

war of any consequence the process of replacing destroyed wealth with new capital and restoring the scale of reward for labor to a normal basis has always involved hardship. In these days such restoration is dependent upon great basic industries, the chief of which is transportation. This strike, like the one in England, is a natural symptom of an inevitable economic readjustment. The sooner the railway employees of the country realize that that readjustment must be made, the less will they and others suffer in the process. If the leaders of the railway unions were statesmen, they would see this and enable their followers to see it too.

The political issue is that of Government ownership and operation. That issue is not officially stated by the railway employees and their leaders. There is no doubt, however, that much of the pressure in favor of the strike has come

from men who want something like the Plumb Plan instituted. A strike carried on for the purpose of making a political change is really an attempt on the part of a minority to intimidate the majority. Every such strike ought to be resisted by those who value their liberty.

The moral issue is the chief one—it is the issue of the right of the public to paramount consideration in any quarrel between any two groups within the public. It is the old issue that has arisen time and again within this country. Forty years ago it was the railway owners and managers whose attitude was that the country had no rights which they were bound to respect. That issue was fought out and under the Administration of President Roosevelt culminated in a decision in behalf of the public. On another page we print a letter from him to the Editor-in-Chief of this journal laying down the principle

as it applied to the anthracite industry. That issue so far as it concerns the railway managers and executives was settled. But since then the issue has been raised between the public and the powerful bodies of railway employees. In some way the responsibility of these bodies to the public must be insured, if not by the incorporation of their unions, then by some plan which is better if such a plan can be found. When in 1916 the country yielded to the railway unions and Congress passed the Adamson Law to avoid a threatened strike, the country lost, but labor lost even more, for from that time organized labor has found itself continually on the defensive before the bar of public opinion. This threatened strike affords a fitting occasion for the country through its Government to make it clear that the common interest is paramount to the interest of either management or labor.

## THE RAILWAY STRIKE

### TWO LETTERS THAT THROW LIGHT ON THE QUESTIONS INVOLVED

IN The Outlook of August 31 there was published an article by Sherman Rogers on the endeavor of the Pennsylvania Railroad to introduce the shop representation plan for the settlement of labor disputes. The same issue contained a letter from General W. W. Atterbury, Vice-President of the Pennsylvania road in charge of operation. On September 10 we received a letter from Mr. H. S. Jeffery, the counselor of the Legal Department of the Philadelphia-Camden Advisory Boards of the American Federation of Labor, asking if The Outlook would publish in reply a statement on behalf of the employees. We answered as follows: "We should be glad to print in The Outlook a letter signed by a responsible official, which would be a statement of the employees' side of the controversy with the Pennsylvania Railroad. The letter must not be longer than Mr. Atterbury's, that is to say, about a thousand or twelve hundred words." Mr. Jeffery responded that Mr. N. P. Good, President of System Federation 90, an organization which represented approximately ninety per cent of all the employees of the Pennsylvania Railroad working in the shops, engine houses, instruction pits, etc., would send us in due course the letter for which space had been requested. We append Mr. Good's letter:

PENNSYLVANIA SYSTEM LINES  
System Federation No. 90  
Affiliated with the Railway Employees'  
Department of the A. F. O. L.  
E. E. Pittsburgh, Pa.  
October 14, 1921.

*My dear Mr. Abbott:*

Replying to your letter of the 4th inst., which I appreciate very much, and

regret the delay in answering which resulted from my illness and other unavoidable circumstances. I had received a file of correspondence between the office of The Outlook and Mr. H. S. Jeffery, Chairman of our Local Advisory Board at Philadelphia and Camden, and was somewhat surprised to learn that he had presumed to make these arrangements without at least having first consulted me; however, it was my intention to request the privilege of having you publish a statement in behalf of the Shop Craft employees on the Pennsylvania System, for the large majority of whom I have authority to speak.

We do not understand that the officials of the Pennsylvania Railroad System "have gone all the way" in eliminating restrictions giving them a dominating hand, since the plan under which they are now endeavoring to operate is being forced upon the Shop Craft employees against the will and wishes of a large majority. This is evidenced by the fact that when the ballot providing for the election of individual representatives was submitted to the employees in the four Regions, exclusive of the Altoona Works, only 10½ per cent of the 33,104 employees said by the company to be eligible to vote exercised their right to do so, and 89½ per cent signified their unwillingness to accept this form of government by refusing to have anything to do with the ballot.

It has been charged by the Railroad officials that this was largely due to orders issued by the officers of System Federation No. 90, directing their membership not to vote, but this is incorrect, since all of the letters and telegrams

sent out from this office, copies of which are in our files, show that they were not directed to refuse to vote, but that they were counseled against doing so, this being not only our privilege but our duty as representatives, and surely cannot be justly questioned by our bitterest opponent. It might also be proper to say that the advocates of the "Individual Representation Plan" were also active in soliciting support, so that there seems to have been the same effort displayed on both sides, for and against Mr. Atterbury's plan of representation.

System Federation No. 90, through its officers, has at all times endeavored to avoid forcing upon the Shop Craft employees a plan of government objectionable to them, and at our conference with representatives of the Pennsylvania Railroad management in Broad Street Station, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, May 24, 1921, following the issuance of the United States Railroad Labor Board's Decision 119, when the management first presented to us their plan of selecting representatives, we took exception, and in the following manner endeavored to have submitted to all Shop Craft employees an opportunity for them to select such a plan of government as they desired, by:

1. Proposing a ballot giving the employees the right to select by a majority vote whatever organization they desired to have represent them. This being refused by the management, we proposed:

2. The modification of the company's plan so that the ballot would include the right of the employee to select either an organization or individual, which was denied, when we also proposed:

3. The postponement of a ballot and

suggested joint submission of our differences of opinion to the United States Railroad Labor Board, requesting an interpretation of their decision.

These several plans were refused by the management, and we were subsequently required to make an *ex-parte* submission to the United States Railroad Labor Board, who in their Decision 218 supported our second proposition and declared illegal all ballots taken prior to that time, and all rules and regulations alleged to have been negotiated with representatives claimed to have been elected on these ballots; the Board ordering that a new election be held.

This the carrier has so far refused to do and is ignoring the wishes of the 89½ per cent of their Shop Craft employees, and is endeavoring by some of the most unfair and objectionable means to make it appear that this majority has since approved of the so-called schedule of regulations. The following are some of the methods used in an effort to secure these results:

Employees who were laid off in the late reductions in forces and were denied the right of franchise in taking the ballot were given an opportunity to return to the service prior to the time that any new employees were engaged, but before being allowed to go to work they were compelled to sign a statement approving of this schedule of regulations, and if they refused were denied the right of employment. At other points employees in active service were required to sign similar acceptances, and if they refused to do so were discharged from the service.

The above and various other plans have been adopted for the apparent purpose of coercing those opposed to the plan adopted by Mr. Atterbury and so heartily indorsed by Mr. Rogers, and a threat of closing down or moving the shops where particular opposition is met has become so frequent as to be almost general.

Contrary to the thought of both Mr. Rogers and Mr. Atterbury, I can see no similarity between the plan proposed by the Pennsylvania management and the plan of government on the Australian ballot used in city, State, or National elections, since the voter is, under that form of government, privileged to vote into or out of existence any officer of law, while on the ballot submitted by the Pennsylvania Railroad it was only possible to vote into existence a certain plan of government, and the opportunity was denied the employees of refusing the plan and of voting into existence in its stead a plan of government and representation acceptable to a majority of those affected.

There is no foundation for the assertion that we are trying to secure representation through individuals not employees of the Pennsylvania System, notwithstanding Mr. Atterbury on his appearance before the Labor Board, March 22, 1921, relative to the continuation of rules and working conditions having said that, after representatives of the

carmen selected by his employees had dealt with the Railroad officials to and including the General Managers, who, he states, would meet "altogether as a whole," Mr. M. F. Ryan, International President, Brotherhood Railway Carmen of America, would be perfectly welcome should he desire to come in and assist the employees in the development of their rules and working conditions.

Finally, it has never been and is not now the desire of System Federation No. 90 to impose upon the carrier or the public an undue hardship or demand rights and privileges not provided for under Government laws, particularly as specified in the Transportation Act of 1920, and upheld by the Railroad Labor Board in Decision 218 (Docket 404).

We have every confidence that if the public, which is said by Mr. Rogers to be extremely favorable to the Pennsylvania Railroad plan, is permitted to understand both sides of the controversy it will undergo a complete change in its attitude.

Thanking you for your courtesy, I am  
Very truly yours,

N. P. Good,  
President, System Federation No. 90.

To Mr. Ernest H. Abbott,  
Secretary of The Outlook Company,  
381 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

While recognizing the courteous and conciliatory spirit in which Mr. Good's letter is written, we do not think it makes a strong case. It originates from an official of the American Federation of Labor. The sub-conscious, and often the definite and conscious, motive of the American Federation of Labor is to organize all workers in each craft into one big union. They do not want labor disputes settled locally, but Nationally. Mr. Good says that, while the members of the shopmen's union were not instructed to refrain from voting, they were advised to refrain from voting. The power of the union has become so great that every intelligent man knows what such advice means. Mr. Good refers to the function of the Australian ballot in our political institutions. Elections in the American democracy are determined by the majority of those voting. Those who refrain from voting have no right to complain of the result of an election. Mr. Good's letter does not deal directly with the threatened railway strike which we treat editorially elsewhere. It does, however, indicate that there is a fundamental antagonism between the leaders of organized labor and the railway operators. It is this antagonism with which the public at large has sooner or later got to deal.

The second letter was written to the Editor-in-Chief of The Outlook by Theodore Roosevelt at the time the Adamson Law was passed. It stated certain principles regarding the labor problem in public utilities which are just as pertinent now as they were when the letter was written. If the American Republic is to endure, no one class can ever be

permitted to control the life and destinies of the great body politic.

September 2, 1916.

My dear Doctor Abbott:

I hope you liked my speech at Lewiston. I wish to express my obligation to you for the admirable suggestions you made to me, and which I worked into the latter part of the speech.

Now a word as to the action of Wilson in the railroad strike matter. I had prepared an interview to give out, and read it to Gilson Gardner, and then on talking it over with him and two or three others, came to the conclusion that it would do no good, and might embarrass Hughes, and might also interfere with Wilson and yet without accomplishing anything myself. In case of doubt as whether to speak or remain silent, it is better to be silent, so I kept silence! But I feel very deeply and very indignantly at what Mr. Wilson has done. I think it is as foolish and as wicked to back any labor union which is wrong as to back any great corporation which is wrong. It makes no difference to the State whether we suffer from a White Terror or a Red Terror; whether the tyranny is that of the ministers of Louis XV, or that of Robespierre, Danton, and Marat. I have a right to say what Wilson should do; because I would ask him to do nothing more than I did at the time of the anthracite coal strike. Then the mine-owners said there was nothing to arbitrate. I got the consent of a commission, with Grover Cleveland at the head, to serve, and arranged for the United States Army to run the mines if there was any delay in accepting the arbitration. In such cases the three parties in interest are 1, the property owners; 2, the laborers; 3, the public; and the President should act primarily as the representative of the public, of the people of this Nation as a whole; for this is a National question. Here I should tell the railroad owners and the heads of the Brotherhood that I would appoint a commission which would have included men like Raymond Robbins and Patrick Morrissey, and that every question, including the eight-hour-law question, without any reservation would be put before that commission, and that I would tolerate no action by Congress in advance of the report of that commission, and that I would tolerate no tie-up of the transportation systems of the country, and that I would use the entire armed forces of the country, if necessary, to run the railroads pending the decision of the commission. I would have also stated that I would see that the commission had the power to interpret and enforce its decrees, so that the men need have no fear that the railroad managers and owners would twist that arbitration so as to bear against them. I would also have had the commission look into the whole question of rates, which must necessarily be considered in connection with the question of wages, and of interest charges, and of salaries to managers. As an incident to



this, it would be necessary to look into the question of capitalization. I do not believe there should be any attempt to upset or penalize over-capitalization which occurred a number of years ago; but, without attempting to draw an exact line, I believe that any cases of over-

capitalization in the last few years should be severely penalized; for all of the public have had full notice during the last few years that over-capitalization was one of the elements which would have to be dealt with in handling the railroad problem; and it was their

business before subscribing to the bonds or stock under these conditions to take thought of what they were doing.

Faithfully yours,

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

Dr. Lyman Abbott,  
381 Fourth Avenue,  
New York City.

## THE ITALIAN STANDPOINT

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE FROM ROME

#### BY CHARLES HENRY MELTZER

IT is a misfortune that our statesmen rarely travel. They go the round of the United States of course, the more adventurous of them, while now and then one finds a man like Mr. Hoover, who has a world-wide outlook upon life and manners. But, as a rule, even our foremost lawmakers are cabined, cribbed, confined, by local viewpoints. If they could only look at international politics, not from the standpoint of their own beloved State, but as outsiders do, they might, indeed, have many shocks and some surprises, but they would learn some truths and see the world more sanely.

They would be pained, perhaps, in Italy, for instance, to find that the Italians feel that *they* "won the war," not we. This conviction is so rooted in their minds that it has changed them in a far from pleasant way. They are not disposed to adulate Lloyd George, and, I regret to say, they seem cold to President Harding. Their national motto, "*Italia farà da sé*" is just at present being taken in dead earnest. You cannot make them understand—they will not hear of it—that the United States has a monopoly of wisdom. They are inclined, I fear, to question our sincerity. And, since our rulers checked Italian immigration, they have even been sneering at our boasted love of freedom.

They are sore and have been angered by our prohibition laws, which have spelled grievous loss to one of their great industries. They resent our chill aloofness from the misery and distress of the Old World, and they are skeptical about the coming Conference. They do not like being treated as mere satellites of France, America, and the United Kingdom. And, at the back of their Italian heads, I fancy they are less friendly to all three than to the Germans.

This is of course not the official attitude. It is the attitude of the Italians "in the street." You see, in times past the smart Germans helped them greatly, more especially with capital. Their Latin cousins hurt their patriotic pride in other days when they kept Nice—or, as they think it should be, Nizza—and they are rivals still in politics and trade.

As for Lloyd George, his harsh and patronizing way of treating Italy has

caused a good deal of ill feeling in this country. He has offended them by many nasty pin-pricks. He has fretted the Italians by his virtuous doubts as to their right to the small island of Sasseno. If the Albanians have agreed to their retention of that quite important outpost, why should Lloyd George even question their position? To Italy the possession of Sasseno, facing Vallona, means something vital. It is the key of the whole Adriatic problem. They remember that the British have not yet given Spain Gibraltar.

More serious, as Italians see the case, is the pro-Hellenism of the British Premier. Though nominally neutral in the wretched war now going on in Asia Minor, they know that Britain is assisting Greece by exporting guns and ammunition to the opponents of the pesky Kemalites. Between the Italians and the Greeks there is much jealousy. So, on the whole, here they would shed no bitter tears if the Turk leader got the better of King Constantine.

The dear, kind Germans are exploiting the vague unrest of their ex-ally. They are telling her that "Coddin's the friend, not Short." Their millionaires are investing money freely in Italian industries and doing everything they can to re-establish their lost influence. Being clumsy in their methods now as always, they have excited some alarm here by their tactics. The Krupps and Stinnes and the rest have shown their hands too much, and for the moment they are viewed with some suspicion. But in a month or two they will resume their game. They know that the Italians must have capital. If the United States and Britain do not give them what they need, why, the kind Germans will not leave them in the lurch. And they will not neglect to flatter their ex-ally. They know the weak spots in the Italian character. They have been buying big concerns in many fields here. And they will buy more if they only get the chance.

The Italians have financed themselves successfully enough so far, though, in the development of their remarkable film enterprises. I have seen "movies" here which put our own to shame. Before long, synchronistic talking cinemas may be perfected—if they are not now—in Rome. One of the most amazing films

yet planned in Europe will soon be shown in Florence and in other cities. It is devoted to the life and times of Dante. While many of our big American film managements are wasting time on poor and foolish "pictures" a new firm, with the name of "Visioni Italiane Storiche" (for short, V. I. S.), is now rehearsing at Ravenna and in Florence a really beautiful and most impressive effort to revive the story of the great poet who created the "Inferno." Historians, artists, poets, archaeologists, have reconstructed conscientiously and ably the leading episodes in Dante's strange career. Near Florence they have rebuilt ancient churches, gates, and houses of the Trecento period, trained little armies, and suggested mystic visions. The love of Beatrice and Dante has been handled with poetic charm. And the result should be a marvelous evocation, a tribute to the genius whose sixth centenary will by the time this reaches you have stirred all Italy.

This film is only one of many tributes paid this year to the most famous and inspired of the Italian poets. New "Lives of Dante" and new treatises of various kinds by Dantologists are on sale in all the bookstores. At Ravenna, where the celebration of the death centenary is to be particularly ambitious, they are restoring and redecorating old monuments with which Dante has been identified. It will be strange, indeed, and very unlike him if the alert d'Annunzio does not step into the limelight once more in connection with the occasion. He has already gone back, as you may know, to literature, and has written a play which Sarah Bernhardt will produce some night in Paris. Mme. Sarah has always manifested deep interest in d'Annunzio's dramas. It was to her he sent the earliest of his plays, "La Città Morte," and I can still recall the impetuous words in which she once voiced to me her admiration of the then young Italian's work.

With his return to art d'Annunzio has, apparently, grown almost modest. Some nights ago he chanced to be in Milan. His Arditi friends had planned an ovation in his honor. But, to their chagrin, he declined to show himself. Which was perhaps as well. For the Fascisti might have stoned him.

Rome, Italy.