

common cause for the defence of the common interest. They need not necessarily settle their quarrels—in fact, it would be impossible to do so, in the nature of things—but they must patch up a truce, forget their differences for the time being in so far as they may injuriously affect their common fight for the common good.

As “politics” usually involve “national” questions, i. e., matters which extend beyond the scope of the things usually involved in the struggle between employers and employees in any particular trade or industry, the proper policy for a trade union to pursue is that of “no politics,” so as not to involve the organization in fights which are not properly its own. That does not mean that the workers are not interested in political questions even as workers. On the contrary, very often “politics” involve matters of the greatest importance to the workers. Such, for instance, is the case whenever the question of protection versus free trade is involved, and in this country at least it is involved in almost every national election. But in this fight the interest of the workers and their industrial masters are the same. Under protection “the (woolen) industry” will flourish, under free trade it will languish. When the industry flourishes the workers stand a good chance of getting a larger portion of the product in the form of wages because the masters will still have enough left to give them “a fair profit.” And even if they should not get a larger share of the product as wages the workers will still be better off, as even the same proportionate share will amount to more in dollars and cents than a much larger portion of a much smaller product. Also, whatever the wages, a flourishing industry is at least sure of giving the workers sufficient employment, while a languishing one will throw many of them out of work. Therefore, must the mill workers of New England be Republicans in politics, like their masters, in order to secure a high tariff which is in the interest of “the industry” as such. The same is true of other industries. Whatever, for instance, the differences between railroad workers and railroad magnates, they have one common interest—high transportation rates. Whenever, therefore, there is a fight

on for higher rates, the workers must be found in the same camp with the railroad magnates.

Opposed to the “trade” or “industry” point of view of the trade-unionist, is the *class* point of view of the Socialist, which is also shared by the anarchist. The main idea involved in this point of view is that, whatever other groupings there may be in society, the great division is that into social classes, and that this division is so fundamental as to overshadow all the others for all really practical purposes. The interests of the different social classes are so opposed to each other as to involve and require constant warfare and antagonism—antagonism which does not disappear beyond the “industry” line. Workers and capitalists cannot, therefore, engage in common enterprises in the interests of their common “industry” for the reason that the community of interest which unites the workers of the different industries on the one hand and the capitalists of the different industries on the other is such as to make a cross-class section along “industrial” lines injurious to the interests of the workers. Instead of regarding the struggle between employers and employees within the industry as a mere family quarrel which ought to disappear in the face of the “common” industrial enemy, it regards the “industrial” divisions among capitalists and the consequent “industrial” struggles of the different groups of capitalists among themselves for “industrial” interests as in the nature of family quarrels within the capitalist family. These quarrels are composed by the capitalists whenever there is a class fight on with the workers; and should therefore not divide the workers, who, as the subject class, find their main reliance in their struggle for betterment and emancipation in the cultivation of the class-consciousness of the members of their own class. The class-character of our social system is such that whatever benefits there may accrue to any *industry* as such redounds to the advantage of the masters of that industry, the capitalists, and to them alone. The workers have, therefore, nothing to gain from such an “industrial” fight. On the other hand, they stand to lose through it very much, as every such fight weakens the inter-industrial bonds