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EDITORIAL

THE AUSTRALIAN PARADISE OF LABOR.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE Legislature of New South Wales has passed an act amending the Industrial Disputes Act of 1908.

Considering that Australia has so often been cracked up as “the workingman’s paradise,” such tidings naturally suggest the thought that the Act of 1908 must have been beautiful, and that the present amended Act must be beautifuller. Paradises are naturally supposed to grow more and more, not less and less paradisaical.

The Australian paradise seems to go by inverse order. The Act of 1908, quite hard upon the workingmen, as far as it went, now, in its amended form, comes down upon him like a pile of bricks.

The amended Act empowers any police officer above the rank of sergeant, when he has any reasonable ground to believe that any building or place is being used for a meeting for instigating or aiding in a continuance of {a} strike, to enter such building by breaking open doors, etc., and seize any documents which he may reasonably suspect relate to such a strike or lockout. The amended Act further provides that any meeting of two or more persons assembled for the foregoing purposes shall be declared unlawful, and any person caught in such unlawful purposes shall be liable to imprisonment for twelve months.

At the London International Woman’s Suffrage Congress, held last year, the delegate from Australia, gloriously referring to the fact that women voted in her country, reported: “Australia is a paradise for workingmen and workingwomen.” In laws of the nature of the amended Act above cited “man” covers “woman.”

It would seem that the paradisaical conditions of Australia for workingmen and workingwomen consist in the satisfaction of women and men going jointly to jail for twelve months every time they put their heads together to strike for conditions that

may somewhat cool off the flames of the hell of wage slavery in which they are being toasted to a turn.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official website of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
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slpns@slp.org