

EDITORIAL

SETTING DR. AKED RIGHT.

By DANIEL DE LEON

WHILE presiding at the Kier Hardie meeting at Carnegie Hall in this city on the 12th inst., the Rev. Charles F. Aked received among the questions one which read: "Is there a growing tendency towards industrial unionism in England?" As innocent of knowing what he had in his hand as an Ojibway Indian would be before a complicated machine-design blue-print, the Rev. Dr. Aked said "I presume by that the questioner means trades unionism."

Perhaps, unlike most of his brethren of the cloth, Dr. Aked may appreciate being set right.

Industrial unionism is not the same as trades unionism. Within the domain of unionism the two are antipodal.

Trades unionism declares the capitalist or wages system to be a finality;—Industrial unionism declares it to be a passing phase of industrial evolution, which will be superseded by Socialism.

Trades unionism, apart from such grotesqueries as the Dublin bakers who are organized "to the honor of our most gracious Sovereign," holds its object to be the bettering of conditions for its members under the present system;—Industrial unionism holds its object to be the essential function of enforcing the revolutionary ballot by taking, holding, and operating in an orderly fashion, the industries.

Trades unionism believes and teaches that capital and labor are brothers;—Industrial unionism believes and teaches that they are irreconcilable enemies.

Trades unionism maintains that the interests of capital and labor are identical, and mutual;—Industrial unionism maintains that their interests are diametrically opposite.

Trades unionism stands by the organization of workingmen into minutely

divided, autonomous unions;—Industrial unionism stands by the absolute unity of organization of all workingmen in a given industry, and, in the last analysis, in all industries.

Trades unionism takes the posture that a contract between employer and employe is sacred and binding;—Industrial unionism takes the posture that such a contract is void from its inception, labor's signature thereto being practically extorted under duress, and hence of no effect.

Trades unionism commands with a ferule of iron, that allied crafts shall remain at work when one of their number is on strike;—Industrial unionism brands such conduct as virtual scabbery, and commands with no less stern a voice that, one set of workers being out, all those whose continuance at work would aid the boss to break the strike, shall also throw down their tools.

There stand the cardinal differences between trades unionism and industrial unionism. The two are not the same.

True, the trades union body is to-day the larger and more powerful, while the industrial union is comparatively small and weak. But as Adams and Leverrier mathematically saw the planet Neptune outside the orbit of Uranus before it was ever beheld by human eye, so to-day the studious economist can mathematically see the industrial union as the inevitable and all-comprehensive organization of labor in the revolutionary days close at hand.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
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