

Head of Direct Action
French Railway Workers.

Dispatches from France path sentence of Durand, workers' union, has been seven years imprisonment in of this fact, the below are correspondent will prove interesting and suggestive.

Paris, Dec. 10, 1910.

the aid of the skillful man Socialist Premier Briand, strike of the middle of October, illegally, violently and least regard for any principle of justice and the railroaders back to work in humiliation, capitalist press fairly howled. They saw the end of syndicalism. A vigorous campaign of was launched by the combined against the militant workers in industries and thousands of them charged, blacklisted, or arrested slightest pretext. There were roaders alone discharged and over 100,000 were dismissed. It was a veritable reign of and has culminated in the recent ing to death. Durand at Havre ged moral complicity in the killing ab during the coal heave strike.

measures of repression far from the desired effect have had just the opposite. The C. G. T. is in almost open and threatens the government with a general strike if Durand is not released. The railroaders, supposedly beaten, are demanding the immediate reinstatement of their discharged fellow workers on pain of complete demoralization of the rail system of France in case of a continuing refusal. To add a little force to this threat, they have brought business to almost a complete standstill on the two trunk roads, and the other five non-trunk roads are rapidly following suit. They are using passive resistance tactics, as it has been lately named, the "pearled" strike. Simply by studied clumsiness, carelessness, deliberate mistakes and general cussedness they so confuse matters that it is impossible to transact business. So serious is the resulting condition that it is becoming a "national calamity." It is impossible to get shipments over the roads, and whilst the docks warehouses of Havre and other points piled mountain high with goods destined for Paris, the cupboard and coal bin after place is empty almost to the famine.

The Rothschild Railroad.

condition on the Rothschild road (L. R.) are as bad, if not worse, as those on the antiquated State road. The management of the former crack road, in the hands of French railroaders, at the end of the strike stated that the normal condition would be re-established again in three days. It is now two months since the end of the strike and, although the working force has been practically doubled, confusion and congestion is increasing. The management states that it will be impossible to resume the usual service before March 1. It has been unable to refuse all retail shipments at points on the line. So serious is the situation becoming that a veritable howl of is being raised by many business men who see ruin staring them in the face. The present condition lasts much longer, and is a leading one in all the big cities.

"Le Matin" instituted an investigation of the situation and sums the matter up by saying "To solve the problem there are but two solutions to consider. First, to reinstate the old personnel of the road; second, to double, triple or even quadruple the present working force." The employers were interviewed and denied that there was any sabotage practiced. But attention was called to the following proposed remedy: "Let the companies pass the sponge over the rails; let them reinstate our discharged roaders; let them give us an increase in wages at once, without the proposed unnecessary delay, and we will put the service on its feet in a few days. Otherwise, with all possible good will, it will take months and months." The extreme nature of this declaration is heightened by the attitude of the railroaders. In one article in "Le Matin" are contained the two following statements: "The railroaders are not interested in the general regard of the public, but only in their own selfish interests." "We cannot be expected to work for the capitalist class." "At first, we will not work for the bourgeoisie."

of the sabotage, of which we are the victims; special sabotage, "pearled" sabotage, that can't be suppressed." A little further on is a long statement praising the good will of their workers who are working frantically to clear the blockade, only, however, in some inexplicable manner to make it still more confused. By the way, these latter are getting in much "overtime." Behold the humor of the following: "I hope these workers (whose salaries have lately been raised for their good work) will persevere in the effort there is yet to be made in order to re-establish the order and regularity." Doubtless the workers will persevere though hardly in the manner hoped for by the honorable railroad directors.

Methods of the Saboters.

The methods of causing this confusion are many. One favorite way is for an engineer to surreptitiously hook onto an important car and ditch it somewhere along the line, where it may remain for weeks, the car checkers conveniently forgetting it. Meanwhile, some merchant is wondering where his car has disappeared to. Cars are hauled back and forth over the lines indiscriminately, and its only an accident when some business man intercepts his wandering ships. On "getting over the road" confusion reigns supreme. Time tables are valueless. As one writer says, they simply inform one of the hours on which the trains don't arrive or depart. Breakdowns are numerous; dead engines also, and the hauling capacity of the engines has for some strange reason been greatly lessened lately. It is in the freight stations, however, that there is real confusion par excellence. Boxes and bales piled indiscriminately; "fragile," "glass," "this side up with care," "use no hooks" signs are meaningless. All is a grist that comes to the French freight handlers mill to be made a general pile of all. To send an employe to look for a shipment is to bid good-bye to him for the day. He looks and searches without seeing or finding. So hopeless have consignees become of securing their goods by this one time successful process that they have taken to hunting their own shipments. The following article taken from "L'Intransigeant," a capitalist paper, gives a fair idea of the situation:

"Obligatory Pity."

"Yesterday at the Chambers of Deputies if M. Briand has promised nothing definite he has at least hinted that the railroad companies may be induced to forgive and open their doors to their repentant prodigal children (discharged railroaders).

"The theoreticians, the people who only reason from the absolute, said on the day following the end of the strike: 'No quarter!' Let us be merciful toward the strikers; toward all the strikers, the leaders and the others.' Very strongly said, but let us consider the facts. A proletariat that is to-day class conscious has opposed new tactics in this warlike reasoning. 'Very well,' said the railroaders to the companies, 'if you don't want to submit, we are going to have recourse to the strike of the crossed arms.' And, in fact, if the strikers on the North and State railroads have returned to work and are all at their posts it is only in the nature of a pretence. To accomplish only the half of their tasks, to purposely multiply errors and faults, to send to Dunkirk the merchandise consigned to Paris, such is the revenge of the railroaders who have decided to resume their normal manner of working only when the victims of their strike will have been reinstated. The complaints from the commerce suffering from this state of affairs have been so strong that they had to be heard. That is why the government and the companies will be obliged to capitulate."

Attitude of Socialist Press.

With capitalist papers thus frankly discussing the sabotage and its influence on the Government, one would expect that "L'Humanite" (edited by Jean Jaures, an official daily paper of the alleged working class Socialist Party) would at least have an encouraging word to say to the saboteurs. But no, this miserable sheet is suppressing the news of the sabotage, and in an article signed by Jaures imputes the disorganization of the roads to the fact that many of the best workmen have been discharged. This policy of distorting the truth is all the more disgusting when one considers that many deluded workers, believing to help the working class cause, subscribe for Jaures' paper in preference to the decidedly more truthful capitalist papers. Jaures' reasons for suppressing the truth is very clear. When the government is forced to yield and reinstate the discharged railroaders, Jaures will hail

it as a great victory for the "Party," as the Socialist deputies have been fooling away their well paid time conferring with Briand on the matter. Then, again, it would be a fatal mistake to recognize the efficiency of direct action tactics.

"La Guerre Sociale," edited by Herve, the "official organ" of the saboteurs, has been boycotted at all the railroad news stands in France.

The situation is an interesting one, and if in the course of a couple of weeks we read of a great victory for the Socialists in the Chamber of Deputies in having the railroaders reinstated, we will know whether to ascribe it to political action or the "pearled" strike.

Yours for an indestructible Pie Card,
W. Z. FOSTER.

P. S.—It is estimated that the railroad strike and sabotage following it have already cost France more than \$100,000,000.

A MISSIONARY AND A HAT

I once read a missionary's account of his first intercourse with some savages. They were all naked, except a few. One large, powerful man had a tall hat on his head, and that was all the clothing he wore. He seemed to be the chief, and excited great respect because of his hat.

The missionary afterward learned that he had won the hat and the right to wear it in many bloody contests, and only retained it because of physical prowess.

Another had a collar, but he did not wear it on his neck, as you would suppose, but on his head, like a rimless, crownless hat.

As the missionary became better acquainted, he learned that each and all of the savages desired a hat above all things. So he worked the idea for all it was worth. By promising them a hat, he induced them to wear a shirt, and, finally, when the hat arrived, the trousers were made to appear as a necessary part of the equipment.

After much persuasion, coaching and a patience for which only a missionary is supposed to be capable, he accomplished that part of their civilization.

Now, I don't know whether they wished to be civilized or not, but he had his own ideas on the subject, and had to make good to the financial backers of the venture. So, having learned their jargon, he made jingles to teach them to like work. One was hat and pants. See the ants. Always work. Never shirk. Few words, but lots of meaning.

He taught other things beside jingles, and in time had them doing a good business, sending products to the world's markets. And he had a personal interest in the returns, so much so that he finally kept them at work all the time, and had to employ clerks to attend to his own affairs. And all this grew out of a hat. And I think the jingles helped.

The working man now has a hat,
His pocketbook was never fat;
Gets into the game,
But often goes lame,
This head in a working man's hat.

The master is first up to bat,
Despises the slave and his brat;
Says smile, damn you, smile,
But work all the while,
And batted the working man's hat.

Here's the preacher's appraisal of that,
For the master always stood pat;
Be thankful, you slave,
Your goal is the grave;
A clod in a working man's hat.

There's a head in the working man's hat,
A think box, some brains and all that;
He develops a mind,
And soon you will find
A head in a working man's hat.

ED JORDAN.

Indianapolis, Ind.

ATTENTION ALL LOCALS

Fellow Worker Henry Bordet is in serious need of assistance. He was physically wrecked in the fight for free speech in Spokane. He served 30 days in the notorious Franklin school, and then 19 days in the jail. The terrible treatment which he received from the brutes in blue while fighting the battles of freedom has left him in a living death. He was in the hospital in Portland seven months. Since then, by the aid of friends, he came here to Holtville. He is in great need of surgical attention. While in the hospital, he was operated on, and the wounds of the operation are rotting. He is hardly able to get about; not able to do anything at all. We of Local 457, Holtville, are doing our best to help him. We can feed him, but it will cost considerable money to have him attended to properly. He will probably never be able to work. Something must be done. In the name of solidarity and freedom, we appeal for aid.

Send all contributions to
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