



FLIGHT



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Here we had once again the shocking spectacle of a body of men allowing the ordinary trade customs of normal times to stand in opposition to the urgent and vital needs of the Empire, knowing full well—or they should know—that by such action they might, in all probability, be jeopardising the lives of numbers of our men—possibly even their own kith and kin—who are helping with the big push which about the same moment was commencing to free the world of the menace of Hun tyranny. This tyranny was not only to be of a military character, but had every promise of being a substitute under a new guise of ancient slavery for the entire world—including the working-men of every denomination in this country. No truer thing of this war has been said than that it is a people's war, but it seems to be a long, long time before a large section of the workers appears to be able to grasp this significant fact. In helping our men at the front to win through by the necessary plentiful supply of munitions, in every sense of the word, the skilled worker is not only helping the Empire as a whole, he is helping the entire civilised world to obtaining a more generous enjoyment of life, and last, but not least, is laying the foundation for very materially enhancing the position and interests of the workers themselves throughout the Empire in the future. It is towards this same end that the decisions have been come to at the recent Paris Economic Conference. By carrying these out upon their broadest principles no section of the community is likely to benefit more materially than the industrial side of the country and its millions of workers. Hitherto the greatest cause of low wages, want of employment, and all their consequent evils has been the steadily increasing competition from the German peoples in dumping their inferior state-bounty-fed goods all over the world, and especially into England. All this has been to the detriment of our vast army of workers, and leaving out of the question the one great principle of the right of small nations to exist as free and independent states, for which Great Britain entered this horrible European conflict, the worker of the world has all his future interests bound up in the outcome of the war; victory spells for him prosperity in the days to come, with the chief breaker down of prices and wages either entirely eliminated or so handicapped as to be for many years powerless to continue his economic slavery; to lose the war or to allow the end to be a compromise, means that the lot of the people would be seriously worse than in the past. Such a climax to this war of nations is therefore unthinkable. But with such a doctrine as

EDITORIAL COMMENT.



WHEN the emergency measures which have been taken by the Government during the present war come to be considered hereafter in their true perspective, the one happy outstanding step to promote greater efficiency, and enable at the same

time the majority of the fighting manhood of the country to take its place at the front, will, we verily believe, prove to be "dilution." Although in this great step towards multiplying the output of our munition and commercial

War Time Dilution.

manufacturing firms we have in mind the invaluable aid which the introduction of "unskilled" labour—especially that of women—to work side by side with "skilled" labour has brought about, we also place very high in the scale of efficiency-building the "dilution" in another direction which has been such a feature of recent legislation towards looking after the "spiritual" side of the community's well-being. The ever-increasing importance of this dilution of our labour powers since we wrote an article a few weeks back upon the subject, has been especially emphasised again during the last few days. To take only one instance, there is the termination of the very reprehensible strike which lasted close on a week at Barrow in opposition to the introduction of the system of diluted labour amongst the engineers, &c., at the works of Messrs. Vickers, Ltd., and which was only settled at the week-end.