

Ben Fillett predicts that the forthcoming winter will be the worst that the dock labourers have experienced for 15 years. There are already 90,000 men idle.

Another crowded meeting of the underground branch of the A.M.A. (says the Sydney *Freeman's Journal* of October 15) was held in the Theatre Royal, Broken Hill, on Tuesday. The following resolutions were unanimously carried:—"That the Broken Hill branch of the Miners' Association hereby repudiates any advances on the part of individuals foreign to the present struggle in their efforts to mediate by contract labour or otherwise between ourselves and the real issue in dispute; and that we resolve firmly and loyally to combat every obstacle in the way of a pacific and honourable settlement, whether they be bogus unions or capitalistic inspired movements."

At the mass meeting on the reserve Messrs O'Connell and O'Donnell conveyed to the strikers the sympathy of the workers of Adelaide. They believed that, though negotiations were still proceeding, they had done something in the direction of bringing about a settlement. With regard to the new union, Mr O'Donnell said that the people of Adelaide were much amused at the idea. The men had too much sense to believe that the intentions of the promoters were honourable. Others speakers said that those who would think of joining such a combination would be guilty of the very worst form of "blacklegging."

In the issue of October 10 the *Barrier Miner* had alluded to the new union as follows:—"Four years ago, when the first great strike occurred at Broken Hill, it was one of the bases of settlement that a new union should be formed, whose members should be released from 'the thralldom under which the members of the other unions laboured.' Thus the Smelters, Concentrators, and Surface Hands' Union came into being. For a long time it was spoken of by the other unionists contemptuously, being indeed referred to as 'the blacklegs' union.' But presently members began to know each other better, and to find that they had wronged one another and that there was really no difference between them, until the surface branch of the A.M.A. and the new union actually agreed to combine; and sitting upon the defence committee of seven to-day we find the secretary of the B.R.S., C., and S.H. Union! History is repeating itself; for now we find proposed as one of the bases of settlement of the present strike the formation of a new union, which likewise, we are told, shall not place upon its members 'the thralldom to which other unionists are subjected.' But the experience of the past raises the question, what permanent advantage will the formation of this new union be? Certainly a great deal is said in order to show how vastly different institutions the old unions and the proposed new one are, just, indeed, as between three and four years ago the same thing was done with respect to the branches of the A.M.A. and the new B.R.S., C., and S.H. Union. But as experience proved in that case, so examination shows now, no material difference actually exists. . . . What, then, does it all mean? Here we have a union proposed which is no different from the other unions. The chief avowed reason for bringing it into being is, first, that socialism shall not be one of its principles, while, as it is, socialism is not any more one of the principles of the old unions than Freemasonry or Mormonism is. We believe that some of those who have taken part in the movement honestly laboured under a false impression, and, since that has been removed, will drop the matter. But others who have their own interests to serve may take up the matter again and press it. With them the objects may be twofold: By throwing dust in the eyes of the men, to cause a split in the camp, and thus ensure defeat; and to afford an excuse for those who in their hearts would like to blackleg, but are ashamed to do it under existing conditions. What is especially noteworthy is that this proposed new organisation is under the *aegis* of the managers; and, as the *Register* remarks, 'there is good reason to believe that the manifesto will be accepted by the mining companies.' We have shown, however, that what the proposed new union is agreeable to is almost the same as what the old ones will accept; wherefore it should follow that the companies will accept the terms offered by the latter. Clearly the two parties in the contest are getting very close together, and the new movement helps to show that a few minutes' conference would settle the whole trouble. Of course, if the purpose of causing a split in the camp succeeds, there will be no need of a conference, because then the directors must win. It now rests with the men, having seen the difference between the established old unions (which are in touch with the unions throughout Australia) and the new union (which would stand alone) to determine whether they will 'swap horses while crossing the stream.' Abe Lincoln hinted that it was suicidal; and he was no fool. The horses are alike almost as two peas; and if the companies approve of one they cannot consistently disapprove of the other. It is satisfactory to know that those who are at the head of the new movement have candidly acknowledged this, and have declared that they will work cordially with the representatives of the old unions. The movement has done good, without doubt, in showing what the old unions'

principles really are; for it needed something of this kind to clear away the cobwebs of misrepresentations which the enemies of the men have spun about them."

A cablegram under date Sydney, October 22, runs thus:—"At the Broken Hill mines the owners are gradually replacing the men on strike, and in some cases unionists have been re-engaged." That there are, meantime, two sides to the break-down of the strike, the following passage from a letter published in the *Adelaide Register* may possibly suggest:—"They (shareholders) must know that all the navvies in creation can never give them a dividend, and that they will have to wait until by the pressure of 'blacklegs' and starvation the miners are forced to go back; and what will this mean? It will mean that the mine will be worked by a surly, discontented body of men, smarting under defeat and waiting the first opportunity to renew the fight. If the men are beaten by starvation it will take years to efface the remembrance of the bitter struggle, and until it is effaced the satisfactory relations which existed between the owners and their workmen prior to the strike, and which so materially conduced to the successful working of the mines, will not be re-established."

The correspondent of the *Otago Daily Times* wires as follows under date Auckland, October 22:—"At a meeting between the Tailoresses Union deputation and the Employers' Association (Mr A. H. Nathan president) *re* the difficulty with manufacturers, the Chairman said he understood the questions in dispute were log or piece-work, and also the number of apprentices. The association at present was not quite prepared to commit themselves one way or another until the whole matter had been thoroughly gone into. The points in dispute were technical ones in the main, and the association would like details placed before it. Miss Morrison stated that matters had now come to a deadlock, especially as to the question of the appointment of expert hands who had been discharged and their places taken by apprentices. Various deputations had visited the firms, who had practically agreed to the log submitted by the union, whilst four held aloof, and one of these had utterly ignored the union. It was not proposed to enforce the union rules as to apprentices until June 1894. The log drawn up by the union has been accepted as a basis by Messrs Clark and Sons, Ehrmann, Fry, and Mrs Davis, whilst Messrs M'Arthur and Co., Powley, Moran, and Breda stand aloof. Some 3000 women were affected by the questions at issue. The union was opposed to strikes and all such unsatisfactory methods. The four firms first mentioned had practically agreed to the proposed settlement, and had expressed themselves very pleased with the basis of agreement. Mr Clark thought Miss Morrison went a little too far in stating that the four firms had absolutely agreed to all the terms of the proposal. Miss Morrison said the union wished the association to arbitrate in the matter. All other means had been tried, but without effect. The union had waived the question as to the employment of union or non-union labour. Mr Finlayson (Sargood and Co.) was of opinion that a fair wage was, under the circumstances of the Auckland trade, more satisfactory than a log. Mr Clark stated that many employers were afraid of unionism. They had had too much of it lately in New Zealand. Miss Morrison mentioned that the union had practically recognised freedom of contract. The chairman promised that the association would do its utmost to effect a conciliation as early a date as possible."

## American Notes.

ARCHBISHOP IRELAND has returned from Rome deeply impressed by the attitude of the Pope towards progress. The declaration of his Holiness in favour of the French Republic has especially affected the Archbishop, who has seen in it a very important decision in civil ethics. The Archbishop holds that the development of republicanism is a proof of the growth of intelligence among the people. But the Pope, he says, recognises the people as the medium through whom those who command receive, from the Divine authority, their right to rule. The Church, meantime, which has been made by God to last for ever, remains unchanging, and is linked with no particular form of Government. She admits the necessity of political changes and helps to solve them. Leo XIII. and his eminent counsellors, of whom the Archbishop mentions with especial respect the Cardinals Ledochowski and Rampolla, understand thoroughly the world they are dealing with.

The Catholic schools of the United States are busily engaged in preparing exhibits for the approaching World's Fair at Chicago. The Pope takes a keen interest in the matter, and has written several letters to persons concerned expressing his desires regarding it. The exhibit of the Christian Brothers will largely consist of the daily work of their schools, the best exercises of the various kinds being taken up from the desks just as the boys have left them. The Jesuit Fathers are also expected to come creditably to the front. The work

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