



The Evolution of Cunning

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Many people wonder why it is that they must buy a job; pay for a "position;" put out money for employment—and, they blame the "kind," Christian "shark" for that condition.

The thing has gotten to be such a great issue that I feel it is necessary to rise up in defense of the shark and apology for the system: The shark, be it noted, is merely an employee of labor, at this time; and acts as an agent of *me or you*.

We hire him to give us the job he has discovered.

Of course, it was only a few years ago the boss paid him to find us. And before that, the boss used to hunt us up himself. Well sir, this business of "hunting us up" was rather hard on the bosses shoe leather (and he wears high-priced shoes) so he tried in every way to make it easier for himself: First he bought a bicycle, and "ran us down with it. Then he got a Ford and ran around with that—why he even used to have us pinched, so that he could hire us all at one place—all at once.

But those things cost money. The bulls had to get a tip; the bicycle was full of punctures and the Ford had to have new tin roofs and energy . . . You know how the boss hates to give up money. He was desperate.

At last he said to himself, "Mr. Sweatdodger (he calls himself mister), "why not," says he, "why not pay 'the men' less money and give the difference to Mr. Shark?" That seemed to settle the question, and he did that very thing—there being no union big enough to stop him and the men being too busy learning table manners and arguing which was worst, the democratic party, the republican G. O. P. or delirium tremens.

He now had a shark!

That's evolution, isn't it?

The shark rented an office and bought fixtures on the installment plan. . . .

Then the boss had another idea:

"Mr. Sweatdodger," says he, "there's no sense in giving the shark any money (he's kind that way; kind of tight) so he kept the "wage-cut" himself.

That's evolution, isn't it?

Or isn't it?

IT IS!

The poor shark was up against it. Rent was due; payment on fixtures, Creole sweetheart in need of sox and lagging . . . he was in a heluva fix.

Then he began to think:

"Wot's the matter," says he, "wit' lettin' 'the men' pay for their jobs—and call it service?" That suited him, so he held out his hand and LABOR placed in it a cigar wrapped with a \$3 bill—labor is that way, polite and "chuck" full of manners.

That's evolution, isn't it

First, the boss himself hunted us; then the bulls captured us; then the boss bought us from the shark, and then we bought a boss from the shark—and now, we pay the bills.

As I was saying, "Looking for help" is hard work. The boss needs help but will not look for it—he merely leaves an order—an injustice, in view of the fact that an idle man is easier to find than an idle job. (In view of the fact that labor can get along without capital, but capital cannot get along without labor).

Step by step the boss has shaken from himself the job of looking for help—he now does you a favor by letting you build his millions.

Then the shark got rid of the idea of looking for you—they organized a little system right inside capitalism.

And so it is that Labor, when he isn't courting the boss, is reading the "black-board" just like he did in 1890 when he was learning "how to become a president"—in school. Those were happy days!

Now, in conclusion, let me point out: Looking for help is too much like begging to suit the boss.

Paying to bulls to hold you—the boss to rush to the rescue—was expensive and very dangerous. The bull might squeal—or try blackmail.

Paying the shark, too, had its drawbacks because the shark might double-cross the boss by maintaining a gang of champion quitters; besides, the expense.

Then the question arose *how to get the men to stand the expense?*

There was only one way: Create an army of unemployed!

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Only fools can call the workers foolish. The workers pay for the jobs because it is necessary—they are compelled by hunger (present or future) to do it.

Thus, you see, it is to the interest of the "masters" to have an army of unemployed. (It cuts wages, pays for "work" and destroys the morale of 85,000,000 people).

But an army of unemployed is absolutely unnecessary. The workers can at any time divide the work among themselves equally—*doing away with begging at the same time*. They can, also, "pay off the boss" who now is so concerned over the interests of the few and undisturbed over the welfare of the many.

The workers can do that.

What workers?

The industrial workers, of course. "But it's got to be," like Frenchy says, "ze one big union."

P. S.—"Paying for the job" is but the gradual fastening of the capitalist system's annex upon labor—like adding a summer kitchen to a house. It is not good *economies* to fight that particular part of the cut-throat system, as such, alone. The capitalist organization, as a whole, can be defeated as easily as any part of it—that is, permanently. But it can be done only with superior organization, stick-to-it-ness and solidarity.