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EDITORIAL

## CRUDE TACTICS IN LAWRENCE.

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**T**HE answer, that the Strike Committee made to the statement issued by President William M. Wood of the American Woolen Company, was a note that rang false. It was worse. It was a shot fired in the air, notwithstanding the target furnished by President Wood gave opportunity for a bull's-eye.

Unblushingly President Wood had struck in his statement the hoary-headed attitude that the master class has for these many years struck before its wage slaves in revolt. President Wood did not discuss his premises. With cucumber coolness he assumed them. He assumed them as settled. Capital is an institution of Nature. The Capitalist is natural. Dividends ooze out of Capital. While oozing dividends, Capital, as an incident to its Nature-functions, gives work to the waifs who, otherwise, would starve. Are their wages starvation-pittances? Wages are even more starvation-pittancy elsewhere. Many of the stockholders have nothing to live on but their dividends. It is the law of Nature that these be considered first.

Such were the premises from which President Wood's statement proceeded. The premises were not stated that explicitly. They might as well have been. And from them flowed a great variety of conclusions—the identical conclusions ladled out to Labor by Capital for these many years.

Here was the opportunity of the Strike Committee. The answer to that statement was to be an answer to a Question that the Genius of the Times has been propounding, to wit, "Has the mind of this strike leadership matured to the class-conscious point from which real History can be dated?{" } The answer was: "Nay!"

Blood curdling language; threats, veiled and otherwise; insolence of utterance;—none of these are needed; they are even out of place on the lips of workers on strike. None of these are utterances of class-consciousness. It is not, accordingly, the absence of such language from the Strike Committee answer that marks the answer

a note that rang false. On the contrary, as far as that goes the answer was perfect. For the rest, however, the answer breathed timidity, the timidity that is born either of fear to say what one knows, or out of ignorance regarding what a Strike Committee should know. Not a word concerning the role of Labor and that of Dividends-spongers in modern society; not a word upon the inevitably harder conditions that await Labor so long as a Dividends-sponging class holds sway; in short, not a word really and calmly, and deliberately in answer to, and thus smashing President Wood's statement; not a word, despite what turns out to be a few appearances to the contrary, to mark the mental fiber of the Lawrence strike superior to or different from the regulation "unpleasantnesses between Brother Capital and Brother Labor." The Lawrence strike promised better things at its start.

Such tactics are crude. While they last every strike remains a "local" affair. Impossible for such tactics to touch the national Labor chord. While such tactics last the strike is but a mutiny; it is worse; it is an absurdity,—the absurdity of demanding for Labor a recognition that is denied by the very social system that the strike is either too timid, or too ignorant even to pronounce against. Absurdities speedily run on the rocks.

The waves of Time will wash ashore fresher and ever fresher President-Wood specimens with their Statements. Each such Statement is in the nature of a question, addressed to that portion of the Working Class which, being on strike, constitutes, for the time being, the head of the Labor column on the march. Not until that "head of the column" makes the right answer—lay down the canons of Working Class Economics, and summon the Working Class to unite upon the political as well as the industrial field for the overthrow of the Capitalist Order of Human Exploitation—not until that Answer is made will the era of "Mutiny," with its inevitable disasters to Labor, be rolled away, and the era of orderly Progress begin.

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