A L L F O R T H E C A U S E

Being the experiences of a

Socialist Propagandist

By

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"They never fail who die in a just cause."
... Byron.

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It was in the month of August, towards the end of a long snowy winter, that I arrived in Melbourne. For ten years I had been wandering, prospecting and mining on the goldfields of the world. The last four I had spent in the Australian Alps. The mining towns in the ranges were beginning to slump. Even Walhalla, that had never known anything but prosperity for forty years was going into decline. The Long Tunnel and the Extended were no longer dividend paying concerns. It was time to quit. There were big things developing in North Queensland, and thither I was bound. My time in the ranges had not been wasted, for during quiet times in camps and in huts, I had read a good deal, and studied considerably, but study was my undoing. Said a poet: "A little learning is a dangerous thing." So it was with me. My learning was only of a superficial character, but it caused me to think that I was more than a common miner. My studies were with an eye on a pulpit in the Anglican Church. The bible was always my masterpiece, and having been once examined by an Archbishop I had been supplied with a Bishop's licence and had conducted services in Gaffneys and Woodspoint. I thought to get farther when I returned from Queensland. But somehow or another, I did not get to Queensland; I had been there once before, and now thought to wait till the end of the tropical summer.

I had read Shakespeare, Burns, Moore, some of Kipling, Tennyson and Dryden. I had been introduced to Shelley by a review in the "Bulletin" when I was in Central Australia. But Shelley's poetry

could hardly be expected to blend with theology, although some of the Prophets, and Christ himself, raved against the evils of their times.

My hurry to go to Queensland seemed to leave me when I got to Melbourne, and after all, what did it matter if I did not go at all?

I had taken prizes for bible lessons when I was a boy, and had everything in the Old ~~Book~~ Testament at my tongue's end, and it seemed to me that there was only one job for a young man with ambition - I would go to the library and study theology. But in my rambles through that great forest of books I found ever so many different books to interest me.

Being fond of poetry, I looked up the American poets, Lowell, Bryant, and Longfellow, and then dropped on to Swinburne. There was much about him that I admired, but there were poems with which I could not agree, particularly in his "Songs Before Sunrise." His "Hymn to Man" was in conflict with my theological beliefs; but little did I dream that theological beliefs, no matter how deep-rooted, could be shattered. I was to learn that what knowledge I possessed was infinitesimal. I had not yet begun to study. As I moved through the library I marvelled at the collection of books that were assembled on the shelves. I had my own books on logic and rhetoric. They were useful perhaps, but only in so far as they had been a service in preparing me to look into and understand what I might undertake to read.

It happened on another day when I was in the library that I came across a book. It was by Jack London, "The War of the Classes." Not till then, although I had been regarded as a radical, had I noticed that society was cleft. I read the book at a sitting. London I knew. I met him in Dawson; he had wintered on Klondike, and was leaving for the outside world at the time I arrived there in the spring of 1898. Perhaps I should not have met him, but for a spectacular character named "Swiftwater" Bill. Bill was his partner. London left for the outside world, and I remained for a year. The maritime strike of 1890 and the shearers' strike four years later proved to one that there were employers and employees, but the Church had asked me and all men, high or low, to consider ourselves well placed, and to thank God accordingly. London's arguments were substantial, but not convincing all at once. Just as the human race has progressed slowly, so has a man, by intellectual stages, to pass from one form of belief to another. Politicians alone seem to develop rapidly. A short sojourn in the Labour Party seems to prepare them for a suitable place in the ranks of the enemy. Perhaps it is because they have no strong intellects, or no recognition of a class struggle.

One Sunday I was persuaded to put everything aside and visit Yarra Bank, there to listen to the various orators who regularly spoke at that place. The first to take his platform was "Chummy"

Fleming. I was disgusted. Fleming condemned and cursed all that I had been persuaded to believe was sacred, and I wondered that the Diety did not strike him from his forum. If what he represented was Anarchy, I had no desire to become an anarchist. I left the meeting in company with a young schoolmaster whom I had become acquainted with through relations of mine. He had been reared near the city and attended meetings on Yarra Bank with his father, before he was big enough to go about on his own account. He said: "Fleming seems rough, but he is mild when compared with Joe Symes. Joe is in England now, and you will be spared from hearing him, but years ago, when he was in Melbourne, he used to go down on one of the wharves on Sunday afternoons - there was no forum like Yarra Bank. He would lay the bible on the wharf, stand on it, and demand of the Diety that he strike him dead. That the Diety did not do it, Symes concluded that he did not exist." A poor method of reasoning, I thought. "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform."

"You have scarcely begun your education yet", he said. "You have been reared like thousands of others, in a narrow school, but you will get the portcullis of your eyes raised, if you visit Yarra Bank very much."

Fleming possessed a flag and on it was printed "NO GOD, NO MASTER." He was pestered with interjections, but that made no difference to him. He replied to them with vigor, and compromised

nothing. The clergy he called "thieves, liars, and black-coated imposters" who lived by lying and who above all things else knew they were lying." Tom Mann did not escape his mordant criticism. Tom was a Socialist, and Socialists believed in "authority", which he as an anarchist mortally despised. He talked of "Free Communes". What they might mean I was not in a position to understand. The Labour Members of Parliament called from him vitriolic abuse, and Harry Foran, Champion of Irish wrongs, fell a victim to heavy gun attacks.

I next listened to Foran of the Anti-Hamburg League, I had met many Irishmen, but none to ladle out the brogue like him. He had been a schoolmaster, but for knowing more than his superiors he was forced to quit the services of the Education Department. Foran was more of a scholar than Fleming, and never left anything to doubt. He supplied the meaning of every word and phrase. Pedantic-like, he would translate into Latin and Greek to make his meaning sure, and as he often said, "I will give you the Hebrew of it if you like." "You are all at liberty to disagree with me", he would say, but let your disagreement be with me here and now. If you disagree, your place is on the platform. Many of you might shy at coming before an audience, but don't let that excuse you. Come up and state your opposition, and I will intuitively understand what you mean. It is not to be expected that you can speak like Harry Foran. Harry Foran is an old dog.

Harry Foran is hardened to the game."

On another occasion he was speaking on a question that he considered should be of great concern to Irish Australians and clinched his argument by saying, "There are one hundred thousand Catholic families in Victoria, and they are all poor people. If you doubt my word, come up here and count my collection."

I next visited a Socialist meeting. There I heard Harry Scott Bennett. Bennett was a magnificent orator. He had served a term in Parliament and harboured a grudge against the Labour Party. It was developing a mania for respectability. The Labour Party was trying to ape the politicians of the old Liberal School. Never before had I listened to a man so beautiful in speech, except it was Frank T. Bullen, the nautical writer and lecturer. Like Abraham Lincoln's, his was to me almost a lost speech. There was life in the Socialist Party. Bennett had visited Australia a few years previously, and Tom Mann's presence in Australia, supported by his world-wide reputation, gave it impetus. He was a rugged orator and could never reach the height of even E. Tennyson Smith, whom I had heard in temperance lectures when I was a boy. A lecturer like Bennett could educate and inspire. I felt like hurrying to Queensland immediately; I was so small, so to speak.

Angas MacDonnell followed Bennett. Angas was a different kind of speaker. He wore a smile that never left him, even when he was

dealing with serious themes. He had a faculty for trotting out and exposing the iniquities that developed from a faulty economic arrangement. He was not a powerful and cultured orator like Bennett, but he was one of a few that belonged to his class. His easy flow of language and ready wit attracted a goodly audience.

Next followed Frank Hyett. Frank was neither a Bennett nor a MacDonnell. He was possessed of a wonderful flow of language, and a thorough knowledge of his subject, but he was without a soul - lacking in personality. Ted Russell was Chairman, but Ted was rough and raw, and seemingly was fired with enthusiasm. His speech closed the meeting.

There were a man and woman at another meeting. They were currency reformers. The man was dressed in frock coat and wore a bell topper hat, while the woman was frocked as if she were on of the well-to-do class. They talked about gold reserves and note issues, Their great phrase was "legal tender."

The afternoon was over, and more than a thousand people trooped away from the assembly ground. They resembled a multitude leaving a racecourse. Platforms were deposited in the Morgue nearby.

I left it all and kept an appointment to have tea with some relatives. They were shocked when they knew that I had associated with habitues of Yarra Bank, yet conceded that one ought to enjoy the experience of knowing what was going on. I was beginning to make strides.

CHAPTER II

I thought I had abandoned all ideas of a business career, and was torn between theology and socialism. It happened one morning just after breakfast, as I sat reading the paper, that a clerk from the broker's office called to tell me of a really good business that had been placed in their hands for sale. He was hard to get rid of, and I promised to call in. I met my prospective partner again, and we set out after dinner. We did not go straight to the place. We located the street, and walked about to see how South Melbourne was supplied with wood yards and produce stores. After satisfying ourselves that the suburb was not overloaded, we set ourselves to watch the place we were to inspect. We saw the carts going in and coming out, and concluded that the business should be investigated. We went into a hotel and called for a drink and were informed that two detectives were on duty in South Melbourne, and that we were they. Duncan Raeburn gave us a rough look over and asked us to call next day. "I don't know much about business brokers", he said. "I did not have this business on the market. Moore's man came in and urged me to sell as he had a couple of good buyers. I thought it over hurriedly, but he urged me to a decision.

It is not that I am a weak man, but for family reasons I bought a home in a distant suburb, and have to rise early and get home late.

The family urged me to sell; I put it on the market. That was twelve months ago. A buyer came along, but when I had gone to considerable trouble with him, he decided to buy, provided I would sell on terms. That I objected to do. When businesses are for sale, they go for cash. There are no terms offered when selling a business."

"Two men who would work together could make a good thing out of Raeburn's business", said my friend, "and it may be that we will buy the place. The only thing that troubles me is the lack of room. I should like a place where I could bring my horses to, and perhaps build up a carrying business. We would only have to buy a couple of lorries."

When we came to a point where we were satisfied to make a deal, we postponed till Monday morning the signing of the contract - but alas, to my astonishment my intending partner did not turn up. He sent a message instead. He had been to the races on Saturday, and his cash, which he thought to increase, diminished instead. I then entered into negotiations with Raeburn on my own behalf, for I was now inspired with the business idea. I began to dicker and get him down to the lowest price that he would agree to accept. I got him to a price below which he would not descend, and a well-to-do friend, who had just a little while before retired from the mining world, said to me, "You are better without a partner who is a

stranger, and now that he has dropped out, if you are satisfied that the business is good, and you are in need of any help, you can rely on a cheque from me to get yourself started." At the end of a week I had worked everything out, and we signed the contract. Monday, the second of December was to see me installed in a business and part of the life of a suburb to which I was scarcely more than a stranger. I was all at once a Hay, Corn, Wood, Coal and General produce Merchant.

I was not quite alone and a stranger. The man from whom I bought agreed to stay with me for a month, and at the end of that time I began to get to know people and become acquainted with the ways of business. I worked and left Raeburn to manage, but all the time he instructed me and timidity gradually wore off, and I began to feel that I was established. My name was painted over the door, and on bill heads, and travellers and agents called on me, all anxious to do business with Raeburn's successor.

On the Yarra Back one Sunday I heard Frank Hyett appealing for people to buy shares in the Socialist Co-op. A store was already opened, and a comrade had loaned a hundred pounds to start a bakery. The bakehouse was only a little way down the street from my store. I went to the S.P. office on Monday and saw Hyett. He promised to give me the order for the wood if I would favour his paper with an advertisement. I agreed and added to my customers, but I did not

know that it was loaded, as the saying goes. No sooner did my ad. appear in the "Socialist" that I was put upon by a number of canvassers. I was persuaded that it would be bad for business if I advertised in a Socialist paper and neglected half a dozen religious papers that circulated amongst the congregations of the different churches in the suburb. I was informed that I had Catholics, Anglicans, Methodists, Presbyterians, Salvation Armites and members of other smaller sects amonst my customers, and if these saw my advertisement in their papers I was sure to have my customers increase enormously.

It was rank intimidation I knew, but what could a man in the business world do to help himself against such strong representations? I gave the ads. I had to be like Paddy Mullins dog-go a little of the road with everyone. The name of Alf. W. Wilson was spread everywhere. The ads did me great good, for I was considered an enterprising young man. No other produce merchant advertised as I did.

When I had time to spare, which was not very much, instead of interesting myself in football clubs, church societies and a hundred different things that attract the business element as a rule, I went to the public library, determined to study Socialism. I looked up the Encyclopaedia Britannica, and there discovered what was meant by Socialism. I looked for a reference to Karl Marx, and was introduced to an understanding of his method. I then took up "Das Capital," and was there put on to the first rung of the ladder for scientific study.

What in all the world could be more logical than a clear statement of fact, such as the opening paragraph of that wonderful work: - "The wealth of Societies in which the capitalist method of production prevails, takes the form of an immense accumulation of commodities, wherein individual commodities are the elementary units. Our investigation must therefore begin with the analysis of the commodity."

It was slow and tedious reading, but how different from the mere theological history. Latin and Greek were useful wherever one studied them, but the theological forest of metaphysics would have to be discarded as soon as the scientific understanding became developed.

I gave my Sunday mornings to entering my books and doing things that the week days would not allow me to do, but the afternoons were spent on Yarra Bank, and the evenings for the most part in or about the Bijou Theatre to listen to the lectures.

I was prevailed on many times to join the Party, and as I improved my understanding I was drawn closer and closer. I was at a street meeting in Collingwood one night, and all the speakers had not turned up. I was urged to say a few words. Being experienced from church work, I mounted the box and endeavoured to deliver a short address. I did not satisfy myself, but the members of the Party, who had charge of the meeting, marked me down as a speaker of reputation. I just had to join the party then, and from being a strict churchman

I was metamorphised into a "Godless Socialist." In spite of all my theological studies I realised how little I knew. The lessons of science were numerous and only time and an application to study would enable me to master many subjects. One man who pretended to be concerned about me and prophesied that I would come through well, offered to loan me John William Draper's "History of the Intellectual Development of Europe", another comrade asked me if I had read "Socialism Utopian and Scientific", I was compelled to admit that I had not as yet even heard of those books. I was busy on "Das Capital", and it would take me a long time to wade through such a wealth of knowledge. I joined the lending library, and was able to take Marx home and read in my spare time. I was advancing famously, I thought. Soon I should be a worthy comrade of the speakers that I had heard and so much admired.

I was progressing as an outdoor speaker,and after having to delay my studies for a few months I was now free to go on and master Marx. I took a closer interest in the managerial part of the Party now that I was elected to the Executive Committee. The young business man, it was thought, would be able to give a hand to pull the Party out of its difficulties. But it was the Party that was supplying me with business experience. It was a business change, so to speak.

Tom Mann came back, and Bijou audiences showed appreciation

for the return of their chieftain. Scarcely was he back two months when I was elected to act as chairman on a Sunday night. It was considered an honour to preside at a meeting so largely attended. Three hundred worshippers in St. Mary's, Woodsmoint, on a Sunday evening, was an infinitesimal audience compared with the enormous crowd of faces that appeared before a chairman on the Bijou platform. It was my birthday, and little, I suppose, did my father and mother think that nearly thirty years before, the babe that was born would one night preside over a meeting of Socialists - they had not read Marx nor Charles Darwin. Mann called on the audience to wish me many happy returns of the day, and a wish that I would spend them all in the good and noble cause.

"I am going away again", he whispered to me, "and I want you to call the Executive together for Tuesday night. I have an invitation to go to Broken Hill. The miners desire me to organize and prepare them for a big fight against their employers."

I made the announcement as desired, and on Tuesday night Tom was permitted to leave for the Barrier.

CHAPTER III

The young propagandists were as energetic and as enthusiastic as ever, and as I was improving my knowledge in what time I could spare, I was in demand as a speaker. One Saturday it was Smith Street, Collingwood, another it was Commercial Road, Prahran, then the Market meeting in my own suburb. Next it was Nicholson Street, Footscray, and on the Town Pier, Port Melbourne on Sunday morning. Several of us were considered to be in the same class as Angas MacDonnell, Frank Hyett and others and were persuaded to speak on Yarra Bank. That was the acme of a Socialist speaker's ambition in those days. Few were reckoned good enough to grace the Bijou platform. Even that few were complaining of feeling the strain, and I was urged to prepare a lecture. I was not yet a consummate Marx Scholar, and had to be careful in going before an audience that had heard the very best, and would baulk at inferiors. I knew a good deal about theological history, and Abraham, from his birth place, Ur of the Chaldeans. I had been reading Lewis Henry Morgan, and with an understanding of man's progress, from him and the biblical histories I managed to get through a lecture that pleased my audience. No one but myself knew how nervous I was from the time I entered the theatre and for a full ten minutes after I started to deal with my subject. I was being tried as by fire, but was coming through.

A change took place in the law relating to early closing. The half holiday was changed from Wednesday to Saturday, and Friday was the late night instead of Saturday. In my business there was no late night, and Saturday was always a half holiday, but with business establishments open on Friday nights the propaganda meetings had to be changed from Saturdays to Fridays and the Socialist Party dance was held on Saturdays. It meant a lot to me, Friday being the pay day, and the market being open late on that night I had to stay in my office, for people called in and paid accounts as they went to or home from the market. I was more fortunate than other wood merchants, for I could give credit and get my money in. A few cheated me, but for the greater part I collected my debts.

I confined my meetings to Sunday morning on the pier, and was always taken to a comrade's home to dinner. I was what Kipling would call "giddy harumfrodite" or "bloomin' cosmopolouse". In business I was brought in contact with the so-called superior people, for there were a number of them amongst my customers - and fine people many of them were - and about the meetings I was brought in contact with the proletariat. In the case referred to I was pleased to be acquainted with working people. The home was humble, but clean and comfortable, and the Sunday dinner was like those that we were fed when we paid board at the Albion or attended there for dinner on Sundays or at Christmas or New Year Time. Never did Rubira's serve a better dinner

than I was treated to on the Sundays that I dined with my proletarian comrades. For one thing town life was gripping me.

CHAPTER IV

Things were developing. The strike was on at Broken Hill and all the mines along the line of lode were shut down. Tom Mann was the centre of the dispute, and the greater number of miners were of the opinion that with his leadership they must certainly win. Little did they realize what I did not too fully understand at the time, that economic forces work through industry, and determine whether the fight shall end in victory or defeat. Eugene Debs said that too much faith in leaders was bad for the workers, for as long as they trusted to men to lead them one way, there was a possibility of their leading them another. Daniel De Leon, the greatest of Marxians, once wrote on the Pleb leaders in the ancient Roman Empire, and there proved by facts from history, that what is required is a strong rank and file organization. Tom Mann was not dishonest, but Tom had to deal with a set of economic conditions. The mine owners or the law tried to do with him what they had done with Sleath and Ferguson, the leaders in a previous strike - had them arrested and gaoled. Others visited Broken Hill, till all rebels of note were gathered at that storm centre. Harry Holland, a very capable Socialist from Sydney, and Australia's greatest Socialist journalist, rushed thither. Harry was no compromiser, and in an address he delivered to striking miners, urged methods that put him on trial for sedition. He said, "Boys, you must put ginger

into this fight. If a policeman hits you on the head with a baton, return the blow with a pick handle". It earned him a sentence of two years.

Harry Holland, Tom Mann, and a dozen lesser lights were committed for trial, and forbidden to speak on the Barrier till their trials were over. Mann was experienced in the old world, and he urged the hiring of a train which, loaded with four thousand people, sped across the State boundary to South Australia. There, they arrested ones showed their contempt for the mine corporations law, or the law that swung very much in their favour.

Where were these men to be tried? The Crown Law office decided that they should not be tried on the field where their offences were committed, and first fixed on Deniliquin, a pastoral town, in Riverina. There was a protest, and the venue was changed from there to Albury, another pastoral town. Tom Mann and his fellow culprits arrived in Melbourne. It was the signal for enthusiastic and determined demonstrations. Socialists forgot their difficulties and the differences that existed between comrades and the members of the Labour Party. The big and little politicians joined, and the town hall was crowded with people to protest against the unfairness of trying men before a jury that did not possess the slightest conception of the conditions that obtained on the Barrier silver-lead field. Many of the speeches were red hot. Mann was at his best, Harry Holland's was a powerful

fighting speech, and some of the older and some of the newer labour politicians were put on their metal. For a couple of weeks we were busy, as there were a dozen witnesses for the defence. How different to a quiet life within the church! I realised that I was more in favour of the hurly burly life than the quiet one where I should have to sit in my study all week and watch the world go by.

It was trial day, and Tom Mann was before the court. Before the case got started he asked for an opportunity to make an explanation. It was granted, and there before a hard, unsympathetic judge, Justice Pring, Tom rolled off a volume of his oratory. He spoke for an hour and twenty minutes. The case came on, and for three days Mann stood in the dock. Every effort was made to convict him, but just as he had escaped before, he got out of their clutches and fared better than Sleath and Ferguson. Once when the Union barrister referred to something Mann had said in his speech before the judge, the judge replied, "I cannot recall all the man said, he said so much." The case over, a meeting was arranged, and from the balcony of a hotel he harangued a vast audience. People in Albury who had not heard him before, had the opportunity, with him at his best. He spat fire and brimstone at Judge Pring and "Hatchet-faced" Lamb, as he called the prosecuting barrister. It was Friday, and he left for Melbourne by the express. Saturday was the first of May, and a demonstration of children was being given on Yarra Bank. Just as they were going

through the maypole dance, Mann appeared. It was the signal for cheering, and Tom was called on to make a speech.

I listened more particularly than ever. What was his experience that day might be mine and theirs at a later date.

"Here I am", he began, "I escaped them. They had me three days in the dock and three nights in the 'jug', and the old judge had the cheek to say that if the jury had only convicted, he would have ordered me where my tongue would be silent for a year or two. I am glad, however, that I escaped them for I have a big work to do, and if it is any news to you, comrades, I shall have to be leaving Australia soom. This country is too small for Tom Mann. Austria has annexed Bosnia and Herzegovinia, and that is a consummation of an International policy that will land the world in a war before many years, mark my words for that. Before another ten years, we shall witness Socialist principles applied to industry." Sure enough he was right. The war came, and Russia undertook to establish a Socialist Republic. It may not have been just as Mann meant, but it happened.

At that time an enthusiastic lady, whose name was never to be made known, donated one hundred pounds for the purpose of starting a Co-operative farm. It is strange how many people come to mistake these co-operative business for socialist efforts. The hundred pounds was never added to, and the farm never became an established fact. The party controlled many activities. There was the orchestra, a

choir, a boys' band, and the Sunday school, as well as a weekly dance, and a Sunday evening supper.

Miss Codlin, who had conducted the school for a long time was compelled to give up. It was difficult to find a successor. At last I was chosen. What I lacked as teacher was made up by my staff. My father was a school teacher, but I did not possess his particular gift in that direction. I had as assistants young men and women who could instruct in calesthenics, etc. My part was teaching elocution, and imparting a smattering of economics, as well as keeping good order amongst the scholars. Anyhow, I got along well enough, and the boys and girls stuck to their superintendent,

I continued for twelve months, but desired to go on Yarra Bank. Some of the older members were dropping out. Frank Hyett, in his secretarial job, found but little time to indulge in Socialist propaganda. Angas MacDonnell went into a boot shop and graduated into the Labour Party to become a suburban Councillor and a Mayor. Harry Scott Bennett was prolonging his stay in New Zealand. ~~Bessie~~ Lizzie Ahearn married, and I had to become the leading speaker. I was still studying and graduating; the more I spoke the more I laboured to get at grips with the working of the Capitalist system. I had "Das Capital" from the Socialist Library for six months without the librarian calling it in. It was a confirmation of the accusation too often hurled at Socialists that there are only a few who have sudied or even read Karl Marx.

Tom Mann and family left for Africa en route to England, and the Party was thrown on its own resources. The financial position was still bad, and although Mann's departure eased expenses by five pounds a week, the struggle was keen. At last the Bijou had to be closed. It was impossible to draw audiences and collect seven pounds ten every Sunday night. So the Gaiety was hired at half the rent, and the Party struggled to carry on. What annoyed me was the reliance on any and everybody to lecture. Everybody that had a pet theme was put on, and any and everything but Socialism was talked. Time went on and the party kept alive, but it was only a Party in name. If a man or woman lectured on a subject in favour of or contrary to socialism he or she was applauded. It reminded me more of a loose and open forum than a socialist platform. It was an audience of clappers.

Bob Ross, Socialist journalist, was editing the paper, but Bob's leanings were very much to the Labour Party, and the Labour Party was very much Capitalistic. After a time Ross left for New Zealand, to edit the "Maoriland Worker", and others were put in charge of the paper. Mrs. Marie Pitt was joint editor with Rev. F. Sinclaire. Sinclaire was a scholar, but he was not a Marxian. Mrs. Pitt was a rebel poet, and militant to the core, but the paper was not what some of us desired.

A man who belonged to some other Party used to peddle papers every Sunday on Yarra Bank, and about the Gaiety on Sunday nights. His paper

was "The People". It was published in Sydney. I liked it and admired the principles of the Socialist Labour Party, but I could not break away from the Party I had so much interest in. I could forgive much. To me it was socialism, and party politics did not matter.

There was another Party in Sydney, the Australian Socialist Party. Harry Holland was the editor of its paper, but the A.S.P. was in the Socialist Federation, and so was the V.S.P. The two papers were sort of brother papers. After a time Ross was brought back to Melbourne, and Harry Holland who served only a part of his sentence for sedition, on his release contested an election against the high and mighty William Morris Hughes. The workers of West Sydney were not ready to accept a Socialist, and Hughes was taken again. Holland was then urged to visit New Zealand and edit the "Maoriland Worker." He went. It was a good day for him, and a good day for the workers of New Zealand. Harry was a staunch fighter. On the mainland, for refusing to allow his boys to drill under the Conscription Act, he was heavily penalized. And if ever a man went short in the interests of the workers that man was Harry Holland. Well did his family know that the way of an agitator is hard. But even Harry Holland became mellowed as he sunk in the slough of Labour politics.

Not so long after Holland arrived in New Zealand there was a strike of miners at Waihi, and for repeating what he had told the

miners of Broken Hill, he was sent to gaol again in "Seddon's Country." He was released, and when the war broke out, took up his usual uncompromising attitude. A member of Parliament, Paddy Webb, was gaoled for what he said about the war, and deprived of his seat in the New Zealand Hall or Legislature. Holland was selected to contest the election and won. Immediately he entered the House he was elected Leader of his Party. He did not compromise ~~same~~ as Labour Leaders on the mainland. His manifestos at election time were always a class-conscious appeal to organize and end the Capitalist System. He was never an idler. His investigations were responsible for a number of booklets and pamphlets. He wrote a brochure on Imperialism. He culled chapters from the history of China, and exposed the Administration of Samoa, by the Government of his own Dominion. He wrote a scathing indictment of New Zealand's treatment of conscripts during the war, and supplied us with a book of beautiful poems.

Harry had endured much for the cause, and put his family short many times. Only Mrs. Holland could tell of the terrible time they endured. Harry mellowed, but for all that he was a rather better type of politician than any other we could name in Australia. His last deed was to attend the funeral of an old Maori chief, and he died suddenly at the funeral. Out of respect Maoris carried his body from the graveside. Harry deserves a page in the history of the Labour Movement in Australia. Had I joined the Labour Party, I might have become a

Minister of State. I rubbed shoulders with them anyhow, and what I got to know about them would not be complimentary if I dared to make it all public. They were the type described and criticised by Abraham Lincoln.

Jack Curtin, a young man and a brilliant orator who had often spoken with me, was looked upon as the principal of the Party after Tom Mann's departure. Jack scathed the Labour Party introducing conscription of boyhood in Australia, "My friends", said he, "say that I am up in the clouds", but if I am, the Labour Party is down in Hell." Not long after this uncompromising socialist went into the Labour Party and contested a seat against one of the strongest liberals in the Commonwealth Party. Like Lucifer, he dropped suddenly from above the clouds to the nethermost depths of hell. Such stuff are some socialists made of -"God moves in a mysterious way...".

Then came another young man, raw from the country, and unlearned in economics. He and I became friendly as we met at the Gaiety Sunday by Sunday. At last he joined the Party, and attended propaganda meetings. He was enthusiastic, and after a time was persuaded to share the platform with others. He visited Port Melbourne on Sunday mornings, and warned the workers that there was only a fortnight between them and poverty. When Jack Cain had advanced to that of a fifth rate speaker, he too joined the Labour Party and succeeded in entering the Victorian State Parliament. Like all who joined that Party, he became reactionary. Socialism was pushed far into the background. Then tested Jack was made of spurious ore. Emancipation

was an individual matter with him.

Two more bright lights came into the party, Alf. Foster and Maurice Blackburn. They were fresh from the University and had not yet found a law practice. They were welcomed as important additions. But their membership was not of very long duration. Both were attracted to the Labour Party; Foster to contest the same Federal constituency as Curtin had done, and Blackburn to win his way into the State Parliament. Within a short time the Party had won and lost them. Foster afterwards, by the favour of a Labour Ministry, was appointed a Judge. Now and then he sparkled as a radical, but for the greater part he was as all judges are.

At last a great day arrived. It was the thirteenth of April 1910. The Labour Party had long hankered for the fruits of office. Twice, but for brief periods only, had it sat on the Treasury benches of the Commonwealth. But on this memorable day it swept the polls. Andrew Fisher, miner and engine driver, was for a whole three years to be the Prime Minister of Australia. Big things were promised, and big things were expected. Fisher's strategy had succeeded in driving two contending parties of Capitalism into one camp, and for that there were to be no more protection and free trade. The heavy guns of both parties were now to be trained on the Labour Party. But the Labour Party found an impregnable fort to shelter them - the Constitution. "The ready-made machinery of State could not be immediately used in

the interests of the working class", as Marx contended.

With a substantial majority in the Representatives and the Senate they were compelled to confess their inability to legislate as they had promised. They were a promising party without a promised land. There was only one way - referendum.

In the meantime, they framed a Defence Act that conscripted all the youth of Australia. This Act set on foot an agitation, and brought into existence an organization named the Australian Freedom League. The Members of the Society of Friends were most active in this and although passive resisters for the most part, they set an example for action that was estimable. Many of them in various states were prosecuted and penalized, and some even broke up their homes to the extent that they sent their boys away to avoid what to them was an uniquity.

I was drawn in as a side-line and helped at meetings with many of their speakers and organizers. It was that organization, the Freedom League, that was ready to fall in and function during the war when conscription was advanced to the foreground. King O'Mally, a man with a financial bent urged the founding of a Commonwealth Bank, and although he was given much credit, Frank Anesty knew even more about banking and the ways of finance than the "King" did. But with all of them it was after all more or less a copy of the American Reserve Bank Charter that the Commonwealth Bank was founded on. Capitalism demanded such a bank and again the Labour Party but administrated the Capitalist party political State.

Immigration and increase of population was another Empire and not a class question; when the Fisher administration legislated the Maternity bonus, triplets might earn a king's bounty, but only a confinement earned the maternity bonus.

Then came the Navigation Act, necessary again in the interests of a growing shipping trade. It was not working class legislation either. It was tyrannous against the seamen, and in some clauses draconic.

"Nationalization of Monopolies" was the slogan of the Referendum. It was contested as rigorously as an election, but in spite of the enormous vote at the election, the people of the Commonwealth would not permit their Constitution to be tampered with, even by a Labour Party.

Other interests were advanced to the foreground. A report gained currency that the English battle fleet was far and away too small. A movement was set afoot to present a battleship to England. Here Fisher baulked. He announed his government as being in favour of building an Australian navy. He would put Australia on the map of Nationhood.

There were those crusty imperial-minded who would stop short of nothing but the presentation of a battle-ship. Fisher was adamant. A monster meeting was organized to take place in the Melbourne Town Hall. It was a monster meeting. By seven o'clock the hall was crowded. I managed to find a place to stand with many others, at thetop of the platform under the organ pipes. I did not mind. I was where I could vote if it came to a vote proper. The meeting was not destined to be unanimous, nor peaceful. A large number of socialists and Labour Party

supporters were there. John Curtin found [illegible] the platform, and used [illegible] points of order to [illegible] the resolution. [illegible] while [illegible] an effort was made to remove him. I hurried down from my perch and joined, or was mixed, in the scuffle. It took half an hour to empty the hall of the undesirable element, after which the resolution was passed. The Australian Navy was created and a unit of the fleet distinguished itself at the Battle of the Cocos.

Then came preference to Unionists. There was a protest meeting again in the City Hall. This time admission was by ticket. Again the Fisher party supporters at the Trades Hall proved equal to the occasion. They sent an unknown man to the city clerk's office to obtain a ticket. From that, five hundred tickets were printed. They were distributed, and the hall was more than crowded. When the meeting got under way it proved to be tough. The mover of the anti-preference motion was heckled severely. The Mayor, Cr. Davey, saw that the plans had gone awry and pleaded for a hearing. That the speaker could not get. At last the Mayor rose and promised the audience that if it would accord speakers a hearing, he would permit speakers to grace the platform and move an amendment. Ted Russell, once President of the Socialist Party, now secretary of the Agricultural Implement Makers' Union, handed me a typed resolution, or amendment, saying, "You are not connected with the Trades Hall and they won't suspect you of implication in this plot. Get on the platform and be ready." I hastened up and handed the amendment to the Mayor. A seat was provided for me, and when the Mayor called on me, I read the amendment. My speech was short, and as near to the point as I could make it in an extemporaneous fashion. M. M. Blackburn

stepped up and seconded me. Then came the vote. It was even, or slightly in favour of the amendment. The Mayor said, "It is a close vote, so close that it would take a Philadelphian lawyer to declare it accurately. But I can do nothing else than declare the motion carried, and so it ought."

The crowd poured out of the hall and a feeling of bitterness prevailed amongst those who had attended to down Fisher. I was subject to mention and severe criticism in the editorial in the "Argus" next morning.

Socialism not having been established, the Labour Party was left to carry on.

A buyer approached me and I agreed to sell my business. My sympathies with the business world had slackened as my interest in Socialist propaganda increased. And I was a free man once more. No longer should I be pestered with one hundred and one people who had axes to grind at the expense of the business man. I could breathe freely and say, "Life is not to draw fresh air and gaze upon the sun. 'Tis to be free!"

What was I to do? If I could not go into business again I should have to go back into industry. What industry could I go into? I was not acquainted with industry in or around the city, but I had improved my knowledge of industry as it is carried on in and around cities. I had also become acquainted with a number of men who appreciated me as a young socialist speaker, and some of these sought me out, and offered to put me on the way to fend amongst the denizens of town life. I was ready to give ear, for I did not wish to go away from the meetings and socialist propaganda. I was nominated for membership of the Port Phillip Stevedores' Association. I secured a little work to begin with. Then Walter Thomas Mills came to

Australia. He was a member of the Socialist Party in America; I know nothing of that party although I had heard and read of Eugene Victor Debs. I had read his pamphlet on Industrial Unionism, and for that I was thankful. I had also read of books by Daniel De Leon. His preamble of the I.W.W. was masterly and years' experience and learning have convinced me that he was the mightiest of the mighty round the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries. He of all Socialists knew the functions of the political State.

Australia had heard a number of overseas orators. Ben Tillet came to Australia in 1896, stumped the country and talked Socialism in a way, but all the time gave a sort of leg up to the rising Labour Party. After him the aspirants for political honours cut their hair in the same fashion and that lingered for a long time. I t was Tillet who offended at a function held in Ballarat, when he refused to toast Queen Victoria. He dropped into hot water when he referred to her as some kind of an old woman.

After Tillet came Mark Twain. Mark brought no message of emancipation to the workers of Australia. His themes were in keeping with his writings in his books, and after all Mark Twain said and wrote much more than any Socialist or Labour agitator. He had no votes to collect, and no compromise to make.

The next Socialist to visit Australia was Ramsay Macdonald. A good orator, and a man who appeared serious in his intentions to stamp out that system that exists by sucking the blood of living labour. Macdonald became Prime Minister of England, and alas, poor Mac! Like all other Socialists who became members of the Labour Party, he sunk deeper and deeper into the slough of political despond.

Then Tom Mann came and conterminous with his visit was that of Ben Tillet again. I heard Ben in one of his best lectures, "The tragedy of Humanity under Capitalism." But Ben, too, when he became a Labour Member of Parliament mellowed into a ribald reactionary.

No sooner had Tillet returned to England than Kier Hardie, by way of India, visited Australia. His pet theme was England in India. Kier Hardie returned, but Tom Mann had not fulfilled his mission.

Next to give the Commonwealth the once over was a man named Hartley. Tillet was fierce, Tom Mann was rugged. But Hartley was a placid, pleasing speaker. Some of his lectures were of an educational nature, but Marxian economics were never handled by him. He was a Socialist of the Robert Blatchford type.

Then came Walter Thomas Mills, Mills began his platform career as a temperance lecturer in U.S.A. Having gained considerable experience during those years that he fought the devil and drink, he graduated into the Socialist Party of America. From there, with a book that he had compiled, he visited Australia. Bob Ross had notice of his coming, and Bob organized a series of meetings for him. The King's Theatre was his platform. A packed theatre came to hear him and many hundred copies of "The Struggle for Existence" were sold every Sunday afternoon. Mills saw, or thought he saw, a good opportunity to establish himself in Melbourne, and set out to gather in what should develop into a boolka (an aboriginal word meaning "Big"), organization. There was to be no section or sectarianism in his organization. His party was to be aswide as every shade of thought. All the Trades Hall officials were to find a snug place in it.

Ross and Mills had talked and Ross had recommended me as one likely to be of service to one in so great a work as Mills desired to undertake. They both approached me, and I was forced to consider my position. Was Socialist Propaganda a mythical thing, or was it something tangible. The generalities of Socialism had been talked for a number of years. Had we now arrived at a time when generalities should cease to form the theme of socialist propaganda Had we arrived at a time when we should tackle socialism on its distict academic side? That time was drawing near, but only for a few of us. I was one that thought Industrial Unionism should be pushed hard into the foreground, but for the greater part our Australian socialists had gripped nothing beyond generalities. I decided that I might act as secretary to Mills, and do what could be done to advance an understanding of Socialism in its truest perspective.

It was my duty to circularize all who could be got in touch with, and compile the reports and sum up prospects. Such a party as Mills dreamed of could not be inaugurated without a paper; Mills and Ross drew up a prospectus, and marked out the greater part of it in preparation for a number of costly advertisements. My office work in conjunction with Mrs. Mills occupied me all morning, and during the afternoon I used to visit business houses and canvas for ads. Many promised to consider ads, when the paper became a reality and on those many promises I assured him that the income from that source should net many hundred of pounds a year.

While Mrs. Mills and I were busy on our part of the great organizing campaign, Mills shipped to New Zealand, where Ross assured him, thanks to the preparatory work already done by the Federation of Labour, there was a

mighty work to be accomplished by Mills and his efforts. But something happened. One Morgan, in U.S.A., editing a paper, "The Provoker", made a vitriolic attack on Mills. That article was reproduced in "The People", Socialist Labour Party paper circulating in Sydney and it was the antithesis of all that could be complimentary to Mills. The Heavens were high, and the Czar far away, as the Russians used to say, but Mills did not return to Australia to follow on the work he had initiated. The article in "The People" astonished Australia.

It mattered not that it were all true, or only partly true, or that there was only an infinitisimal portion of truth init. It had an effect. A Labour politician, or a union official, can go far wrong and be forgiven, but an oversea agitator has to live up to an unblemished record, or be damned. An Australian may be false to his country or his class. An Australian may be false to a friend, but the man who comes to alight on the Labour movement from overseas must come with an unblemished record. It was enough. Mills either found New Zealand a better feeding ground, or his reputation so dented that he decided to stay for a time in the shivery isles. Mrs. Mills received word to square off in Melbourne and follow her husband. The work that she and I had done had gone for naught. I feared for success from the first. With the Labour Party successfully seated on the treasury benches of the Commonwealth, and the Labour movement so honey-combed with opportunists it was not to be expected that the time was ripe for the formation of a revolutionary party in Australia, such as Mills would like to have launched.

At this time there was a crop of Labour trouble afoot. The sugar workers in Queensland went on strike and the season's crop was in jeopardy.

But with craft unionism as the industrial basis of the Labour Movement, success was not to be expected for the sugar workers. The Colonial Sugar Refining Company sought labour in all parts of the Commonwealth and soon recruited as many men as were required.

Then craft union recreancy asserted itself. Seamen and railway men refused to make common cause, and the Waterside Workers, who were willing to play their part, were prevailed on by W. M. Hughes, who was General President of the Federation, to remain at work and keep honourably to their agreements. A strike on their part destined to do injury to the Labour Party caused the Waterside Workers to load sugar that had been harvested and crushed with blackleg labour. The strike dragged on but by craft union methods was brought to naught.

Then the men in the Implement Manufacturing industry employed by ~~High Victory Mackay~~ HUGH VICTOR McKAY ceased work. It was another craft union strike; the headquarters of the strike committee was in the Trades Hall, but that helped the cause but little. Unions with unlimited cash at their disposal did not feel disposed to reduce their bank surplus by very much, and at Union meetings only small amounts were voted to assist the strikers' families. But in spite of that the men exhibited stern determination. The class struggle asserted itself. A Committee of men and women set to work to canvas and collect. A goodly sum came in and much in the shape of foodstuffs and clothes, but never sufficient to maintain the strikers and their families. Socialists, and I was one of them, visited the Trades Hall day by day, addressed meetings and endeavoured to educate and encourage. At last Frank Hyett paid the strikers a visit. He had been sent along with a

substantial cheque by the Railway Union. Frank was called on to speak, and being no mean orator, he took a grip on the men. "Fight these gormandising Capitalists", he said, "and as for those who blackleg, give them a hell-fire time." Frank was rapturously applauded for his fighting speech, but was afterwards known through the papers as "Hell Fire" Hyett.

Joe Skeehan was the secretary of the Union at the time, but it broke Joe down, when he was compelled to suffer defeat with a union of half starved men. But Joe never learned the lexion of the Class struggle. He began the fight a craft unionist. He went through it as one and ended as he began, in spite of all the Socialist propaganda that I and some others endeavoured to inculcate.

As a craft union strike it was bound to fail, and fail it did, and once again the workers in the harvester manufacturing industry were forced back on to the seven shillings a day wage Higgins prescribed as being sufficient to keep a man with a wife and three children in frugal comfort. The class struggle was tacitly asserting itself all over Australia.

The Magnet Mine in Tasmania, located in almost inaccessible mountains on the west coast bred trouble. There were no miners who could be hired to replace the men who had not only struck, but had left the district. The mine was declared "black" and no man holding a Miner's Association Card could be induced to go to seek work in the Magnet.

Then came trouble at Lyell. The Company had been formed seventeen years before, but never had the company got into conflict serious enough to force the men to throw down the gauntlet. But in 1911 an unbroken record could not stand any longer. Most of the mine work was done on piece work or

contract. That system of intensifying labour never appeared anathema to the miners of Lyell. It produced, and continued a harmony between the management and the men for the seventeen years of the mine's existence. But one evening it was discovered that a man named White, one of the contractors, had acquired a habit of going back into the mine after tea each evening where he indulged in barring down the baulked ground from the firing out as they went off shift. Immediately he was placed under interdict The miners demanded his dismissal. The management was obdurate. A strike occurred. All the miners quit work and for seven weeks the Great Lyell and North Lyell amalgamation were idle. Men could not be obtained for blacklegging. The haulage up the mountain did not work and a hundred buckets on the aerial train refused to travel. The smelter stacks no longer belched forth smoke charged with sulphur and arsenic to destroy all vegetation and desolate the mountain side. But one thing did happen. Day by day colour and healthful looks returned to the faces of the men who had been for so long hidden from sunshine and the light of day. "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform" might have been truly applied to the men of Mt. Lyell.

Although the miners held a key position that in itself meant but little in the long run, they were wage slaves and wage slaves must necessarily compromise in the end. There was no revolutionary spirit permeating the men of Lyell. At last White disappeared. The men said that in order to settle the dispute he had been sent by the Company to the barrier silver lead field in Western New South Wales. The mines were manned again, and a pyrrhic victory was all the men won. But the idle mines were prepared for a disaster.

It looked as if winter was going to be hard, so I booked for Tasmania; miners were scarce, and the Lyell mines were advertising. I was given work in the North Lyell, helping with timber work. It was timber work. The mine was almost in a state of collapse. The strike the year before and seven weeks idleness had got the mine out of repair. The dividend had been passed, and this year the manager ran for a profit of a thousand pounds a day. Work that should have been done was being neglected. With a shortage of men there was no time for repairs. My mate, "Speewa" Smith, and I had to set up timber, in some cases five sets high, and no mullock to steady any of it. I could see nothing but disaster ahead.

In some places where we worked we were in danger of our lives, and only the heavy sets of timber prevented many men from losing theirs. There was a terrible crash of ore on one level, and the mining inspector calculated it at more than twenty thousand tons. It was a profitable fall of ore for the company, for it did not need boring and shooting. Only the large boulders needed firing. I began to fear that I would stay a day too long. I had worked five months without missing even a day, and had saved forty pounds. I had written several articles for the "Socialist", and they appeared as I wrote them. Miners considered that I was too severe in my criticism, and that the mine was safe enough. "Custom had made it an easy property in them." Time, however, was with me. The mine workings were on the mountain top, and the winter was severe. We walked from Queenstown to the smelters, about two miles, There we climbed into ore trucks, and were hauled by a small locomotive to the foot of the haulage - a steep incline tram. Six trucks at a time were loaded and hauled to the top of the divide. In loads

like that we were saved a tiring climb. At midnight when we sent off afternoon shift we were forced to run down the mountain side with lanterns and a wind blowing at a speed of twenty miles an hour. The lighthouse at Cape Sorrell blinked at us through the wind and storm, but if our lanterns went out it mocked us. There was no lighting of a lamp on the mountain side. Here and there there was a prospector's tunnel, and if one's light blew out near any of these it might be possible to get underground and re-light. When it rained, an oilcoat by itself was of little service. One had to wear oilcloth leggings from boots to hips. It was true that men earned the money the rich corporation paid. Some there were who had lived at Lyell since the mines were first opened, and in spite of wind, rain and smelter smoke would not trade the West Coast of Tasmania for any other part of the Commonwealth. Others were there only temporarily. Many were on their round. For a while they worked at Lyell, then they left for Broken Hill; from there they went to Cobar for a spell and then crossed the Tasman sea to New Zealand, to work in the rich Waihi. They were men without families or encumbrances. Gormanstown on top of the mount, near the mines, was once a thriving town, but when the "wild cats" closed down and population diminished it became deserted. In a deep gully below the North Lyell, on the King River fall, there was a small town named Linda, and in this inhospitable gulch many made homes. I would have been heartily sorry to marry a Socialist girl and take her to such a place for a lifetime. But there are men who can live in Hell if only given a glimpse of Heaven as they pass.

One afternoon "Speewa" and I were timbering to catch up some ground

that was in danger of crashing, and blocking an ore pass. I was not timid, but I did value life, and when the job was finished I decided to quit. The time-keeper that came through the mine, as a check on the man who called the roll and gave the candles out, came to us. I asked him to "put in my time" as the miners called it.

"You are too critical, Alf", he said. "The mine is alright. It is the end of the year and the profit has been good. After the 30th September there will be a lot of work done to put the mine in good repair, and it will be yours and "Speewa's" work to do your part of your shift. What do you say, "Speewa"?

"MY ----- oath," Speewa" answered, "and we are just the gentlemen who can do it."

"Look here, Ernie", I said, "When I go up the shaft and out of the tunnel tonight I will be on the safe side. You will never see me down in these drives and stopes again."

I had scarcely returned to Melbourne when two men were killed. They were in the main mine. It was crib time and they went to what they considered a safe place, but the back came down and they were buried and killed. I wrote another article for the "Socialist." This time I ventured to prophecy. I concluded my article by writing, "Nothing on earth can prevent a terrible catastrophe beside which the sad murder of our two working class comrades will be a small thing." That started things. The Company could not allow their system of management to be criticised to that extent by a socialist. Maurice Blackburn, now a member of Parliament, was doing a turn as editor of the paper. The company's solicitor approached him, bought up copies in

which my articles appeared, and threatened to gaol me.

"Don't take Wilson too easy", said Blackburn, "He will not stand on court procedure. He will challenge judge and jury to visit the mine and he assured me, that knowing it as he does, he will take them to places that they will fear to stay in."

There was no bluffing the company's solicitor. He was determined. An inspector of mines from Victoria and one from New South Wales were engaged to inspect the mine and report. But alas! They arrived at Queenstown by the train at seven o'clock in the evening, and the disaster had taken place at eleven in the morning. They were in time to give their technical skill in aiding rescue work. Forty-eight men lost their lives and thirty more died afterwards as a result of having taken part in rescue work. The mine went afire in the disaster, and the gas from burning timber poisoned all who inhaled it. It was all as I had stated - a sacrifice for dividends. I was not prosecuted nor jailed. I was hailed in Melbourne as an intuitive propagandist and the one who foretold the Mount Lyell disaster. For that I drew crowds to the Socialist meeting on Yarra Bank, and when I lectured on the Gaiety platform I found the audience large. H. Scott Bennett returned for a visit and for lecturing he was paid three guineas. He lecture d two Sundays and when he left for Broken Hill I was elected to follow him. My lectures, for which I received nothing, were responsible for collections equal to those when Scott Bennett lectured and received three guineas. I was coming on.

CHAPTER V

I endured a few days of idleness and then fell into what stevedores would call a good run of work. I was not specially favoured, but work was abundant, and I could get in with any and everyone. Sometimes I was employed by men who were members of the Socialist Party, others because of hearing me on the pier, got to know me, and so I was never idle. I became one of the regular Yarra Bank speakers, and took several tyros in hand. One was a raw recruit, Jack Cain, but he improved with practice and instruction. But like many more he secretly joined the Labour Party, and made a two years membership, so that when the opportunity occurred he was nominated for selection and entered Parliament. That was the end of his Socialism. He has since become a Cabinet Minister. That, I am afraid, requires no special ability. The strike of 1928 disgraced him for he supplied trains for scabs and police to protect them.

At the end of a busy summer, I was walking down the street to the Stevedore's Club, when I was met by several members. "We have been talking", said one of them, "and we have concluded that we need a live President. We have had dead heads too long. What about you?"

I had to admit that it was too sudden a question for me to answer there and then. I left them, promising to think about it. When I arrived at the club, I was approached by more of the coterie, and persuaded to consider seriously. Meeting night came around, and my name was called. I was promised by Joe Morris, the secretary, and sort of boss of the Union that I would be rewarded by a significant beating. "These men won't have

a "Red" for chairman, and the cheek of a young member like you to think that you can get votes enough."

The voting was on a Friday and Saturday, and the counting was done on the Sunday; everything, even the engaging of labour was done on Sunday in Joe Morris's unioh.

I was engaged for a boat on Sunday, and on Monday morning went to the pier.

"So you are our new President", was the greeting from one member, and I soon discovered that there was truth in his remark.

Two days later the Vigilant Officer called on me and told me that there was to be a meeting of the new Executive. A delegate from the Miners' Union was over from New South Wales, and wished to address us. He was collecting funds. We met, but Morris treated me shabbily. There was no retiring President to instal or instruct me. I just had to take the chair and open my rule book. Not being a new chum, and being ~~the~~ a product of the Socialist Party I was not placed at a disadvantage. Experience was necessary, and I possessed it. Again it was a defeat for Morris. We heard the delegate explain the merits of the strike, and decided to summon a special meeting of members for Sunday morning to recommend voting a hundred pounds, the amount to be recouped by a levy.

The meeting endorsed the Committee's recommendation. The cheque was signed and sent, and in the course of a few days the hundred was in the bank to the credit of the Union. The new Committee had a loyal membership. There was good support for the Socialist President. I was becoming well

established in the Labour Movement. I only needed to join the Labour Party and soon I should be in Parliament, but I could not be a Marxian and a Labour Party Man. One was an antithesis of the other. One maintained the power of the State; the other aimed at its destruction. There could be no Socialism under a Capitalist State instrumentality.

I was soon to learn that I was in the camp of the enemy. Not one man of all the old hands who were responsible for the engaging of Labour would even look at me. That did not trouble me to any great extent. I had a couple of hundred pounds in the bank, and with one small job on Monday of each week I would be able to continue in office and defeat my enemies.

There was a rule on the book that was more frequently observed in the breach than the observance. Members were not to be engaged for work between mid-day Saturday and seven-thirty on Monday mornings. But as the employers desired to engage labour on Sunday for an early start on Monday mornings the rule was allowed to atrophy. What the shipping interests demanded was conceded. I mortally hated mustering on Sundays, and now was favoured with an opportunity of enforcing the rules. I read the rule to the members of the Committee, and having a Committee that, for the greater part, was with me, it was decided to call a special meeting and ask members to agree to strict enforcement. Needless to mention the Committee's recommendation was endorsed. It chagrined Morris and his old cronies but the bulk of the members appreciated the enforcement of the rule. At one time it was customary to engage labour any time between seven thirty and bedtime. Being a club, members could attend at any time they pleased. If a man failed to report for work at starting time after tea, a message was sent per phone and a man

could always be engaged. Such a practice had to be discontinued. We appealed to members and hours were fixed from seven-thirty to ten a.m. and from three to four p.m. It was a good reform, and enabled me to enjoy a lot of my spare time at home, and engage in study. Morris and the old timers were extremely hostile to me for the reforms gained, but I persevered.

It happened that the Committee called members together for a special meeting one Sunday morning, four months after I had been elected President, and boycotted. It was my chance. One old hand who was the leader of a crowd, and a regular employee, moved to adjourn the special business. He had been left out, and considered he was stood down by the employers. I heard his grievance, but refused to adjourn special business for him or any one else. Morris tried to dictate to me as he had been in the habit of dictating to other Presidents. I ruled him out, and was afterwards told that it was the first time x in a dozen years that that dictatorial gentleman had been seated by a President. I spoke severely to the man who considered himself boycotted, and informed him and his supporters that he and they had applied the boycott to me, and as I was taking my gruel they would have to do likewise. That was the end of the boycott against me. On Monday morning I was approached by a dozen deputy foremen, as the leaders were termed, and could have my pick of jobs. From then on I went ahead and hever knew what idle days were.

Before the mustering hours were fixed, there were some strange doings. One evening I had to choose between attending ameeting of the Co-op. Board and presiding at a union meeting. I decided in favour of the Union. When the meeting opened a member moved to adjourn to hear candidates for

Parliament speak at a meeting in the street. I consented, and hurried away to the Co-op. meeting, only to learn next morning that there was a foreman on the premises to engage labour for a timber boat to begin discharging next morning. He engaged his men, and called my name amongst the rest. I was gone, and missed. After that I refused to adjourn a meeting for any reason whatever. There was not much need for adjournments when the mustering hours were fixed.

My next interest in Union matters was to disturb an equilibrium. The only port in Australia where waterside workers were divided into two unions was the port of Melbourne. Two unions were formed in the early days of the colony. All Interstate boats berthed up the river, and all overseas ships discharged at Port Melbourne pier. In the sailing ship days only sailor men were able to load and discharge sailing ships, and that was responsible for a union of ex-seamen. With the West Melbourne dock and the passing of the sailors the days for two unions had disappeared. I moved for an amalgamation. Again I was seriously opposed by the old faction led by Morris. It was a big fight, but I did not despair. I was a better speaker than he, and did not rely on the sentimental method of crying like a baby on the platform in order to impress my audience. Members heard me patiently and agreed to a conference of delegates. This time Morris was not elected. A meeting of wharf labourers was convened and I appeared before a rather large audience. Members for the most part were patient and sympathetic, but there were others to whom the passing of the Union was as the passing out of life themselves, and they were hostile. The officials were my staunchest opponents, but question after question was answered,

and it was agreed to elect a committee of delegates to meet delegates from the Stevedores Union. My own Union appointed delegates, and we waited for a summons to attend a conference. Again we met with opposition. Morris would not convey to me the message from our kindred brothers. The Wharf Union delegates attended but I was not there with my delegates. But our Vigilent Officer assured the disappointed delegates from the other Union that he would guarantee our presence at the office next morning. We met and there and then decided, after debating reasons, that the two Unions should be called on to ballot and decide for or against one union. Industrial Unionism was my theme. Morris demanded a two-thirds majority, although nothing more than a majority was demanded by the rules, no matter how serious the vote.. I was confident that I should win a two-thirds and granted that majority. The Wharf Union decided by a heavy majority, but my union voted twenty short of the two-thirds. I should have won, but for the fact that Morris approached the men in the Williamstown section surreptitiously and intimated them on the ground that the Wharfies would take their club and property if they went in with them. That ended that fight.

There was more to excite and interest members and keep Morris on the qui vive. A member had been working for some time on a scheme for Co-operative stevedoring. He failed to understanding why a mere contracting company should go between the stevedores and the ship owners, and reap enormous profits. He approached me with his scheme, and although it would not spell Socialism it was something that would supply a greater remuneration for our labour than mere wages. I joined with him to urge the scheme. I mentioned it in Committee, and Morris again showed his teeth. The Committee examined the skeleton of the scheme, and decided to put it before a special meeting, of

which good notice was to be given. In the meantime, Morris wrote all shipping agents and the Stevedoring company, and received replies from them. These he brought before a meeting of the Committee. He was castigated for his conduct. He had not been authorised to write any one, but he did it all the same.

The meeting morning arrived, and when I declared what the business was to be, Morris rose to his feet and demanded to be allowed to read the letters. I refused to allow him, and his supporters demanded that he read the letters. I was adamant, for they were not authoritative from the Committee's point of view. The meeting decided that it would be wise to develop the scheme. Several Committee meetings were held, and it advanced well on the way towards establishment. Just then the man who first introduced it to me left for Tasmania, and not being made of the same fighting metal as me would not help any further. The scheme went into abeyance and Union matters occupied most of my time.

The Waterside Workers were under agreements that were to expire in all ports on November the 9th, 1913. Although the Union was registered under the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, there was no award. There was to be a conference to draw up a set of working conditions to be uniform for all ports. There were to be a series of Committee meetings. As President I was a member of all Committees. It was meeting after meeting week after week, and sometimes we met on Sunday afternoons. The Union kep me busy, and my speaking was not so frequent, although I loved speaking best of all. The domestic rules needs must be revised to fit in with the new demands that we were to make on the ship owners and stevedoring companies, and another

Committee was elected. I had another meeting a week to attend, and so was engrossed in the business of the Union. It was somethat inconsistent to be so busy with the affairs of a craft union while at the same time demanding the end of the wages system, but the fight was there, and could not be avoided, and as for me I felt that I could do more for the ment who had elected me to be their Chief Executive Officer, than any else at that time. Time, learning and experience have convinced me otherwise.

At last all the agenda and revision committee meetings were over and nothing remained but a special meeting to adopt what the Committees had done. Notice was given and a meeting arranged for a Sunday afternoon in the Town Hall. It was a mighty gathering. Ninety per cent of the membership crowded into the hall.

"You will never get through the business at this meeting", said Morris. But we did. When the meeting was over he asked where I gained the experience that enabled me to preside over a meeting of so much important business and rush it through in less than three hours.

"In the Socialist Party", I answered.

While the last of the business was being got through nominations were sent in. Two delegates were to go the Sydney. Morris feared that I would be one of them, so had been stacking the cards against me, as he thought. He had six men's consent to nomination, believing that if the vote were split on me, he would be sure to top the poll and me be defeated. But alas! The vote went strongly for me. I it was who topped the poll and not Morris. Such a thing had never happened before, Morris and I, two men diametrically opposed in opinions were to attend the conference as co-delegates. Both factions would be represented. Joe was aging, and his health was not of the

best, and the defeat upset him. Monday saw him in bed with a heart trouble. When I left for Sydney he was still abed, but at the week end he managed to leave his bed and getacross.

I was acquainted with W. M. Highes. I had met him when I was a boy amongst the sheds with shearers. Billy was doing some organizing, and in 1894, the year of the big shearers' strike, he made his entry into the New South Wales State Parliament. From there he stepped to the higher political sphere, and was a member of the Great Australian Parliament. He was General Secretary of the Sydney Union, and President of the Federation. Many thought him a wonderful fellow, but I was not in agreement with them. To me he was an intriguer of intriguers. I detested him from my Socialist viewpoint. He had fathered the Boy Conscription Act, the Navigation Act, and was a party to the establishment of the Commonwealth Bank. These were the antithesis of what a Socialist programme ought to be. I went to Sydney prepared to fight him. Neither he nor Morris were in very much favour with Queensland delegates. The strike of men in the Sugar fields and mills in 1911, when Highes and Morris had ordered the Waterside Workers to keep at work, when the shifting of sugar was helping the sugar combine to defeat the strikers had not made the delegates from the North favourable to Morris. The secretary up till that time was but a nominal official, but the 1913 conference that we were to attend was to elect a full time secretary. Delegates from the Melbourne Wharf Union recommended me, and my name was brifted amongst the delegates. Morris got to hear of it, and fearing defeat after experiences a t home, aproached Hughes. Hughes did not desire me. I was not likely to be pliable enough in his hands. He approached Mat McCabe, Secfetary of the

Brisbane Branch, but Mat refused. He expected shortly to receive an appointment to the business management of the "Brisbane Standard", the Federation job would only be worth five pounds a week, but the paper job would be six pounds at least. Hughes urged him to stand and split the vote, and if elected, he would use his influence to have McCabe appointed to the other job, when he could resign and leave Morris in. In the meantime Morris was to be kept acting.

The conference was openedafter a week end in the chief city of the Commonwealth. Hughes delivered a long political speech, and mentioned only a little of the industrial. I was wrathful with him but was compelled to swallow my chagrin for the time being. The election took place. Morris lost heavily. He could only secure seven votes out of the twenty-six cast. McCabe commanded 10 and I nine. McCabe was declared the winner. Poor Morris, he was not too well in health, and the loss of a coveted job upset him completely. When McCabe thanked delegates for the honour they had done him, Morris rose, and made a dirty attack on the man who had been elected.

"I always regarded Mr. McCabe as a friend", he said, "but never in this world again will I regard him as such. McCabe and I are enemies." Here he burst into tears, and sobbed bitterly. Hughes patted him on the back, like a child, and said, "Never mind, Joe", I am sorry for you, but you will be alright in the end", and turning to the delegates he said, "I am heartily sorry to lose Mr. Morris. He and I got on well while he was acting, and I am sure we should get on well for all time. Mr McCabe will do his duty nobly, I am sure. Mr. Wilson I am not too familiar with, but his temperament and mine would never blend, and I am sure, in the interests of our organization you have made a wise choice."

It was the first week in October, and McCabe was not asked to take up his duties then and there. Hughes urged that he be allowed to return to Brisbane and report on the Conference, resign his position in the Branch, and be given till January the first to take up his new duties. Thirty pounds was also voted at the instigation of Hughes to defray the cost of transferring his family and their belongings from Brisbane to Melbourne.

Hughes was called to Melbourne. An important division was to be taken in the Federal House, and his presence and his vote were demanded. I was nominated for the chair, and for the first time since the Waterside Workers' Federation was formed a meeting was conducted without Hughes in the chair. I was honoured to be the first that sat in his seat after him. Going to lunch, Jack Bourke of Rockhampton and I walked together, and as we talked he said, "You had bad luck. If you had been half a day in the chair before the election of the Secretary, you would have beaten McCabe and Morris easily. You were not too well known to all the Queensland boys."

We were taken for an outing on the Sunday, and were provided a dinner by the delegates from Sydney Branch. We were taken up and down Hacking Harbour, and at a guest house were entertained. Various delegates were called on to make speeches; what for, I did not "savvy." We were hearing and making speeches every day for a week nearly, and there was another fortnight to go. Surely we should have been allowed to enjoy harmony. The fat was in the fire when Morris rose to propose the toast of the Federation. He burst into tears and slangwanged McCabe and I for daring to compete and deprive him of the secretaryship. I grew disgusted, went outside, lit a cigar and waited till the sordid speechmaking was over. How I wished I were on Yarra Bank, talking Scientific Socialism.

The Conference did not end everything. Delegates had to be elected to the Federal Committee. I looked through the rules and discovered that the Stevedores were entitled to two delegates. There had not been an election for years. Morris sat, self-appointed, with two votes. There was a fight to prevent a second delegate, knowing that it would be me. I declared Morris not a delegate as there had been no yearly election. We held an election, and with Morris I was elected - only a few votes separating us. I was now to get right in to the fighting arena with Hughes. I had occasion to be bitter with him. He was sacrificing us to political jobs. "Don't let us hurry to the shipowners", he urged, "We lost the Federal election on the cry of the "Rural Worker's Log", and the New South Wales election is coming on. Don't force the Labour Party to risk losing on the "Waterside Worker's Log.""

The log ought to have been submitted to the shipowners immediately before the ninth of November, but it was the middle of the following January before they were notified. McCabe did not take up his duties on January the first, but appeared to attend the Conference with ship owners, and had with him his resignation. It was as Hughes arranged. He had succeeded to the position that attracted him. The way was not open for me then. All delegates that attended the conference were written to and asked to nominate someone. I was nominated, Morris was nominated, and Ted Creamer, a delegate from the Wharf Union, instigated by Hughes, also got himself nominated. It took more than a month, and when the nominations were in they were pigeonholed till after several conferences with ship owners, and a protracted Arbitration case. It was so near the next conference that it was scarcely worth while

bothering. I withdrew. Hughes immediately ordered his protege to withdraw, and Morris was left in. Immediately after Hughes persuaded the Management Committee to elect Creamer assistant secretary to Morris, and two days later, without consulting anyone, he engaged Senator De Largie's daughter to go into the office and do what neither the Secretary or his assistant were capable of.

I engaged in many bitter fights with Hughes, but the Management Committee consisted for the greater part of Federal Labour men and they voted with their chieftain whether rightly or wrongly. In Parliament Hughes threatened to resign if he did not get all his own way, and against me he threatened to resign, but it was the usual blandishing by the Politician friends, and he dominated.

I was nominated for the second term of office as President and Morris and Hughes conspired to defeat me. Hughes wrote a leaflet in the hope of undermining me, and Morris saw to its distribution. Morris selected the only man whom he could rely on to defeat me, but after the election, my votes outnumbered my opponents by three to one, and I had four to spare. Then the War came, and the union fell on troublous times. There were many German stevedores, and the "patriotic" Australian workmen refused to associate with them. I, being an Internationalist, would not agree to rejecting working class comrades. For my support of such men I was branded a pro-German, and that was a frightful thing in the eyes of those who were for years intoxicated with patriotism. Little did I care.

In spite of my unpopularity Morris feared me, and the meeting for the election of delegates to the next conference was a more or less secret one.

The rules provided for fourteen days' notice, but taking advantage of many of us being in the dock at the week-end working busily, he notified a few supporters and held the meeting on Sunday. There he had a man prepared to move, not that the Branch send one delegate with two votes, and let the members elect that one, but the Mr. Morris be sent with two votes. That disgusted me. I had learned from experience what villainy goes on in the name of the emancipation of Labour, or at least the improvement of workers' conditions. I resigned the Presidency before my second term expired.

CHAPTER VI

Out of office I was blest with more spare time, and got to speaking on Yarra Bank again, and at South Melbourne on Friday nights. The Socialist Party had suffered a split. With a slight improvement in finance, a Secretary was brought from Sydney. He was a namesake of mine. "Jock Wilson was the man to do big things." The Australian Socialist Party in Sydney and the Victorian Socialist Party were two distinct organizations. Once they were in the Socialist Federation of Australia, but now they were independent bodies. In the judgement of the A.S.P. the V.S.P. was too reactionary, and most of its members were also members of the Labour Party. The A.S.P. alone considered itself revolutionary. Jock Wilson came to Melbourne fully determined to alter the policy of the V.S.P. or smash it. At the first monthly meeting of his secretaryship there was a row. The man who spoke words of welcome a month before now demanded the resignation or dismissal of the Secretary. Failing in both cases, he tore his membership card in pieces and left the meeting. A month later Jock left the meeting followed by at least twenty, and formed a Melbourne Branch of the A.S.P. I felt like resigning, but thought it cowardly to retire from a wreck before trying to salvage it. I hung on.

The time came when I was compelled to don my considering cap. The Party under Bob Ross's leadership was becoming more and more a second edition of the Labour Party. If it were not a true revolutionary Party, it was time to seek one, or go wholeheartedly into the Labour Party and make an effort to enter Parliament. Many graduates of the V.S.P. were now in the Labour

Party. Jack Curtin had run as a Labour man, and A. . Foster was also on the Labour ticket. I was for the revolution as I then understood it without compromise. Marx had endured and suffered in formulating his theories, why, then, should I, a young man without encumbrances, seek better than my master?

The schism that had taken place in the I.W.W. was on the Political clause. Originally the political clause was included, but in 1908 it was rejected, by an anarchistic section. The original I.W.W. continued, and the fight between both factions was bitter. Daniel De Leon, a super Marxian, not a "burnt out volcano", as Shaw Desmond called him, fought for the political clause. Although I was studying Marx I was not particularly familiar with tactics. I did not realise that tactics are the most important thing in organization. That was to come to me later.

I urged Bob Ross to convene a meeting of propagandists so that we could discuss ways and means. The enthusiastic coterie that once supplied speakers for half a dozen street meetings had dropped out. Some were already in the Labour Party, and more were merely waiting. The meeting took place, and I went to it fully determined to force a fight against the reactionary policy of the Labour Party, and the W.S.P. giving it support. I was outvoted by some remaining political opportunists. I stated my position clearly, and in no uncertain language. One comrade, Tilly, who had been a member of a Socialist Party in Great Britain, endeavoured to persuade me to stay with the Party. "We will miss Wilson if he resigns", he said. "I have heard many speakers, great and small in the old country, and I tell you Wilson has ability. If we lose him we will miss him, and whoever gets him will weaken us doubly. He will be our loss and their gain." The die was cast,

and I was finished with the V.S.P. It meant severing many associations, but I severed them. It was the cause alone that mattered, and I was for the cause.

Norman Rancie, whose family were in the V.S.P. at one time, and who with his sister was a capable propagandist, met me and we decided that there was no help for the workers without an industrial organization as a primary thing. We agreed to convene a meeting and find out if there were sufficient offering to form a branch of the I.W.W. We hired a small room in the Temperance hall, but could not get the requisite number of names signed to an application for a charter. We tried again a week later, and attracted one more than we had at the first meeting. We appealed again, and after the fourth meeting the application was signed and the charter sent for. Soon we were to have a real Revolutionary Industrial Organization in existence in Melbourne.

The Panama Pacific Exposition was opened and I determined to take holiday and rest. Rance and I had the I.W.W. under way, so I booked for Sydney on the S. S. Zealandia. It was a hurried departure, but why linger? I visited the I.W.W. headquarters in Sydney, and talked with Tom Barker, who was editing the Party paper 'Direct Action'. Tom was brilliant, and impressed me. I met others, happy in the movement, but altogether unconscious of the terrible time of persecution that was in store for them.

I had been at sea as a young fellow, and sought a job on the "Makura." I obtained it, and on Thursday was steaming out through the Heads. I had no sooner arrived in Vancouver and taken a room than I was asked if I had made acquaintance with J. B. King. King was well known in Canada, and was

establishing himself as a propagandist on Sydney domain. I did not intend to connect myself with Parties, but rather study them and get to understand.

My travels took me to Alaska and in Juneau, the Capital of the Territory, while walking out one fine day (of which there are too few in Juneau), I discovered a Socialist hall. There was a woman living in a couple of rooms attached to the hall, and I proceeded to question her. She belonged to the Socialist Party of America. Not De Leon's Industrial Union Party, but the pure and simple political party, of which I had read much, and to which the V.S.P. most pronouncedly leaned. We talked long, and I discovered that she was editing a Socialist paper. She was no less a personage than Lena Morrow Lewis, wife of Arthur Morrow Lewis, whose books I had read and often sold at meetings. She was considered a brilliant socialist journalist and a very good speaker. I met her again, and on Sunday afternoon I met her comrades. Some were working men, others were storekeepers, and one was a lawyer. It helped me to pass time more interestedly than I was doing ~~now that I had met~~ prior to meeting these comrades. The editoress prevailed on me to write articles reporting what the movement was doing in Australia, and more particularly the working class Political Party. I wrote several, and posted copies of the paper to comrades in Augtralia.

The Territorial Legislature was sitting, and Mrs. Lewis invited me to attend with her. My first experience was to meet an old acquaintance, Chester K. Snow. He went to Klondike at the same time I did. He packed up Chilcoot with me, and I met him several times afterwards. His ambition was to make money out of Klondike and return to his native State, Nebraska, and study law, but he had never been out of the valley of the Yukon since he

went in with me till he was elected a member of the Territorial Legislature. He had got on to newspaper work, and when Ruby opened a paper of his own there. There were others of the Klondike, whom I remember but with whom I was not personally acquainted. I listened to dreary debates about nothing in particular, although the politics of the Territory were of absorbing interest to the legislators, and to my comrade, Mrs. Lewis, whose duty it was to write and criticise them.

It was the first of May, and I was invited to deliver an address. The gathering astonished me. The Socialist Hall was not nearly large enough to accommodate the people who were to attend. The Oddfellows Hall was hired, and it too was almost too small to celebrate in. They were not all Socialists, but they were from many countries of Europe, and May Day to them was a carnival day. Mrs. Lewis and I were the speakers, and so I had to my credit the fact that I had spoken in two countries.

"You have witnessed one real fine day in Juneau", said Comrade Callahan, the lawyer member of the Party. "Fine days are rare indeed on this coast. If you intend staying in Juneau for any length of time and desire to pass the time, you can attend at my office. I have a spare typewriter and if you can use one you are welcome to it." I thanked him for his generous offer, and informed him that I was fired, from what I had seen, with a desire to return to Australia and get ahead with propaganda work. After six weeks in Juneau, I was saying goodbye to the Capital town of "Uncle Sam's Ice Box", fully convinced that the Socialist Party in America was no improvement on the A.S.P.

Late in the Spring in Seattle I sat on a seat one morning to read the "P.I." as the "Post Intelligencer" was abbreviated. Next to me sat a man reading an "Industrial Union", an I.W.W. publication.

"Excuse me, mate", I interrupted, "but could you inform me where I can buy a copy of that paper. I am interested in the Organization." He directed me to headquarters, which was not far down the avenue towards Main Street, I read the morning news and walked to the hall. It was upstairs over a picture theatre. It had been a warehouse or store room at one time, and was anything but refined looking, although roomy and convenient. There was a long rack on one side of the hall where out of work men could lock up their belongings while they rustled for food and bed. There were two tables with all kinds of revolutionary papers on them, and a goodly number reading and resting. I was in the midst of the proletariat. I feared I was too well dressed for their company, but when a young man came into the hall dressed equally well, I felt comforted. He and I engaged in conversation. He was a young Norwegian, who had migrated to America, believing it was the land of true liberty, only to meet with a savage disappointment. He had 'hoboed', ridden in box cars, rode on the ~~break~~ brake beams, and even had a 'ride on the cushion'. He was not a waster, for he had done some work, and bought a good outfit of clothes, and still had a few dollars to keep going on. He and I made up, and I was able to enjoy company. Sometimes we took meals at the 'Cascade', and sometimes we ate at other restaurants. We discovered a place cheaper than the Cascade. For ten cents we could buy a three course meal and finish it with ice cream. Needless to say it was always crowded, and I voted

for the Cascade. I induced him to visit the library, and introduced him to works on economics. For that he thanked me.

"There are many rebels in this country", he said, "but they are only rebels. They read a five cent pamphlet, and think they are educated. I realize now that one has a lot to learn. You ought to proclaim yourself, and you would be given a job organizing and be run about in the 'Red Car'.

"AMerica", said I, "needs no foreigners to come to teach her. As far as I can sum up the position I am needed in my own country. Our propagandists all sneak into the Labour Party, and say good-bye to Socialism, but I will not depart from the Marxian position."

On Sunday night James Thompson, one of the best of I.W.W. lecturers, was to provide an illustrated entertainment. He would show photos of places where men were compelled to work, and describe the degrading conditions under which men lived in freedom loving America. My Norwegian American agreed to attend. It was a first-class lecture, and a vigorous defence of a number of men who were languishing in gaol, and likly to do so for a long number of years. The ~~ahll~~ hall was well filled, large as it was and many of the audience were in their logging camp or backwoods suits. All other clothes had been pawned. A dollar and a half was the collection, and two quarters of that were contributed by my comrade and I. Times were bad for the workers. I recognized then, and do to this day, that Thompson was by far the best type of man that was prominent in the I.W.W. in U.S.A. I heard Elizabeth Gurly Flynn. She was equal to ~~Bessie~~ Lizzie Ahearn, and that is saying much to those who knew ~~Bessie~~ Lizzie as a speaker. I heard Swazzi, in San Francisco. He was a good out-door man, but not a James Thompson, nor even a J. B. King.

CHAPTER VII

Sydney was a wonderful city, with her harbour, which was scarcely second to any on earth, but San Francisco could beat her hollow. There was much akin in both cities. Sydney was somewhat bohemian, so was 'Frisco. The Panama Pacific Exposition, which I had gone across primarily to see, was an enormous affair. It covered six hundred acres of the Presido grounds on the shore of the bay. I met a man on the S. S. "Queen" on the way down from Seattle, and we struck up a friendship. He was an Englishman and a seaman, had been in 'Frisco a good deal and knew the city well. We took a room together, and spent my first day at the Exposition. I had seen the Melbourne Exhibition, when I was a small boy, but it did not compare in my mind with what I was now visiting. It was not that America could do better than Australia in all things, but the years that had intervened had provided so much in the shape of invention, that the occasion demanded a better show. I was proud of Australia. The pavilion for the Southern land was one to be proud of. Wool made a magnificant show. There it was in every phase of development, from the sheep's back to the finished article in tweed, blankets, flannel etc. Woods, rough and polished, were on show, and while Australia could take prizes for the best of woods, most of our timber is imported from U.S.A. We have hardwood and America is prodigious in softwood, but America does not let hard or soft wood stand in the way. What America requires of wood, is made from wood grown in the country, it matters not if it be soft or hard. Uncle Sam has the happy knack of conforming to existing circumstances in all things.

It was from the Marxian viewpoint that I viewed the great show. Everywhere in those pavilions over a square mile were the products of labour and tribute to man's mastery of the technique. Oil. Was there anything in the world that gave such an impetus to human progress? Lewis Henry Morgan said that mankind was arrested for a period till some one discovered the use of iron ore and he was right, but oil had developed industry in an extraordinary fashion since its manifold uses had been discovered. The Standard Oil Company was spending almost a fortune in proving to spectators what could be done with oil. There wasn't a machine of any kind invented or known to man, that could not be propelled and worked by oil. And in an enormous pavilion one could stay for hours and look at the advance of the technique. Many passed through hurriedly and exhibited no great interest in the Standard Oil Company's wonderful show; more said it was wonderful to see so many kinds of machines working with oil as a propellent, but beyond that they realised nothing. The greater number were philistines. There were vessels containing oil in every process of refinement, from the mucky looking slush as it came to the surface, to the purified benzine, and what the oil in each process could be used forwas all demonstrated through working machinery. Truly it was an education to spend hours in such a pavilion. I spent an hour in the Standard Oil Company's pavilion every day I visited the Exposition.

There were two locomotives on show, the largest ever built. What an advance on Stevenson's first, less than a century before. The mighty and rapid advance brought to my mind the words of Kipling:-

"The auld fleet Engineer
That started as a boiler-whelp when steam and he were low.
I mind the time we used to serve a broken pipe wi' tow!
Ten pounds was all the pressure then - Eh! Eh! - a man wad drive;
An' here, our workin' gauges give one hunder sixty-five!
We're creepin' on wi' each new rig-less weight an' larger power/
There'll be the loco-boiler next an' thirty miles an hour!
Thirty an' more. What I ha' seen since ocean-steam began
Leaves me na doot for the machine! but what aboot the man?

It took some understanding of economics to appreciate Kipling even. Economics and science are the key to all understanding. How glad I felt before those mighty locomotives that I was not by this time a parson. Not until one had read and studies Marx could one understand theological history. Yet people the world over were trying to dispute Marx and Darwin with theological history. How understanding does get turned upside down!

Even advertising depended on the development of the technique. A walk up or down Market Street at night was convincing evidence of that. The electric light ads, and the colouring of them was enough to supply an evening's entertainment and a hundred lessons as from a technical school.

The ferry system was marvellous, and a prodigious step from the primitive Indian with his canoe. Steamers almost, were gliding across the harbour carrying two thousand passengers and upwards of seventy automobiles. Sydney ferry system had not come up to that.

Capitalism is ruthless in America, but for all its ruthlessness some effort is made to provide recreation for the victims of a vicious system. Mt. Tamalpias and Golden Gate Park provided the most splendid system of human enjoyment that the denizens of a great city could desire.

I was buying a paper at a stall one morning when I noticed a copy of the "Socialist." I wondered how a Melbourne paper could be offered by a

news vendor in San Francisco. "It is this way", said the proprietor of the stall. "I am a Socialist, and I don't pretend to be one thing and practice another. I sell Socialist papers here in the street and I don't care who knows it. Every Sunday night I address a meeting on the corner of Polk and Market Streets. I f you are interested in Socialism come right along; and if you are not, come all the same and I might be able to convince you. Socialism, young fellow, is the only subject worth being interested in these times. Go to the Exposition and see what man has brought production to, and realise if you can how with all the means of life in a few hands we can have anything equitable in this world. We live in an age when every damned thing is commercialized. Go to the 'Red Light' district and witness what Capitalism has brought women to. There virtue and chastity are not only commercialized but accepted and legalized by the State. What greater blot can there be on our American civilization than to find three thousand women legalized into a life of prostitution? The Mayor sees no evil in it. It is woven into the very fibre of our economic life. I was trained for a preacher, but I discovered early in my areer that people cannot be good unless they are supplied with a good groundwork, and how can there be a good groundwork with man preying on man? The class struggle has to be recognized or all else is waste of effort. Learn that lesson and you have the key to everything else. "Come to my meeting and buy books that I recommend and and you will think as I do. All rightly trained minds must think as I do."

Ted Green and I went to his meeting, and for several Sunday nights I was a regular attender. I did not tell the propagandist that I was a Socialist, but I listened to learn. His mistake was that he represented the

pure and simple political school. I could not understand how men pretending to be Marxian could swear so fervently by the political machine. If it were "the Executive Committee of the whole Capitalist Class", it had to be ended and something substituted for it. I was becoming more and more an Industrial Unionist.

I visited the "Red Light" district, and never was I so shocked as on discovering the way young women were drawn off from all that savoured of uprightness to be cast into a sesspool of lasciviousness. Where I was reared, any girl that happened to become a mother before she was married, was despised by her parents and ostracised by society, but here girls and young women were thrown into a condition where they were compelled to overwork their sex organs for the private gain fo those who ran the "Red Light." I became deeper rooted than ever in my Socialist convictions. Whatever it cost I was determined to work hard to help root out a vicious system that so degraded men and women.

The war still had the world tight in its grip, and unemployment was on an enormous scale. There was no counting the number who were without jobs, but an enormous army assembled at Murray and Ready's employment agency every day. Here were men living, not on women's degradation, but on man's misfortunes. The firm was reputed to be worth over a million, and it was all accumulated out of jobs supplied.

It was computed that two thousand men at least were without beds and sleeping in horse barns. Many of these lay in the sun on vacant blocks, where buildings had been ~~broken down~~ wrecked during the 'quake' and the fire of 1906.

It reminded me of Melbourne and Sydney in my boyhood when the land boom crashed and the banks suspended payment and closed their doors. Close to Murray and Ready's there was a five cent coffee parlour. It was no rough and ready eating place, but a well established place of business. Every table, bench and counter was well scrubbed. The Cooking galley was in an island surrounded by clean counters. Everything was served over the counter and paid for with a five cent piece. One could, for the smallest coin almost, be served a plate of beans, and a cup of coffee, ~~x~~ I visited this plate of rice and a cup of coffee parlour more than once, for I desired to learn how American workmen lived through the period of depression that was afflicting the States up and down the Western Coast. I sat for hours at a time on the benches that were erected in the big room where a million of profit had been made by sending men out to all sorts and conditions of jobs in two and country. I met all sorts and conditions of working Americans. One in particular made acquaintance with me. He was middle/aged, not altogether of proletarian appearance, but rather like a man that did not want for daily bread.

"It is this way", said he, "I save all I can when I am working, and I am not badly fixed just now. I have a room in my sister's house, out at Sunset, and I come in every day. I am peddling my labour power same as all the rest of the bunch, but I am not for taking anything that is going. I have bade farewell to heavy, hard work. I am after a job flunkeying in a camp. When a man reaches middle age, and has made fair use of what he earned for his working years before, he would be foolish to go in for hot, hard, rough/ work. When a job comes along I will take it, but until it does I will rest up, and conserve my energy." A sensible man, I thought. I met

many others as I called for a while each day, and learned the method by which working men were fleeced by the people who went between men and their masters. There were other employment agencies round about but they were in a small way compared with Murray and Ready's. Truly life was hard in the United States.

I next met an Australian. He had been over to see the Exposition, and was ready to return home. I favoured a hoboe trip up through California, Oregon and Washington, intending to join the "Makura" at Vancouver, but he exercised a sort of influence and I returned on the "Sonoma."

CHAPTER VIII

Back in Melbourne from my trip to America and Alaska, I discovered that everything was going well for Socialist and Industrial Union propaganda. Norman Rancie with a coterie or tyros was holding meetings regularly on Yarra Bank and at South Melbourne Market on Friday nights.

There was an inordinate amount of ill feeling over the war and enlisting. W. A. Watt, a politician of great State and Federal reputation, twitted Frank Brennan, a lawyer-Labour politician with being a coward. Brennan had said that he would not shed blood, and would not even kill a German. Watt waxed wrathful, and abused him frightfully in all the power of oratory which he possessed, and with practised years of parliamentary language. It ended in a challenge. Brennan expressed himself as willing to enlist as a Red Cross man, if Watt would sign up, he being well within military age. Brennan spectacularly attended the City Hall, but Watt had too many business interests to enable him to get there and accept the challenge. It had been the talk of months, and I was told of it shortly after my return. It was bunkum as far as I was concerned. What right had a Labour representative to be offering his services to share the glories of a Capitalist War. I was stirred to get into the fray.

Rancie called on me, and on Friday night I was on the box on the weighbridge at the market where I had spoken many and many a

time before. I could not compromise my position. I was uncompromisingly against the war anddid not hesitate to make my hatred of it known.

"You will soon be in trouble", said Oscar Benson, an old friend of mine, to me. "They will not let you say things like you said tonight without going you."

"They can go and be damned, Oscar", I said. I am against the war and will not hesitate to say so. "But, Oscar," I said, "did it ever occur to you that my opinions of the war are my own, and I will not accept any person's right to dispute them. I have but myself in this world, and I do not put my life at a pin's fee, as Hamlet said, and when they attack me I will let know that I lived for awhile in the Kelly country." My mind was definitely made up.

I had passed through a trying time in my union. Those who have voted and permitted me to be the only member up to that time who had marched in the Eight Hour Procession for two consecutive years wearing the President's badge, were now against me. They sought to oust from the Union all who were born in the enemy countries, under the guise of patriotism, but their motive was selfishness for work. How they loved being wage slaves!

I took up my stand as an Internationalist and was dubbed a "pro-German" and called all kinds of nasty names. I was no passive resister. I kept on the line of fire and sought opportunity to prove what I was made of, but so far and no further did my Union opponents go.

It happened that when a petition was signed requisitioning the President to call a meeting to rescind the motion of expulsion that I signed it in the yard in the presence of all, or as many of the members as were there at the time. That was sufficient. The "glad-eyes", as certain bunch were called, made up their minds to deal with me. It was nearing a crisis, and I was spoiling for a fight. They had often mobbed men, who were not natives but they were not going to mob me. My stand was on the International Question. I was no fair weather Socialist.

The meeting was called for the Sunday morning. I attended. On the way down I was told that it was not expected that I would be there.

"More likely", I answered, "it is expected that I am not game to attend." The meeting room would not hold half the members, and the meeting was held in the yard. Joe Morris was up to tricks, and had allowed some into the bar to drink and gather Dutch courage. They were noisy even before the meeting started. The President and the Secretary came out, and when the meeting was declared open there was no petition. The Secretary declared that he had put it in the safe, but as it was his custom not to close the safe door while he was in the office, someone seeing him deposit it, must have "pinched" it. It could not be found anyhow. Joe Morris and his lieutenant thought that I might have been able to sway the men in favour of the Internationals, the rules were with me and against the "glad-eyes". There could be no meeting, as there was no petition requisitioning it.

The President declared the meeting closed. The "glad-eyes" immediately demanded to know who had signed it, desiring to hear my name. The Secretary and the President pleaded ignorance. I announced myself as one who had signed, for the purpose of bringing matters to a head, and putting an end to the actions of the "glad-eyes." Tom Fennessy, a puglist who had fought with Dick Kernick, Bill Squires, Bill Lang, and many other heavyweight champions of a year or two before, and who could turn the scale at seventeen stone, moved towards me. Tom and I were good friends, and worked mates together very often. "Go the b-----, I will fight", he whispered in my ear. I could afford to be game with such backing.

"I'll not need you, Tom", I replied, "I am deadly ready for any eventualities."

"Keep it out of sight", he answered, "we can get through a dozen of the best without drawing blood that way."

There was a good deal of howling as it were, but no action. It was the end, but the German stevedores were not allowed to return. Some of them, being competent sailor men, found very good jobs, and when times got bad on the waterfront there was increased jealousy that such men should be able to live at all.

There was to be an Interstate Conference in Hobart, Tasmania, and nominations were invited for candidates. I still had friends amongst the stevedores. I was nominated, and to make sure that there would be no faking of the ballot I appointed a scrutineer. We were

working a boat, the "Port Napier" on Saturday afternoon. It was four o'clock, and we were discharging whisky out of a special cargo locker. My scrutineer appeared over the hatch. I went up to him, and he handed me the figures announcing the result of the ballot.

"You go", said a "glad-eye", who happened to be one of the crowd. "I hate you like very Hell, but you are about the best we could elect to represent us." He was right. I was again entrenched in the confidence of the members.

Work was abundant. Ships were still being fitted up and made ready for tropping. These were being loaded to their plimsoll with wool, wheat and all the commodities that the old country was demanding, and the German submarines were searching for. I did not allow work to hold me up, but spoke at every available meeting and kept on the firing line with many others. Norman Rancie left for Sydney to edit the I.W.W. paper, "Direct Action." Tom Barker, for a cartoon, demanding "Capitalists, Politicians and Parsons to enlist, and asking Workers to follow their masters", was serving six months in gaol. Rancie found a congenial occupation and made a creditable effort at editing. He appealed to me, and from time to time I was compelled to write as well as study and speak.

Percy Laidler, of Socialist Party fame, the young man who demanded the resignation of Tom Mann's executive, like myself, found himself very little at home with those who were now nothing more than supporters of the Labour Party. Socialists were pretending not to be

in favour of the war, but the Labour Party in power were doing more to keep it going and gain recruits than a conservative Government could possibly do. Andrew Fisher had promised "the last man and the last shilling". In addition, his Party had enacted a War Precautions Act, and were dealing rigorously with men and women who dared to be too outspoken. Fisher did not enlist, nor did he remain to enlist the last man or collect and spend the last shilling. A job offered, George Reid had left this life of Law and Politics, and gone a higher tribunal (?). Andy coveted his job. My old enemy, "Billy" Hughes, who once told me that he had walked the streets of Sydney for three days without a bite to eat, had usurped the Prime Ministership. "Billy" visited England and returned determined to draft all the manhood of Australia to the war. He reckoned without his Party. Although he had dominated the Federal Labour Party for many years he now found that there were some who were not prepared to submit to his domination any longer. It was testing time. The Labour Party were not Class-Conscious. Some were against Hughes and his Conscription, but they were out to back the war, and defend the motherland against all nations. Senator Ted Russell and Frank Tudor resigned their portfolios. Hughes left the Labour Party room, with such as would blindly follow him. Thus there were men in the Labour Party who were prepared to put country before class. These were the members of the Labour Party who were being accused day by day in the papers and by political opponents of standing for Socialism. What irony!

Being beaten by his party, and saying goodbye to those who took him from poverty and obscurity and gave him political power, Hughes became exasperated and determined to sell Joseph as a slave. He enlisted the support of those whom he had been fighting, for twenty-two years in State and Federal politics, and decided to submit the Conscription issue to a referendum. So confident was he that he could get it carried that he immediately used the Defence Act of Labour Party enactment to call up all the single men between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five for immediate training. Thousands obeyed the order, but many there were who would have none of it. All those who resisted and occupied positions in the Federal Public Service were dismissed, but when Conscription was defeated, they were not to be reinstated. Amongst the public servants who resisted Hughes and his draft was Fredrick T. Macartney. I knew him well. He was refined, and one would scarcely expect to find a man of his poetic genius and literary talent on the side of the resisters. But Macartney was made of solid stuff. He was compelled to depart from all his intellectual environment and associations and find a means of livelihood in that lonely tropical outpost, Port Darwin. Mac had no regrets. He decided as his conscience guided and was the more the man for that. He reminded me of that poem on "No", which I had been taught as a boy at school:-

"More of courage is required that one word to say,
Than to stand where shots are fired in the battle's fray."

Hughes sought to bring the I.W.W. to destruction. He blamed

the members of the organization for all kinds of villainy, and goodness knows, the I.W.W. made mistakes, but when one remembered his book, "The Case for Labour", one knew what Hughes feared and condemned. When the I.W.W. was formed in 1905 it supported a political clause, and shortly after its inauguration propaganda clubs were formed in Australia. Hughes in his book bitterly attacked the ideas of that organization with all its political clause, so it was not the non-political organization, for its anarchistic clauses, which it adopted when it dropped the political clause in 1908, but the idea of Industrial Unionism. Even today it is hard to find a Labour Politician that will stand for or support the Industrial Union idea.

Hughes set himself out to destroy the I.W.W. and legislated an Illegal Association Act. Clever as he thought himself, his Act was innocuous, in that it was only when one was prosecuted and convicted that the Act could be invoked. In spite of the innocuousness of the Act, the I.W.W. was raided in Sydney. The organization certainly did advocate and support sabotage - but with what interpretation no matter. There had been a number of fires in Sydney. Some made out that because of the war and a difficulty some business men found in carrying on, there might have been a possibility of fires to obtain insurance monies. Whatever the reason of the fires, Hughes became exasperated, and there were raids and arrests, trials, and imprisonments. Twelve men were sentenced by a savage judge to terms of from ten to fifteen years. There was no case against them. All the police

evidence was of a circumstantial character. But so inflamed was the populace that when men who opposed the war and conscription were sent to trial there was no hope for them. Barrabas was in the ascendency.

Jock Wilson had left the A.S.P. and entered the fold of the I.W.W. and for a time harboured in Sydney. He now returned to Melbourne. We mustered a goodly number of the members of the Local, and Jock proceeded to lecture us severely for not doing all the things we ought. Jock seemed to think we ought to have accomplished the revolution. I waited patiently till his long animadversion was over. I rose without hesitation and proved to the members, if not to him, that we had done magnificent work in a few months in straightening the finances, and after all the financial part of an organization is the part to be most attended to under Capitalism. What did it matter to Jock, once the money was obtained whether it was repaid or not. There are too few in the revolutionary movement who know how to look after the financial part of its affairs. Not being able to castigate the Local with any degree of success Jock left again for Sydney. He had not long been back when it came his turn to get before the court. Once he said to me in a free speech fight that he would not risk going to gaol. He had done a month in Sydney for street speaking and refusing to move on, and he was not going to gaol again.

He appeared on the Domain, and said amongst other things, "I am not going to the war to have Broken Hill lead pumped into me by the Germans". That was sufficient. Under the War Precautions Act

a Labour Party law - he was convicted, and being a known I.W.W. man was sentenced to six months under the Illegal Association Act. His term was about to expire, and Hughes in a desperate desire to deport him held while he amended the Act. Jock was eventually deported. A girl that he had fallen in love with was permitted to marry him in Long Bay gaol, and they were deported together; Jock signed on as a seaman, and his pretty Australian wife as a stewardess. Jock kept at sea while the war lasted. He wrote me and assured me that he would take the platform for Industrial Unionism, but when the clouds of war were gone, he drifted into the Communist Party and became one of its English organizers. So much for one who had suffered for being an Industrial Unionist.

The Waterside Workers Conference was held. When we arrived in Hobart everybody thought we were I.W.W. " criminals", because some delegates were from Sydney, the seat of the trouble. We heeded them but little. I was least of all thought to be an I.W.W. man. Hughes' conscription fight was on. I was invited to stay a night in Launceston and deliver an address. It was an open air meeting, but a large one indeed. All meetihgs were large while that campaign was on. One man, slightly the worse for drink, listened, looked into my face, and said, "Get your head read."

"If you weren't colour blind", said I, "you would be able to notice that it <u>is</u> red." Great laughter. Another man, also inebriated, stood against a urinal, and from his fortification interjected. I pointed to him, and said to the audience, "There is a man leaning

against a house. All that is wrong with him is that he is outside of it." Laughter again. I was not interjected any further. I spoke till late, and the crowd was loath to leave. They desired a sure guarantee that conscription would be defeated. That I could not give, but felt sure it would be.

Our delegates were housed in the Howard Hotel, and Nick Connelly, the proprietor, was an "anti". I was not destined to enjoy rest or holiday. For me it was hard work indeed. My fame was noised abroad and I was booked to address many meetings. Some nights I was in the city streets and others I was driven to country towns. Dave Dicker, who was a Labour Member of Parliament was about the most energetic member in Tasmania. He used his car day and nights, and travelled long distances to fight the good fight and help labour for the cause.

Dave was not a powerful orator, but he was a good speaker, and above all, was convincing in his argument. He organized meetings in places far out, and picked me up as the conference closed each day and drove me with him. One experience was in Pontville. A young clergyman had come to hear the anti's. He had heard the Conscriptionist speakers, and his superior was a conscriptionist, as nearly all parsons were. He could not bear to hear me slashing into the warmongering set, and began to interject. That suited me, for having studied myself, I knew how poor the vision of the parson really is. I replied to him in merciless fashion. He appealed to the chairman to protect him, but was advised to remain silent and he would be let off. At the end of the addresses the young cleric rose to move a vote of thanks, and

express his satisfaction with our speeches. He said he had never heard the anti side before, and doubted if there could be any logic on that side, but now he was prepared to differ from those in authority and recognize two sides in the fight. We stayed at the hotel that night. We could have stayed at the Catholic Presbytery. The young priest was at our meeting and was decidely an anti-what Irishman was not?

It was the morning of the great day - "the great, the important day", as Addison said in Cato. We returned in time for me to reach the conference room shortly after the opening. A serious debate was in progress. It was not on business arising out of the agenda, but on the issue to be decided that day. I had not seen the morning's papers. But it appeared from the tenor of the debate that the "Mercury", the conservative journal, had published to Tasmania that the Waterside Workers Federal Conference had carried a resolution "that if Conscription were carried the Waterside Workers of Australia would immediately take part in a strike, in all ports." This statement had perturbed the delegates, and they were endeavouring ~~the~~ to shape a means whereby they might contradict it. There were several silly motions moved, and withdrawn. One delegate moved that all the books and business of the conference be submitted to the editor for perusal. That I violently opposed. What to me, a Socialist, were the opinions of the Capitalist dailies! The workers never had their case strengthened by what they wrote. They were part and parcel of the Commercial arrangement. I moved that the chairman for the day, and the Secretary be appointed to

to interview the editor and inform him that no such resolution as that reported by him was ever carried or even mooted. My resolution was carried. The Conference adjourned at noon and the chairman and Joe Morris set off hurriedly to interview the editor. Theirs was a vain mission. He refused to alter or recant a line unless they were prepared to swear an affidavit. He assured them that he got his information direct from a delegate, who assured him that such a resolution as he had reported was carried. Well I knew that there was one man, who was still prepared to support "Billy" Hughes, and believed that such a report would help hundreds of thousands of votes to be cast for Conscription.

What was actually done was done in connection with a letter that had been received from Jack Curtin, Socialist renegade, now J. Curtin M.H.R. for Fremantle, and aspiring Prime Minister. Curtin was secretary for a Committee at the Trades Hall, Melbourne, that had been brought into existence to organize to combat the infamous methods of the Hughes Government. I moved early in the Conference - "That delegates guarantee that they would recommend to the Waterside Workers of Australia to fall in with any course of action that the exigencies of the moment might prompt the Council of Action to recommend." So pussy were the delegates that even a couple of I.W.W. sympathizers from Sydney would not support it, even though their own Branch had carried a similar resolution. My motion was lost . Hughes still had staunch secret supporters.

The Conscription issue was decided, and the anti's won. I was pleased, but disappointed to think that so many people would, on their vote, favour conscription. But with all the elements forming opinions, and the war at its height we might have been able to excuse people. Nations were supposed to be fighting against German Militarism, and on a universal suffrage vote endeavouring to establish it in democratic Australia. It is strange to contemplate how one nation of people will fight to rid themselves of tyrannies forced on them by tyrants and autocrats, and other peoples voting to impose on themselves what others are fighting desperately to throw off. I felt the more determined after the Conscription issue, to get on with the educational work of Socialism.

The Sunday following referendum day was sunny and spring like. Meetings were advertized and the Domain was thronged. It was much like Golden Gate Park on Sundays. There was a joint meeting, and I with Dwyer Gray and others addressed a couple of thousand people at least. I was a speaker from another state, and that seemed to give me prestige, whatever my shortcomings might have been otherwise.

There was only one hitch in all the campaign. During the last week, Nick Connelly applied for the City Hall, since the Mayor had granted it free for Joseph Cook, one time Prime Minister, and an ardent Conscriptionist. He refused. Class bias again! Connelly then agreed to hire it at whatever price. That was refused. The anti's were to be kept in the background. The hall held four thousand people, and Cook filled it. He did not meet with a favourable reception. So disturbed

was he that it was only now and again that he could be heard at all. Laird Smith, a Federal Member, who "ratted" with "Billy" Hughes, rose from his place on the platform, but was howled down. He spoke into the ear of a reporter, and sat down. Next morning we were acquainted through the press with the fact that Laird Smith rose to say "That if the audience would give Cook a hearing, the Mayor would grant the hall free to the anti's." He ultimately granted it without Cook getting a hearing. I was no party to organizing the anti meeting. I was too busy going out each evening to address meetings with Dave Dicker. It seems that there were many who desired to speak at a meeting where an audience of four thousand was expected, and became jealous of one another. I heard all this and many more things from one of the delegates. He occupied the same room as I, and often when a bunch had been yarning and drinking till late, he would come upstairs, wake me and we would engage in a long talk. I assured him that they could have the meeting, and that I would welcome being in the audience for once. "One man", said he, "had mentioned the fact that there was no need to argue. His opinion was that there was one man who could bring his platform and talk all night." That was what caused the jealousy.

When the Secretary of the Hobart anti-Conscription League approached me, I baulked. "You will be able to muster many speakers", I said, "and you will get through without me." He was indignant and ~~said~~ said, "But for reckoning on you we should not have organized the City Hall meeting. You must agree to speak." I left him at that, but on the night I was placed third on the list. I was disgusted when I heard a Sydney delegate relate how his union was the first to refuse to work with men born in the enemy country, and used such argument to assure

the people of Hobart how patriotic they were. Sydney had a Nemesis. In 1917 the union went on strike, and instead of refusing to work with foreign born unionists, they were compelled to work with Australian born blacklegs who destroyed them. I put vigour and energy into my speech, and sent my voice into the balconies and made the rafters ring. Never did I think that an outdoor speaker for the most part could rise to a flight of oratory. I surprised myself.

I had another unique experience. One day, after lunch, while I was being shaved at a barbers, a messenger called at the Howard, and asked that I be prepared to go to Geevestown after the Conference adjourned. There was a motor coach leaving at four o'clock. I was ready. A local man went with me. While we were enjoying afternoon tea at a roadside house, John Earl, ex-Premier of Tasmania, and quondam Labour Politician, passed in a car. With him was a blind soldier. When they stopped for tea, the coach got in the lead. The clock was striking eight when we reached Geevestown, and many were assembled in front of the local hall. John Earl was billed to speak for Conscription in the hall. The local anti's organized an opposition meeting, and it was because of their telegram that I was hurried to their town. Earl was using the blind soldier, that is if he were blind at all, to persuade people that conscription should be carried. A chairman opened our meeting on a store verandah opposite the hall door, and we gathered a goodly audience. As I spoke I saw that the hall was far from full, and passed a remark. Several rushed into the hall and in a few minutes I saw them standing asking questions, interjecting, and otherwise

discomfiting John Earl. Soom the audience left and attended my meeting. I kept on till late. It was the policeman that assisted Earl to his car and got him away from what might have been a rough handling. All over, I was driven to the home of an apple orchardist a mile or two out of Geevestown. He was one of a family of brothers who had been reared in that fertile Huon Valley. A supper awaited me when I got amongst the women folks. My friend from Hobart was taken to another house. I was getting back to life. When I was a boy I lived amongst farmers, and as a youth in the Kelly Country I had been treated just as I was being treated in Geevestown.

I had received two letters from Melbourne warning me that all members of the I.W.W. had their places searched, and that my place would quite likely have been searched or it would be immediately on arrival home. I feared nothing, for I was determined to see the fight through. All Hughes' legislation was in the interests of the owning class, and law was nothing more than the wish and desire of that section. I was not an anarchist, but I was against the State interfering with me on account of the war. I occupied a small house, and batched with an old mate from the mines and with a brother of mine. They assured me that there had been no one near the house, and no one came after my return.

I was a happy delegate. I had been elected after months of unpopularity on account of my internationalism, and I had attended a conference where we had declared "Billy" Hughes no longer a member of the union. His wash pot, Joe Morris, was lost without his "Billy", but "Billy" was gone.

The year 1916 was one of the wettest springs ever known in Melbourne. Every day it rained. Each shower lasted a week. The Cup had to be postponed. On the day of that great Australian event the course was under water. There was abundance of work for stevedores, but very little chance for meetings. When we could, we showed on Yarra Bank and addressed the crowds. Time passed and the I.W.W. continued. "Billy" Hughes had not so far been able to kill it. But "Billy" was not as easily beaten as some members thought. I knew him and his methods only too well, and realised that he would have another shot. He did. Discovering that the organization still existed and that in spite of his thinking that he had it in gaol it was still like the cat, possessed of several lives, he sought to amend the Illegal Association Act. In the meantime there was an election. In spite of the fact that he considered himself still a good Labour man, he fled from West Sydney and was received by the electors of Bendigo. "Billy" had been in the Labour Party so long that he knew its weaknesses, and one of them was that for a number of years a certain religious organization was falling in behind the Labour Party. That mighty International religio-political machine, sought a government grant for denominational education. From the beginning of State Schools, with the policy of education free, secular and compulsory, it had not been able to move either the Protectionist or Free Trade Parties. Although Hughes was now at the head of what was termed a Nationalist Party, he introduced the Sectarian issue into the election campaign. It was good along with war propaganda. He assured the electors that there would be no talk about conscription unless there

were another referendum. That I feared would never be held again, but it was. The Labour Party was supposed to have blown its brains out when it ridded itself of Hughes, De Largie, Pearce, Earl, Laird Smith and many other, but the movement being greater than men, found men when the times demanded them. I was no more enamoured of the new blood than I was of the old that had gone out. I knew for all time that the Social Revolution would come, and that in spite of and not by the fiat of any political party. I could not be persuaded to compromise my Marxism. The Labour Party should never rope me in.

The Nationalist Party with its win the war programme came out of the election campaign with flying colours, and Hughes sought his amendment to the Illegal Association Act. There was a fight in the House, but Hughes got his Bill through. The Labour Party did not vote against the Bill. He gave a month from the date of assent, and all who dared to hold on after August 27th 1917 were to be gaoled for six months. Our party in Melbourne was a good little party and kept well away from anything that might savour of criminality. Some members might have advocated sabotage, but Laidler and I kept strictly to Industrial Union propaganda. Our little hall was the home of a happy little party. Every Saturday afternoon one of the girls would buy the requisites for a Sunday tea, and when we came from the Yarra Bank we would find half a dozen girls and some young fellows with a delightful tea ready. A couple of dozen would dine and from tea time

till meeting time would indulge in choir practice and singing. But Hughes, being a philistine would not allow happiness and association. One thing along concerned him and that was the perpetuation of Capitalism. Our concern was to organize to destroy it. The Bill was Law, and any person that dared to declare for the I.W.W. after August 27th was courting six months in gaol. We met, talked over the Bill, and appointed a committee to meet and recommend what course of action should be deemed best. The Committee having all facts before it recommended obeying the law. It was more than we could do to fight it, with twelve men in gaol and all that was alleged against them passing for truth. There was a little money owing to me on what I had advanced to pay for furniture, and it was decided that I should be instructed to take charge of the local's belongings, dispose of them and after I was paid, the balance to go to the fund for the support of the wives and children of the men in gaol. We bought a few boards and some packing cases, and used these for seats for our last night's meeting. The hall looked barren after the nice way it had been furnished, but we did with the makeshift.

It was the last Sunday, and we appeared on Yarra Bank in force. We could afford to defy a law that was not law for another twenty-four hours. "I suppose you think that this is our last appearance on Yarra Bank", I said in my speech, "but we will be here the same as ever. We stand for the One Big Union, and neither Hughes nor any other Prime Minister will prevent us. I for one will be on Yarra Bank next Sunday even if I have to wear a frock coat and carry a bible in

my pocket. It has been said that with the bible and Shakespeare we can prove anything. Well, I will look up the prophecies and from them I shall find scripture warrant for what I desire to say." We ran till the last minute, and left the meeting for our gloomily furnished hall.

A Waterside Workers' strike was in progress, and on the Wednesday there was a procession of striking unionists to Yarra Bank, and a demonstration. I was in the march, and listened to speeches from some of the officials. Several approached me and urged me to make a speech, but not being an official, I could not play the part of an interloper. Miss Johns, of the Women's Peace Army, was on the bank, and from her car proceeded to address the men. She spoke till she was nearly exhausted. Jack Williams, the Union Secretary, approached me and officially urged me to relieve the woman. I did. There I was, two days after the Illegal Association Acts, speaking when Hughes thought he had me silenced.

For our challenge speeches on Sunday it was considered that I was representing the I.W.W. , and a detective took down my speech in shorthand. Soon I was served with a summons and had to appear before the court. The police case must necessarily be weak. They raided the hall and got nothing to incriminate. They had searched Percy Laidler's place, but were disappointed. Percy's concern was for his job. He knew that he could afford to be brave, but it would not be genuine. He was a specialist and his boss needed him, and for his boss's sake he was concerned about the defence.

I was lined up, charged and pleaded not guilty. I was not a member of an illegal organization, but I was a One Big Unionist. The detective who took the shorthand notes read out things that I had never said, and swore that I stood near a tree guard with a red flag floating about me, whereas I spoke from Miss John's car, and she had had a white calico sign, "Workers Unite." He produced a button with a photo of Karl Marx on it, and said it was the product of the I.W.W. Laidler had the Secretary of the Socialist Party handy to prove that it was issued by the V.S.P. Ben Mulvogue, secretary of the Builders' Union, gave evidence that apart from what the I.W.W. might propagate, he, with others, had drafted a constitution for a One Big Union, and had never been in the I.W.W. in his life. Jack Williams testified that the meeting was a pure and simple craft union affair and that it was he who invited and urged me to speak. The case was looking black for the police. It looked blacker when a plain clothes constable testified that he had made longhand notes of my speech, and things sworn to by the shorthand man were never said by me. The magistrate compelled the shorthand man to produce his book, and transcribe as he read. All the evidence was there, but it lacked corroboration. I was opposed by Leo Cussen, one of Melbourne's leading barristers, but he went down. The information was dismissed and I was awarded five guineas. The money went to Maurice Blackburn, but his was a sinecure job. There was nothing to defend.

When we came out of court, Kiernan assured me that I was only proceeded against on summons and not arrested. That was because the

police did not desire to treat me as a criminal - they respected me, and were in sympathy with our propaganda. Sergeant Detective Coonan informed me that Hughes knew me too well to think that I would yield to his law, and that it was from the Prime Minister's department that the prosecution was ordered. Once again I carried too many guns for Terrible Billy.

Sunday by Sunday I went down and talked about Socialism and Industrial Unionism. There was big interest in the meetings, for it was feared that as long as the war lasted there was a necessity for vigilance, not so much on the part of the authorities as on the part of the people. All were not patriots and all were not in favour of the war.

It happened one Sunday that meetings on Yarra Bank were forbidden. The people swarmed out as never before, believing that there would be a riot. The river banks were lined with people, as Henley never attracted them. An army of police were on foot and on horses to shepherd people out of their regular meeting ground. There was galling and chafing, and well the police knew that they could not hold the crowd if once it broke. "Chummy" Flemming, the anarchist, hired a boat and a man to row him, and as the boat was rowed up river from Princes Bridge, "Chummy" lectured. He cursed the police and the authorities that dared to usurp the people's privilege. Suddenly there was a break and a mob was rushing in. The police were powerless - they pushed and rode, but the meeting ground began to fill with people. Dick Long, a poet, and friend of the Anti-War Brigade, mounted a box and began to harangue the crowd. The police seized him, and there was intense excitement. On the other side of the river thousands, like Peter,

had assembled to follow their Jesus afar off. Two men excited and eager to get across, engaged a boatman to row them. When they were in midstream one of them stood up, and in his excitement, overturned the boat. The boatman was at home in his boat or in the river. He soon swam to the bank, but his fares went down. Men stripped hurriedly and swam to the scene, but there was no rescuing them. Police with grappling irons fished two corpses up. It was a victory for the habitues of Yarra Bank. The authorities did not try to prevent any more meetings. They had caused one tragedy, and that was enough for them.

I was becoming versed in tactics from my studies, but supposing that things did not happen according to plan! I was thinking on every happening, and working out in my mind a plan for action. I am sure if I were not a revolutionary, I should have made a good soldier. But I should have to be the General. I could never serve as a private. Military discipline would never dominate me.

The authorities not being able to lock people out of Yarra Bank Campus, a new method was adopted. Returned or enlisted soldiers sought to break meetings up. They tore down "Chummy" Fleming's flag and smashed up the Women's Peace Army meetings. Vida Goldstein, Miss Johns and Adela Pankhurst were thrust from the platform Sunday after Sunday, but courageously they went to their posts. The V.S.P. was not in favour. Fred Riley was attacked more than one Sunday and efforts were made to immerse him in the river, but Fred too continued his policy of passive resistence. It all riled me. I wanted to fight and went to the meetings prepared for fight. An antagonistic mob gathered round one Sunday and threatened me. I spoke and gave warning.

"It is this way", I said, "I have watched your doings and noted that you think you are running the country. I have no respect for soldiery, and if the authorities do not see that the police do their duty we will do it for them, and I intend to meet lawlessness with lawlessness. There is room in the morgue for many of you, and it is there I will send you - Keep back."

"You are alright, Wilson", said their spokesman. "You talk common sense and you have nothing to fear."

"I have nothing to fear", I repeated, "but you have. The morgue is close beside Yarra Bank - the authorities reckoned for us when they built the morgue alongside what was to be the rebels meeting place."

Sunday after Sunday soldiers and would be soldiers assembled and worked for mischief. It mattered not whether it was Miss Johns, Miss Goldstein or Adela Pankhurst, they were interrupted, and sometimes pulled off the platform. Fred Riley was knocked off his stand, and sometimes threatened with violence, The police were always handy, and strange to say, recognized their powerlessness to deal with the interrupters, and escorted Riley to the morgue till the trouble was passed.

The Anti-Conscription League that had been brought into existence for the purpose of fighting Conscription in 1916, had not disbanded, for well did some of its members realize that the danger of Conscription was not past and would not be till the war ended. I joined them, and thus was attached to an organization where I could carry on propaganda. Sunday after Sunday, and Friday night after Friday night, we carried on,

and the hour of another campaign drew nearer. I was at a strike meeting one afternoon, and we were kept late. Going down from the Guild Hall many men were talking and discussing the strike. As we stopped at the corner of Bourke and Swanston streets a sergeant of police approached us to move us on, and he said, "You will have abundance of time to talk about the strike when you get into the trenches. Billy Hughes is after you with his referendum again." I bought a "Herald", and sure enough there was to be another referendum. The fight was to be right on and the battle of 1916 fought all over again.

There was a State election in progress, and we abandoned the South Melbourne market meeting for six weeks in favour of the politicians. The election finished on a Thursday, and all was clear for me on my old stand. I had been written to and asked if I would visit Adelaide. I answered and informed those who had invited me that I had more to do in Melbourne than I could satisfactorily manage, and if there were any other speakers available, I would prefer that they engage them.

Several of us spoke to an enormous crowd at the South Melbourne market, and did not discontinue the meeting until late. I went home, made coffee, enjoyed supper, perfectly satisfied that the antis were the ones that were wanted to be heard. I was short of candles, and not to be cheated out of my customary read on going to bed, I made a bed on a sofa downstairs, where I could use the kerosene lamp. I read till the town clock was striking twelve. I was enjoying a splendid sleep when I was suddenly awakened by a hard knocking on the front door. I feared it might be the military, because of things that I and others had said at the market meeting, or it might be the police,

for we had conducted our meetings without any permission save our own. I rose, stepped outside and took possession of the axe, for I meant to fight. I laid it on the sofa and went to the door. Whoever it was to arrest me I should have to be allowed to dress, but when I opened the door I was greeted by a shy telegraph messenger. He handed me a reply paid telegram, and assured me he was ordered to wait for a reply.

I was wanted in Adelaide, and was urged to leave my home city on Saturday and arrive to speak in Adelaide on Sunday. That I could not do. I owed it to the local Anti-Conscription League to speak as arranged on Sunday afternoon. I should have abundance of time during six weeks to put the case for the antis in the lesser city.

An enormous crowd swarmed on to the Yarra Bank on the Sunday afternoon, and I scarcely thought it fair to go away, but I had replied in the affirmative, and there could be no reneging. I bade the audience good-bye and exhorted them to make sure and do credit to themselves on December the twentieth.

On arrival in Adelaide I was taken to a home in the city, where I was supplied with a first-class room, and board that was a change from by bachelordom. I was soon informed why I had received the telegram at four 6'clock in the morning. There was an Anti-Conscription League in existence during the 1916 campaign, which consisted of men and women of all shades of political thought. In the meantime the Labour Party, that did not understand its position in 1916 and took up a sort of yes-no attitude, had found itself. In a few months time there was

to be a State election, and it was planned to form up a Labour Party Anti-Conscription League, and the speakers and organizers were to be the candidates to contest the election. Each selected candidate was sent to his constituency, and under pretext of defeating conscription was to do considerable campaigning on the funds collected to fight conscription. The original Anti-Conscription League held conference with the Labour Party, and after having been rejected the Committee hastened to their room, which was on the A.W.U. building, and there decided to wire me. It was 11 p.m. when the wire was sent.

The Party's funds were low, but I was not short, and could wait for my fare and expenses, but two members, Frank and Max Arndt, immediately donated money to assist in the printing of leaflets. I was taken to many factories and works, and the late "Teddy" King introduced me and assisted with the meetings. Sunday came and I made my first speech in Botanic Park. The interest was enormous and the throng accordingly. I appealed for funds and the box was filled in one round, many coming up to the platform and handing me ten shilling notes. The Labour Party were chagrined when they learned that the Anti-Conscription League had engaged a speaker, and one who was new to Adelaide audiences, and on that account something of an attraction.

It was one of Adelaide's specially hot summers, but in spite of it I threw myself into the work. Men and women came in, and from the country cash was donated in large and small amounts and we were a truly happy family. There was earnestness and energy everywhere. We printed thousands and thousands of leaflets and the committee of

active workers distributed them through the city and suburbs, and a goodly number addressed envelopes and posted thousands to the country. Four men were appointed to travel the country, and out they went, proving that the Anti-Conscription League was as strong as ever in spite of the new Anti-party formed up by the Labour Party. I addressed meetings at lunch hour, and every night we were in some street or another drawing hundreds and hundreds to hear the case for Australian liberty.

We were hampered by the censor. Major Smeaton was the man appointed to pass or prohibit what we desired to print, but I will say in all fairness to his position, he might have delayed some of our leaflets, but he gave us very little trouble otherwise.

The great day came, and a burning hot day it was, I was feeling the strain, and rested in the office, receiving reports, and issuing instructions. I was there at night when the first report of the voting came in. On that I was satisfied that we were on the winning side and that Billy Hughes had lost again, and "democracy" was saved. It would have been a terrible satire on the intelligence of Australia if conscription could have been enacted by a referendum vote.

I was due for a rest, and as it was only a few days till Christmas. I spoke in Victoria Square on Friday night and in the Park on the Sunday. It seemed at first that I was loafing. There were no midday meetings and no street meetings at night. Such meetings seemed to have grown to be part of my being. While the campaign was on I enjoyed a shower in the morning, one when I returned from a midday meeting, and one after

the street meetings at night. Even then I scarcely had a chance to get cool in such a summer. The wonder was that I was not charged an excess water rate on top of my board.

With the defeat of Billy's second attempt I was anxious to return to my bachelor's headquarters but was engaged till after New Year. The members meeting was held and the balance sheet showed that we had handled four hundred and fifty pounds in six weeks. Much credit was due to many humble as well as prominent members of the League. Scott Bennett heldped over two week ends on his way to and from Broken Hill, and as he was a mighty orator, he was of great assistance.

The founders of the Anti-Conscription League, who were ardent fighters against boy conscription from the inception of compulsory military training, were in favour of retaining me to continue that fight, for Australia was not free from conscription while her boyhood were compelled to attend for military training. There was still a prodigious amount of enthusiasm and the meetings in the Square and the Park did not abate.

The secretary of the Anti-Conscription League was a second generation of Socialists. Miss Glenie's father and mother were early converted. From the time that a drought drove them off Mootwingee station until the outbreak of the war they had lived in Broken Hill, the storm centre of Industrialism. They had lived and suffered through the strike of 1909, had heard Tom Mann, Harry Holland, Scott Bennett and other speakers of equal calibre, and had reared their family in

the great movement that I was dedicated to serve for the rest of my days. Miss Glenie was capable as well as earnest.

Several Socialists believing with me that boy conscription could be fought more effectively from the point of view of Socialist propaganda moved for a conference between the Anti-Conscription League and a supposed Socialist Party. Within a month the Socialist Party was formed actively, and the tacit members quietly dropped out. I had no desire to remain in Adelaide. The Yarra Bank was calling me, and I was full of longing to get back before the old audiences, but comrades in Adelaide persuaded me to stay till they could appoint another. I advertised for an organizer, and there were several applications. I refused to submit one, and considered myself disqualified from being appointed. One thing I objected to was the pay. I was a vendor of labour power whether I worked for a capitalist system. To me it was not what the party was prepared to pay me, but what it would prevent me from earning in industry while it employed me.

I was to be married on the Thursday to none other than the Secretary of the Anti-Conscription League, and had arranged to leave for Melbourne on the Saturday. I had written to Percy Laidler, and Percy advertised me to speak on Yarra Bank on the Sunday, but the meeting on the Wednesday night altered my plans. The room was full, and the applications were there for consideration. When it came to making an appointment my name was mentioned. I objected, but in spite of me it was repeated, and my qualifications urged: I left the meeting, went into a tobacconist shop downstairs, bought a cigar, and sat at the foot of the stairs, waiting till the meeting was over and

my fiancee was ready to see me, and make some final arrangements for the morrow. But just as I was three-quarters of the way through my cigar, a messenger came downstairs and begged of me to return to the meeting. The chairman acquainted me with what had taken place while I was out. The meeting had agreed to turn down the applications and appoint me, at a slightly increased salary if I would continue as organizer. I agreed to do so for six months, when I would have the Party in such a way that a lesser light could replace me and carry on. Had I done right or wrong? I was sorry to have to stay, yet glad for the sake of the cause I served to be of some use even in South Australia, It was Party and not people that decided me.

I went to the hills to a quiet place for a few days rest, returning to the city on Saturday afternoon. Now that I was a benedict I had to seek a home. I had been cheated out of my return to Melbourne and made no arrangements for residence in Adelaide. With the day's paper and half a dozen rooms and flats marked we rounded the city. Some places looked desirable, but there were faults to be found with them. I had never sought a home for myself and a wife before, so was fastidious. At last we found a place that suited and I was settled down to the life of Adelaide - but for how long!

Sunday saw me on a platform that I thought I had abandoned when I spoke from it on the previous Sunday, but there was I in the same place again. We had dined in the city, and visited my wife's people accepting an invitation for tea. Our housekeeping did not start till shops opened on Monday.

The Party had engaged the A. W.U. hall for Sunday night lectures but I was to be freed from lecturing on my first Sunday evening of married life. After tea we decided that we would visit the hall and listen to what was to be an enlightening lecture on "The New Russia". As yet I had but an imperfect knowledge of the details of the revolution. The lecturer was a Russian, and could give a perfect description. We had not got off the tram, when I saw the Secretary of the Party looking for some one. It happened to be me. The hall was crowded but the lecturer was missing. I hurried over, addressed the audience on the Necessity for the Proletarian Revolution and so saved the situation.

Now that I was definitely appointed organizer I entered on my work with determination. I had been a speaker, and an executive officer, but I now undertook the responsibility of building up a party. I could not go on speaking day and night as I had done through the anti-conscription campaign. I should have to allot myself certain meetings and no more. I received a letter inviting me to Broken Hill, and asking me what would be my fee and expenses. I replied that I was engaged and not available for Broken Hill.

Every Thursday I visitied a well-known furniture factory where a large number of men were employed. Matthias, the manager, was just the type of boss that a Socialist might hate and despise. He believed in extracting every ounce of energy out of the workmen employed by him, and men feared him. A long verandah in front of the factory saw the men seated for their dinner and a smoke. It was an ideal place for a

meeting, but I could not encourage or persuade anyone to sell papers or books for me. They were married to their job as it were and afraid of their master. I prepared for emergencies, and stood on my box with a few shillings and pence in my hand for change, and kept the papers under my arm. As soon as the whistle started to blow I would step down hurriedly and run to the gate, and as the men passed in in a crush many would buy a paper, and so I managed to dispose of from a dozen and a half to two dozen copies. Only a fraction of the men were buyers, but who more than a fraction at any time contributed to the funds of a party or bought literature? The greater number of union men were compulsory unionists, only a limited number in any industry would join a union if left to themselves. Socialism was not based on compulsory membership, but on the process of economic evolution. It was not the will of the mob, but societies great driving force that we relied on.

At the Islington workshops I found things different. There were men there who were active in the anti-conscription fight, and who had taken membership cards in the Socialist Party. These I could always rely on. One man took three dozen papers into the shops and compelled his workmates to buy, another took a parcel every meeting and sold upwards of three dozen. Often too I disposed of books and pamphlets. The Party had but little money. The great anti-conscription fight took all but twenty-five of the four hundred and fifty that we collected. We were lucky that we could keep the party out of debt. The collections in the park and in the hall on Sunday nights were consistent, and soon

I could estimate what our income would average. My salary was not huge, but two of us could get along reasonably enough on it. I had calls, being a party organizer, that other members did not know about; besides I had to be continually buying new books and subscribing to many papers. It was necessary to keep up to date.

Percy Laidler was manager of Andrade's book shop, and being a rebel, had persuaded his employer to stock political literature. I wrote him and on my name he was prepared to grant a substantial credit. He had had dealings with parties and had suffered, but with me as a responsible agent our party could buy fair quantities and stock up. The paper we were handling, "The Social Democrat", savoured too much of the Victorian Socialist Party methods. It was too "democratic" and not revolutionary enough. There were several Socialist Parties in existence in Sydney and each competed for our affiliation. I was somewhat disposed towards the Socialist Labour Party, but that Party was definite in its attitude towards politics. I scarcely favoured political action at all, to me at that time it seemed that it was not primary, and ~~seem~~ others who had been in the I.W.W. were with me in that. We decided to hold aloof from affiliations and handle the "International Socialist", which was being printed by the Australian Socialist Party. I ordered a hundred copies. They sold out easily. I increased the order to two hundred, and disposed of every copy. I wired for three hundred, and before we got to our full selling capacity we were receiving and disposing of four hundred copies. With papers and literature we crept from two pounds a week

to three, four, and then for a full half year, we averaged five pounds a week. That was good for Adelaide. The most of the comrades were pleased and credited me with being a capable organizer as well as a speaker, but there were others who could not bear to be in a party that could show success. Jealousy seized them, and I was marked down for their opposition. I was too ready and desirous of leaving to accept criticism from anyone. Some of my critics desired to heap work on me and increase the number of meetings that I was to address. It irked them that they might come into the party room and find me writing or looking up something for a lecture. In their judgement I should work all day, speak several nights a week, speak Sunday and Sunday night, and do all my studying in my sleeping hours. I consented to address a meeting in the Square on Saturday night in addition to Friday, but beyond that I would not go. I had organized for seven months and was proud of my record. Several handsome donations had enabled me to build up a literature stock to the value of a full hundred pounds - there was ten shillings worth in the cupboard when I started.

"Monty" Miller, the grand old man of the Australian Labour movement, although well over eighty, desired to make a trip from West Australia to old haunts in the Eastern States. We received him and raised money to help him on his way. He spoke in the Square, in the Park, and lectured in the hall one Sunday night. He was off. The day after, the armistice was signed, and Adelaide was all excitement - fully intoxicated. Tramway men refused to handle the traffic

unless they were paid more money. The amount was refused. They struck, and the largest crowd that ever filled Adelaide's streets were forced to get to the city as best they could. Tens of thousands thronged the streets all day, sang victory songs, and waved flags. Monty was to catch the afternoon train. Our comrades were at the hall. It was a general holiday. We decorated in red, and hoisted the flag of Social Reconstruction and marched through the crowd, but we were not noticed. We were accepted as part of the great celebration, so enthusiastic was the crowd. Had they been sober enough to realize who we were, and what we represented, there would have been a melee in the street. Patriotic intoxication is the worst form of intoxication.

The tramway men were locked out and the meeting in the Square on Friday night was enormous. Never had I addressed a larger gathering. One speaker before me referred to the vanquished Germans and said, "They are not so bad. They are enterprising. If a man in Germany possesses a good idea there are lavatories for him to go into!" Great laughter.

I talked as I never talked before in the open and almost exhausted myself talking about Socialism and Industrial Unionism. From that I branched off onto science, proving how all the human race were akin, and that the war just ended was a fight over commercial aggrandisement. It was a sordid trade war, as Dr. Mannix had said. My critics seized on my talk on science as an opportunity to chastise me. I should have talked one thing only to such an audience, in their judgement. Here I gave notice that at the end of the financial

year, which was February, I would be a missing quantity. I was in Adelaide because of my ability to organize and not to be bossed by lesser lights.

"You will never get away", said my wife to me as we went home that night, and we took half a house from a comrade with a small family and I bought some furniture. Yet I was for quitting.

The end of the calendar year came and we set about to organize a picnic. It was to be held on Foundation Day. It was as big an affair as the anti-conscription celebration, nearly. More than four hundred journeyed to National Park. I was sure in a party that was booming, and was proud to be its organizer. It was while the party was in this flourishing position that I desired to quit and leave it to some one else to hold. The end of the financial year arrived, but no arrangements had been made as a result of the notice I had given, but I refused nomination. I was instructed to advertize for a successor in the various Socialist papers in the different States. It meant that I should not be able to leave before the end of March at earliest. The nominations were in, and after a good deal of debate on the merits and demerits of the various applicants I was referred to as the only man for the job.

"You will have to appoint another", I said, "for I am going away."

At last a selection was made, and I was pleased, for I desired to return to work and to the meetings on Yarra Bank. I wired the successful applicant, H. Spencer Wood, then at Newcastle, but when it came to accepting he reneged, and recommended another who had been

one of the applicants. This individual did not wait to know what might be doing, but immediately sent in another application. I was as far from being relieved as ever. Applications were invited again, and another month elapsed. There were half a dozen applicants but the Party would not make a choice. Any one of them might have proved good if given a trial, as the Party was organized and on a good footing, as the saying goes. Little Doctor Nicola thought of Mick Sawtell, and moved that I write Western Australia and urge him to come to Adelaide. Mick was as far away as he could possibly be. He was at Wyndham, and his fiancee, formerly an Adelaide girl, wired him and demanded that he leave his outlandish place and return to civilization. At last word came through that Mick would arrive in Adelaide on a certain day. It was weeks ahead, and I began to think that my wife was a wise woman, and that I should have to be anchored for a long time in the land of the "crow eaters."

Time was passing. May Day was approaching, and it was our intention as Socialists to celebrate it worthy of our Party. My wife and a number of other women comrades organized a social in the Trades Hall, and a mighty good social it was. On our way home when I was in the best of humour I consented to my wife leaving almost immediately and clearing the way for me to quit as soon as Sawtell arrived. But alas! Decisions cannot be executed as soon as hatched. A plague was upon the land. Influenza of a kind not known in Australia before, was raging in every State, and many people were dying because of it. An embargo was being placed on Interstate travellers. One had to be

examined by a doctor, wait a week and report again before a boat or rail ticket could be issued. That was bad enough, but the boat on which Sawtell was travelling from Wyndham to Freemantle had a sick passenger aboard, and the whole ship's passengers were forced into quarrantine. I was to be held up for a further period. My wife gained her pratique and left for Melbourne. I stored our belongings, rented a room in the city and carried on.

I was feeling deeply interested. Our propaganda was having effect. The One Big Union idea was taking hold. Would that it would scourge like Choleric Influenze. Already the Trades Halls were sitting up and taking notice. There was a conference convened in Melbourne for the purpose of launching the One Big Union to function in industry. Several delegates from Adelaide Trades and Labour Council were to attend. Was my dream coming true earlier than I could have expected?

Of all the Trade Union officials who had taken an active interest, one might give some credit to Ben Mulvogue, Secretary of the Builders' Union in Melbourne, but Ben had his limitations. When he made a statement to the effect - "That with the One Big Union formed up we could march triumphant to the Arbitration Court", I was satisfied that Ben was not a revolutionary, but a pure and simple craft unionist. I waited for the result of the Conference. Delegates evolved a scheme, and draughted a Constitution. The delegates returned. With the One Big Union in the air many Craft Union officials who had jobs to lose and other interests to serve, proved how far they were in favour of the emancipation of the Working Class - my class. One Cleary, wrote

a book, "The One Big Union, Will it Emancipate the Workers?" He wrote it, not as a member of a union, but as the President of the Catholic Federation. He was against it, on very poor argument, but it was sufficient. The attitude of one of our large religious organizations towards the O.B.U. was stated and that sufficed for some delegates. Tommy Howard, Secretary of the Trades and Labour Council, immediately turned right about face, and then I knew that the Propaganda for the formation of the One Big Union was in the hands of the revolutionaries. Sawtell was credited with being an ardent champion of the O.B.U. He had been a member of the I.W.W. and for its sake had suffered several months imprisonment.

The Workers International Industrial Union, which was the original I.W.W. before the Anarchist element captured its Conference in 1908 and eliminated the political clause, was organizing and building up in Melbourne. It doubled its efforts after the Trades Union O.B.U. Conference, for it knew that only trained revolutionaries could handle the position. The Organization published a paper, "The One Big Union Herald", Fifty earnest comrades, engaged in selling it, and canvassing on Saturday afternoons and Sunday mornings, taking subscriptions and eneuring a wide circulation. I was written to and eagerly seized the opportunity to spread such a paper. The paper was in demand, and hundreds and hundreds sought it. I raised the sales to one hundred dozen a month, and kept the sale of the "International Socialist" up to four hundred a week. I was feeling more interested than ever before. Yet I desired to expend my talents in Melbourne.

When it was known through my wife that I would soon be back I was written to by the Secretary of the W.I.I.U. inviting me to speak and work for that organization. I replied, refusing the invitation. I was still only partly concerned about a party that had a political clause.

At that time Frank Hyett, Secretary of the Railways Union, who was the same gentleman that I had had to do with in the Victorian Socialist Party contracted the dreaded scourge, influenze, and died. Applications were called by advertisement. Doctor Nikola drew my attention to the ad., and a couple from the local Railway Union called on me. I was also written to from Victoria and urged to make application. My industry was transport, and if the O.B.U. were going to be formed I would be eventually in with the railway men. At a weak moment I was persuaded to make application. The result was as I might have expected. The Victorian Railway men, while pretending to support the O.B.U. did not desire to have for an official one who was as red hot a revolutionary as they considered me to be. I had had association with the I.W.W. They selected Will Smith, a member of the Victorian Socialist Party, and one who held membership in the Labour Party, - he afterwards contested a seat in the A.L.P. interest. The same gentleman some time later visited Russia, and traitorously misrepresented the doing of the Great Industrial Republic. His Labour Party ideas would not permit him to do otherwise. Russia was the antithesis of our Australian Democracy. "We had universal suffrage, and nothing more was needed." Truly an inferior understanding of the functions of the Political State. Never did it occur to the Labour Party hangers-on that Universal suffrage had produced worse rants

than Czars and Kaisers. But opportunism is blind and deceitful.

It was approaching the fourteenth of July, and I set myself the task of studying the French Revolution so that we might celebrate the fourteenth, which was the anniversary of the fall of the Bastille. I had just been through the W.I.I.W. constitution, and that of the One Big Union, and was being softened in my anti-political opiniohs, and as I waded deeper into the history aforesaid I was becoming convinced that economic power alone could not suffice. The bourgeoisie had won economic power but were hemmed in by a political wall, shaped in the days of feudalism. It was the desire to smash that antiquated political shell that forced the revolution. The bourgeoisie had to win political power. Then a new book arrived in Australia. It was "The State - Its Origin and Functions." Never had there been such a book written before, dealing with that mighty institution in the light of Marx's Materialist Conception of History. I was on the horns of a dilemma. Just as it was a hard intellectual struggle to accept science and break with my early religious training, and later theological studies, so was it a mental strain to make up my mind that political action was necessary in an economic fight with the forces of Capitalism. The One Big Union might be alright in fighting the daily struggle, but the Social Revolution would have to be planned on the most scientific lines. I was glad indeed that I had refused to accept the job of organising for the W.I.I.U. I would be able to make up my mind when Mick Sawtell relieved me and I devoted time to further study.

At last Sawtell arrived, and after another week end I was to be free. We gave him a welcome in the hall and I was presented with a

handsome travelling bag - something to pack up in and get away. Which way should I accept it? I was also presented with a gold-mounted fountain pen, by the comrades and sympathisers at Islington. I was becoming an important factor in the world of Socialist Propaganda. Sawtell was to occupy the room that I was then in, and for the time an extra bed was improvised. We retired late, and talked till the small hours of the morning. I woke at seven, and was possessed of a happy feeling as I saw my successor sleeping in the bed beside mine. But I was disappointed when he woke and got up.

"Alf", he said, "I have been doing some thinking, and I have come to the conclusion that this will be no job for me. I can talk on Industrial Unionism, but I could not manage the different things that need attending to. Monty Miller gave you great praise to me and said I would find it hard to carry on from where you left off. You are a Marxian, but I have to confess that I have never read such an author, and I do not possess a mind that would enable me to study him. Emerson is more of an intellectual master for me. Take a holiday, a month if you like, and return. I will labour to carry on in the meantime."

Sunday came, but I was disappointed. The day was sunny and the audience enormous. Many attended to hear a farewell address by me, and to hear my successor who was expected to be equal to me in an oration. I spoke, said farewell, and introduced Sawtell, expecting that I had spoken for the last time to an Adelaide audience, but to my surprise, Mick made a vigorous but short speech. He cut out in half an hour. I was compelled to step on the platform again.

I spent Monday in the office introducing my successor to his new work, and on Tuesday I was packed up and ready for my departure. At this time the seamen were on strike, and the waterside workers of Port Adelaide idle. The Broken Hill miners had been out for a number of weeks, so that there was a depression clouding South Australia. Already a coal shortage was being seriously felt, and because of shortness of fuel the street car service was curtailed. None was permitted to run after 7.00 p.m. There were several men in Adelaide collecting money and clothes to support the miners and their families, and one of these had arranged for things to be left with me as well as at the Trades Hall. It happened that I had asked Mrs. Wilson to call on Angus MacDonnell, a quandom Socialist speaker, who was now established in a bootmaking business. For several years Angas was my bootmaker. She gave him an order to make two pairs, one black and one tan. These he made, and all unknown to me had posted them to the A.W.U. hall address, I called on Angas on the afternoon of my arrival in Melbourne, and was informed that the boots were by then in Adelaide. Prices had gone up since he had made boots for me before, and the two pairs were to cost me five pounds. I got him to strengthen the heels of the pair I was wearing and screw my skates on them as I was determined to enjoy a good deal of an old recreation while the winter lasted.

I wrote to Sawtell, but was keeply disappointed when he replied. Frank Lundie, Secretary of the A.W.U. had refused to allow the Socialist Party to occupy the room after I left. Mick Sawtell was an ex-I.W.W. man - so was I for a matter of that, but Mick had the bad luck to have got into gaol, and was tried again with Monty Miller in Westralia. When my

parcel arrived he left it in a corner of his room, and one of the Broken Hill delegates called in. He claimed the parcel saying it was sent to me for Broken Hill, and without opening it, he packed it up with other things and away it went to the Barrier. I wired Barnett, the Secretary of the A.M.A. but received no reply. I then wired Jack Coogan, a man whom I knew, and he set about searching for what was mine. He was just in time. The Strike Committee were sorting things out, and when they came across the two fine pair of boots they decided to raffle them. He recovered them and returned them to me, so I got my boots and did not lose my five pounds.

The Waterside Workers were on strike as well as the seamen. The blackleg bureau had been in existence since the strike of 1917, and they were determined to get rid of it. The Seamen's strike was holding them up and prolonging their fight. It was a stern fight, but little supported by other unions. It lasted three months, and during that time ten thousand pounds passed through the hands of the Strike Committee. Two thousand was the amount that was subscribed by unions out of their funds, the other eight was collected from wherever it could be got. Men hung outside picture theatre doors from eleven in the morning till closing time, and others visited works on pay Fridays with boxes, and there were donations of food stuffs from sympathetic business people. A store was opened at the Union Hall, and rations were distributed, as well as fifteen shillings a week to every married member.

The Seamen's Strike ended and the boats were steaming round the coast again. A week after the ending of the Seamen's strike thirty

thousand tons of coal arrived in Melbourne on ship's bottoms, but there were no men to discharge it. The blacklegs were not capable of working colliers. They had been tried in 1917, and several got killed rigging the gear, and many more got hurt. There was no coal in the city. What was to be done? The Federal Government stepped in. My arch enemy, Billy Hughes, Prime Minister, was away. Senator Milne was acting for him. He was sure he could persuade the watersiders to turn to work and discharge the coal. He attended a meeting. It was a crowded meeting without a doubt, and an orderly one - it is amazing how rough working men can conduct themselves when the occasion demands it. The Acting Prime Minister spoke for an hour, and delivered himself of a volume of political rhodomontade, and concluded by asking the men if they would go to work and trust the Government. He received as a reply a thundering "NO" from that crowd of men who had listened so patiently. He left, but asked the Committee to meet him at Parliament House next morning, when he would deliver to them the decision of his cabinet. We were ordered to a meeting at 10.30 The Guild Hall was hired, as our room would be too small for the gathering that would assemble to decide whether the strike should end or be continued. We were all there, and even the Guild Hall was full to its utmost holding capacity. The Committee men arrived, a little late, but all were patient. We won. It had been decided that the blackleg bureau would be abolished if the coal section would agree to turn to at 1.00 p.m. that day and begin discharging the coal. We cheered the victory and I was called for. I delivered a short address, and we hurried away to dine

and prepare for work. I who had been a paid organizer for the Adelaide Socialist Party, was now back at my old occupation. I went down in dungarees with my digger on my shoulder. We assembled at the Union Rooms and marched to the wharves. In front of the bureau we held a meeting. Read a burial service, and passed on through the customs gates. Matty Forbes, for whom I was working when I received the call to Adelaide, was engaging men for the "Ashridge" lying under the gaswork cranes. Matty spotted me and called me. I was booked, and soon digging amongst the "black diamonds". There was a run of work for several weeks without stop, and I kept at it. Then it happened that the "Komura" was expected on Monday morning, but severe weather delayed her.

"You can go home and come out at two o'clock", said Matty, and homeward we started, but when we crossed the ferry one of the Commonwealth liners, the "Carina" was in to the agency of one of the Interstate companies, with a cargo of five thousand tons from Sydney. I waited, and before all the crowds were engaged my name was called. We had agreed that the original blacklegs - those who had enlisted between August and November should be recognized and given preference. They were all turned to but a few stragglers, and we were for night work. They were only to work from eight to five each day while we were to work from six p.m. till seven a.m. We would have by far the most money out of the job.

I had enjoyed nine weeks rest since I quit Adelaide, but was now working with industry. It had cost me a lot of money, but I felt sure that I should soon make it up. We engaged a furnished flat in a very nice house in Fitzroy, and felt comfortable. But I had something to consider. I was a married man, and soon to be a father. We began to

speculate, and I wanted to bet that our child would be a birthday present to me - mine was near at hand. All arrangements were made so that my being at work would not interfere with the episode. Others in flats in the same house were good to us although we were almost strangers to them. Five long nights I had worked, and was feeling tired. I came home on Saturday morning finished with the "Carina". It was my birthday, and sure enough I was right. My wife had to be taken away, and before midnight I was the father of a daughter - a live birthday present and a rebel child.

There was an advertisement calling for applications for an organizer for the Australian Socialist Party, in Sydney. I had lost weeks of wages by not accepting the position of organizer for the W.I.I.U. and now I was back in industry I did not care to make application for the precarious living. One of the Melbourne members of the A.S.P. approached me, and urged me to apply. A weak moment with thoughts of going to Sydney and speaking on the Domain, caused me to apply, and while my wife was still in the nursing home I received word to the effect that the Executive had unanimously appointed me. I was urged to hurry to the big capital, but would not leave till my family was settled again, and wired a refusal. I had not yet returned to speaking on the Yarra Bank.

CHAPTER IX

I was again approached by the Secretary of the W.I.I.U. and urged to take an organizing job. The One Big Union was in the boom, and if the W.I.I.U. position were not more forcibly placed before the workers there was a chance of its propaganda being sabotaged by a number of adventurers whose only idea of a One Big Union was to shape it and use it as Craft Unions and the Political Labour Party were being used. The Constitution of the Trades Hall outfit provided for a Grand Council of twelve to be paid six hundred pounds a year each. That was anathema to those of us who thoroughly understood what a Revolutionary One Big Union meant. The General Executive Board of the W.I.I.U. had approached the Trades Hall outfit for an amalgamation, believing that they could do much to dissipate wrong ideas, and help the work of the organization along, but they were informed that the O.B.U. had drafted a Constitution, which while being utterly unlike the laws of the Medes and Persians, could not be altered until the following May - it was then September. But the Executive Committee would effect a compromise to the extent that their organizer would agree not to compete with the organizers of the W.I.I.U. and would not engage in propaganda where the latter Party's organizer was carrying on. That was accepted on the ground that at the annual conference of the O.B.U. the W.I.I.U. would be permitted to be represented. An amalgamation therefore would have to stand in abeyance till the following May.

"You will just have to get yourself busy", said Tom Audley, "We

have done big things already. Our membership is substantial, and we have handled a lot of money and printed thousands of pamphlets and a good many books. Our paper has a wide circulation and what we need is organizers. Jim Scott and Fellow Worker Dodd have been about a good lot, and brought us many members. We have one hundred and fifty at Wonthaggi, amongst the coal miners, and more than that number on Sugar Loaf, building Eildon Weir. We have a lot more members amongst the bush workers and saw mill hands in the Warburton district, and neither of the men who have done so much for us, are as capable as you. We have had our members challenge the A.W.U. (Australian Workers' Union) and one of their organizers is going to Eildon Weir next week. Jim Scott was to meet him in debate, but Jim cannot leave his job to get away. He could do it if we were to appoint him permanently, but his throat has felt the strain of heavy speaking and he has decided to stay with his job. There is a meeting of the General Executive Board tomorrow night. Come to it, and we will put the position plainly before you."

I agreed to attend. It was a fatal meeting, for I was persuaded to accept a paid job again.

My wife and baby daughter were only home and settled when I was packing up to go away from them. I was not to be away for long, as I was to be the main Yarra Bank speaker for the Organization. Eildon Weir was on the Goulburn, just below where the Delatite emptied into it. It was eighteen miles from Alexandra on the main road to Jamieson. I was well acquainted with all that territory, for I had spent many of my boyhood days about Alexandra, and knew the Delatite from its source to its confluence;

in my manhood days I had mined and prospected over the greater part of it. I would meet many old mates on the weir job - and so I did.

I dined at a hotel where I had dined many times in my mining days, and there met one of the A.W.U. organizers. He knew me not, nor did I know him for a matter of fact, but knowing that an A.W.U. organizer was going to the weir, and knowing that Richardson was a coloured man, I was sure of him. We talked about things in general as we ate our dinner, and he told me much that he would rather not have told had he known who I was. He informed me that he was on his way to the weir job to meet a man named Scott in debate, but he had bigger things to think of in his spare time. He, with the Secretary of his organization and several officials at the Trades Hall, were interested in a tin mining proposition on Wilson's Promontory. It was in the initial stages of development, but preliminary work had given encouragement. If the mine opened up as it gave promise of doing he would soon be done with the working class. Instead of debating and fighting One Big Union schemes, that were menacing the A.W.U. form of organization, he would be employing some of them, and if they gave trouble on his mine he would prove to them that workers are dependent on masters. I listened with intense interest, for it was because of the reasons stated by him that I was a Socialist and not in the Labour Party. The bourgeois mind was all that was possessed by politicians, would-be politicians, Union Organisers and Secretaries. Yet this was the type that was responsible for bringing the O.B.U. into being. Tommy Howard was not the only one who would turn from being a friend to being an enemy. Such a dinner conversation convinced me that I had done right in again throwing myself whole-heartedly into the fight.

I travelled by the mail coach, but Richardson engaged a man, who was a returned soldier member of the A.W.U. and thus we got to the weir, without him knowing my business. I was met by one of the members of the W.I.I.U. and lodged in a navvy boarding house. It was alright. I had often put up with worse. Navvies were not miners. The latter demand nothing but the best, the former rough it pretty badly.

I went from house to hut and met many of the members, and talked with a goodly number who were A.W.U. men, but sympathised with the O.B.U. I slept in a small room off a kitchen, but was not lonely, although I thought of my family in our comfortable flat. I was where I had lived and camped many and many a time - on the bank of the beautiful Goulburn. I knew the river from Yea to Alexandra, and from Alexandra to its very source in the mountains about Woodspoint. Many and many a time I had prospected and washed my loams in the creek waters that formed the head of that excellent river.

On Friday I walked up the Delatite to visit a family who had received their education from my father, when he was a school teacher, at Howes Creek. Their rich land was soon to be inundated, and the homestead that had been built by their father forty years before was to be pulled down and removed, or left to be covered by the waters that the weir was to throw back into an enormous lake. At night I was taken to a hall. It was a school by day, and a room for meetings, dances, or concerts at night. It was a sort of communal hall for the denizens of Sugar Loaf, whose habitation would only last as long as the job of construction.

The meeting had been well announced amongst the men during the day,

and the hall was crowded. Only once, I was told, was it so crowded before, and that was when Miss Grant, an anti-conscription speaker, visited the camp when Billy Hughes was endeavouring to fasten his conscription shackles on the manhood of the Commonwealth. The job delegate of the A.W.U. was none other than a man whom I had worked with in the Lyell mines in Tasmania seven years before. He introduced me to Richardson. Richardson looked at me and said, "Haven't we met somewhere before?"

"We Have", I answered, "and thatas late as yesterday. We dined together in Alexandra."

He looked astonished, for he remembered our conversation. "I have not come to Eildon Weir to debate", he said, "I am here on union business, and have to address these men as it is drawing near the end of the financial year. They must take out their ticket as soon as possible after the first of October."

He rose to speak and kept on talking all kinds of rhodomontade about the history of the A.W.U., and of the greatness of that organization - which I knew in 1894 when its members burned woolsheds and river steamers - and did not quit till nearly ten o'clock. I rose and spoke only for a few minutes, and assured the members of the W.I.I.U. that as I was not given the opportunity to prove the soundness of our form of organization I would speak on Sunday afternoon.

"I will be staying till after the week-end", said Richardson. "There is no reason why I should leave in a hurry now that I am on the job."

Probably he was afraid that I would repeat what he told me at dinner in the hotel in Alexandra about his interest in mining propositions. But I was a sealed book on that till it should be made public through other sources, which it was, not many months afterwards.

I rode over to Mansfield on the Saturday and visited old acquaintances, and on Sunday mixed with the men and talked to them about the weakness of the A.W.U., and what bad acts it was guilty of. Richardson did not dare deny that when the Waterside Workers were shifting blacklegs off the wharf, his organization had entered into an agreement to work with them on wheat stacks, and thus help to keep them about the water front, nor did he dare to deny that on a certain job at Mildura when men were on strike an organizer visited the job, and offered to issue tickets to blacklegs while the members of his own union were deprived of the opportunity of getting back onto their job.

Sunday afternoon came and I took up my position near the hall and close beside the two up ring. The gathering was large, and amongst the listeners were a number of women folk - wives of the men who were constructing Victoria's greatest storage basin. Being a long winded speaker I continued till the tea bells were about to ring. Richardson waited patiently. At last he interrupted and reminded me that it was growing late, and asked me if I would finish soon to give him time to have a say. I reminded him that I had come to the weir to debate him or any other representative of the A.W.U. - that our fellow workers had arranged the debate for Friday night, and that he occupied the whole of the evening, when the meeting had been organized by the W.I.I.U. Committee. "This is my meeting", I said. The bells at the boarding houses rang. I finished soon after, and left Richardson to the few trees that had not yet been felled for an audience.

Billy Meade, who was the local Secretary of the W.I.I.U. handed me six pounds that he had collected at the pay table on Friday, which was pay day. I was pleased, for it proved that the men on Eildon Weir were men who sympathised with the militant One Big Union.

Back in the city I was installed General Organizer for the W.I.I.U. and after all it was a position to feel honoured in. I was wired for again, and in a fortnight's time I was back on Eildon Weir. This time I was to be in a rough game. Richardson was there also. It was not debating time, but fighting time. He was there to see that every man on the job took out an A.W.U. 1919-1920 ticket. There was to be no room for the W.I.I.U. on that job. The only One Big Union that the A.W.U. would support or tolerate was their own Executive ruled organization. Meade took up a collection, and still the support for the W.I.I.U. was strong. He collected at the pay table four pounds fourteen.

"It won't be what you men on this job say", said Richardson, "but what instructions I have brought up from your Executive that will carry weight. The A.W.U. has been in many fights in the past, and it will take something to break it now. Your W.I.I.U. and your Sydney-cum Garden O.B.U. won't get in on the A.W.U. The A.W.U. built the trans-line from Port Augusta to Kalgoorlie, over a thousand miles, the A.W.U. is constructing Eildon Weir, and if the Hume Reservoir goes ahead the A.W.U. will build it too."

He was right, for he had loaded guns to carry. His organization was so reactionary that it was in conspiracy with the employers or their representatives. At eight o'clock the whistle sounded for the day to start, but there was no response by the A.W.U. men, and when the W.I.I.U. men picked up their tools they were informed that they could not start without all hands turned too. That was a mild preliminary intimidation. Richardson mounted a truck and spoke for a few minutes, I mounted another one and spoke as he could not do even if he desired to. I criticised the A.W.U. and its many infamous actions. Many of the A.W.U. men understood what it meant to defy their Executive and they acted like puppies under Richardson. At last the engineer in charge came down and said, "I am not going to have any stoppage here. One man is as good

as another as far as I am concerned. The A.W.U. , I know, and can deal with, but your new militant O.B.U. might give me all kinds of trouble, and if the A.W.U. organizer won't give his men permission to work with the members of another Union, I have no alternative."

"If you take out your A.W.U. ticket you can go to work", Richardson said, "If you don't you all will be tramped."

The W.I.I.U. men refused to be bossed as if they were little children, and would not take out the ticket. They were, therefore "sacked".

Richardson visited the boarding house keepers and intimated them to turn the W.I.I.U. men out. Some of them were married men with their wives on the job, others were in huts and tents. The single men immediately began to batch, but that was not the end. Richardson set himself the task of having them driven off the job entirely. He went to Darlingford - the picturesque little settlement that was soon to be inundated. Tom Allen kept the store as well as the hotel. I knew Tom. He was one of the family that lived further up the river and ran every business at Ten Mile. Once his father was a witness on a case in court, and when asked his occupation, said, "I am butcher, baker, blacksmith, publican and storekeeper - in fact I am everything at Ten Mile." The Allens owned land and ran hundreds of head of cattle over the ranges. Tom bought the Darlingford hotel and store for the purpose, if possible, of getting the licence trasferred to a place below the weir where he could keep a bourgeois hotel for tourists in the days when there would be an enormous lake and it full of trout for anglers. He agreed with Richardson not to supply any member of the W.I.I.U. with groceries, bread or meat if he knew him and thus became a part of the conspiracy. Allen had occasion to keep in with the A.W.U. He was a shareholder in mines in the ranges, and since the miners hadgone into the A.W.U. they would be easier to deal with through Executive officials than

when they were in the A.M.A. (Amalgamated Miners' Association) with autonomy to act on any field according to the conditions that obtained. The A.W.U. had played its cards and shown its hand. I learned from first hand experience where its weakness lay.

It was no use my delaying. Members considered that they could do all that was to be done. I returned to the city, and was pleased when I learned that rank and file of the A.W.U. were not hostile, but ashamed of Richardson and his Executive. They were ready to do shopping and buy them stores, and when it came to leaving they collected money and helped the married folk considerably. It was the Executive that was at fault. The A.W.U. won, but I did not dream that in a little more than a year's time I should, like Caesar's ghost to Brutus, meet that organization at its Phillipi.

I was at home again, as it were, addressing audiences on Yarra Bank. The "One Big Union Herald" was still being printed in goodly quantities, and some fellow workers in Adelaide were selling it by the hundreds of copies in Botanic Park. The Socialist Party was broken up. Frank Lundie would not have them in the A.W.U. building. The anarchistic element at a hole and corner meeting of which very little notice was given, met, and all unknown to the greater number of the members turned the party and its property over to themselves and formed an I.W.W. which was a second edition of the I.W.W. I had learned and was more than satisfied that while Industrial Unionism was perfectly right it was wrong to ignore political action altogether. I was getting to understand the economic basis of the Russian Administration, and the trials and struggles of the revolutionary party for a number of years. I was forced to realise that with political power left in the hands of the master-class the social revolution would be a sanguinary affair.

On week days I went to various works and factories and always attracted good audiences and received a good hearing. Paper sales too were always very fair. Men were looking for the truth. I visited the big engineering shops at Newport, and there found the men rather dull. They were in Government jobs and thought themselves set and right for life. Still I attracted a goodly number. One day when I was there I met Senator Barnes, President of the A.W.U. He was friendly enough, and asked me if I would give place to him, as it was nearing election day. I did not care to abandon my meetings for a fakir, but knew that the greater number of workers in the Newport shops as everywhere else still had great faith in the Labour Party. I appealed to them, and they decided in favour of letting Barnes speak. I next met Mick Considine, Federal Member for Broken Hill, or the Barrier, as the electorate was named. Mick had heard things said and was compelled to face the men in Newport. They had collected money to finance the strike, and were not satisfied with the manner in which it was distributed. Mick delivered a vigorous address, but was heckled and when he was through had to submit to a severe questioning. It seemed that he explained all that was demanded of him, but there were amongst his audience men who would never accept an answer - nor understood.

We were handicapped in the selling of papers and literature on Yarra Bank. The law said that one was not even to give out handbills, religious or otherwise. We folded dozens of copies of the paper, and kept them more or less concealed. When I held up a copy and recommended it, it was a signal and half a dozen fellow workers would busy themselves amongst the audience. We never sold less that twelve dozen and once we sold seventeen dozen papers. Another Sunday when we had a new book off the press, I held up a copy, recommended it as a great book on the origin and functions of the Political State, and told my hearers where our rooms were, and urged them to call up any evening. That

afternoon we sold thirty-six copies. The law was truly an ass.

When I was invited by a couple of members to visit the Abbotsford brewery I went there. They met me outside at lunchtime, took me in and I spoke. I refused to drink a glass of ale, for I did not desire anyone to think that W.I.I.U. propagandists were going where beer was cheap. I was approached by a shop steward, and informed that I was not to speak there again unless I was supplied with a permit from Dick Gill, secretary of the Liquor Trades Union. I went again, by invitation from a couple of members of the W.I.I.U. Again the shop steward endeavoured to dissuade me and again I defied him. A week later he met me and informed me that I could not enter the dinner room unless I first saw the head brewer, Mr. Breheney. I went to Breheney, and we had a chat.

"I reserve the right to give permission", he said. "This is a brewery, as you know, and the country is full of prohibitionists. I would lose my job if I were to let some of that ilk in to talk prohibion. What a put over if a prohibitionist person went about boasting that he had got into a place like this. No, Mr. Wilson, we keep that sort out. If yours is politics and Industrialism, and the men invite you, speak by all means, and have a glass of beer with them before you go. Abbotsford ale is the best in Melbourne."

"But what about Dick Gill", I asked.

"Dick Gill is like all the other union officials. He likes to keep the members of his union to one idea, and would mortally hate anyone inculcating different ideas. We have nothing to fear from Union Secretaries. They seldom fall out with employers. They are like the Labour Politicians - in the game for what it is worth. Dick would mortally hate men going from his union to any other. It matters not to me so long as they do their work and do it well. The liquor trade is one that can pay good wages, and we seldom have trouble

with men. I don't wish you to infer that because we can pay good wages that we are unreasonable and ruthless exploiters. On the contrary we are a despised set, and for that obloquy that we have to bear we demand a little extra by way of compensation. Don't come into this brewery damning drink, and Dick Gill will have no saying either yea or nay!"

We could easily see that the Labour Council's form of O.B.U. was destined to fail. Unions were called on to vote, and vote many of them did. Not all, but a great many carried the vote in favour of sinking their craft identity and becoming part and parcel or the much needed O.B.U. but they had not had the meaning of One Big Union and its revolutionary purpose explained to them. We kept on, and the W.I.I.U. was succeeding. While the Labour Council OLB.U. had a few pamphlets our organization was supplying all the Marxian literature, and explaining the purpose of the organization and its Socialist objective.

I was invited to Wonthaggi, Victoria's new coal mining town. I was to spend a week end there. At Flinders St. Station I met my old friend and comrade Bessie Ahern, one of Tom Mann's protéges. She was now married to Arthur Wallace, who was for a year or two associated with the Victorian Socialist Party, and was for a term its Secretary. Arthur was a revolutionary apostate. He had secretly taken out membership in the Labour Party, and was ready, by two years membership to seek the job of a "carpetbagger" (a political career). He sought nomination, was nominated and selected to contest Albert Park, when George Elmslie died. It was a seat that I might easily have been selected for and won, if I had done what others in the Socialist Party had done and were doing. After a short chat on the platform I said, "I will have a chat with you on the way down."

"I may not see you", she answered, "I am riding first-class."

That convinced more than ever that as soon as the so-called revolutionaries

became members of a bourgeois party they immediately became snobbish.

It was pay week at the coal field and no work. There was a prodigious quantity of potential human energy about the street. Some merely met and talked, others played billiards and cards, while more sat in hotel bars and drank to the glory of Bacchus. I spent the afternoon with a couple of fellow workers as if I were but a visitor to the town. In the late afternoon we were in the township after a walk away out in the country. At one hotel there was a row almost equal to a riot. A number, fairly full of Abbotsford ale, engaged in singing the Red Flag. The reactionaries would have none of it and a fight ensued. It was a mob fight, and from fighting inside the bar, where room was scanty, they rushed outside. Several had cuts and bruises and black eyes and sprained wrists. It was a great fight, they said, but the W.I.I.U. men held their own. It was a scrap for the Cause.

I met the Fellow Workers and addressed them at night, for to me it was necessary that they understand the real socialist objective. A One Big Union that merely sought membership and did not educate its members would not stay in existence much longer than it took to enrol the members. Many asked questions and I was satisfied that the greater number of them understood the difference between their own organization and the Labour Council outfit with its incipient Grand Council of twelve receiving six hundred a year each.

I rose early on Sunday morning, as I almost always did, and coming downstairs I was welcomed by a glowing coal fire in the sitting room. It was November, but the mornings and evenings were cold near the coast. I was seated comfortably and reading a book that I had with me, when another man came down. He was relieving a bank manager who was on holidays.

"A nice fire", he said, after we had passed the time of morning.

"Coal is cheap in Monthaggi", I answered, "and they can afford to be

prodigal with it."

"I should have thought the opposite", he answered, "The miners get as high as seventeen shillings a day, and in some cases even more than that. I should think that coal mined at such a cost for labour would be more on the dear side than anything else."

It was my chance. I was meeting a man of the financial world, but one whom I was sure was not familiar with even the first principles of banking. I was sure that he understood his business as a manager - all the routine and rules of his bank as far as dealing with his clients were concerned. But had he ever got down to the genesis of banking, and the commodity status of labour. Had he learned how gold was first introduced as a measure of value because it was a universal equivalent? Had he ever read in that epoch marking book, "The Critique of Political Economy", by 'that German sheeny, Karl Marx', which appeared in the same year as Darwin's "Origin of Species" and which was destined to last as long and defy its critics just as logically, where he stated:

"Gold becomes a measure of value, because all commodities measure their exchange value in gold, in proportion as a certain quantity of gold and a certain quantity of the commodity contain the same amount of labour time; and it is only by virtue of this function of being a measure of value, in which capacity its own value is that gold becomes a universal or equivalent of money." Or "Price is the form into which the exchange value of commodities is converted when it appears within the sphere of circulation."

I was sure that he had not.

I proceeded to take him on his own argument that commodities were dear because of the wages paid, and proceeded to explain to him that labour is a vanishing quantity. While wages might be higher at one period than another, machines often made it possible to produce with very much less labour, and therefore, the wages represented a smaller return to labour even though they might be higher one decade than another. He was a goodly sort of man, and

argued in the friendliest of fashion. He was not arrogant because he was a banker and in dispute with a proletarian. He accepted me tacitly as a man and an equal. I went on from the labour theory of value to explaining what I understood by surplus value, and how it was the difference between what the worker produced and what he got when he received his wages. We were alone and in an interesting controversy when a maid announced breakfast. We breakfasted better than if we had drunk a glass of whisky together, but we could not continue others were arriving at the table. When breakfast was over other men took the stranger for a walk around the environs of Wonthaggi. I rested and read till dinner time, for I had two more meetings to address. The day was gloriously fine, and most miners in Wonthaggi own horses and vehicles. Taking advantage of such an afternoon many of them drove to Inverloch and other beaches. The crowd in the theatre was small, but interesting. There were some who thought not and understood little beyond even their craft union. They averred that the miners were in key industry, and did not need to link up with workers in any other industries. If they struck it would be impossible to replace them with blacklegs, as none but skilled miners could carry on the industry, and miners as a whole were too militant to scab on one another. That gave me a cue to further my thesis. I entered enthusiastically into a speech and laboured to explain how even seamen were not indispensible and coal miners were no more in industry than men who worked at other occupations. The capitalists were as one when they were in a fight against the working class, and coal could be shipped from any port in the world and supplied wherever it was required. I explained how labour was bought and sold, and how nations at war soon made up a friendliness when it was over and indemnities arranged.

"Labour is a commodity", I said, "owned by the workers of every clime, and bought from the workers of every clime. An Indian coolie's labour is the

same to a British capitalist as that of a labourer who could trace his English ancestry back to the days of William the Conqueror, provided he can do as much and yield up as much surplus value."

The audience was not large by any means. We scarcely collected enough money to pay the rent of the theatre, but to me it was an interesting meeting. We did not close till right on tea time.

Our secretary organized a meeting in the street in front of the theatre where I could address a large audience as they collected before entering to see the picture show. The crowd was big, women as well as men gathered early so that they might hear Alf. W. Wilson, who had spoken to so many thousands of people in different States.

When the meeting was over, I returned to the hotel after a walk with some of the fellow workers. Around a roaring fire of Rhthaggi coal I met the banker again.

"I heard you speaking a while ago", he said, "I reckoned when we were talking this morning that you were a man above the ordinary, but did not dream you were an economist with such an understanding. Truly your Marx must have been a great man. I agreed with a lot of the things you said, while confessing that there were many that it would be impossible to grip without deep study. I have to confess that banking companies are more or less cormorant institutions. I have had to perform disagreeable duties in my time, foreclosing on clients that could not keep up their payments of interest on mortgages etc., but little did I dream that there was any moral wrong in mine or the company's actions. It was all a matter of business, and after all what is a businessman but one who is out for what he can make, and a businessman is, as you quoted from your Marx, one who is bound by no other than one nexus, that of naked self interest, callous cash payment. You seem

to grip the workings of society, and your explanation that all things in life comes from Labour - let me spell it with a big L - seems logical enough, but can you get your downtrodden working class to understand it in that light? I fear not. As I heard you say - and you said a lot in an hour - more than a person could preach in twenty sermons - there are already three forms of One Big Union in existence. There is the I.W.W. with its negative non or ultra-political programme, the W.I.I.U. as you call yours, and the Labour Council O.B.U. with its so called Executive top heavy control. In addition I might add that the A.W.U. claims that it has a constitution broad enough for all the workers of Australia to go into. Surely there is more confusion than is to be found amongst a hundred jarring religious sects. Where is unity to be developed out of such a Tower of Babel? I feel interested in you, but fear that you have a hard row to hoe."

"Evolution never makes a mistake", I answered. "We have a hundred competing and jarring nationalities on the earth, and they are all the product of the great evolutionary process. Nations are in disagreement but worse than that, nature has produced men of different colours, and the colour bar is serious to contemplate, but with such men as Darwin, Marx and Lewis Henry Morgan to guide our thinking and understanding, I feel fully assured that before many centuries the whole human race will have associated and united. When I was in North America I found all the old time miners on Cariboo, Cassair, and Ommineca married to Indian women and rearing half breed children. Some had families grown to manhood and womanhood, and these in turn where married to the younger generation of whites who came later. In a few centuries the whole Indian population will have died out, but there will remain their blood strain, and it will help to invigorate the white race that now occupies the Mountain province of British Columbia. Today there are ten millions of

Chinese outside their own country, and scattered and intermarried with whites. Once there were a million negro slaves imported into Portugal. They were never repatriated, and there are no negroes in Portugal today. The unity of the human race is inevitable, and just as inevitable as a preliminary is the unity of the working class. They will pass through many purgatories before getting to understand what is the correct form of organization. The correct form will only come out of clear inductive reasoning, and the average mind is not trained to inductive reasoning yet. Metaphysical reasoning is the method of the untrained mind. Marx, De Leon and Lenin point the way, but not every propagandist even has systematised his studies on a truly materialist basis. Morgan, Marx, De Leon, Lenin and Dietzgen laid the foundation of materialist understanding, and never can it be disputed till man has finished his term on this planet and the earth gone back to nebulous formation, I am not worried over all the confusions that are introduced by clodpates. Marx is undisputed and he is my intellectual master."

The evening passed all to quickly and before we know it the hour of midnight was at hand. We drank a glass of hot sweetened gin, and retired.

few rebels, and desired that I should address them as there was confusion in the industrial camp. The A.W.U. organizers busied themselves in an endeavour to undermine all forms of One Big Union, except their own, with its tyrannical form of Executive rule.

I left on a Monday morning and spent nearly a week in Adam Lindsay Gordon's town. I was reared across the border from Mount Gambier, and only missed visiting that place on several occasions when I was a boy. At last I was seeing that historical place.

As soon as it was known at the Trades Hall that I had gone there, union organizers of every sort and craft rushed to Mount Gambier, in an endeavour to save their crafts, and prevent their members from becoming members of the Big Union. Young Cyril Hassie, an Industrial Union tyro, had been elected organizer for the Labour Council's O.B.U. He, as Marx once said, allowed his enthusiasm to outweigh his economic knowledge. He adopted a sort of cussed opposition to the A.W.U. while his own organization was nothing more than a glorified A.W.U. at best. Between him and me the craft union officials were on the horns of a dilemma, but I understodd, though Hassie did not, that the O.B.U. could only take form when the craft idea and the wages idea became dissipated in the minds of the workers. Their craft unions should have to become obsolete. Like the Capitalist system they should have to outlive their usefulness. The main work was educational.

Mount Gambier rendered me a service. During spare hours I visited the Institute and looked up the papers reported the miners' strike of 1892. It was like living through the struggle. Like the Maritime strike of 1890, the Broken Hill strike was an epochmarking affair. I read every detail, and the report of every day's development. It was because of events connected with that struggle that Bleath, Ferguson and others went to gaol and after that,

like Peter Lalor, of Eureka fame, entered Parliament. From disgrace they ascended to honour. I wondered in my revolutionary understanding which place of confinement supplied the worst stigma.

I had done good work. In ten weeks I had organized a local of the W.I.I.U. in Adelaide, sold more than thirty pounds worth of literature and papers, and collected enough money to pay my board, my fares, and hand over to the General Executive Board twenty-two pounds worth of literature, besides supplying the local with a dozen pounds worth.

Money was not as plentiful as was necessary, and I was notified that for a time I should have to go back into industry. I was happiest when in industry, for there I felt I was not taking what was being paid in out of the hard earned cash of the workers, but still, the work was so congenial and results were so satisfactory that I was sort of spoilt. It would be easy to draw me off again when I was needed, even if the work did not yield me as much as the wages of industry.

I returned, having left a local with a membership of nearly one hundred members. It was no trouble to go into industry, and I felt sure that I should stay there, but man proposed and other forces do the disposing. I was only working six weeks when the finances of the W.I.I.U. improved and I was urged to undertake organizing work again. Sydney being a big place and the Labour Council's O.B.U. having its headquarters there, I was disposed to work in the Capital of the Mother State. The field was clear for the W.I.I.U. The Conference of the O.B.U. which we were assured would admit our delegates to put before that gathering the proposition for unity was held but there were no results as far as we were concerned. Expecting that we would have at least been received, as we were promised by my namesake, Tom Wilson, the President of the Provisional Committee.

When the conference opened Wilson ordered our delegates out of the room until such times as the conference decided whether we should be admitted or not.

"This", he said, "is a conference of delegates elected to represent unions that have voted in favour of joining the O.B.U."

We reminded him of his promise and how we had acted sympathetically towards the Labour Council Outfit. But being possessed of nothing more than craft union minds, we saw nothing but disaster for the much boosted O.B.U. We left as ordered, and sat on a seat in the passage close beside the conference room. Wilson called for a notion to refuse the delegates of the W.I.I.U. admission, and no less a person than Jock Garden moved the resolution. There was a debate. Some considered that as we were unionists, and some of us members of unions that had voted in favour of the O.B.U. , our delegates ought to be admitted; but Wilson was adamant. The resolution was carried, only Ted Jones of the Wharf Labourers Union voting "against" and for our admittance. Jack Garden came out to convey to us the decisions of Conference, and said "I can't help it, boys, I did my best for you."

"You are a liar, Jock", I answered wrathfully. "We heard everything that was said, and you moved against us." Jock laughed and returned to the Conference room. Com. Dawson turned to me and said, "that settles it. We know what sort of a boneheaded outfit we have in the Labour Council's O.B.U. We will go ahead with the A.I.I.U. now and damn every other pretended outfit. The A.I.U. is as good as Garden's outfit any time."

When we were coming down the street we found it and every other crowded with enthusiastic people. We thought they were out to meet us. But being more concerned about the welfare of the aristocracy than about their economic well-being we soon discovered that the Prince of Wales was passing through

the city on his way to Flemington. His passing held us up for nearly half an hour, but we did not join in the cheering. Without Capitalism, Empires would be without Kings, Czars and Kaisers. We longed for the day when the common people would command respect and not the aristocratic exploiters.

As we waited I recited lines that always impressed me. They were from Addison's Cato, where Syphax the Numidian General addressed Juba the young Prince: "The boasted ancestors of these great men
Whose virtues you admire, were all such ruffians.
This dread of nations, this almighty Rome,
That comprehends in her wide empire's bounds
All under heaven, was founded on a rape.
Your Scipios, Caesars, Pompeys, and your Catos
(These Gods on earth) are all the spurious brood
Of violated maids, of ravished Sabines."

We are all of a pretty common origin. It is only property interests that riseman above man and create him an aristocrat. But how men do cling to their position of power and possession. I was prouder of myself as a commoner than I would have been, possessed of my opinions, and born to be a prince or king. We were working towards an end. That end when consummated was to be equality based on useful work, and equal moral and intellectual standing. "A consummation devoutly to be wished", said Shakespeare, and I seconded Him in the remark. Soon I would be meeting Jock Garden on his own dunghill.

I met my youngest brother in Sydney. He was the other rebel of the family, and for his opinions had suffered four months incarceration in Tamworth gaol. He was against the war and recruiting. "You will be in for a rough time, in this town", he said, "You were alright on the Yarra Bank, or perhaps in Adelaide, but in Sydney there are men who think themselves kings on the domain. You will have to face hatred and jealousy. You know Sydney - you have known it from boyhood almost, but you did not know the Sydney revolutionary movement. You will get to know it now."

My first Sunday on the Domain was a unique experience. I had but a solitary supporter and helpmate. We borrowed a chair and I stood on it, while Jack Pike wandered about the various meetings selling the One Big Union Herald. The literature was spread out in front of my improvised platform. My wife was there, but she had our baby girl to look after, so I had to wait till I was through to sell to those who remained to buy, Pike returned having sold more than twelve dozen papers, which I considered quite good for a first effort. I disposed of more than a pound's worth before I packed up. After the meeting I met Jack O'Brien. Jack came to Australia sparring partner to Tommy Burns, but remained to make his home in Australia. For a time he filled a job in the Glaciarium cool stores in Melbourne, afterwards being promoted to instructor on the ice floor in the skating season. The Glaciarium was not to open that winter, but the Sydney one, after a spell of idleness, was to be opened once more. Jack and Snowy Spencer applied for positions and they were engaged. Jack joined the W.I.I.U. one Sunday on Yarra Bank, and came to me immediately I finished my speech, and paid me for six months ahead. "I will sell books for you", he said, and he did. Pike took the papers on the second Sunday and went about the Domain, and again sold nearly twelve dozen of the same issue as he had handled on the previous Sunday. Jack O'Brien was new to selling literature, but succeeded in disposing of more than two pounds ten worth. I was confident that I was going to do well in Sydney, and as for opposition I was prepared to meet it, and if anything, doubled it.

All went well for a start. T. L. Judd was more than busy with his speaking and assumed intense interest in the agitation for the release of the twelve I. W. W. men. Members of the A.S.P. were friendly enough, and

Mrs. Reardon invited us to visit them at their flat and have tea with them. We passed a splendid evening and Reardon and I engaged in a long talk since he had been an active member of the Socialist Party of Great Britain before coming to Australia. From our evening at Reardon's I was more satisfied that the A.S.P. was not an Industrial Union Party, I was mighty glad that I had not undertaken to fill the position of organizer to that party.

I was alone as far as speaking at our meeting was concerned but the A.S.P. had several speakers, all of them mediocre, except Reardon and Mrs. Reardon. When one of the weaker speakers took the platform and the crowd would not hear him, Mrs. Reardon chatted with him, and as soon as the woman appeared on the platform a crowd would gather round. It is wonderful to the crowd to find a woman a rebel speaker. When the next speaker mounted the rostrum and the crowd departed again, she would relieve him. Reardon was always the last speaker, and spent the greater part of his time on the platform selling the last of their papers.

I undertook to visit Newcastle once a week. I went over on the midnight boat, had breakfast in the coal miners' town, and spent the day looking over the city. My first night was in Woolf Street. I expected that it would be an initial night only, and that I should have to become known as a weekly speaker before I could expect to attract a crowd or sell much literature, but I was destined to disappointment - a sort of agreeable disappointment. Scarcely was I at the meeting place when a man approached me with a parcel of books and pamphlets.

"Did you bring any literature"? he asked. I replied in the affirmative.

"The I'll put mine away and sell for you. I am a member of the S.L.P.", he said, "and always keep a stock on hand. The way to do propaganda is to

have a few books or pamphlets about one, so that when one comes in contact with a man worth while one can recommend something to read and supply it too."

There were many interjections, and a goodly number of questions at the end of my speech. A large crowd stayed and kept me late. It was a successful meeting. McDonald sold one pounds twelve worth of papers and literature and we collected five shillings, rather a good return for a street meeting. In my boom days in Adelaide, after the excitement of the anti-conscription fight, when people were enthusiastic, we only sold from five to fifteen shillings worth of literature at the street meetings, and our collections rarely exceeded five shillings. I was delighted with Newcastle. Although the meeting was a late one I had ample time to catch the midnight boat and was home for breakfast. My wife began to think me a sort of peripatetic propagandist. But propagandist I was.

My second trip to Newcastle was even better than the first. The people knew of my coming, and the audience was large. McDonald was with me again, and sold two pounds nine and sixpence worth of literature and papers, and the collection netted seven shillings. Truly it was a first-rate street meeting.

I went to hear Arthur Thomas lecturing one Sunday evening in the A.S.P. hall. His subject was the "O.B.U." He made out a good case for Industrial Unionism, but failed when he set about describing what would have to be the tactics of that powerful organization, which was yet in embryo. There was no opportunity given me to question or criticize the lecturer. The chairman saw to it that only the heavy guns of the A.S.P. were turned on the lecturer. He saw no one but the members of his own fraternity. I waited, and when there was a lull at the end I rose and challenged him to a debate. I was determined that the W.I.I.U. whose thunder the O.B.U. had stolen, was not going to be shoved into the background. Arthur expressed a willingness, but excused himself

until he consulted his Executive. I was determined to force the issue, and on Monday called on Jock Garden who was the Secretary. Jock greeted me with hostility, and wanted to know why I was in Sydney antagonizing his O.B.U. I reminded him that we desired to have unity, but that at the conference of the organization that he was Secretary for they refused point blank to have any truck with the W.I.I.U. He calmed after a while and agreed that Thomas could debate me. The A.S.P. claimed that it was owing to Thomas lecturing under their auspices that the debate had been arranged and undertook to entrepreneur it. We were compelled to capitulate to them, as it had already been advertized at the Domain and other meetings.

I gathered from my opponent that he was not distantly divorced from the A.W.U. and the Labour Party. Nor was I far wrong as time afterwards proved. Tom Wilson, who was Provisional President, and who pretended to be in earnest about the formation of the One Big Union, whose constitution stated in no uncertain language that "experience had proved that present day political and industrial methods were hopelessly out of date" had continued his membership in the Out-of-date Labour Party, and stood for parliament to support an out-of-date Labour policy. I was afraid that Arthur James would end up the same way, yet hoped that he would not become a shyster. Time alone convinced me.

We were agreed on many points, but differed widely on tactics. I hammered hard against the Grand Council idea and otherwise found good reason for criticising the O.B.U. constitution, at the same time emphasising the International character of the W.I.I.U. and that clause that gave autonomy to branches in States or districts. We finished quite friendly, but it happened that I referred to the fact that in the days of the Socialist Federation of Australia it supported Industrial Unionism, but when Harry Holland was selected to oppose W. M. Hughes, Industrial Unionism was repudiated, and as

A.S. Reardon was about to contest an election the A.S.P. was denying Industrial Unionism again. Such a statement angered the leading lights in the A.S.P. and in the next issue of their paper I was being castigated. I was summoned to attend a meeting and be expelled, although I was not constitutionally a member of that organization, but it suited their executive to publish in their paper that they had got rid of me. My brother was right; jealousy was stirred up, and my opponents were showing their teeth.

Thomas and I were challenged to a team debate, for the A.S.P. determined to exterminate both of us. Thomas was not so certain about attacking them. I went to the Labour Council office, and talked with Garden and his organiser. Jock was more friendly when he learned that I was willing to stand on a platform with Arthur Thomas and help defend the principles of Industrial Unionism.

I went to the debate fully armed. I engaged a man from Stott & Hoare's to report the debate in full. Brodney was at the hall early with note book and pencil.

"No need for you to make notes tonight", I said. "You had it your own way when Thomas and I debated, but I have a professional shorthand man to report the debate in full tonight."

He straightway collected his Executive and after a short meeting Reardon approached me and offered to pay half the cost of reporting if I would supply them with a copy. As it meant two guineas, I agreed.

We got through the debate. Arthur Thomas did better with me than against me in our debate, and what he missed I made clear. The hall was crowded, and everybody enjoyed an interesting time. Two weeks later I received a letter informing me that Mr. Little was leaving for Newcastle and that the report was ready and in the hands of a certain lady in the office, and she would deliver it to me, and me only. I called in, received the report, and paid the

fee. Immediately I posted a copy to the General Secretary, for publication in the One Big Union Herald. It was announced in the current issue that the report of the debate was in the editor's hands and that it would be printed through the paper in installments.

Reardon and his Executive were far from pleased with the report. Yet there were no reasons why the stenographer should show prejudice. He had gone to Newcastle to take charge of the Branch of their Correspondence school there and I was leaving for my mid-week meeting. I promised I would see him and inquire. In the meantime, and without consulting me, Reardon wrote the editor of our paper to inform him that I had agreed that the report should not be printed. I was not made aware of his action till after the next issue of the One Big Union Herald. I saw Mr. Little, and in his office asked for reasons as to why a report should be unsatisfactory. He asked what was the main objection. I informed him that Reardon complained that as he was the A.S.P. main speaker he had not been given nearly as much space as me.

"If that is all that is wrong, I can easily set your minds at ease", said he. "Jackson, Reardon's collaborator, quoted a good lot, so I could give him all the space he was entitled to, but Reardon did little more than wave his gaunt arms and indulge in a lot of bad language, and I for one in my capacity am not going to report bad language for anyone." It is remarkable how it hurts men to see themselves in cold type. I have the report filed and years after I am satisfied that the report was true in every particular. The Party that was trying to ape Russia and advocate a Dictatorship of the Proletariat in a land that was distinctly dissimilar, was destined to go down in a debate against Industrial Unionism.

I was where I could share the rejoicing when the most of the I.W.W. prisoners were released. For a couple of weeks Bulwer Grimm, of Tasmania, who

had been appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into the evidence taken at the trial, decided that the whole thing was more or less a frame up. The evidence was, as we knew, faulty at the time, but so much prejudice had been worked up, more particularly by W.M. Hughes, that the minds of many people were poisoned, and those who composed the jury were not free from the prejudice. Jack King and Charlie Reeve were the two left to linger in incarceration, Reeve because of a letter that he had written to a comrade, and which fell into the possession of the police, and King because he was in on a Commonwealth charge. I visited King but once after that, and he assured me that he was anxious to be out with the boys, and demanded to know what efforts were being made to release him. I assured him that many were busy and that he might not be long. It was no great time either.

A welcome was organized in the city hall, a building that could hold four thousand people easily. It was crowded to more than holding capacity. Hundreds were turned away. Hundreds will be turned away from Heaven's gate, for no matter what the celebration there are those who will make a point of turning up late. It was a rousing night. The speeches were distinctly militant and one might have expected that we were there to hear the Social Revolution announced.

When it was made known that the released men would be on the Domain the Sunday following tens of thousands who had been interested in their release made a point of being in attendance. There was a chance for me. It was difficult to collect money for our purposes, when wives and families had to be supported. Whenever I announced a collection, collectors, ever on hand, hurried through my crowd and collected every coin they could - there was little left for our propaganda, yet we got some each Sunday. We might now get more. There were a goodly number who came to my meeting and handed in donations of a shilling each, and assured me that they would gather here me spending than any

one else on Sydney Domain. I could believe them when they so regularly donated their shillings.

There was a family in Sydney that I was acquainted with in Melbourne at one time, and whenever they had a visitor for a Sunday, they brought him to the Domain to hear Alf. Wilson. I had a similar experience in Melbourne, when I was, in my own judgement, little more than a tyro. Captain Davis, assistant Harbour Master, afterwards Director of Navigation, would attend regularly at Yarra Bank, and seldom leave our meeting, and when he had a Sunday visitor he would invite him to Yarra Bank to hear Alf. Wilson. One did not need to be a champion speaker to attract an audience on that memorable Sunday.

All the freak speakers as well as those who talked commonsense were well patronised. The A.S.P. representatives boasted that they were responsible for an enormous literature sale, but they were afflicted to some extent with hyperbole. I have my sales recorded and they amounted to £five pounds six, and inspite of the boxes that were going round for the wives and children we got sixteen shillings in ours. The following Sunday saw an enormous throng in the Domain again, and we had our share of the more intelligent ones, and disposed of four pounds sixteen worth of literature and papers and found a whole pounds worth of coins in the box as a result of a appeal for a colledtion.

I was beginning to be known, and visited factories and workshops at midday and selected Balmain as a place for a Friday night meeting. It was remarkable how men and women could be attracted to work. There were a number who could not see their way clear to join the A.I.W.U. yet could be relied to sell literature and otherwise give a hand to make meetings a success. I was in the boom. "Jally" Watson and his wife, both of whom I had met in Adelaide during the fight against conscription, were in Sydney. Jally joined up, and he and his wife with me and mine, would enjoy the tram ride from the city and

back. Wally was enthusiastic, but not a good seller. If any one in the audience not knowing me, were to ask of him who is the speaker he would forget his work and set to and talk. He would tell them how I organized for the Anti-Conscription League, and how South Australia gave a strong vote against Hughes' proposals The audiences were good, but literature sales were not as good as at the street meeting in Newcastle. Many attended the Domain on Sunday afternoons and brought their books and pamphlets there.

Steel Cathcart, a young man whose entlusiasm outstrided his judgement, was on the coal fields canvassing for an insurance company. He was eager that I should visit the coal towns and address the miners in their various centres. I agreed and named the week that I would devote to propaganda in Newcastle. It was Monday morning, a week earlier than I received a wire from him urging me to leave for Newcastle right away. "Everything was ready." I had an hour in which to pack up and catch the train. I hurried, and was off for a full week of hard talking.

Cathcart met me and took me to the house where he was rooming, and I was made comfortable. We walked about together during the day, and I sounded him to understand if he had improved his economic knowledge since I first brought him out, in Adelaide. He was not a Marxian. He left it to me to be that. He could organize meetings and otherwise forward propaganda and that was something to be appreciated. Many looked on and gave orders. Cathcart was not one of that ilk. On this occasion his was a comedy of errors. He had brought me a week too soon. We went to Tighes Hill at night, but the handbills announcing the meeting were delivered around the meeting that I was addressing. The audience was small, but Cathcart promised me better as we proceeded. Next day I was to speak at the railway workshops, but again he had blundered.
A.W. Buckley, Secretary of the Railway Union, met us there. He too was along

to address the men. It might have been a ruse, but if it were it failed, for neither he nor I spoke that day. Buckley was exasperated. He was a Member of Parliament, and later on was rejected and expelled from the Labour Party and the Union, for, it was alleged, taking part in fraud ballots. There was much talk about faked ballot boxes at that time, and several were expelled from the Labour Party. One man since recovered heavy damages against the Party and a couple of individual members, so it is hard for an outsider to tell how many of the allegations were true and how many false. It was a repetition of the woman taken in adultery, there was scarcely one to be found who could pelt the first stone. Intrigue has many adherents.

Buckley had been in the district for a week, and at a Sunday meeting announced that he would address the men on that day. He was so pompous and egotistical that he seemed to expect they would have a carpet laid for him. There was the shop steward and two more men. They were there because Cathcart had sent handbills into the shops in the morning, but the rest of the bunch were down town. It was pay day, and as was customary, the men met their wives at dinner time and went about shopping. Buckley feigned to be disappointed, but not so much, I fear, as he was destined to be with his own happenings later on.

Our next meeting was a Cessnock. Again Cathcart had blundered. A man he had appointed to distribute handbills came to the meeting with a bundle. The printer had posted them, and he only received them at the Post Office when he got home from work. He could not get them delivered in time for the hundred of miners and their families to know of the meeting and attend it.

I found a club at Cessnock. There was a large number of men like myself who feared for the success of the O.B.U. It was launched too quickly and those responsible for it wanted to see it shoot up like the Eastern star that

rose or did not rise over Bethlehem. The members of the club were not boneheads as our I.W.W. friends might call them. Their room, which had been built for a shop, had papers and magazines on the tables, and a number of the best of books on the shelves. Its members were not ones to be tricked with the O.B.U. scheme and its expensive Grand Council. They understood the history of the rise of the One Big Union idea, and could tell me as much as I could tell any audience about the Convention in 1905. They were as familiar with the speeches of De Leon on that memorable occasion as I pretended to be. They had the report of the first Convention on one of their shelves. I was delighted to meet such enlightened men, for seldom outside of a city was one likely to meet such a galaxy of economic learning. We enjoyed a hearty talk till it was time to address the meeting. Although the handbills announcing the meeting had not been distributed, the fact that Cathcart had made it known that he had invited me, and I had promised to visit the coal fields, made the fact talked about, so that men came up town each evening in the hope that I might be there any night.

The meeting was fairly large, and questions were many. They all hinged around the difference of the O.B.U. and the W.I.I.U. Such questions afforded me the opportunity to state a logical case for the straight out revolutionary organization. We finished by selling eighteen shillings and sixpence worth of literature and papers, and ten and three pence was collected towards my expenses. Next night I spoke in Woolfe Street, Newcastle, and sold nearly twenty five shillings worth of literature and collected seven and nine pence. Then followed West Wallsend. There the miners were awaiting me, and Dave McNeil, a staunch S.L.P. man, opened a meeting in the main street, outside one of the hotels. The meeting was orderly, and as there was a branch of the S.L.P. there, I but confirmed what many of the miners of West Wallsend knew pretty well.

Dave McNeil appealed to his mine mates, and ten shillings was put into the box. Literature sales neared thirty shillings.

Our last night was to be Kurri Kurri. The train landed us there a few hours before meeting time, and a miner met us and took up to his home to tea. I had pictured the coal miners homes to be like many of the gold miners homes in out of the way mountains towns, but such was not the case. There were no slab or shingle houses, or log huts. The homes of the miners for the greater part were comfortably built - but for all that they were only the houses of working men; they were not what Socialists might conceive of. But our day was to come. We ate supper where we had been treated to tea, and sat by a fire of coal, that heated the kitchen as the homes of working men in the city are seldom heated even in winter. Coal was cheap, and burned prodigiously.

When I arrived in Sydney on Sunday morning it was six o'clock, and but few people were astir at that hour. Only one handsom cab was on the stand. I was first down the gangplank and hailed him. He asked six shillings to drive me as far as the town hall, Paddington, I disputed his right to extert so much for a fare, but he was equal to the occasion.

"It is this way, mate", he said, "I am not a Christian. If I were I should be at mass and not here, and if I sacrifice my religion for work and pay, surely I am entitled to a little compensation. I will not receive any when I drive to beyond. It is always worth double time for Sunday work anyhow."

I put my bags aboard and in a few minutes I was home with my family. There was no heater in the bathroom, so I made a fire under the copper downstairs in the wash house, and carried several bucketfulls up to the bathroom. I enjoyed several sea baths at Newcastle, but itched for a complete freshening up.

Mine had been a heavy week, but I could not resist the Domain, and glad

I was that I did not stay home to rest. Jack O'Brien called at the house, and made sure that I would not miss the Sunday afternoon meeting. We sold two pounds twelve worth of literature and papers, and collected fourteen and nine in cash. Several approached me, signified their intention of joining up, and a number of members paid me their subscription fees. O'Brien and Pike agreed that we were doing splendidly.

There was no shirking by Jack Pike. While I was active he did not allow any grass to grow under his feet. We arranged to meet on Eight Hours Day, and sell papers. We were at our posts early, and as the people began to gather we began to sell papers. The O.B.U. being in the boom, the name of the paper attracted many buyers. Jack took one side of the route and I the other. When the procession had passed people began to disappear out of the streets and we counted up. Jack was the superior salesman. We disposed of eighteen dozen and seven, and nine dozen and four were sold by him.

The Glaciarium closed for the summer and Jack O'Brien went to the Blue Mountains for a holiday before returning to Melbourne. I feared that I should have to make it a family affair and bring my wife to the Domain to sell in his place, but was greatly surprised when Jack Pike counted in two pounds six for the afternoon sales. He was a hundred percenter.

It was the reputation I had earned for selling and distributing literature that laid the foundation for a mighty quarrel with E. E. Judd, that was to develop later. Judd became possessed by big notions. He undertook to publish editions of certain books and appear as one of Australia's big men in the book world. In addition to his own work he busied himself printing out books and pamphlets for the Party. He had brought out a large edition of "What Means This Strike?" by Daniel de Leon, although the National Executive of New York had printed thousands of copies and could supply in required quantities.

But that did not suit Judd. He must have pamphlets printed bearing the imprimateur of the Australian Party. He next undertook to print an edition of Marx's Criticism of the Gotha Programme, but here he ran foul of opposition. Ray Everett, editor of the "International Socialist", was printing an edition of "What Means", but Judd got his edition out first. When Everett heard that Judd was going to print the Gotha Programme, he immediately set about bringing out an edition. Judd's edition was to sell at sixpence, so was Everett's, but Judd printed an autographed photo of Marx in his and reduced the price to fourpence. Everett brought his edition down to three-pence. Splendid rebels, those - competing against one another to produce revolutionary literature. Yet they continued to call themselves Socialists.

Will Andrade had opened a branch of his business in Sydney, and leaving Percy Laidler in Melbourne to manage, went to Sydney himself. I called in one day, and discovered Judd there.

"I will call again", I said.

"Don't go out", Judd and Andrade said almost simultaneously.

Judd left, and Andrade said, "I wish you had not appeared just then. Judd had big notions. He desires to become a big Capitalist but he doesn't know the game. He will go down, and when he goes he is not going to catch me. He can only do business on a cash basis. See those "War, What for?" They have just been released from the Customs store, after having been prohibited and almost confiscated since the beginning of the war. He wants to buy them, but I could not let him have them. I informed him that you had bought them all - you remember inquiring about them?"

"I never thought there were so many copies", I said, "when I spoke about them. I thought to take fifty, but if it makes no difference to you I will close on the lot." It was agreed that I should have them. It irked Judd that

he should be asked for the book, and see his prospective customers visiting our meeting on the Domain.

Judd went further, and undertook to print out a new edition of "Looking Backward." As a preliminary, he had posters printed and sent them to every store and book agent. Andrade wrote Percy Laidler and advised him not to bring out an edition, as intended, but Laidler was far too enterprising to let a chance slip. Knowing that Judd's edition was to sell at two shillings, he ordered a lot to be printed on cheaper paper, and so produced an edition to go out at one and sixpence. So Mr Judd was not equal to the astute Percy Laidler. Percy forgot more than Judd had ever learned about Socialist literature.

Our Secretary, Tom Audley, wrote to inform me that with the expense of printing the "One Big Union Herald", and keeping organizers in the field, (Jim Scott was then in West Australia) it was difficult to finance. Scott would have to come home, and unless I could see my way to make the propaganda in Sydney pay my salary I should have to give up. I could not go into industry, for since the strike in 1917 there were two thousand blacklegs on the wharves in Sydney. No one would be employed who did not pass through the Free Labour Bureau, and that was closed against outsiders for the time being. There was other work in Sydney that I might have taken, and time convinced me that I was wrong in not working outside my own industry for a while. Fred Bowers wrote from Adelaide informing me that the local had at last rented a hall. It was one built by the Deutcher Verein, but not opened because of the war. It was at the rear of a house and few knew of its existence till it was advertised. Fred was delighted with the new quarters, and wrote to ask me would I consider returning to Adelaide. He was not capable of holding the fort on his own. I thought it over, and wired a reply in time to reach a meeting on the night named in his letter.

It mattered not whether Adelaide needed me or not. I would leave Sydney on the Saturday for Melbourne, and go back amongst my mates in industry. By way of saying farewell to Sydney my wife and I visited Taronga Park, and visited a friend in Marrickville. It was near midnight when we reached home. There was a letter under our door. It was from Bowers, and he notified me that the comrades would raise the money for our fare if I would return. He expressed himself as being concerned about raising money to pay me a salary, but I did not allow money to stand in the way. I could transfer from one branch of the Federation to another, and work in Adelaide, and relieve the local of expense. The money for fares had been guaranteed. I could not wait, I must go to Adelaide or Melbourne. A sympathiser said to me, when I informed him of my going, that he had a little cash to spare, and would lend it there and then, and when the comrades had paid in it could be sent to him. I went to the Domain to address my last meeting, but it was a disappointing one. The day was hot, more than ninety in the shade, and speakers took their platforms under the shade of the trees. I did not feel it excessively hot so adorned the platform in the open. The attendance at our meeting was small - so small that we only disposed of twelve shillings worth of literature. Pike was seriously disappointed.

As we were packing up, a man, who often visited our meeting, and paid in a shilling pretty reguarly, came to speak to me and hand in his customary donation

"You had a small meeting today", he remarked, "but that was because you did not seek the shade. Any break out of the sun heat could get an audience on a day like this. I remarked to a man who was with me that you were the best speaker on the Domain, yet you were talking to the smallest audience. Never mind, old boy, you will have the mob with you on the day of the revolution. Truly the way of an agitator is hard at times."

CHAPTER XI

A week on board steamer and I was rested and fit for work again. We spent most of a day tramping to and from suburbs or walking about the city in an endeavour to locate a suitable flat. Towards evening we accepted a large upstairs room near the General Post Office. It is one of the privileges of a peripatetic agitator to visit various cities and sample all kinds of residences. The occupation is one of variations. At night we eagerly sought the beautiful hall with half an inch of linoleum on the floor, as Bowers reported it had. While we were seeking it several of the comrades appeared and took us to the back of a house where the hall was located. It was a splendid hall, and had we known of it when I was in Adelaide at the beginning of the year I should not have visited Sydney, perhaps. But I had been there and varied my experience and that strengthened me for my future work in Adelaide.

I met many acquaintances and they gathered round while I gave of my best, for an opening meeting. Cyril Hassie was talking hard for the O.B.U. and he fell in for my criticism over his attitude at the O.B.U. conference. I was now fighting with the gloves off as it were. All were encouraged when we sold more than three pounds ten worth of literature and collected more than thirty shillings, from the park meeting alone. At night we attracted a goodly audience and substantially improved on the afternoon's doings.

I was delighted to think that the fellow workers had held themselves togeth so well, and had advanced to the occupation of a hall again. Soom we should be in a big way. There was permanency in sight. I had figured on six months only, and began to wonder how much effective work I could crowd in to that brief time.

Fred Bowers had written and informed the members of Kalgoorlie that with me to relieve him he would be free to go across and help them there. I had

been written to before I left Sydney, but placed myself in the hands of the Adelaide local. When they received Bowers' letter they immediately wired me. I read the telegram at the business meeting of the Local, and Bowers agreed to stay a while longer in Adelaide and do his best. I was to go to the golden city, not as in olden days to seek gold, or work for mine owners but to deliver a message of emancipation. I expected to meet my old teacher, The Reverend Alexander Crowe, but he had sought a new charge, and had left Kalgoorlie after many years of ministry there. I had been wondering should I meet him how he would accept my advanced opinions - he would surely say I had fallen from grace.

An effort had been made to persuade Mick Sawtell to return to the West, promising him that there was abundance of money there to pay any and all expenses. I wondered at that, for "Bull" Callahan, who had written him was a member of the W.I.I.U. and Sawtell was not. Sawtell handed the letter to Bowers and on that he had written. Now that I was to go I expected from what Callahan had written that I should be sure of expenses, but alas! the fare was wired, and I felt confident. I was pleased apart from organizational matters, for I had seen much of Australia, and had prospected at Tarcoola and would pass through the place of pleasant memories and see the Nullabor Plains. I could have said with Juba - "By Heavens, thou turn'st me all to attention."

When the train left Port Augusta at eleven o'clock at night the passengers went to bed, but I was a different sleeper to the rest. I was passing over territory at enormous speed where eighteen years before I travelled at a speed of only a few miles a day. It was the line that was built by the A.W.U. - proud boast. The W.I.I.U. had not completed a big job so far, but was organising for something enormous. Some day it would be able to boast a gigantic achievement. When the workers organized along the lines laid down by the W.I.I.U.

they would not do jobs to enrich contractors, who merely stood between the workers and the community and fleeced both. They would do their job for the joy of doing it and for the betterment of Society. Russia was achieving, but at a terrible cost. It was a year of drought and famine in that great land.

We woke to the grinding of the train on the rails that spanned the desert, and stopped for a while at Tarcoola. I could see the scar on the hillside where I and a hundred others had worked in the days when The Blocks was turning out gold at the rate of two thousand ounces a month. All was silent now, but the memory remained. On some future date men might again be employed and The Blocks enriching a company as it had done in the days when I delved nearly two hundred feet down vertical from the crown of the little range.

The tourists were now travelling in comfort where we fought heat, sand-storms and lack of water. My old mate was lying in the sandhills where he died when we missed Bellamy's well, but here now I was spanning the desert again with no anxieties, and at a pace that enabled me to be transported in one sleeping night where it took fifteen days of hard walking to negotiate. God bless the A.W.U. I thought.

In the sand hills and just before we emerged to start our four hundred miles across Nullarbor, we met another train. Both trains stopped and I heard a man from the Eastern bound calling for a man named Wilson. Few knew me, but I answered. He had a message for me. He was from Kalgoorlie and a member of W.I.I.U. Truly the organization was growing when one could meet a fellow worker in the desert wilds.

All day the train speeded over Nullarbor, and to front and rear the two steel lines stretched and stretched until they seemed to amalgamate into one thin thread of steel. Could the A.W.U. put such a band right round Australia - an economic band such as unity.

I had for a companion one who was a lad with me in the goldfield days of Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie. He advanced to the post office service and was returning to duty after a long holiday. He was a sociable fellow and very good company. Another was a son of that turbulent land where they demanded and fought for Home Rule, both at home and in the American Colonies where they organized to invade Canada. He was a man true to the land from which he came, and cursed with a comprehensive curse Thomas Beach, better known as Henry Le Caron, the Secret Service relic of the Civil War. He cursed South Australia too. As he went to bed, he demanded that if any of us should wake after the train crossed the border he was to be aroused so that he could pray and give thanks to Almighty God that he was delivered out of Australia's "wowser" State. We left him to his sleeping and we were a long way into the land of the richest goldfields before the slumber of a summer night had left him,

The train carried a variegated human freight. There was Mick White, the rebel son of Erin's Isle, myself a rebel against employerdom, "Texas" Green, a politician destined to be defeated and in lieu be elected to the Federal House and become Minister of Defence. There were also half a dozen priests, in addition to the many others of humble and obscure personality.

The train entered the station at Kalgoorlie, and passengers hastily detrained. Those disembarking went home or sought quarters in the town. Those destined for Perth and Fremantle hastened to see as much of West Australia's goldfield as possible during the few hours at their disposal. I expected to be met on the station, but none of the members of the W.I.I.U. as far as I could see were on the look-out for me. I took up my luggage, which was heavy, because of the stock of literature I had with me. I lugged it till perspiration streamed out of my every pore, and at last found the house of the fellow worker to whose place I was directed. I put my luggage down at the gate, and wiped

perspiration several times during five minutes, but no one answered me. I quit knocking and took my belongings outside the gate with the intention of seeking a room. Just then a man drove up to me in a car. He had just taken the priests from the station to the Presbytery, which was on the opposite side of Brookman Street.

"You had better load your thingsinto the car and come down town to a room", he said, "There has been trouble and the people from the house have cleared out." With that he dismounted and proceeded to lift my bags into his car. I stepped in beside him and he drove off. I wondered if he were genuine or if he had any instructions to impede me. He had not driven many yards when the door opened and a woman called after us. He stopped and turned back.

"You are Mr. Wilson, are you not?" she said, half inquiringly and half imperatively.

"I am", I answered, "and I have come a long way to see you, but Mr. Urquhart informs me that you have had trouble. Just what your trouble is he has not had time to tell me yet. I hope there is nothing serious the matter anyhow."

She proceeded to talk to Mr. Urquhart, who apparently possessed some knowledge of her troubles.

"I have just come from Callahan's", she said, "and Mrs. Callahan is fairly composed. God help us all. What have we done that such evil should afflict us? I came to the goldfields the first year after Coolgardie was discovered, and for twenty-seven years I have lived as a girl and woman ought. My husband has been on the fields as long as me, and there hasn't been a harder working or more industrious man in the West. Why should these returned soldiers hunt and hound him out of the town. He has been a good union man, but being a butcher and not and A.W.U. man he had nothing to do with the clean up of the members of the old Coolgardie Miners Union. It must be because he stands solidly for the One Big

Union, and they for the old Coolgardie outfit that they connect him with that trouble. Perhaps it is because he is a Socialist and an Internationalist, and they took part in the fight to drive out the Italians that so many mortally hate him. What a beastly thing it is to be small and narrow-minded! You are not to go away, Mr. Wilson, Dave Hartigan has Kenkinson and "Bull" Callahan planted not many miles away, and he visited them this morning. He was with us while ago and said that as you were to arrive by the trans-train I was to make you comfortable. Perhaps Mr. Urquhart will take you to Hartigan, and he will direct you to their hiding place. Leave your bags with me and come back as soon as you have seen them and dinner will be waiting ready for you."

As we drove off I learned a little from Urquhart, and more from David Hartigan, but it was not till I found the men in their hiding that I learned all that I was destined to know. Urquhart was a motor man from the stand. He knew that Jenkinson and Callahan had been driven from home, and as he left the priests at their presbytery he saw me lugging my belongings to Jenkinson's gate. Had Mrs. Jenkinson not called us so soon he might have told me all.

Hartigan directed me to some ground that had been worked for alluvial gold in the boom days of Hannan's. There were some big holes in the hillside and here he had planted them. His boy had taken tucker to them, and that morning he visited them himself.

The position was serious. He would not hear of my going to the delinquent's hiding direct, for fear some spies were at work. He directed me by a circuitous route. After half an hour's walking and looking at some old poppet legs and mine shafts I came to the place pointed out. I called out, and said, "I am Alf Wilson! It is alright, there is no one else in sight." Soon I received an answer and in a few minutes the two frightened men came to the mouth of the cave as it were. They were too frightened to stay out and invited me in. I

followed them for fully a hundred feet, while the light of a hot summer's day outside gave light sufficient. I had never seen men camped like that since I was a boy. There was a bridge over the river that ran through Merrivale and men used to come every year and camp under the bridge. Sometimes a whole dozen would camp under the bridge whereit extended over the bank for a little way. Their blankets and belongings would like side beside on some grass that they would gather, always reminding me of the stories of the cave dwellers of which scientists and investigators were continually writing. It seemed easy after all for men to return to the troglodyte life.

For one thing they were not short of tucker. Hartigan had sent ample supplies to them. They had tinned fish, canned beef, bread, butter and ever so many other dainties as well as several loaves of bread. Being near midday they would not hear of my leaving till I dined with them - which was always the way with hospitable Australians. They could not offer me tea for they dared not light a fire. But without it in the wilderness and in a place where some expectant miners had once dug, we hate a hearty dinner. Jenkinson, I discovered to be a refined and well informed man, but "Bull" unfortunately, was one of the rough and ready type. He had done boxing, and man to man would have held his own, as the saying has it, but when a savage mob took the field he was compelled to flee. It irked him that he was in hiding, but submitted to the inevitable. But a more serious hiding was in store for him.

Jenkinson gave me a note to deliver to his wife, and I left him in their lonely habitation. Back in town I was compelled to eat another dinner and enjoy a drink of tea, without which an Australian does not fully consider he has enjoyed a meal. I was forced to hurry away to an important meeting. The woodcutters, on the Kurrawang line, were on strike, and all the miners on the Golden were idle. There was no wood for the boilers, consequently no steam,

as a result, no power and no work. Wood from the Lake side line could not supply much more than a third of the mine requirements. It was terrible to think of the mighty corporations, dominating the mines on one of the richest fields in the Empire having to admit that they were powerless to produce when the giant, labour, was resting and not working. Never since that memorable morning when Pat Hannan's horse turned up a colour of the shining metal as he trotted in front of his owner, till that week when the mines that had produced a full hundred million of pounds were rendered idle was there such a silence on Kalgoorlie. It was the price paid by the Cormorant Wood company for entering into a conspiracy with the A.W.U. to rid the field of members of the W.I.I.U. The One Big Union was not to be allowed to establish itself on the goldfields. Yet the President of the Wood Company was a man carried in at the point of death from thirst.

A week of idleness sufficed. There had been strikes before, but none so large and effective as the strike of the W.I.I.U. men. I was delighted to be at a settlement where the men I was associated with, were being granted one hundred per cent, of their demands. The I.W.W. boasted many strikes in U.S.A., and some victories, but in its first real scrap with employers in Australia it had won.

CHAPTER XII

After tea a party of us trudged to the ambush and brought the occupants to town, arriving home about nine o'clock. Callahan and Jenkinson were delighted to be home with their families and their families were equally pleased to have their breadwinners with them again. The men from the woodline were provided with a special train to take them to their job. The management was anxious to have the axes biting the salmon gum as soon as they could after the stoppage. We saw them off early on Sunday morning, and went to Boulder city to attend a meeting of the local. Ferguson, the signal man, who had been chased from his box, was the only missing man. He had gone to Coolgardie, and some said from there to Northam.

It was all as if nothing had happened. The business of the organization was conducted by its members and officers with the exception of Ferguson. Some members expressed themselves as being afraid that trouble would brew again, and wondered how I could have arrived on the gold field town, without being seized and deported. I did not know of or anticipate trouble, but had any one illegally made an effort to seize me it would have gone ill with him. I should have met him in his illegal way, and left the train well prepared.

One man, now a wealthy tributer, and first-class citizen, drew out a heavy revolver, loaded in every chamber. I asked him for it, feeling sure that in a rough go he would not be experienced in its use, and might as easily shoot one of his own men. He, believing that I was unarmed, handed it to me without protest. I expressed myself as anxious to address a meeting in Burt Street that night, but some members advised caution. They preferred to delay. I was adamant, so we closed the meeting after making preparation for the evening. The "specials" after newspaper reports announced Jenkinson and Callahan miles away, did not show out on Sunday so we walked the three mile road from Boulder to

Kalgoorlie peacefully and undisturbed.

It was a lively time. Hugh Mahon, a veteran Federal Politician, had been unseated, and was contesting a bye-election. At a pleasant Sunday afternoon in Richmond reserve he had referred to the British as a "bloody and accursed Empire." Billy Hughes, once accustomed to making similar statements, was now deeply patriotic in the position of Prime Minister. He moved for the expulsion of his erstwhile colleague. Every effort was being made to prevent Mahon's return to the house of "honourable men." A certain State member was persuaded to retire and contest the Federal seat. Sunday night there was a meeting in Burt Street in front of the Trades Hall. Our meeting was higher up. There was no sign of the impromptu policeman, but uniformed men moved about in numbers that almost persuaded me that Ned Kelly had returned to life and inflicted his presence on the community.

The Labour Party meeting was large, and ours was not small by any means. The police evidently feared trouble for a goodly number stayed about our meeting all evening. It was for me to speak as I had not had to do since the Conscription issues were decided. Our chairman delivered a short address and made way for me.

"Friends", I said, "I have been brought a long way to a place to which I am not altogether a stranger. My mission is not to mine for gold this time, but to talk to miners, and others who gain their livelihood as a result of Paddy Hannan having discovered what has developed into one of the richest miles of goldbearing ore in the world, and I want to talk about Labour's emancipation. I want to tell you how to organize, and what your objective must be. We have had a fight, and serious and exciting times you have passed through. Many of you thought when the old Coolgardie Miners Union merged into the A.W.U. that

you were entering an Industrial Union, and when a number of your work-mates, persuaded by the mine managers, remained in the old union, you organized to clean them up; instead you bred into existence a number of spurious policemen - Special Constables they are called. These disreputable individuals instead of upholding the law have gone out of their way to break it, and well you know from newspaper reports that they have undertaken to shift out of Kalgoorlie men who are organizing for something better than the Australian Workers Union, with its reactionary set of rules. The paper said on Saturday that these men were miles and miles away from Kalgoorlie, but that was a lie. I was not an hour off the train when I was with several of the men who were thought to be beating it hurriedly for the coast, and before I went to bed last night I ate supper in the home of one of them. They are not miles away, as you suppose, but right here at this meeting, and no man dares attempt to do them harm. I must tell you what I told thousands of people during the Conscriptionist campaigns of 1916 and 1917 - that it is for the authorities to see that the police do their duty. If they don't, we will do it for them, and if there is going to be any lawlessness I will meet lawlessness with lawlessness. I am ready, so look out.

I am here when you are in the throes of an election campaign, and many of you think that the return of Hugh Mahon will mean something to you. I have been campaigning for a good many years now, but not for Labour politicians. They are but a self-seeking lot, as Abraham Lincoln once said. Playing at Master-class politics will not get you any further than you are now. Listen to what I will have to say during my sojourn amongst you, and buy and read the pamphlets and books that our sellers are peddling tonight. You have been reared to a narrow outlook and understanding and you have to be lifted out of your narrow groove. You have listened to many speakers from time to time. Tom Mann, and a dozen others have visited the goldfields and lectured you, but I come to you

with the gospel of Industrial Unionism. Marx once urged the workers to unite. "You", said he, "have nothing but your ~~aims~~ chains to lose. You have a whole world to win." It is for the purpose of winning the world for the workers that I and many others advocate Industrial Unionism. The greatest Marxian in the English-speaking world was one Daiel De Leon. He wrote many pamphlets and he was without exception the greatest and most logical speaker at the 1905 convention, when what today is known as the Workers International Industrial Union was launched. It is true that it was first called the I.W.W. , but when a certain element broke with the political clause and continued to cling to a name that did not by rights belong to them the name was changed. The I.W.W. when first formed contained a political clause in its preamble and constitution. That clause has been repudiated by the present I.W.W., and I have to confess that it occupied me a long time to discover where a political clause was necessary. Perhaps it was because of a too hurried reading through the literature and not assimilating all that I had read, but in quiet hours by reading and re-reading I have been brought to a knowledge of the truth. The politics of the W.I.I.U. are not the politics that are being talked in front of the Trades Hall tonight, and the politics that you will hear and read for the next few weeks. Our politics are revolutionary in that we aim to wrest the power to manipulate the Capitalist class political State from those in possession - to dissolve it as it were, but to do that by itself would be utterly useless. The workers must be ready and prepared to establish a new administration. They must be ready for the Industrial Republic, basing the administrative system on factory and workshop control. I cannot describe it in detail tonight, but will have a number of opportunities as the weeks pass to speak to you at length and explain in detail what the W.I.I.U. with its Socialist Industrial Union aims at, in other words organises for."

The meeting was one of the quietest and seemingly most interested meetings I had ever addressed. The literature sales were good and we went home satisfied that instead of men desiring to drive revolutionaries out of town they would wish to hear them further.

Callahan undertook to escort me to Lakeside, where there were a number of members of the W.I.U. We trained to Canbella, the station on the Golden Mile, and walked from there to Lakeside. There the wood trains came in and went out. We were forced to ride in a truck under scorching heat and sit on what we could find. The wood lines were temporarily laid down, and all who rode rode free at their own risk. The engines burned wood that was stacked along the line in readiness for them, and showers of sparks were spewed out of the engine funnel and descended on the trucks and their inhabitants. It was one perpetual vigil, for under a heat like that that blazes on the West Australian hinterland, a spark has only to touch one's clothing and there is a conflagration. In spite of my care I had two holes burned in the only good hat that I possessed. The train pulled up at Celebration City. A wonderful place it was. Hampton Plains had been boomed as a new and rich mining area, and people rushed to peg leases, and companies bought or took options. Speculators on the Adelaide Exhhange were reaping rich harvests out of the Hampton Plains boom. The settlement consisted of a number of tents and bush humpies, and a hotel. The hotel was of corrugated iron, and had been erected by a Perth speculator, who was known as a successful race horse owner. He built it for a man who assured him he would pay for it and make a fortune in less than a twelve month.

The Hampton mines were not crowded together like those on the Golden Mile, and be they never so good there could not be two towns like Kalgoorlie and Boulder within a mile or two of each other. There were twenty properties working and being boomed, but there was nothing more than a camp of a few men

at each property. Business men and other interested people hoped for the best. Something should have to relieve the depression that was setting in, but alas! One by one the Hampton mines were closing down, and the boom was destined to be short lived, but short as it was, it meant thousands and thousands of pounds to those who played the speculator's game, and a loss of thousands and thousands to those who believed every wild rumour of the richness of Hampton. It was Capitalism to excelsis.

In the evening we were delivered to the camp of woodcutters. There were a hundred men, women and children living anything but comfortable lives in the wilderness. The camps had to shifted every now and again, therefore they were not of a permanent character. The store, which belonged to the wood company, was a calico edifice over a wooden frame, while the homes of the woodcutters consisted of tents and hessian houses erected in haste over a few poles. In such a camp lived those who supplied the fuel for the boilers at the mines that gave steam and power to work gigantic machinery that had been erected to crush out the hundreds of thousands of ounces of gold every month that earned for the Golden Mile the reputation that had made it famous for nearly thirty years.

It was sufficient for me to know that there was a struggle between the men and women of conflicting interests, but it was strange to learn how their condition of life was accepted by these hard living slaves. I pitied them, and it remained for me to arouse them out of their apathy. That I determined to do. But as Shakespeare wrote: "Alas, what poor ability is in me to do them good."

There was a boarding house and in a large hessian room Callahan and I met the unmarried portion of the woodcutters population. At night I was billed to address a meeting. It was customary for a notice to be posted on every tank, so that the woodcutters when they went for water should be able to read it. At meeting time someone would beat a tank with a billet of wood and the population

would gather at the place appointed. With them all there the chairman, who was the W.I.I.U. delegate, mounted a box and announced me. I was well heard by the greater number, but some reactionary A.W.Uites preferrred to interjedt. If there was to be a One Big Union, why not the A.W.U.? That organization could embrace all the workers of the Commonwealth. I could have wished that the A.W.U. were on an O.B.U. with a W.I.U.objective and constitution. It would be easier for me, for I did not relish having to leave home and travel so far in an endeavour to inculcate the revolutionary idea. On the whole it was a good meeting and some literature was disposed of. There was some hope for the woodcutters of Lakeside.

It was midhight when we finished supper and made down our bed in front of the tent of the delegate. He supplied us with a tent and blankets. The tent we spread on the ground and we made our beds side by side. Hundreds of thousands of men in the early days of the Westralian boom slept in the open as they tramped the road from Southern Cross to Coolgardie before the railway could be built. It was but the return to a life that I was once slightly accustomed to, therefore I enjoyed it.

The A.W.U. that hated any but its own form of organization to be accepted by the workers, sent an organizer, Mick Costello, to dissipate what Jim Scott and I had done to enlighten and organize them. Mick, I expected, would be a man worthy of his job, But to pay seven pounds a week to such an incompetent was nothing more than an insult to intelligent working men, and a waste of good money. Notices were posted on the water tanks and a tank was drummed with a stick as for my meeting. I attended on the night after our meeting and went prepared to hear a severe criticism of myself and the W.I.I.U. methods and tactics. But what a disappointment! Mick was introduced and mounted the platform. "Men", said he, "I was out on the dairies last week, and I found the men there getting

on alright. From them I have come to you, and I will be staying on Lakeside for a few days, and if there is any of you who have experienced difficulty in making out and filling in your income tax returns I'll be willing to give a hand. I don't think that there is any other business that need delay us. I will step down and the chairman will make any announcements that might be necessary and you can return to your camps, sleep well and prepare yourselves for tomorrow, for the weather is hot and work of cutting wood very hard. I thank you."

Costello was typical of the average A.W.U. organizer. Yet this was the union that baptised me in 1894 and fought the squattocracy of Australia in every State, sent men to jail for fighting the workers' fight, burned the "Rodney", a Darling river boat that was transporting scabs to one of the stations in the back country. It was men of this organization that burned a hundred woolsheds in various States in that year of strike against a reduction of the shearing rate. But in 1894 that union consisted of men and not money. In the years that had intervened an increasing membership had built the union from an insolvent condition to that of considerable affluence. The A.W.U. boasted cash and property running up to more than half a million pounds. At time of writing its cash and property run into even more than that. Since 1894, and the adoption of Arbitration the fight was taken out of the members, and an army of officials had been created that did nothing better than batten on the membership and dig themselves in as it were. The W.I.I.U. on the other hand opposed the creating of an army of highly paid officials, and only paid its organizers what they would have earned in their industries. I feared that I should have to go a long way short of what I could earn when the West Australian sojourn was over.

Arthur Jenkinson and I left Kalgoorlie for Kurrawang on Saturday night.

We took rugs with us, and were permitted to sleep in a carriage, as the company's train did not leave for the woodline till Sunday morning. Sunday came as all days come in their turn, and a motor car containing the pay officials and the cash for the woodcutters hurried from Kalgoorlie to catch the train; with them was a campaign director for Hugh Mahon, who was to address the woodcutters and persuade them to return the old Federal Member, who had so precipitately been ejected. Kurrawang was the principal wood line and out past where there was an enormous rock-hole that was taken out on the water trains for the woodcutters and their families.

Being pay Sunday the men were all waiting the arrival of the train and the pay officials. I met men who were at the settlement of the strike a week before, and felt at home amongst them. One of them, who kept his family on the job, prepared accommodation for Jenkinson and as soon as he received his money he took us to his home. We dined splendidly for being in an outlandish place, and hurried to hear the campaign director, Keene. He urged reasons why Hugh Mahon should again become a member of the Australian Parliament, and then rambled off to make an attack on the W.I.I.U. I listened patiently for a while, to his misrepresentation and villification of the W.I.I.U., or One Big Union scheme, as he was pleased to call it. Scarcely before had I ever listened to such a display of economic ignorance, and could bear him no longer. I interrupted, but he showed exasperation, and tried to belittle me. I was not in the least perturbed at his tactics, but could not suffer a waste of time. I challenged him to a debate in the afternoon. He refused to accept the challenge. He had to return by the pay officials' train to address meetings in Boulder and Kalgoorlie that night. He left little for me to reply to, but he certainly did give me an inspiration for the speech I was to make in the afternoon.

One hundred and sevety of the woodcutters had broken with the A.W.U. and

were members of the Workers International Industrial Union. Jenkinson and some others were enthusiastic, but I had misgivings, for I knew that few of that number really understood that there was a class cleavage. They were what they were before, only that they gripped the idea of a system of better unionism. In that there was hope.

The afternoon meeting was large and I laboured to deliver a lecture on the academic side of Industrial Unionism. I pointed out with emphasis that they would have to divorce themselves from the Capitalist policy as contained in Keene's speech. Made it clear that the political State was nothing more than the executive administration of the Capitalist System. A good many pamphlets were sold and as men had time to study them in their quiet eveings I was sure that good would result from my visit.

We did not hurry away, but spent several days going from man to man at their work and enjoying long talks with them as they rested every now and then under a little shade between their spasms of heavy axe work. I took up a spare axe and did a little chopping for I was reared on the border of a forest, and had had much practice. It was physical organization and created a good impression. For few organizers that the A.W.U. sent along ever visited the men at work or ever took an axe in hand. They had divorced themselves from work when they stepped into the union job. I was only away from my job for the time being, and I feared that I should not receive much for being away from it. My fears were well founded.

The A.W.U. organizer, who did nothing but camp on the job, was powerless to offer resistance to the march of the W.I.I.U. He enjoyed a princely livelihood. The days might be hot - a hundred and fifteen in the shade - but it never scorched him. He remained in the shade. Like Mick Costello he was a man of few words and little action. Behold what dummies worm their way into official

positions in the unions and the Labour Party.

There was a bunch of men camped further out than the main camp, and the comrades were anxious that they should hear me and be persuaded to join with them. We took possession of a velocipede and in turns worked the lever and raced along at the rate of ten miles an hour. It was a good meeting, and the woodcutters were impressed. They promised to abandon the A.W.U. and join with the rest of the bunch. For all that Reynolds hung on. His seven pounds a week was reaching him regularly.

"You should be here when we shift camp again", said Humphreys, one of the pioneer woodcutters. "It is the hardest part of the work. We have a square mile allotted to each of us, and as timber is scarce in the desert it does not taken long to cut the blocks off. A special train of trucks is supplied and we pull down and pack up. The engine showers sparks as she strains to her load, and the sparks scatter by the million and fall in innumerable quantities on our belongings. It's a case of being ready to fight a blaze at any second. We have holes in nearly everything we possess, and they are from sparks. The miners scarcely know how our part of the labour of producing gold is performed. Kalgoorlie is a big town - better than Broken Hill any time, but it is not for the woodcutters to know town life. Who would have thought that finding gold at Coolgardie nearly thirty years before would have provided life for the men and women of this generation? I am reminded of that poem, "Hassan or the Camel Driver" where it is said - "Curst be the gold andsilver which persuade
Weak men to follow far fatiguing trade!
The lily peace outshines the silver store,
And life is dearer than the golden ore;
Yet money tempts us o'er the desert brown,
To every distant mart and wealthy town."

"It was I, the fool that I am, that left the Goulburn Valley in Victoria to come to this desperate place. It's my home now, and rough as it is I am sort of settled to it. It is marvellous how a man can change his home place for

something a thousand times behind it, and settle down. You will meet men who left the other States when times were bad in the nineties to rush to Coolgardie, who are still on the goldfields of Westralia, who have married and reared families, to manhood and womanhood, and never make effort to return to the better and brighter places. Ned Hogan is an exception. He camped and cut wood, got to check weighman, became secretary of the woodcutters' union, and when we took out membership in the A.W.U. cleared back to Victoria engineered his way into Parliament and is destined to become the leader of the Labour Party. But mark my words, Wilson old boy, the time will come when he will wish to God that he was back "swinging Douglas" again.

"I am no prophet, but, mark my words, the war has produced a set of conditions that will move us a few degrees round the vicious circle. Hogan has just got to his position when the crash will be on us, and he'll wish to Christ that there was a new Coolgardie before he is through with Labour Politics in Victoria. This life is rough, but I don't desire to return to the hard times that I remember. The mines are going down, but they'll produce gold for a good many years yet. I have "swung Douglas" for fifteen years and I'd be lost without an axe in my hand so I must hew my way through life to the end, and say with Ned Kelly, "Such is life."

I met men of little learning, but possessed of real common sense, whose company I enjoyed. It was with a certain amount of regret and some severe blisters on my hands that I left Kurrawang woodline for the Golden City again.

It was the end of a terrible day - heat, dust and perspiration - that Arthur Jenkinson and I crammed ourselves with twenty more into the only box car on the train. The train steamed slowly over a bumpy line and somewhere about one o'clock in the morning stopped at Kurrawang. Others laboured to gain a little more slpep before the main line train should come along and pick them up.

I was disgusted and somewhat impetuous. I prevailed on Jenkinson and he agreed that we mightwalk and reach home before daylight. We could then go to bed comfortably and enjoy a peaceful sleep for a few hours at any rate. The air was sultry, and we perspired as we had done, crowded in the box car, but we plodded along. The lights of the Golden Mile shone through the sultry atmosphere. Above the towns the lights of industry were shining over mills and ore dumps. That which was a dead wilderness for a million years, perhaps, had for a couple of decades given life and living to ten thousand miners and shopkeepers and enormous dividends to shareholders scattered through every country. Groups of capitalists who had been warring against one another for four years and over were not meeting and shaking hands around board tables, managing and dividing, and again as Ned Kelly had well said - "Such is life!"

The spurious police seemed to be well informed as to what was going on, and did not visit Jenkinson's house till they knew he was settled at home. He and I were sitting in the front room talking with a few others when one of these worthless wretches called. I heard him ask for Jenkinson, and hurried to the door.

"Out and away", I urged, "or you will be carried. You and your ilk have no right here. I rejected them in war time, and in peace I am not going to pestered. Jenkinson is here, and here he will remain as long as he can make a living in Kalgoorlie. He has been here since soon after Paddy Hannan found gold and made the place, and here he will remain." They left, and it was good for them that they had. I had the axe behind the front door. They were without authority, and I would have taken them accordingly.

We were not without information. One of the members of the Returned Soldiers' Association was full or sympathy for the cause of the O.B.U. but he was compelled for certain privileges to remain with those who had fought and thought the country was theirs. He kept us well informed, and we were fortified with a knowledge of what was going on. Truly to be forewarned is to be forearmed.

I addressed more meetings in Burt Street, and attracted audiences as large as those of the election campaigners. Politicians were there from every State, Federal and State members were busy labouring to get Hugh Mahon back into the Federal House. Tom Ryan, the great Premier of Queensland with whom I fought on Koroit Show Ground when we were boys, Mick Considine, the revolutionary politician from the Barrier, Frank Anesty, the fiery Labour man of State and Federal politics, who had written "The Kingdom of Shylock", "Red Europe", and "Money Power" Ned Hogan, erstwhile woodcutter, check weighman and union secretary, politician and labour leader. They were a wonderful galaxy, and I but a humble socialist and industrial union propagandist. I knew Considine when he was nothing, and Tom Ryan when he was a boy. Little did I think in my young days that he would become Premier of a State, and I a propagandist, yet it was so.

The returned soldier mob, and spurious policemen were in attendance at the political meetings interjecting and questioning. They were determined that a man who had said such frightful things about the dear old mother country should never be allowed to enter politics again. Truly, said Draper, "Patriotism is the first delusion of a simpleton and the last refuge of a knave." Labouchere knew where the flag of England flew.

It was the night before election day. The crowd in Burt Street, Boulder, was enormous, and I had my full share, Comrade Jenkinson sold a fair amount of literature and other comrades worked to make the meeting a success. They were enthusiastic when they saw such a number round our meeting on such an exciting evening. I spoke till late, for I was encouraged and in good form. At last the Labour Party meeting ended, and more and more crowded to hear me. I had spoken for two and a half hours. I was known as a longwinded speaker, on Yarra Bank, Sydney Domain, and in Botanic Park, but on this night I left my old self far behind. I considered that I had no equal till I heard Steffanson, the explorer, in Adelaide Town Hall. He talked for nigh three hours, and I gave

him the belt.

Back in Kalgoorlie we discovered Cannan Street crowded. Ryan, Hogan, Considine and Ansty were all doing a second turn. I met Mahon, and gave him a handshake. "You have abundance of help", I said.

"I need it, Mr. Wilson, I need it", he answered.

Hugh Mahon was growing old, but he was no proletarian, by now. His record was a long one. He was known from the time of Parnell till he cursed the British Empire on that fatal Sunday afternoon on Richmond Reserve. I had no interest in pure and simple Labour Politics, and it mattered not to me whether Mahon or Foley got in, but I favoured Mahon because of the way he was being treated. It was a personal favour and not at all a political one. Ansty was the last speaker, and as the Town Hall clock struck twelve he concluded a powerful oration.

The campaigning was over. It was now election morning. We went to bed, and woke to the march of hundreds and hundreds on their way to the polling booth. Night came and the latest figures gave Foley a substantial lead. There were many returns yet to come from outlying parts, but I feared that the Empire propaganda had done its insidious work. Mahon would be a "goner". Additional figures dribbled in but Hughie was being left further and further behind. It was the middle of the following week, Jenkinson and I had just come home from a meeting in Burt Street. We went to the returning officers' room for a glimpse of the latest figures. Hugh Mahon and his campaign director were there.

"It looks hopeless now", said Mahon.

"Don't give up hope yet, Hugh," Keen admonished. "There are returns to come from a couple of outlying parts, and as they are nearly all Catholics in those parts you should get a substantial lift up."

So religious votes were being used to further Labour Politics. I had known it for many years. The most powerful International political machine had been working for years to force the hands of Australian Governments to grant money to finance denominational schools. Ever since that day that the Victorian Government - the first in Australia - declared for education "free, secular and compulsory", the Catholic church took up the gauntlet and fought and intrigued for what it considered its right, and here the tables were being turned. The vote was being relied on to help in a man who claimed through his party to represent the proletariat. The last figures came to hand, and poor or rich old Hughie became a back number. The Interstate politicians departed amidst boohooing and groans from the spurious policemen and returned soldiers.

I was kept on for a few more weeks and put every effort into my speeches and was considered to have done much effective speaking. One man, not a fool by any means, approached me quietly one day, and said: - "I have heard them all, Jack King, Tom Mann, Charlie Reeves, Mick Sawtell and others, but I can tell you honestly that none of them have had the same effect on the mind of the slave as you have. I am amongst them day by day and I heard their conversations. I wished we had a hundred like you in Australia."

I did not feel flattered. I had worked to have a good effect and was pleased indeed to learn that what I intended was being accomplished.

Christmas came, and Jenkinson and I walked and talked before dinner. As we walked down Hannan Street, we met George Steer. George was an elderly man, but one of the most genuine that had ever been attracted to the revolutionary movement. In England he had a record. He had worked and tramped in Canada and U.S.A. and in Australia he always sought the revolutionaries. We enjoyed a talk, and Jenkinson invited him to dinner. In the evening, at George's invitation, we visited a picture show. It was the first of its kind that I had

found time to attend for several years. I enjoyed the recreation.

There was trouble at the Lakeside woodcamp. The cutters had ordered beer for Christmas, but only a small quantity had been sent out. They refused to start after Boxing Day unless they were given a better booze up. Mick Costello hurried to the field of battle, and a message was sent to us. I was to leave in the morning. Bull Callahan used to come in and out, but he was less active than he had been. I was glad of that for I did not form a very good opinion of him from the start. Bull belonged more to the school of criminal syndicalism than to the W.I.I.U. Jenkinson urged him to accompany me, but Bull would not. Jenkinson decided to accompany me instead.

We trained to the mine area, and walked to Lakeside, only to be informed that there was no train leaving for the wood camp. "We'll go all the same", I said to Jenkinson. He murmured something about the heat and the long way, but decided that the occasion demanded our presence in opposition to Costello. On and on we walked to a point where most outfitting was done for one of the Hampton Plains mines, or wild cats. From there we kept on till we came to where a railway man was camped with his family. After a prodigious drink of water we were invited to afternoon tea, or a dinner I should call it, for we were fed well. Strengthened and rested we soon set out to complete the journey. Arriving at the delegates camp in time for tea we went with him to the boarding house, and if ever a woodcutter ate a meal to beat what I ate that night I wait to meet him.

Our delegate was well supplied with camping outfit and blankets. He had bought from men who, from time to time, got disgusted with the hard work under a summer sun, and sold their camp outfits cheaply.

Jenkinson and I made down beds in the open, and taking a bucketful of water from a tank, I stripped and bathed before turning in. In the morning I was

refreshed and fit for any job or walk, but Jenkinson, although in the West for twenty odd years, was not a practised walker. He suffered terribly, but was astir betimes. After breakfast we went amongst most of the men, but they were adamant. The company had not treated them as they should have been treated and they were going to town for their Christmas booze. Two men offered us their camp till they returned, that was if we desired to stay that long. Jenkinson did not feel equal to a sudden return so we accepted the offer and decided to camp for a day or two. All was quiet. Axes were not ringing through the bush. We engaged in short walks and explored the bush where men delved in terrible heat. Then we crossed Lake Lefroy to the old mining place where I had once known life and energy. The "Butterfly" was no longer a mine of the boom days. It had long been closed, and the camp was entirely deserted. When I enjoyed the excitement of the boom, I was not a student of economics, and never knew that such a man as Karl Marx had blessed this planet with his presence. Now I was for talking about him, and endeavouring to get as many men as possible interested in his theories.

We knew that the woodcutters would not return to camp in less than a week, and did not desire to stay that long. We made ready for a return to Kalgoorlie. A train was loaded and made ready to leave one night and we were on top of one of the trucks. When we reached the place where the railway man was camped, who had succoured us on our way out, the train was joined with a few trucks that carried logs for the saw mill at Lakeside. Here was mounted a log carriage, and on top of a dozen logs rested and slept as the train steamed slowly along. We rested for the day, and at night visited the house of a sympathiser. He had been in business for a number of years, and had accumulated a goodly sum of money. When the war came he feared that he might lose it in some speculation, so he concentrated on property. His home was all that a home ought to be, but the lessening of the gold production caused property to fall in value, and

he regretted that he had not put his money into war loans instead. I sat on the lawn and yarned with him, while Jenkinson, still tired, went to sleep in his chair and slept soundly till disturbed to join us in supper.

"Wilson can walk as well as talk", he said to our host, "and I can a little, but when it comes to miles and miles I have to admit that I am not the man to keep up to the likes of him."

We went home at midnight and both of us were glad enough to get to bed. I had done all that I could to help on the work of Socialist and Industrial Union propaganda, and determined to return to Adelaide. I was urged to stay, but so far had only received a little money each week to send to my family, and there was not sufficient in the exchequer of the organization to allow me even that for long. I figured on joining my family on New Year's night. I went to the station and learned that I could book a berth as a passenger had cancelled his, and I was the first to enquire for it. I had no cash, so had to seek a pawn broker for the first time in life. I pledged a chain and ring and thus raised the fare. I never recovered them. So they went all for the Cause.

As we walked to the train a man singled me out for conversation, and informed me that he was well supplied with notes, but they were not negotiable ~~only~~ except under certain circumstances, therefore risky to handle. Some time later an Afghan gold buyer was reported to be on the way to the field to buy illicit gold. The make up was excellent and many who possessed gold parted with it for spurious notes. One man who possessed some property interests, and whose brothers were members of the Victorian Socialist Party, and one of whom played in the orchestra in the theatre on Sunday evening was what some might call a "Bit of a Socialist". But to me there was no such thing as "a bit of a Socialist." One had to be all out a Socialist, or not one at all. Socialism was something about which there could be no equivocating. One had to understand

thoroughly that society stood divided. That there is a class struggle,and proceeding from that basic knowledge, it had to be admitted that the difference between what the workers received from the product of their labour and what the employing or owning class divided meant wages and profit. I had summed up that the basic principles of socialist belief were the class struggle, the commodity status of labour and the theory of surplus value. There was no other ground basis. There is no room in the Socialist movement for people who talk Christian Socialism or State Socialism or those who put their property interests in front of their Socialism.

The man referred to was passing through a crisis. Like many another, he had fumbled on the Hampton Plains boom, and how was filled with regrets. He pitied me, but his pity had no cash value. I and many others could sacrifice for the cause, but the cause was secondry with him. Like Henry Lawson I could say "I have battled myself and you know, you camps, what a man in the Movement goes through."

One of my fellow passengers on the train was an elderly man. We fell into conversation. It was a hot journey, extremely hot, over the Nullabor Plains, and over the sandhills and tableland. It reminded me of the days that Jack Arnold and I had tramped the track from Tarcoala to Port Augusta in similar weather. I like the train ride better.

The old man told me that he had lost nearly his all in the land boom and financial crisis of the early nineties, and as soon as Coolgaride was found thither he hastened. He had lived the rough life of the early days, lived on damper and tinned meat, and drank condensed water same as tens of thousands of others, but never let up. He made Coolgardie his home. He was now taking his first holiday in twenty-eight years. He would visit some old friends in odd places and return to Coolgardie, and there end his sojourn on this planet.

He would die as he had lived - knowing little more of life than he knew when he lost his nearly all in the crash, and was compelled to migrate and struggle to start again. His was the life of millions the world over, and the life that many more millions will live until they learn of the great cause that means so much to so many of us and which means so much to tens of millions of the proletariat in all lands.

Two days and two nights on the desert train, and I was once more in Port Augusta. But a rare thing happened. The weather came up cloudy, and as the train sped down through the wheat lands of South Australia, it commenced to rain. The rain was no mock. It rained heavily all day, and on that New Year's eveing when the train arrived in Adelaide it was still raining heavily. What a difference to the travels of years before. When I came into a city in my young mining days it was seek Ac out a good hotel whereat to stay, but now my wife was at the station to meet me, and had a home to take me to.

I had come home with little cash but a determination to break through and make good in Adelaide, I had one hundred pounds locked up in a speculation but it would not be profitable to realise just at the time, but it was a backing.

I spent a quiet week while my transfer was coming through, and then I was a full blown member of the working class in Adelaide.

I went to the waterfront, but it was a troublesome time. A sugar boat had arrived from Java, but the waterside workers had refused to discharge the cargo. There was an Act of Parliament, by which men could not be forced to handle bagged freight when the bags weighed more than two hundred pounds. The Java bags weighed much more than that. The boat lay at her berth over the New Year holidays but now that work was available no man could be engaged. Every effort was made to persuade the men to man the ship, but they were adamant. There was no other work. The port had been cleared on New Year's eve, and shipping

was not normal again as yet. Several days passed. The board of reference met, but the men stood by the law. As the law meant carrying, and the sugar only had to be slung, the ship owners were stubborn. It was a deadlock. At last, with the offer of a few pence extra per hour, a compromise was affected. The strike was over and the port normal.

I was a stranger, and for three weeks I was without work. Clannishness revealed itself. I had to transplant myself with difficulty. All that stood in my favour was the fact that I had met three members of the union at a conference in Hobart, and that one foreman was the son of a man who had attended meetings when I was in Adelaide before.

At last I broke the ice, I was initiated, and from then I was a busy man in industry. I carried and stored wheat after the manner of Adelaide stevedores at the first, then engaged in discharging coal. I was engaged by a deputy foreman for the Adelaide Steamship Company.

It happened one day at dinner time that an employee of the company asked me, "Did you see Bill Baker eyeing you off as you spoke in Botanic Park on Sunday?" He described him to me, and that night I asked my wife if she saw a certain man at the meeting; when she answered in the affirmative, I said "That settles me. I shall not be able to live long in industry in Port Adelaide." "Don't fret", she answered, "he put a shilling in the collection box." I discovered him a regular attender at the Park meetings, and instead of boycotting me he advanced me to the main hatch where the most was to be got out of the company's colliers. There had been a hold-up in the coal industry, as a result colliers were following each other regularly. For a few months it was more like constant than casual work.

It sometimes happened that in the haste to despatch their boats the company asked us to work on past midnight to finish so that the ship could be

sailed at daylight. It was not convenient to refuse, but it more than once involved me in a seven miles walk home to the city. When it became known to the yard men that I had to walk betimes I was assured the use of a bicycle to spare my legs. For six months coal stocks were being built up and I, with timber boats and week-end cargo boats in addition to colliers possessed very little in the shape of spare time. If there was a delay between the coming and going of boats, the mustering hours were so arranged that one had to spend most of the idle day waiting at the Port. It was good for me that I was unlike many of my proletarian comrades. I had been reared in a home and in a district where the child life of the individual was one of full and plenty of nourishing food, and that in addition, that I came from a healthy and vigorous ancestry. I had a meeting in Victoria Square on Friday nights when I was not working late, a meeting in the Park during Sunday afternoon and a lecture in the hall at night, at least three out of the four Sunday nights each month. In addition I had to keep books and accounts, read reviews and order and keep stock of the literature and papers. I was fortunate in that I had a capable partner who could assist me very materially and to some extent lighten my burden. I could turn the scale at one hundred and ninety pounds and was able to maintain that weight in spite of all.

The Waterside workers in Port Adelaide I found very backward as far as their interests were concerned. The Union was a peculiar organization. It was known as the Port Adelaide Working Men's Association before joining the Waterside Workers Federation. Its membership consisted of all kinds of men. There were publicans, stevedore company's presidents, and men of every trade and occupation whose names were on its books. Even my foreman was president, and I gathered convincing evidence that the President of a Union in a foreman's job was compelled to give first consideration to the company that

employed him. It was a poor school in which to propagate Socialism and Industrial Unionism.

An Interstate shipping company and a stevedoring company seemed to run the Port and the men were trained to give them all the consideration they demanded. Where was I to find an apportunity to break in? Slowly perhaps, but nevertheless surely, I was able to make an impression, and my words did not return to me void.

I attended the Union meetings whenever opportunity offered. The members seemed to be in the dark regarding their position in the Federation. The Union owned nearly three thousand pounds worth of house property, from which it drew rents each week, and the property interest was always a major one. If they joined the O.B.U., should they have to pass their property over, and did the Federation have any claim? It was my opportunity to speak and enlighten them. I interpreted the Constitution which very few of the members were acquainted with and there it was plainly set out that the property of the Branches was the property of the Federal Committee. It roused the members when they were fully sure of that, but their trustees tried to placate them by informing them that the property was the property of the Working Men's Association. But as that body was now defunct, they were securely enmeshed in membership of the Federation. The property basis of the Union revealed itself, and an agitation got afoot. A ballot was taken to learn if the members were in favour of withdrawing from the federation. But again a difficulty arose. Could they legally withdraw by process of a ballot? Again I was appealed to. Although a man possessed a good understanding I was far from being a lawyer, although perhaps wiser than a good many of them. My legal masters were Marx, Morgan, Maingand De Leon, but knowledge gained from them was deeper and more scientific than the every-day laws relating to property interests under Capitalism. I

recommended consulting the union's solicitor for an interpretation. I had done enough to take a grip of them. I had roused them and many gathered round me.

It was then that I could discover a way to break the reactionary crust that they were integumated with. I could do the work and was regular with an important shipping company. In that I was a worthy member of the Port Adelaide Branch of the Federation. I made a point of attending as many meetings as I could, but only spoke occasionally and then briefly. There were several budding orators,and aspiring Labour politicians. I left them a full rein, but slipped them on rising to a point of order sometimes, or by asking a question. The members had to be taken from where they thought and led up. I was using my best endeavours.

CHAPTER XIII

It was summer time with a vengeance, but in spite of the heat the work of the port had to go on, or rather be rushed ahead. It was a day of extreme heat, although it was the month of March when word came through that Percy Brookfield, the rebel member of the New South Wales Parliament for Broken Hill - the most militant town in Australia - had been shot on the railway station at Riverton, where the express train stopped for breakfast. Poor Percy! I had been privileged to know him personally. He meant well, and laboured to live up to what he professed before he entered Parliament. It cost him dear in cash to pay fines for offences in connection with his political honesty and outspokenness, but no one dreamed that it would cost him his life. He was an obscure man, working in one of the mines until the anti-conscription fight of 1916. He was physically fit, if any man was, but he was not for the war. He joined with others, and although he was not a man of learning he was a personality that attracted those who made acquaintance with him. He broke with the orthodox Labour Party, and said on a platform with me, in Melbourne, on one occasion, that he would no more scab on the working class in Parliament than do so as a miner in industry. He was fined, and compelled to borrow on his salary or go to jail and forfeit his seat, and to silence his vigorous and mordant tongue he was placed under bond. When the I.W.W. prisoners were in jail for long terms he busied himself on their behalf, and when there was an agitation for their release he entered whole-heartedly into the fight. He did more than the public knew of, and when the Judge Ewing inquiry recommended their release, he was one of the first at Long Bay jail to welcome them to liberty. I met him as he arrived in the city with Donald Grant and offered him my appreciation of his work. I could not stay long with him then as I was on

my way to catch boat for Newcastle.

When the Prince of Wales was in Sydney I met him. The Labour Party was occupying the Treasury benches, and when the royal gentleman went to the country, there was not a Cabinet Minister to be found in town. "They are all away", said Brookfield to me, "chasing the b---- Prince about the country. I find no difference between Labour Politicians and Conservative. In office they fall to the bourgeoisie." The country and the heads of the nation take precedence over the common people and their interests. How they differ from old Abe Lincoln, who always declared himself on the man's side in the fight between the man and the dollar.

The conservatives endeavoured to entice Percy to their side, as his vote would help to oust the Labour Party, and install George Fuller in John Storey's place. That meant much to the Conservatives - there were many in their ranks seeking honours and titles - Storey, no matter how reactionary, could not recommend men for honours and titles. The Labour Party was against titles.

Bert Edwards, M.P. , who afterwards fell on evil days, saw to it that Percy was returned to Broken Hill to be buried, and supply that town with the greatest red funeral ever witnessed in any part of the Empire. Percy died as he had lived, loyal to his class, and left a name to be cherished by militant workers no matter what their views of politics and politicians.

Shortly after Brookfield's death I received a letter from Donald Grant, asking me to handle a book "Through Six Jails" which he had written. Also he asked me to organize a series of meetings for him. I replied encouraging him to come to Adelaide, as the workers in South Australia had done much to hasten the twelve men's release, and had collected a large amount of money to assist their wives and children during the four years they were incarcerated. His meetings were like those of the Anti-conscription days - large and enthusiastic.

The W.I.I.U. instructed me to arrange with him to hand over all above our average collections. Grant was an attractive speaker, but a man of no deep economic knowledge, but for all that he satisfied the enormous crowd that gathered around him.

I shall never forget his first meeting. It was Friday night; the Lord Mayor would not consent to his speaking with me in Victoria Square. It was good for him that he did not. It was a night of bitter coldness. I spoke till I attracted a fair audience, then abandoned the meeting and the crowd, or most of it, followed us up the street to the hall, where many were already assembled.

"It is magnificent", said Grant, as I handed him twenty-three pounds ten shillings for two week ends. "It would be impossible to collect such an amount in the larger city of Sydney at present. You are a born organizer, and may your shadow never grow less."

We sold four hundred copies of his book and supplied many outstanding orders when he was able to send fresh supplies through.

That was not the end of Grant in Adelaide, nor the only money we were able to collect to help him. He contested an election as an Industrial Unionist candidate at Broken Hill, and although the late Percy Brookfield had succeeded on that ticket after he broke with the orthodox, or official Labour Party, Grant failed. After the election he was appointed a representative to attend an All Australian Trade Union Conference in Melbourne, and he wrote asking me to organize meetings for him for six weeks. We agreed to pay him four pounds a week so long as he spoke for Industrial Unionism.

Grant was an attractive speaker in a general way, but a failure when it came to an academic lecture in a hall. One Sunday night he was to lecture on the "Chicago Martyrs", and resting assured that the meeting would be good in his hands, I visited the town hall to listen to Mrs. Annie Besant. She was

amongst the world's best woman speakers. She spoke on India. I was interested myself in her as a speaker - from the point of view of oratory only. Her theme, "India", was no more than a support for British Imperialism and England's policy in India. Yet this was the woman that was under a ban during the war period. Dickens said "The Law is an ass". After hearing her I was more than satisfied that the lawmakers and administrators were braying asses at times.

Mrs. Besant's lecture was timed for seven p.m. and Grant's for eight. I walked leisurely to the hall after Mrs. Besant finished, but before I reached there I overtook Grant with a couple of ladies. He too had been at Mrs. Besant's lecture. I hurried him on. There was a fair audience waiting for him, and fearing that he had left for Sydney.

He was a disappointment, all his energetic efforts as a mob orator were missing, and he but referred to a few points and assured the audience that in discussion I would be able to enlighten them further.

There were other clodpated militants, not understanding enought to join the W.I.I.I.U. but who desired to start a party of their own. Grant seemed to be a man whom they thought could be used. They organized a meeting in a hall in Port Adelaide, and carted Grant down there one Sunday evening. His meeting was not a success. The collection was only a few pence more than four shillings, yet we were responsible for his salary, and he was not in the hall to help earn it. In that I judged Grant not to be stable, although he was regarded as one of the big and solid men in the I.W.W.

A few evenings afterwards Grant came to my house with a dozen type-written sheets and asked me to go through them with him. They had been supplied by those who were desirous of using him to start their show. The policy of the new party was to organize a united front, and take in all and sundry who would join with them on such a policy. I criticised it severely and

almost made Grant ashamed that he should have undertaken to consider it. Donald Grant was becoming a speaker without a policy, and aiming to make his living without going into industry again.

His hopes were dashed when a letter arrived from A. C. Willis, Secretary of the Coal and Shale Miners Association, informing him that he was not to attend the conference as a delegate from the miners of Broken Hill. Not being a member of their union he was ineligible to be supplied with credentials. That disappointment was overcome when he was supplied with credentials from the Builders' Labourers' Union of Adelaide.

The Conference over, and Grant having found a better bone to gnaw in Adelaide than elsewhere, returned and joined up with the United Front Party, and as a reward for all we had done for him, he set up his meeting almost immediately alongside ours. Ours was small for a Sunday or two, but the literature sales were very little smaller than the average over many Sundays. Cash was not rolling into the coffers of the spurious revolutionary party and Grant tired of it.

Before he left, his quandom I.W.W. comrade and jail companion, Charlie Reeve, arrived from Freemantle, Charlie suffered jail longer than the rest, and when he was released he was deported to Westralia on the condition that he did not return to Sydney before five years. He was working out his time on the way back. Reeve was no longer a whole-hearted comrade. Grant had stood for Parliament and Reeve abhorred parliaments and politicians. They spoke together for a few Sundays, but when Reeve from the platform abused Grant as being an aspirant for a "bum" politician's job, Grant departed. He joined the Labour Party, became a member of Parliament and a City Councillor. Another revolutionary gone.

Reeve stormed the citadel as it were. He was a new type of speaker, and

half the Park gathered to hear him. He thinned out meetings but I did not envy him. Destruction was ahead of him. I knew from experience that his type of oratory would not find the same license in Adelaide as Sydney Domain might tolerate. He was not a compromiser, but he was extravagant and abusive, and his language was not that of a polished speaker. His boast was that he was a proletarian and he was addressing proletarians in proletarian style.

A man who owned a small lorry, and who professed that he was a revolutionary, and had been through strikes and lock-outs in Broken Hill, used to charge the W.I.I.U. seven and sixpence for the hire of his vehicle on May Days - the only party celebrating May Day in the Park - brought it down for a platform for Reeve as he had done for Grant, and rejoiced that he was helping opposition to Wilson. Still I continued. Frank Hill, who had been engaged in a Union organising job, could only help me when he was in the city, so that I was often left to go through the afternoon unaided. Still the stamina that I possessed enabled me to keep up with speaking as if it were an easy job. I pushed all the energy that I possessed into my speeches and fought the opposition. Many watched for signs of my breaking down, but they failed to witness such a happening.

Reeve's Party now that the Illegal Association Act had expired, launched the I.W.W. again, and many who one were members of that organization, gathered round and helped Reeve. The Nationalist Party, that conducted meetings during the war period and for a good while after, at last gave up. Reeve and his newly formed I.W.W. took possession of the meeting place where Reginald Blundell and other renegades from the Labour party, who had been hackled and heckled, and this was now as full of excitement as before. Reeve, who bitterly hated the police for police action against him and his colleagues in Sydney, confined

a good part of his afternoon addresses to violently abusing the police who attended his meeting and listened for an opportunity to make out a case against him. His language exceeding all bounds soon brought him into trouble with them. He was taken from his platform and hurried out of the park on more than one Sunday afternoon, and many negative rebels took it for a sign that Reeve was the only man in the park who spoke against the Capitalist system, and for that he was to be prohibited from delivering his message. Just as there are more ways of destroying a bad dog than to choke him with porridge, so there were more ways than one of getting rid of a nefarious character, as the police judged Reeve to be. The Board that governed the park enforced a by-law prohibiting any person from speaking unless having first obtained a permit. It was not sufficient for an organization to hold a permit of a general character, but each speaker had to hold a personal permit. Reeve was denied one. For this he gained a lot of cheap advertisement. He was a defiant wretch if ever there were one in Australia, and went to the meeting place. When he took the platform the police demanded to see his permit, and when he failed to produce one they bade him get down.

Many deserted his meeting place and appeared at the W.I.I.U. meeting. I was questioned and asked if I "stood for free speech." I could scarcely seek it for myself and deny it to others, whoever they may be, so answered in the affirmative. Reeve came forward and asked if I would permit him to occupy my platform. I should have denied him the right, but under the circumstances I could not. I made way for him. He spoke for only a few minutes when he was approached by a plain clothes constable and ordered quit. He tried to proceed but was hauled down. A good number of policemen were on duty so that if there was any trouble they would be sure to be on the winning side. Reeve was escorted out of the park. The next Sunday he was at his meeting place again.

This time he was taken to the city watchhouse. A fine was imposed on him, and he was given time to which to pay. He being at liberty for the time being defied the police on the following Sunday. Again he was arrested and again fined with time to pay. His two weeks having expired and his first fine not being paid, he was sent to jail. It was the signal for a "Freedom of Speech" Campaign. Many came forward and spoke without permits. They were locked up, tried and fined. Soon there were a dozen in the big stone house that stood in the olive grove.

Out again, Reeve as defiant as ever took the platform, only to go through the same arrest, fine and imprisonment. Others followed him. It was approaching Christmas time, and a woman of means, who seemed to regard Reeve as the acme of revolutionary propagandists, came along and paid several fines and took all the free speech fighters who had been jailed to her place for a hearty Christmas dinner. This lady during the anti-conscription fight thought me the greatest of men, and for a time identified herself with the party that I represented, but being sympathetic, and not logical, became obsessed with the idea that I was a reactionary, or I too would have been jailed. She failed to realise the difference between subject matter and the language used to express one's convictions.

At last Reeve was given another chance to prove that he could speak and use becoming language. In an attack on the Revolutionary One Big Union with a political clause, he was challenged to a debate. The conditions were that Harry Clark, secretary of the Builders' Labourers' Union, and an erstwhile member of the I.W.W. was to manage Reeve's side. The conditions laid down by Clark were that all the collection - leaving us nothing for the rent of our hall - was to be handed to him to be sent to U.S.A. to augment the fighting fund for the release of the Centralia prisoners. To give no excuse for

default our secretary consented. It was a scorching hot Sunday, and the atmosphere in the hall at night was suffocating. In addition I had to bike to Port Adelaide and be there at midnight to be conveyed to Outer Harbour to start work on arrival there on an Orient mail boat.

Reeve led off, and surprised me very much, I believed him to be a man of some economic knowledge, but the theme of his argument was the failure of the Labour Party both on the mainland and in New Zealand. His was but a negative diatribe. It was left for me to state the revolutionary position from the working-class viewpoint. I said "that it was a pity for his own sake that my opponent did not say something worthwhile." In reply Reeve said he had "exposed the Labour Party and that was something mighty." It was left for me to prove that it was not a question of the failure of the Labour Party, but whether the working class in their fight for emancipation could afford to leave the power to control the State and the armed forces in the hands of master-class representatives.

The debate over, I was soon home, changed and ready for a seven mile bike ride. I had given the whole of the Sunday - as I always had to - to Party work, and on top of it had to go and work for ten or fifteen hours without a night's rest or sleep. I did not think that even that could break me down, but time alone convinced me.

The money was paid over as agreed, and great was my astonishment a few months later when Reeve from his platform in front of a large audience accused me and the W.I.I.U. of having pocketed the money, instead of sending it to its destination. This angered me and gave me a good idea of the extent to which a man will go when jealous of another. I advertised that I would produce the receipt at our meeting the following Sunday. Reeve did not turn up to see it, nor did any one represent him. But after the meeting I was informed that

Reeve had made a statement that amounted to nothing better than a Yankee apology.

Reeve could not keep down to a language that would suit the respectable authorities of Adelaide, and again was in trouble. Fines were heaped on him, but he heeded them not. He was defiant.

It happened that the oversea seamen were notified of a severe reduction in their wages. Some struck in home ports, some struck in Australian ports, and others as soon as their ships arrived in port quit them. This dislocated shipping, and we stevedores were robbed of much of our work. I had grown disgusted with the disagreeable experiences of living in furnished rooms and moving from one house to another to try and better my family, and furnished a comfortable flat, where I was handy to the hall and Party work, which was growing. That,with many calls that a prominent agitator has to meet left me short. My earnings for five months during the currency of the strike, and the time it took to get boats on to their running schedules again, left my earnings at less than two pounds a week. I could not keep on in the flat, pay rent and live on that amount, plus a small sum the organization ~~paid~~ paid to me. I either had to sell out or raise cash. I went to a well known money lender, and little did I realise what a burden I was heaping on myself. The oversea seamen's strike was but the beginning of a long chain of industrial disturbances that reflected themselves in the earnings of waterside workers, and kept me in the hands of the loanmongers.

The S. S. Nestor arrived with Lord Stonehaven on board. He was the Governor General designate. I was fortunate enough to secure a job discharging her. As a coal burning ship she had to replenish her bunkers at Outer Harbour. The seamen on the tug boats refused to ~~tow~~ tow a lighter to Outer Harbour, but they had to learn, like the British seamen, that Industry is organized by the

Capitalists so that there is no true key industry of which men used once to boast. Several trucks of coal from a boat discharging at inner harbour were taken out, and a gang of men from amongst the stevedores on the "Nestor" were put ashore to shovel it into tubs, that were hoisted aboard like cargo. I was not one of the gang. There were, on the wharf watching proceedings, some members of the Australian Seamen's Union, and with them was a man, whom I knew to be associated with Reeve. They went out on the train in the morning, and at three in the afternoon were still there without having been able to board ship or come in contact with the men on board. At the afternoon smoke-ho, they approached me and asked me to deliver a message to the crew. I did as desired, and informed several of the firemen and sailors that representatives of the A.S.U. were on the wharf with money to pay their fares to Port to a meeting. One of the firemen sneaked ashore and furthered the conversation. The result was that nine of the stokehold crew remained ashore with the big bunch already idle. The Labour Party was in power in South Australia, and they expected a lot of sympathy from them, but the law is the law no matter who administers it, and the law never departed from by politicians whether Liberal or Labour. In all States hundreds of seamen, for protesting against a reduction of wages and a lowering of the living standard were imprisoned. Even the notorious John T. Lang, who figured so prominently by deferring payment of interest to the English bondholders of the New South Wales public debt, who was a Labour Minister at the time, administered the law against the seamen, and five hundred were incarcerated in his State. It was an argument for Reeve that the Labour Politicians were treacherous. Instead of going his political enemies and using their treachery as an argument for Industrial Unionism, he concentrated on me. His pal who was at Harbour the day I worked discharging the "Nestor", told him of my being there,

and Reeve in his speech declared me to be one of the "blackest of scabs" for coaling the "Nestor." I sought him to deal with him in my own way as workmen generally do, but Reeve and I never met. At the park, while the police were prosecuting him, it was not likely that they would let me to him.

With nineteen pounds in fines accumulated against him, or six weeks in jail, he departed and was next heard of on Sydney Domain.

CHAPTER XIV

Lesser lights than Reeve tried hard to keep his lamp burning, but there was an increase in the size of our meetings. The spectacular characters were played out. I was ably assisted, not so much with speaking as with other work by comrades who visited us from Victoria. Our Adelaide comrades for the most part seemed to think that is was sufficient to be members and leave the bulk of the work to the old agitator.

I struck more trouble. Satan always finds work for idle hands to do. A man named James Cavanagh, who had been a candidate for Parliament in the interest of the Labour Party, who claimed himself a revolutionary, returned from Pt. Pirie. There he had joined the Waterside Workers Federation. He arrived in Port Adelaide with his transfer, and soon was working. He almost immediately began to condemn the method of engaging the labour and of running the organization, and made himself prominent at meetings. He determined to turn things inside out in less than no time. He was enthusiastic perhaps, but lacked understanding. The conditions that obtained in Port Adelaide had their counterpart in every port. There were preference men, and men who favoured one another. I had known it for years, and had done much to help alter it, but it was a labour of which time and patience was required. Dull minds understand slowly.

There had been an All Australian Union Conference, and Cavanagh asked me if I would allow him a while on the platform. As he signified his intention of offering some comments on the Conference, I consented - very much to my regret. He set out by attacking the Port Adelaide watersiders. He said that "amongst them were men who obtained work, by buying beer for foremen, handing back part of their wages at the end of the week, and even lending their wives

to foremen." Such things were said in every port, and without any direct evidence to prove such statements. I knew it meant trouble for Cavanagh, for there were a dozen members of the W.W.F. at the meeting.

One night towards the close of a meeting of the union, Cavanagh was asked if he had made such a statement. As it was within five minutes of closing time he should have asked for the questioh to be reserved for next meeting, but instead admitted having made such a statement. He was summoned to attend before the committee. I was summoned as a witness. Cavanagh did not appear. I was asked if he had made the statement, and could scarcely say no. He was expelled. He sought court injunction but lost. I was then singled out for attack. All the negative rebels of the Charlie Reeve ilk turned on me and blamed me for having Cavanagh expelled from the union. He even went to "Truth" newspaper and put his side of the case. I had to fight a lot of opposition and did fight it. Cavanagh made the statement; that he did not deny, and I was a witness summoned before the committee according to the rules of the union. I feared not the clod-pated element that made a mountain out of a molehill, and lived down their attack. Rebels are like Christians - backbiting, double dealing. Still it is like dogs harbouring fleas; it keeps them alive and awake, but where is the Socialist propaganda in such actions?

The secretaryship of the Waterside Workers was vacant. I was nominated against Joe Morris, but there were three others in Queensland more anxious for the job than to get rid of a reactionary, and they nominated. The election proved that I was the only one in the field who might have been able to defeat Morris. My votes numbered nearly equal to all the other three obtained, and Morris with four in opposition was returned. So the reactionary was assisted by men who pretended they wanted him ousted.

Reeve's last meetings in Adelaide were conducted through a very rough passage. His abuse of the police never abated. Certainly he had suffered because of police evidence in the trial of the twelve men, but what he failed to realise was that the police system and not the individual policeman, or all the members of the force is to blame. Whatever the police system may compel the members of the force to do the police are not the Capitalist system - they are but one of its bye-products.

It happened that one Sunday afternoon Reeve was abusing all parties of the revolution in addition to the police, and most violently criticised the Socialist Labour Party. One of our members more possessed of enthusiasm than judgement became exasperated, and challenged Reeve to a second debate with me. Reeve consented. That was the beginning of trouble in our own Party. The debate never eventuated. Reeve laid down a set of impossible conditions, but the Sunday evening after the challenge one of our tyro members came along. Several of us were discussing the prospective debate and he intruded himself, and demanded to be permitted to debate Reeve. I turned to him and said, "You could never debate Reeve, weak as he is in debate, for the reason, that he may be primed with all the information about the formation of the I.W.W. and the trouble at the 1908 Convention that brought about the split, and the acceptance of the non-political clause. If you did not know the history of the formation of the organization that he claims to represent it would be a sorry day for the S.L.P."

Reeve took up the agitation for a six hour working day in Sydney, thus denying the revolutionary position that he had championed and had been gaoled for supporting.

With Reeve out of the picture the I.W.W. meeting was at a discount. Sometimes fair numbers attended, but the fire of Reeve left other speakers feeble by comparison.

The W.I.I.U., most of whose members in U.S.A. and England were also members of the S.L.P., decided to abandon the organization, and to concentrate their efforts through the S.L.P. to propagate Industrial Unionism. I wrote the Executive Board, in Melbourne, and advised following suit. Negotiations were entered into, and E.E. Judd notified that he would visit Melbourne and Adelaide for the purpose of addressing the members of the W.I.I.U. He visited Melbourne, and wired me that he would be in Adelaide with the arrival of the S.S."Katoomba" on a certain date. I was commissioned to leave work and meet him. I waited till all passengers were ashore but Judd was not amongst them. I boarded the ship, and met him, a very sick man.

He was far from a man in normal health when he spoke at the Park meeting. The audience was large - larger than Donald Grant or Charlie Reeve had addressed except when Grant first came to Adelaide under our auspices.

Later I learned that Judd's visit was not to enlighten Melbourne and Adelaide comrades, they were already well enlightened. His purpose was to place books amongst the German settlers of South Australia - of which there were a large number. He had bought up unsold stocksof The Kaiser(s Memoirs, of Von Tirpitz's Memoirs and Ludendorf's. It was a matter of private interest and not the formation of a branch of the Socialist Labour Party that had spirited him away from Sydney. Business methods had taken hold of him.

CHAPTER XV

The Socialist Labour Party being a political party, it was decided to contest a State election. I was selected to oppose three sitting candidates for the division of Adelaide. The Party engaged in very little campaigning until after nomination day, but during the few weeks the campaign was on all the comrades worked magnificently. Active propagandists and camp followers all worked with equal energy. There was a Communist candidate, but I did not fear him. His policy was but a second edition of the Labour Party's. In fact he could have been in the Labour Party. He advocated a seven hour day, a five day week, a basic wage for all unemployed and made ever so many specious promises. There was nothing revolutionary about such a policy. Although many in the Labour Party said that both Cullen and I would lose our deposits - the Party feared us, for there was an active committee of men and women engaged in a house to house canvass and the three Labour Party candidates held many meetings during the last week of the campaign. It was not an opportune time for the S.L.P. to break political ice. The depression had been on and many were unemployed. The blame was shouldered on to the Liberal Party. Lionel Hill promised that there would not be an idle man in South Australia if his party were returned. There was to be "work for the workless and land for the landless." The move was to remove the Butler administration. Labour and Liberals believed that Butler was the break on the wheel of business progress.

~~Judd was not finished with his dirty work. He printed leaflets and his infamous minions were ready to distribute them. Judd was broke and his remnants of a party had no cash, but a printers bill running into more than twenty pounds was contracted. I replied to his first leaflet but on the eve of the election another was distributed, headed "A BOGUS CANDIDATE". There~~

~~was an affidavit sworn before a J.P. to the effect that Judd and his so-called Executive had expelled me for swindling the S.L.P. out of hundreds of pounds. In spite of Judd's filthy actions I received nearly twice as many votes as the Communist candidate and neither he nor I lost our deposit.~~

It was a strenuous time for me, for I was a sick man. Just previous to the election campaign I had been ill with bronchial catarrh, which the doctor said I had contracted because I was run down. Many years of open air speaking in all kinds of weather had told on me although I was one ~~of~~ with a wonderful constitution. His treatment and taking things easier for a time than I had been in the habit of doing gave me an opportunity to build up and regain my strength and vigour.

The Labour Party won the election with an enormous majority but it only needed time to prove the contention of the S.L.P. - that whether Liberal or Labour it was only possible to administer the Master class Constitution. The humpies did not disappear from the banks of the Torrens, and instead of the workless being absorbed in industry more and more joined the ever increasing unemployed army, and the Government deliberately dismissed public servants. It was coming to the time when as Marx wrote that "The working-class would have to be fed by the Capitalists instead of being fed by them." With no knowledge of political economy Lionel Hill failed to realise that he was legislating to prop a decaying commercial arrangement. The more he tried to patch things up the more ignominiously he failed. The misery of the working class continued to increase.

For opposing the Labour Party at the election I fell foul of the members of my union. There was a strike nearly two years before, and it was believed that the Labour Party in power would rid the wharves of blackleg labour, and the unionists would be restored to preference, I, therefore, was opposing my own chances of returning to work. Little did these unfortunate comrades of

mine realise what an institution the Parliamentary system is. I could afford to ignore their ignorance and bear adversity as well as they. They lived to realise that in a few short months the Labour party was as loyal to the British Imperial shipowners as the Liberal party could ever be. Neither the State nor Federal Parties could act against the dominant economic interests of the Empire. I and my comrades in the S.D.P. had learned that long before, but only a bitter experience could convine the unthinking multitude.

Port Adelaide was no longer the Port that it had been for many years. Progress was working against it. A new pier had been erected at Port Lincoln, and another at Thevenhard along the West Coast. To those places oversea steamers went and loaded direct, and thousandsof tons of wheat that was annually brought to Port Adelaide in crafts to be loaded by waterside workers were now shipped from the outports. Wallaroo and Port Pirie vied with Port Adelaide for a share of the State's shipping. Gantries were erected at Osborn, near Outer Harbour, and the coal that gave work to hundreds of men now deprived them of that work. More and more ships were burning oil, so that bunkering jobs, on which many relied were scarce. Then the Rock Phosphate boats, on which I had worked since before the strike were being discharged by grabs. The march of the machine and improved facilities all round reduced the number of men that the Port would require even at its busiest time. It mattered little who got what work remained. There was scarcely a living on the waterfront for a quarter of the men who sought the work, and the rush ahead methods made it a hell instead of a desirable place. Never in my life, not even in the rush of the summer on Klondike did men work harder than the men of Port Adelaide. But faithful service, and no stoppage of work from 1890 till 1928, for which the local men were directly responsible weighed with the Shipowners. For doings in other ports which might have been reflected in

Port Adelaide, the men of that port were to be persecuted.

In the "Manchester Guardian" at the time of the strike, there appeared a report, and a shipowner was reported to have said, "that the British Imperial shipowners were definitely determined to smash organized labour on the waterfront in Australia." The Labour Party claiming that they stood definitely for the creation of an Australian sentiment allowed the British shipowner to dictate terms along the waterfront.

The strike should never have occurred, but for a set of reactionary officials, who by juggling and fraud wormed their way into positions that they were never capable of filling. An Executive of opportunists some of whom did foul deeds to occupy their positions, ordered a stoppage of work to force the hand of the Arbitration Court to take a case. There was nothing in their plaint that asked for more than waterside workers were getting at the time. Judge Beeby, once a Labour politician, like many another, took the case, and deprived men of conditions that had obtained on the waterfront for sixty years, viz., time and a half for all work performed between five p.m. and midnight. The constitution laid it down that only the Federal Committee could order a cessation of work. Instead of acting in accordance with powers conferred, the Federal Committee called a conference. Delegates were sent from every State. Most of them arrived in Melbourne on a Thursday morning tired from travel and under other influences. They met in the afternoon, and not having read and studied the voluminous award, carefully took up an attitude of hostility to the award whatever it was, and ordered the Secretary to wire all Ports to refuse work on Monday morning, September 10th. The President of the Port Adelaide Branch stood at the gate of the yard and advised all as they entered to refuse work under the terms of the Beeby award. He was obeyed, and there was no work on the waterfront that day.

There was no work during all that week,and ships were accumulating in the port waiting to ship the new season's wool. On the Saturday there was a telegram ordering work to progress. The Conference delegates had discovered that only a few ports had obeyed them. Sydney, that once boasted of its strength and its militancy, had brought about a strike in 1917, during the period of the war, and for several years blackleg labour was predominant on that waterfront. A condition of the settlement of the trouble in that port was that the men agreed never to bring about a stoppage of work, even if prevailed on to refuse to work ships that had been scabbed in other ports. Remembering their crucifiction for several years, it was hardly to be expected that they would refuse even the Beeby award. South Australian outports also refused to obey orders given by the Conference. I did not expect anything better, for the Federation had not brought unity into the Branches, Instead of a union ticket taking members anywhere, they were compelled to take out transfers and lose benefits that they had paid into for years. Few of the members knew that they were connected with anything other than their branch. It alone was the Federation to them.

On the day, September 16th, when we were ordered to accept work there was a rock phosphate boat in port. Those of us who worked on them were engaged and went to work, expecting that men would be seen starting work on other boats, but at ten o'clock ~~smoke~~ smoke ho there was no sign. At 1 p.m. we looked for them but none were to be seen about the wharfs, and later we learned that the President had opened the hall and allowed members to hold a meeting. There were many who had done but little work, if any at all, for the year, and these in opposition to the "bulls" voted for a refusal to man the ships. It was not union principles that permeated them, but rather a narrow self interest. The mistake was the President's for not knowing his constitution or for flagrantly

defying it. In any case chaos had been introduced by a vascillating policy adopted by the Federal Committee. We finished the rock boat on the Friday evening, and hearing that there was to be a secret ballot on the Saturday morning, I went to Port. The gathering of men was large, and at eight o'clock a ballot box was placed near a table in the yard. The Secretary supplied each member in turn with a ballot paper. I took mine and voted, although I mortally hated the secret ballot. My belief was in men who could assemble at a meeting and divide and declare for or against a motion openly.

I had scarcely more than recorded my vote and gone out into the street to talk to some members there when the ballot box came out over the gate. A crowd of excited men rushed it and kicked it down the street till it yielded to rough usage and ballot papers began to fly in the wind. That was the end of the secret ballot.

It was a desperate time for Australia - the Capitalist section of it. The financial position of the Commonwealth was desperate, and only those of us who understood economics could gauge the situation. Wool had to be shipped without delay to settle heavy payments on debts in London. It was the time for a win if the Industrial Union, that I had so long advocated, were in existence; but it was not. The President, one Bob Whitfield, allowed far too many meetings. The shipowners advertised for blacklegs, and it was not till several of us formed ourselves into an unofficial committee and commenced picketing that any semblance of proper action began. It was late then, for a goodly number had already gone in. Volunteers, they were called. It was the beginning of action. The police were baffled, for although we went about some of the wharfs quietly they did not know what was in our minds, and what we were reconnoitering for. The Police Commissioner assured the Premier, a Conservative, that he had men enough placed on the wharfs to hold any situation. We picketed for a couple

of days, and a number of policemen were placed at Robinson's bridge, so that we should not cross and intimidate the blacklegs. They were taken to and from the Compound in box cars - "armoured cars" as they were called.

We were all called to a special meeting on Thursday morning, September 27th. There it was decided to march to the compound and pretend we would all register through the blackleg bureau. The police guard at the bridge were nonplussed and before they knew whether to let us pass or not hundreds of men had passed them and the others were surging behind at a feverish pace. The march broke up and the men ran riot as they entered the compound. Blacklegs assembled, were assaulted and driven out and a couple of policemen were assaulted for interfering. There was a hurried rush for the ships on which the blacklegs were working. Men boarded without permission and passed the constables who were supposed to be on duty to protect the strike breakers. They descended the ladders and cleaned out the hatches. Hurriedly, without coats and hats the "blacklegs" climbed the ladders and as they rushed for the gangways they were punched and kicked. The police were powerless to protect the master's proteges. Some men began throwing stones aboard some of the ships, but I interfered. "Don't throw stones aboard", I said, "You might hit some of the crew." They desisted, and boarded boat after boat and cleaned the hatches of their scurvey workmen. "Can I go back for my coat?" one asked of me as he left the gangway quicker than he might have expected. "No", I answered, "I am getting you a safe passage away, but cannot guarantee what will happen to you if you don't make yourself scarce." He went with his companions.

The gangway of one ship was hoisted, but a rope hung over the side. One of our men grasped it. An engineer tried to haul it on deck. He was too late, so he rushed up the companion way onto the boat deck, and disappeared. Two men climbed the rope and lowered the gangway, and soon it was carrying

its full capcity. That ship too was cleared of an 11 non-union men.

The captain of another ship rushed on deck with a revolver in his hand. A policeman seeing him called out, "Don't shoot, captain, or they will murder you. You are at their mercy, we can't help you." The Captain was no longer in charge of his ship. He only returned to his command when the blacklegs were driven ashore.

The job was done, the Port Adelaide Waterside Workers had made history. They returned to the hall and the President ordered them to a meeting at 1 p.m. He and some of his Executive hurried to Outer Harbour to reason with the blacklegs who were working ships at the outport. It was a prodigious blunder to make, for it was not likely that such men would be amenable to reason. They addressed them in the dining room at the restaurant, but only met with insult.

"We will clean you up as we did the inner harbour this morning", said one of the Executive. They dared him, assuring him that they would have a load of coal on deck and bombard them if they dared to board a ship. Disappointed, they returned only to find the hall crowded with angry men chafing for the red rage of battle. They reported, and in answer to the challenge I spoke as I had done in the morning. My voice rang out through the excellent acoustic properties of the hall and soon fifteen hundred men were as one and the doors were opened for them to surge out. I recommended hurrying as I felt sure that Jervois bridge would be swung against us, and then our only way across the river would be to walk the railway ties. Others favoured a spectacular display by marching up St. Vincent Street, and gathering all the idle seamen and unemployed they could. Fortunately the bridge was not swung against us and the march started. At Glanville some favoured commandeering a train, but the railway authorities fearing damage held up trains for the

afternoon. It was a warm day, almost hot. Ted Dickenson of the I.W.W. was in the march, and for a time he and I walked and talked. Later in the march we were soon lost to each other. I had done much walking in my time over rough country and for long stages sometimes. I felt at home in the march, but there were many that a quick seven mile walk was more than enough for. Still they kept on. There were fifteen hundred or more ranging from fiery youth to old men of seventy. All were united in their purpose. Here and there men broke from the march to go into houses to water taps to drink. They did not ask for cups or glasses. They drank like Gideon's soldiers - lapped as the water ran from the taps. There were no hostile householders. All were in sympathy with the union men.

It was a day of trial for the police force. After the morning's raid, and when it was known that the blacklegs had defied the delegates, the Commissioner knew he had something to face. Messages were sent to country stations and men hurried their horses to reach the scene of action ere it was too late. Horses were hurried to a standstill, and their riders were without dinner. The defending army was mustered and ordered at top speed to reach Outer Harbour before the Union march. It was then revealed what I feared when the President and Executive officers went to interview the blacklegs - we should be held up till it was late. The police, some on horses, some on motor cycles, more in cars and on motor trucks passed us at Osborne, three miles from our destination. Nothing daunting, our army marched, some tired and footsore, others wet through with perspiration. After the police passed us those of us in the lead waited till the rearguard came up. I addressed them in informal fashion, and every man filled his pockets with line ballast three inch metal. After ten minutes rest we started in full determination for a severe fight. At the recreation reserve a line of a hundred mounted constables with batons drawn awaited us. We feared them not, for "thrice is he armed who hath

his quarrel just". We charged, and I was amongst the first dozen men who passed under the police batons. Had I been struck with one my mind was made up to revenge it. I escaped. With an onrushing tide of determined men the police were powerless. Some were knocked down by frightened horses, as their excited riders reined them this way and that, but none were seriously hurt. With Brigadier Leane's men busy in a hopeless endeavour against the tail end of our army the front ones formed up in an opening between some buildings waiting the arrival of the rearguard. Police Inspectors, detectives and rank and file men waited with batons drawn for the heavy attack. With some others I tried to pass through a gate on the railway platform in order to turn a number ofour men in another direction and thus get onto the quay and frustrate the police but was rolled off the platform by a young plain clothes policeman. I ran along a few yards and made a spring again. He pushed me back for a second time. I got on the platform in spite of him. He then drew a baton. I pulled a stone out of my pocket and warned him that the position was ours for that day, and he would go home in one of the ambulances that had just arrived if he did not hide his baton. He hid it.

Just when we were ready for the final charge and about to give the police battle, a man called out from behind them, "You are too late, boys. The blacklegs have been got onto tug boats and are now in midstream. You can't do anything if you get onto the quay." We hesitated, and he passed through the police lines. "I have been sent to tell you, and to ask a couple of your men to come and make sure of the truth." I and another man passed through the police lines. I had never had trouble with the police in all my years of propaganda although I had been summoned to court on more than one occasion, and as many of them knew me well, they consented to my passing onto the quay. There I saw the P & O mailboat Malafa hurrying to the anchorage so as to save

the big liner from destruction. I discovered that the blacklegs were in midstream right enough, and ~~the~~ we could not engage them. I met the Brigadier, and every now and again had to pull the flaps of my coat pocket out so that he would not see stones. He was seeking Dickenson and questioned me about a man with a white collar, but I replied by saying "All our men are in their working clothes."

When we returned to our men we reported that there was no chance of getting at the "Brave" men who had challenged - they were in ambush. Our menwere loath to leave, for they feared that the moment we quit the blacklegs would be back at work. I talked to Brigadier Leane and informed him that our men would stay at the Outer Harbour all night unless the blacklegs were sent in. "I can do nothing for you", he said. "We are here to protect Harbour's Board Property and that is our duty." Darkness was coming on and many, tired and hungry began to evacuate. Many still remained.

"I have had no dinner, and I don't know when I will get any tea if you fellows stay here", said an Inspector to me, "Why don't you go home and get your men away?"

At last, fearing an organised baton charge, one of our men suggested a retreat. Many were lying on the ground behind us resting. Some called out "Hear, hear", and we commenced the long march home again. We did not depart beaten by any means as we were afterwards to learn. It was feared that hundreds of our men might only have retreated a short distance and in the night advance on the quay again. They did not bring the men ashore to the wharf shed in which they had been corralled, for fear it might be set on fire, so they had to huddle in discomfort till morning. At three a.m. when they thought all was safe andquiet, the tug boats were taken to Glenelg and from there sent the blacklegs to Adelaide by train. They even feared to land them anywhere in Port

Adelaide. It was a grand march and had strong moral effect.

There were no signs of train running, and I walked in a batch of a dozen. There were many batches ahead of us and many more behind. All talked about the march and the "clean up".

When we reached Largs I enquired at the station if any trains would be set in motion that night, and was informed that as the men had held up a train on their marâh out and searched it from end to end, the Railway Commissioner had, under instructions from the Police Commissioner ceased to run trains till all was quiet. Just then the phone rang and he was advised that a train had left Outer Harbour with a load of police. I waited, and in entering a carriage was greeted by Inspector Nation.

"Your knocking about the back country and your hundreds of miles over rough country has stood you in good stead, Alf", he said. "There will be many sore and aching limbs tonight. Seven miles out and that far back may not seem a long walk to you and I after our years of experience, but there are many who never walked ten miles in one stretch. They are the ones who will curse the march and the strike and the "volunteers." But after all you were not bad fellows. Anything might have happened and it was all so sudden that you had our men at a sort of disadvantage. For the sake of the days when I went through a strike in Broken Hill, and my father's experience before me I am glad that severe measures were not called for. Brigadier Leane said that a couple of his best young men were badly knocked about in the volunteers compound this morning, and that we should have evened that up, but for me there are mishaps even when there is no fight on. We don't measure out personal violence to those who resist us when on duty in the city, although our men fall in for rough handling at times."

I was in earnest about a good supper when I reached home at ten o'clock.

My wife had no apprehensions, for when we were through the police lines investigating I telephoned her, and cautioned her not to fear, no matter what she might see in the evening paper.

All was quiet in Port on the following morning. There were many police and detectives on duty but there were no volunteers on the waterfront. Some of our unthinking members boasted as if we had fought and won a great battle. I was pleased enough as far as we had gone, but my studies and experiences had convinced me that the master-class are not too easily beaten, especially when they have Government backing. All sorts of men and boys were gathered into a sort of Citizens League, without knowing what such an organization stood for. It seemed hard to pump into the workers' minds that the State and the Country are but other names for the Employing Class. There is no shortage of money, nor is expenditure too extravagant when Master-class interests are at stake. Camps were pitched and young men threatened with dismissal if they did not agree to go into camp.

It was a time of woe and misery. Never in the month of September or the first week in October had such a frightful weather smitten Adelaide. It was bitterly cold and rainy for days and days, and the poor wretches who had never slept out on a night of pouring rain, like Inspector Nation and I had experienced in our time, were almost drowned, and I felt sure would have welcomed a charge by the desperate Waterside Workers as an excuse to leave the camps in Port Adelaide and rush home to a little comfort.

Prime Minister Bruce promised the shipowners if they did not employ union labour till the next week that he would enact legislation and licence those whom they might desire to employ. I had often lectured and written about the Servile State, but neither Hilare Belloc's book, nor "The Man and The State" by Herbert Spencer could have any effect on men who never thought on

questions that vitally affected men in the great class struggle. Legislation was enacted and a meeting was held. We refused to license. For what reason I know now, but at a meeting the Mayor of Port Adelaide and the leader of the State Labour Party were surreptitiously brought to the meeting. Hill spoke and as an old footballer tried sporting sophisms, and promised that after the next election if his party were returned we could rely on it that iniquitious legislation would be rescinded. I asked a question and waited for a chance to speak when the adoption for the report was moved.

Such a motion was never asked for nor moved. The chairman applied a gag by asking all to vote that the Premier's recommendation be adopted. All were bound to suffer the indignity of being licensed slaves to work on the waterfront and to work with blacklegs if need be. In addition there was much that was intimidatory in the Transport Act. Under no consideration did a union man dare attack a blackledg under penalty of having his licence cancelled.

There was a Federal Election a year after the strike, but it made very little difference to the position on the waterfront. The financial position in the Commonwealth was so acute that there was but little time available for attention to the requirements of the workers, no matter how urgent. In the end, there was some pressure brought to bear on the Federal Labour Government, and it ended in a battle between the House of Representatives and the Senate. It made little difference anyhow. Trade was so slack, and the work of South Australia so distributed that many were never invited to go to work. I had the rock phosphate boats to work at, but they were coming in more and more rarely, and grabs were installed to do the little that some of us once used to get.

The position of the Adelaide Branch of the Federation was shaken. The property basis on which the union thought and reasoned had changed. The time for a convenient mustering place was years overdue. A conference of State

Branch delegates went into session in Port Augusta. At that conference the Port Adelaide delegates urged that a method be adopted which would put a stop to men having to hang about street corners for the greater part of the day, and thus eliminate what Judge Higgins termed "a prodigious waste of potential human energy." It was impossible to persuade the delegates from other ports to agree to action. I and my co-delegates fought hard, but the sheds were like the Rock of Ages, or as impregnable as Mt. Atlas. To get done with the business and leave the men in other parts of the eternal convenience of the shipowners, it was decided the Port Adelaide be left free to make the best arrangements that would suit the port. So far, so good.

At the meeting when the delegates reported we each emphasized the necessity for acting on the authority given. When the report was disposed of one of our union meeting orators moved that we muster from 8 a.m. till 10 a.m., and not present ourselves at other times. The employers of maritime labour were informed, and immediately replied that under no consideration would they consent to such a condition. We were like Abraham Lincoln when he showed his "Proclamation of Emancipation" to his Cabinet. He did not seek agreement, but desired to inform them as to what he intended. We were emphatic. But it did not end at that. Representatives of the Union were summoned to appear before Jethro Brown, a State Industrial Commissioner, although we were working under a Federal Court award. He heard evidence, fined the Union one hundred pounds, and stated a case for the High Court. The High Court, like all other Courts, took its time in hearing the case. At last it consented to adjudicate and refused to give judgement, as Brown had penalised the union, tantamount to having judged the case and disposed of it. It was therefore returned to the State Industrial Court for interpretation. Brown was on furlough, and a magistrate named Bright was acting locum tenens. He upheld

the union's action and charged the ship owners one hundred pounds costs. The union money was not paid, and at last the bailiffs were sent to the union office. The trustees were summoned to a meeting, and as there were a number of interstate boats in port, they threatened a hold up there and then, if the shipowners did not withdraw action. It was the end of the claim. For several years the two hours a day for mustering worked well, and tended to eliminate a lot of drinking and depravity. It supplied me much more time for party work and that was an enormous consideration.

CHAPTER XVI

The depression was raging, and no matter to what union one belonged, there were tens of thousands of Australian workers without a job. We Socialists had been warning the workers against such a happening, but they were not without faith in the Labour Party. In 1924, when the Labour Party roared in high and low places that they would build one thousand homes for workers in South Australia, and workers believing that in the end a Labour Government would provide a house for every worker, elected the Party in a majority, not realising that previous governments had been through a State Bank building for all who could pay the necessary deposit. For the Labour Party's purpose the bank had to be enlarged. John Gunn who was a socialist with me in Melbourne was Premier of the State, but he, aiming ever higher, soon passed to a higher sphere under the Federal administration. Lionel Hill rose to the Premiership, and when the builder of the new State Bank met trouble with his employees, Hill saw to it that the builder was protected and the bank built with labour recreant to the principles of Labour that Hill had been elected to uphold.

Three years in office, and the Labour Party out for three, there were energetic preparation for another return of the Labour Party; photos were taken of Colonial Light Gardens, the thousand homes suburb, and these printed on one side of a poster; and photos of the humpies on the banks of the Torrens on the other. Colonial Light Gardens was boomed as Labour's achievement, and the new battle cry was, "Land for the Landless, and work for the Workless!" It succeeded. Labour came back, the Waterside Workers succeeded nothing, and the landless were just as much the victims of Capitalist development as before, and the workless were as far from securing a job as ever; the Labour Government

ounce of my physical energy behind my speech. During the next week I was served a summons to appear in the city court. The court was crowded with business, and tyro magistrate was secured. In a small court room I was charged that I did dare to address a meeting in Botanic Park without being in possession of a permit. The young magistrate was snobbish and hostile. I was aggressive. I could have wished that I had him in Botanic Park where I should have had freedom to address him as he deserved. At last he asked for the by-law. It had been formed in 1865 and read: "That any person speaking in Botanic Park without first having secured a permit from the Botanic Park Board, could be fined ten pounds or sentenced to three months' imprisonment." That satisfied the novice on the Bench. He was a professing Christian, and an anti-socialist. He imposed a fine of five pounds with a guinea costs added. He granted a month in which to pay, but I assured him that he would not collect. He then ordered seven days imprisonment. I refused to allow the Party to be mulcted, and went in. It was an experience. Had I been left to myself I should have been like Charlie Reeve - finished with fines amounting to nineteen pounds, or six weeks gaol instead of a few days. Within the gaol I learned how much environment plays on the warders, or screws, as the prisoners called them. They lived in houses, the front windows looked out on the high stone walls, and the wives and children of such men look on when within an unfortunate man is being flagetated, or hanged. What a life, I thought, for a human being to live. I thought of "The Man with the Hoe" - stolid and stunned, brothers to those, and concluded that their wives must be sisters to the brother to the ox. What a pass Capitalism has brought men and women to! There is no job that can be created that cannot find someone ready to fill it. "Screws", they called them, and they deserved their names. The prisoners for the most part were cast off by the Capitalist system, drunkards, metho drinkers and vagabonds.

Gaol was a haven of rest for these poor degraded wretches. Outside they were homeless, and vermin infested. In gaol they could bath, wash and press their clothes, eat a few regular meals poor as they were, and thus gather a little strength for another term of liberty in degradation. Reared in slums they never had an opportunity. My socialist convictions were strengthened during those few days, and I was more determined than ever to fight against being silenced. But at a party meeting I was instructed to remember that I was not an anarchist, nor an individualist. I was asked to wait patiently while the party undertook to investigate, and make representations. In spite of it I seemed to hear a voice saying, "Speak, cry aloud", as the Scripture said.

I think mine was the only case tried by that magistrate. Shortly after a crime committed by a high official of the Supreme Court opened the way for him to be transferred to another position. Just after that I went to work for a mining company in the Mt. Lofty Ranges, and that prevented me from being able to week-end at the Park on Sunday afternoons. Nothing came of the Party's efforts. It should have ~~to be~~ been fought as a free speech fight.

The Board went further. They carried a resolution that every individual speaker, no matter what party or religion, he represented, must be supplied with an individual permit.

I was chafing to be on the platform again, and decided that I should return to Melbourne. We sold up and the family moved on. I stayed another three months, and followed them.

I determined to speak in Botanic Park on my last Sunday in Adelaide, permit or no permit, but was disappointed when it turned out to be one of the wettest and coldest Sundays that Adelaide had known for many years.

CHAPTER XVII

Back in the old city, I found myself at home as of yore, but not the same attention being paid to socialist propaganda. The depression had atrophied the workers' interest in anything except the amount of sustenance supplied by the Government. This was meagre, and the fight was only to get a little more.

"Man wants but little here below, nor wants that little long."

The only way by which a conservative government could be persuaded to increase the sustenance allowance was by providing work. The Labour Government that preceded them, consisting of my protege, Jack Cain, Ned Hogan, one-time radical in a wood-cutting gang on one of the wood lines that supplied the gold mines of Kalgoorlie and Tom Tunnicliffe, who had been in the Labour Party since its foundation in the maritime strike in 1890, had approached the Arbitration Court in conformity with the Premier's Plan, and applied for a reduction of wages, below the basic, or living (?) wage. With such precedent to guide them, they appealed to the Court again, and the variation and reduction was ordered to stand for another year.

The conditions of work were a limitation of time to be worked, only allowing each and every sustenance worker to earn a very small income. Some were sent into camps to do road work, some to do railway work, some to clear forests, and in some cases plant out forests of young pine trees. More were to be supplied with work about the city. A tract of land adjoining Government house and grounds which had been scarcely more than waste, and which had for years been enclosed by a costly fence of iron railing, was to be converted into a park, and the land surrounding the Shrine of Remembrance was to be beautified. These jobs occupied several hundred men. The amount of work to

be done was enormous. In addition to a dozen foremen, a number of leading hands were needed. I was selected as one to take the lead in building a rockery in a grotto, and to build two waterfalls. There were to be two lily ponds, and a sunken garden. There were two of us and for twelve months I was engaged not in producing surplus value for ship and mine owners, I was to do something for the common good. Quite congenial for a socialist propagandist.

Such a job allowed me to conduct classes, and be on Yarra Bank each Sunday.

The Socialist Labour Party is the one and only party that has adhered strictly to the Marxian position. In days gone by there were many who found that party too strict and uncompromising, who broke away and drifted and drifted and drifted till the hour of the crisis developing within the Capitalist system had found them when weighed in the balance, very much wanting. The Labour Party had become so bourgeois in its outlook that it refused to allow the use of the Melbourne Trades Hall radio for the purpose of delivering a Socialist speech over the air and with Don Cameron, one-time secretary of the Victorian Socialist Party, as Assistant Secretary to the Trades Hall Council; Don feared anything that might prejudice his chance of being elected to the Senate for which he is a Labour Party selection.

The Communist Party was never game enough to launch out on a Marx-Engels-De Leon programme, and are floundering in the slough of economic despond. Marx and Engels wrote, "Repudiate any one who expunges the Class struggle from their programme", and Abraham Lincoln once said, "Go with a man when he is right: stay with him while he is right, but part from him the moment he goes wrong."

I am drawing on towards three score years. A number of them were spent in seeing many places, and coming in contact with all sorts and conditions of

men, in cities and in far out of the way mining camps. Thirty years I have been associated with Socialist and Industrial Union propaganda. I possess but little of this world's goods. But one cannot be a socialist propagandist and accumulate by the Capitalist method of exploitation at the same time.

I have been approached by Labour Party representatives, and it has been hinted that I might win a safe seat in Parliament. But having put my hands to the plough, there can be no turning back.

I have indulged in more consistent open air speaking that any one else in Australia, but am strong and vigorous still, earnest and fit to continue for a good many years to come, When my time is up, I shall be able to leave my son and daughter a library of books and pamphlets that they shall not have to pass through the several purgatories that I had to pass through, before reaching a correct interpretation of what Marx and Engels meant when they gave the world the value of their masterly education and meticulous investigation and research.

The social revolution is not here yet, but Capitalism has concentrated and controlled to that point where it can no longer function in the interest of the great mass of humanity. Capitalism has produced unemployment, crime, disease and poverty; it has housed tens of millions of the population of every country in slums, and by the methods of its development it is powerless to abolish what it has produced. It remains now for the proletariat of the world to destroy the monster that has oppressed it, and set on foot a new social order, where in the words of the prophet of old, it shall be said, "that mercy and truth have met together: righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

For my part, I can happily say in the words of Richard Burton, England's explorer and greatest oriental scholar:-

"In days to come; days slow to dawn
When wisdom deigns to dwell with men;
The echoes of a voice long stilled
Haply shall make responsive strain
Wend how they may with brow serene;
Fear not thy humble tale to tell,
The whispering of a desert wind;
The tinkling of a camel's bell."

CHAPTER XVIII

What I am physically I owe to my parents, who were strong and healthy, and to the fact that during my childhood, boyhood and youthful years I had all that could be required to lay a foundation for the hardships that I was compelled to face under the Capitalist system. In Klondike and in Canada, food was plentiful, but in Westralia, South Australia, and in the Northern Territory, I was forced to make a meal for months on end of damper and tinned meat with water, condensed some times, at other times putrid. But for all that, I am as healthy and hardy as any other man my age, or as many men a decade or more younger.

My intelligence I inherited, and much of my early education I received from my father who was a domine, and English scholar, and a literary man. With that foundation and my theological studies, I was equipped to continue studying and master the works of science.

My higher intellectual development I owe to Karl Marx, Fredrich Engels and Lewis Henry Morgan, supported by the works of August Bebel and Daniel De Leon.

When I learned from Marx, by his process of inductive reasoning the Materialist Conception of History, I was on the rung of a ladder that I could climb rapidly. I studied the science of Geology from Lyell, Geekie and Page supported by intuitive experience. I loved the tropics and visited them, saw and studied the glaciers of Alaska, Malaspina shoring the Gulf of Alaska for ninety miles, Child's Glacier on the Copper river and a number of lesser ones, terrace mining on Klondike where the beds of rivers and creeks had been on ever so much a higher level ages ago. I saw the scorings of glaciers, remnants of the Ice Age in Australia. I saw them at Ferribee Gorge in Victoria, and

Mt. Lyell, Tasmania, and on the Finke River in Northern Territory. I saw and studied the great sand formations at Warnambool, Victoria, and in the Northern Territory. On the Hugh River I saw the tower, Chambers Pillow, a kernel of hard sand standing like a monument. I saw Ayers Rock, the expansive monolith rearing itself a thousand and a half feet above the surrounding plain. Not an igneous rock, but a giant mass of metamorphic, proving conclusively that by the process of sedimentation it had been formed, and by the process of pressure had been so united in its parts that it was nearly as solid and grained as a mass of granite or basalt. I knew from my experience that Australia, although one of the newer countries in settlement and development, was as old physically as any other part of the world - millions, tens of millions of years, perhaps.

I often meditated and in scientific understanding could see the sun an enormous fire mist spreading hundreds of millions of miles over space in the universe; I could see it in motion gradually solidifying. I could see it segregating, throwing off particles over periods of tens of millions of years. I could see Pluto lost to its parent body, and by the force of centripital and centrifugal gravitation attaching itself to its parent body and attuning itself to a regular motion that by all the forces of nature, could not be varied. I could see Neptune letting go, and becoming a satellite and acting in the same fashion as Pluto, its oldest brother. I could see Uranus, jealous of Pluto and Neptune, aping them and becoming a planet. I could see Saturn differing and supplying itself with a magnificent ring and a family of moons arranging itself into that regular course that we can see and know. I could see Jupiter playing the same pranks and imitating in gravitational fashion the other planets. Then I saw Mars, a more diminutive child of the sun, losing hold and so forming himself that he has been the admiration and wonder of mankind from primitive savagery till the present day.

I could see the Earth, another independent segment, leaving home and asserting its independence and preparing itself to be the home and habitation of man, brute, fish and birds, I could see the beautiful Venus leave home to satisfy the Earth and provide a splendour as a morning and evening star. I could see the little Mercury cast off from the rim of the sun, as it contracted, and form a little orbit nearest and dearest of all the planet family to its great parent that rules and reigns in that portion of the great universe that we describe as the "Solar system", supplying light and heat to the earth, providing the seasons to compel the earth to yield abundance for all that dwelleth thereon "where every prospect pleases and only man is vile", organizing society into two contending factions, destroying harmony and calling on the proletariat of all corners to unite on the political and economic field to re-establish that harmony and equality that must inevitably be established if man is to fulfil his historic mission.

I have lived a long life intellectually. I can look back on primitive man, man in savagery, man in barbarism. I look back to the time when Moses led the Israelites and lost them for forty years in the wilderness. I look back to the time of Caesar, and Christ and Napoleon. I see the rise and destruction of nations, nations at war and dismembered, nations added to and enlarged. I see greed and avarice amongst men and when my time comes to say NIRVANA, I can do so happily, knowing that in the words of Daniel De Leon, I "have lived up to a Socialist standard", and that all I have done I have done for the great Cause - "the Cause of our Common Humanity."

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...ght an offender in the vet... if one of the officers was known to be near at hand, the 'ring off' tap was hurriedly sent through the walls from cell to cell."

The Late A. W. Wilson.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE AGE.

Sir,—There died in Victoria recently, a man whose name Australia may yet honor; but because he died in circumstances rather remote from any renown, I beg space for this letter, that people may come to know more of Alf. W. Wilson, and his work. His father was a pedagogue; I believe a very fine gentleman of his kind. He educated Alfred in the hope that he would enter the Church of England, and I believe A.W. did, at one time, take the pulpit under the Bishop's licence; but adventure called him, as it has called many others before and since. He went to Klondike. He afterwards visited almost every big mining field in Australia and many small fields.

When Tom Mann came to Australia, Wilson met him—with John Gunn, and others—and became interested in Socialism. From that time on there was only one field that he would prospect, and he worked it until he died, suddenly, the other day. Alf. W. Wilson was not an ordinary man. He was possessed of a courage undaunted. I know he suffered hardship—very great hardship, but I never heard him express a complaint that in any way mitigated his principles, or drew attention to his own lot. In most unfavorable conditions he wrote his impressions—often at night in his tent after a day spent in hard labor in the shaft. I was privileged once to read some of his manuscripts, and I can only hope some of these will be preserved. He was engaged on his memoirs when he died, I believe, and here will be found matter of value to compilers of history in days to come, for Wilson knew everybody from Premiers, to press men, and lived in Australia in almost every part of it, experiencing what most men knew little of. I have heard him speak of C.H. (?) Curle, of "Ted" Theodore, of W. M. Hughes (whom he knew in days when W.M. was a poorer figure than he is to-day) and such reference as he made to men of "those" days impressed me that his life story should make valuable reading. If I am not mistaken Mr. Bernard O'Dowd knew Alf. W. Wilson, and at one time helped him by criticising his literary efforts. I deplore his passing.—Yours, &c.,

T. GILMORE.

Red Hill, Brisbane.

Alfred William Wilson was born near Warnambool on 20th September, 1878, the second son of Richard Wilson, a school teacher.

He left home at the age of fifteen and lived a roving life, working at potato digging, sheep farming then mining in Alask, British Columbia, Central Australia and the Alps and in the stoke holes of ships and on the wharves.

He became interested in Socialism when on a visit to Melbourne and on being taken by a friend to the Yarra Bank. All his spare time from then to his death was devoted to the "Workers' Cause".

He died suddenly of a heart attack while working on the sewerage scheme at Berdalla on 19th August, 1937. He left a widow, a daughter and a son.

PREFACE

It is with feelings of sadness that I write this, for Alf. Wilson came to be a symbol to me, representing social righteousness and the fight for justice, a personable symbol, and one that I loved.

His death in August 1937 was a great grief to all who knew him intimately, and a serious loss to all those associated with him in his representations of socialism. Notwithstanding his undoubted ability and his profound knowledge of many things, he surrendered his opportunities to follow that course in life which bound him to those classes in society least likely to give recognition to his worth.

His work however, will live, for many a humble student of socialism, and many a poor man by the wayside, will remember Alf. Wilson for his great earnestness, for his brilliant oratory, for the depth of his learning, and for the great modesty that characterised his way of life.

I commend this volume for its historical interest as well as for its worth as a contribution to radical literature, and in the hope that it may contribute in some small measure to the comfort and education of his son.

Alfred W. Wilson died suddenly at Benalla, Victoria, on the 19th August 1937. His age was 58 years.

T. GILMORE,

Brisbane.