

FRENCH REBELS ACTIVE, WILL STRIKE SOON

Paris, Sept. 7, 1910.

Fellow Worker and Friend:

France, at present, in regard to "labor troubles," is experiencing the calm that oftentimes precedes the storm. Except for a few strikes of minor importance the situation is one of suspicious quiet. The air is full of expectancy, of wonderment as to the result of the negotiations now pending between the railroad workers and their employers. In case of an outcome unfavorable to the workers, it is confidently expected by many who thoroughly understand the situation that a general tie-up of all the French railroads will immediately follow. It is also expected that a general strike, to support the railroad workers, will be attempted if the situation seems to demand it. The general strike is being broadly hinted at, and the fear of this much talked of social weapon has goaded the employers into redoubling their efforts to keep the railroad slaves from touching off the bomb that may end French capitalism. The usual channels used by them to influence the minds of their slaves are flooded with appeals to the patriotism, religion, etc., that the slaves have been reared on. But these appeals are being largely unheeded; as the French worker is awakening to his true interest, and it is confidently asserted that the railroad workers will respond en masse to the strike order if it is given by their committee.

After the wonderful exhibition of class solidarity shown by the Swedish working class in the general strike of a year ago, who will attempt to place a limit to the capacity of the French working class, which has ever been in the forefront of revolutionary movements, and which has for years been educated by much more radical propaganda than has the Swedish working class? But it is idle to speculate or prophesy. We must await the outcome of the negotiations, and, if a general movement takes place, profit by the lessons it will teach.

The most important strike now taking place in France is the "plumbers strike" in Paris. This conflict, between 1,500 plumbers, helpers, roofers, etc., on one side, and the organized contractors of the city on the other, has been bitterly contested for the past six weeks, and as yet there are no signs of a settlement.

Of course, the blame for this lamentable affair rests entirely upon the strikers. They are insisting, in their usual haughty manner, that their hours of work be reduced and that their pay be increased. As an instance of the insolent and unreasonable demands of these industrial tyrants, let me cite the case of the plumbers and plumbers' helpers. At present the scale for these workers is 10 hours' work per day for the princely sum of \$1.60 and \$1.20 respectively; and, although beefsteak costs but 30 cents a pound, potatoes 2c, bread 4c and other necessities in due proportion, they have the unmitigated gall and inconsideration to demand an eight-hour day, with wages of \$2.00 for plumbers and \$1.50 for helpers. The strikers have offered to accept a committee of architects to arbitrate the matter, but they have been ignored by the contractors. These gentlemen seem determined to scotch the C. G. T. Needless to say, they are stepping on a very dangerous snake. Several men have been killed in the brawls growing out of the strike.

During the past month the prices of bread and wine have been raised 26 per cent. As these are perhaps the two most important articles in the diet of the French working class, there is a great howl being set up by the radical papers, who blame the advance entirely upon the monopolistic powers of the bakers, restaurant keepers, etc. The matter is furnishing excellent propaganda material for the syndicalists and they are making the most of it. On every side one can see posters "knocking" the bosses and "boosting" organized labor. Times are getting very appreciably harder, the wheat and grape crops are failures and there is an unusually large number of unemployed men for this season of the year. The streets are infested by bands of "Apaches," who make life interesting for the belated wayfarer. So bold have these "illegal" thieves become that the middle class public has become thoroughly alarmed and drastic measures are being employed to suppress this ungentle and unorthodox species of the gentle art of robbery. Some of the leading papers are advocating the introduction of the whipping post into the already generous list of punishments meted out to the unfortunate proletarian thief.

With the cost of living advancing by bounds of 25 per cent, and wages being kept stationary, Paris can expect to develop many more "apaches" in spite of all the jails and whipping posts the "good" citizens can erect. Of course the newspapers are very careful to

avoid pointing out the connection between the hard times and the increase of crime.

A few nights ago I had a reminder that I am in Europe. An agent of the police paid me a visit to examine my papers and inquire into my business. It happened that when he arrived my table was loaded with some dozen radical French papers, which I was doing my best to decipher. After getting what information he came for, the police agent asked how I happened to have so much doubtful literature scattered about, and I had to fall back on the old "No savee" gag. The papers simply happened there; of course I didn't select them because they were radical, etc., etc. I had my fingers crossed all the while, and he looked skeptical, but I suppose it is all right as I haven't heard anything further in the matter.

Yours for the I. W. W.,

WM. Z. FOSTER.

Bureau Poste Restante, Place de la Republique, Paris, France.

SKAGIT COUNTY, WASH.

After four years of service for the Hamilton Logging Co. Otto Becker, a chaser, was killed this morning (Monday, September 19), while at work.

Last Monday, September 12, one of the head fallers in the same camp had four ribs broken and his right collar bone cracked.

Six members were added to Local 318 at our last meeting.

Fred W. Heslewood, will spend this week speaking and organizing in this county.

Meetings are advertised for Sank, September 19; Concrete, September 20; Lyman, September 21, and the rest of the week at Sedro-Woolley and vicinity. Good results are expected from these meetings. A local of the I. W. W. may be organized at Concrete.

There is some talk of a general shut-down of all camps in this county, in which event many lumberjacks will receive a much needed vacation—without pay and with reduced rations.

Minkler Logging Co., two miles west of Lyman. Work one side, wages \$2.25 to \$4.00. Grub fair; sleep in bunkhouses. I. W. W. boys can get on.

Skagit Lumber Co. Work two sides; wages \$2.25 to \$4.00. Grub fair. Work ten hours. Sleep in bunkhouse. Members of I. W. W. can get work. They have their own mill and cut their logs into lumber and shingles.

EMIL M. HERMAN,

Press Com. Local 318.

CHRONICLE LIES.

Chewelah, Wash., Sept. 15, 1910.

Editorial Industrial Worker.

Just a few lines to let you know what kind of justice they peddle to the workers. Here in Chewelah a gum-shoe ex-bull from the Spokane slugging committee by the name of Hood blew into town and secured a position as night robber or watchman for this burg. So on the night of September 13 a cook by the name of Wheeler of Spokane, a striker of Local 450, arrived. This bull, Hood by name and brute by nature, caught him at once. The cook was tried before a kangaroo court, in which he had to keep still, and was given 60 days in the county jail at Colville for being out of a job. When will you workers get wise?

A MEMBER,

Local No. 222.

Loggers' and Lumber Workers' Industrial Union No. 432.

Seattle, Wash., Sept. 18, 1910.

All members of I. U. 432 are hereby notified that a referendum vote of this local is being taken on the question of reducing the initiation fee from \$2.00 to \$1.00. All votes are to be in the hands of the Secretary by September 30th, 1910. All members in good standing are entitled to a vote and can have same registered by notifying Secretary of how they wish to vote on the matter before the expiration of the time above specified. Ballots are being sent to those whose address is known.

E. M. CLYDE,

Secretary No. 432.

ARMY SHOTS MANY STRIKERS.

Madrid, Sept. 16.—Dispatches today from Bilbao say that heavy casualties have taken place there in a clash between the strikers and troops. No details of the fighting are available owing to the telegraph censorship. Miners in the Bilbao district have been on strike for several weeks and there are 3,000 troops in the district.

ENGLISH WORKERS STRIKE.

Cardiff, Wales, Sept. 18.—Twelve thousand miners employed in the Cambrian mines here, disregarding the decision of leaders to take a ballot, have adopted a resolution to strike tomorrow. Their action will lead to a general tie-up in South Wales, probably affecting 200,000 men.

While Standard Oil business is admitted to be falling off, net profits are still in excess of \$2,000,000 per year, more than double the dividend requirements.