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Although there is an impropriety, as a rule, in discussing in the press questions that are pending before courts for decision—an impropriety which is the same whether it is or is not within the power of the court to punish it,—that rule applies rather to questions of fact, regarding which a tribunal might be easily influenced, than to questions of law, which are subject to generally recognized principles. This consideration, together with the fact that the press of the country has very freely discussed the question, will warrant, even before a final decision, some examination into the injunction against strikers intending to strike which a Federal judge at St. Louis has issued.

No strike had occurred, but the employes of the Wabash railroad had by vote ordered the officers of their organization to call one; and it was to prevent those officers from obeying that order that the injunction under consideration was granted. Here was such a wide stretch of judicial power, an act so distinctly marked with the characteristics of revolutionary usurpation, that much allowance may be made for the opinions of men who advise revolutionary resistance. But inasmuch as regular methods of resistance are still open, the intending strikers have doubtless adopted the better course.

Observe the nature of this injunction. It does not in terms prohibit any employe of the road from

quitting work; and all might quit at once, provided they did so without concerted arrangement. For men have as much right to discharge their employer as he has to discharge them. So, at least, the injunction order is generally construed, though we fear the lawyer who should advise the strikers to that effect would be a bold man. But take it so, and still there is a most extraordinary situation. For in that case a judge has ordered men "absolutely to desist and refrain from persuading, inducing, or otherwise causing, directly or indirectly," other men to do what it is conceded they have a right to do!

One would hardly expect an injunction to be issued against men forbidding their quitting work individually. Neither should we expect one forbidding their quitting work in a body. Yet this St. Louis injunction does the latter in effect, and if it can do the latter it is absurd to suppose it cannot do the former. If it may lawfully prohibit one man from advising another to stop work, it may lawfully forbid the other's stopping work; or else Dickens's old beadle was right when he denounced the law as an ass. When an injunction forbids the "ordering," "persuading," "inducing," "or otherwise causing" a strike, it certainly does forbid striking. For striking consists not merely in the coincident quitting of work by individuals; it consists in a cooperative quitting, which is impossible unless some one "orders," "persuades," "induces," or "otherwise" causes it. Such an injunction being lawful, an injunction forbidding individual quitting of work would soon be forthcoming, even if it is not practically involved in the injunction now under review. With

that, the legal relations of master and servant would be fairly adjusted for this era of revived feudalism. It would be rounded out in accordance with the principles of law that originated in the institution of villeinage from which some American judges are drawing their legal principles.

It is instructive to learn from New York dispatches that in financial circles there the opinion prevails that "if the Wabash Railroad company can sustain its position the death knell of strikes on inter-State railroads has been sounded." The opinion seems to be well formed. But those who congratulate themselves upon this method of ending railroad strikes, are curiously oblivious to the fact that great bodies of workingmen who strike don't do so for the fun of the thing. They do it because they have grievances. Even a child in intellect and experience ought to know what happens when opportunities for redress of grievances are arbitrarily denied to large numbers of people. A very serious question occurs, therefore. When the death knell of railroad strikes is sounded by arbitrary suppression under government by injunction, then what?

"Prosperity" touters will find something of interest to them in the London Times of the 9th, which predicts commercial disaster in the United States. It goes so far as to assert that the evil day has already arrived and has been postponed only through the grace or cupidity of London bankers. Here is its language:

The mysteriously large reductions of net deposits effected in the last quarter of 1902 have been the result of transfers of indebtedness to European capitalists, who were ready for a