessarily greater, and less sectional and factional, than they are in older countries.

...

We do not intend to make the mistake that Labour propagandists often make, namely, to pander to a mere class of labour. We don't particularly care whether the labourer uses a shovel or a theodolite [sic], a tape measure or a violin bow, the reins of a sanitary waggon [sic] or the pen of a poet, we are Labour's Tocsin against Idleness, against Paracitism, against Castle, against Flunkeyism, Expropriation. And we don't think that we will have an impossible task to show that the interests of Labour are the interests of all who labour with whatever organ Nature or Fate or God has most adequately endowed them.

Nor do we intend to fall into another pitfall of similar ventures - namely the divorce of Labour from Life. The labourer loves, sorrows, aspires, sins, dreams, reveres. In other words he lives, is living. The world is more to him than a mere "statement price" or "union rule," a statistical column of supply and demand figures or even than "one man one vote." The studio is for him, too, the symphony, the coster song, if he so wishes, the stage, the race, and the halls of learning, with their great alcoves stretching back to an immemorial past. He has hopes, emotions, wrestlings with faith and with reason, and, if we're going to treat him, we must treat those which are part of him. He is not the sexless automaton of the political economy books or the statistician's tables; yet if you divorce him from Life, if you shut out from your editorial chambers the rose-tints of his natural atmosphere, what worth is your monograph or your leader or your essay on the Iron Law of Wages, however wise it may be from the merely academic or Labour Party point of view?

The Tocsin is your own paper, owned by your trade unions, your labour leagues, your representative men, and many of yourselves individually. It

does not draw its sustenance from sources which, in the end, are inimical to that form of social organisation which alone finds favour with the workers. Other papers have done yeoman service to you upon occasion, but this paper is yours and yours only upon all occasions. It will try and do its part, and sincerely believes that it will be able to achieve something, but it will never be what it hopes to be until it receives your whole-hearted support.