

R U L E S

OF THE

International Working Men's Association.



FOUNDED SEPTEMBER 28TH, 1864.



NEW YORK :

PRINTED AT OFFICE OF "THE NEUE ZEIT,"
51 CHATHAM STREET.

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CONSIDERING,

That the emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves; that the struggle for the emancipation of the working classes means not a struggle for class privileges and monopolies, but for equal rights and duties, and the abolition of all class-rule;

That the economical subjection of the man of labour to the monopolizer of the means of labour, that is the sources of life, lies at the bottom of servitude in all its forms, of all social misery, mental degradation, and political dependence;

That the economical emancipation of the working classes is therefore the great end to which every political movement ought to be subordinate as a means;

That all efforts aiming at that great end have hitherto failed from the want of solidarity between the manifold divisions of labour in each country, and from the absence of a fraternal bond of union between the working classes of different countries;

That the emancipation of labour is neither a local, nor a national, but a social problem, embracing all countries in which modern society exists, and depending for its solution on the concurrence, practical and theoretical, of the most advanced countries;

That the present revival of the working classes in the most industrious countries, while it raises a new hope, gives solemn warning against a relapse into the old errors, and calls for the immediate combination of the still disconnected movements;

FOR THESE REASONS:—

The first International Working Men's Congress

declares that this International Association and all societies and individuals adhering to it will acknowledge truth, justice, and morality, as the basis of their conduct towards each other, and towards all men, without regard to colour, creed or nationality;

This Congress considers it the duty of a man to claim the rights of a man and a citizen, not only for himself but for every man who does his duty. No rights without duties, no duties without rights;

And in this spirit they have drawn up the following rules of the International Association :—

1. This Association is established to afford a central medium of communication and co-operation between Working Men's Societies existing in different countries and aiming at the same end ; viz., the protection, advancement, and complete emancipation of the working classes.

2. The name of the society shall be : " The International Working Men's Association."

4. The General Council shall consist of working men belonging to the different countries represented in the International Association. It shall from its own members elect the officers necessary for the transaction of business, such as a treasurer, a general secretary, corresponding secretaries for the different countries, &c. The Congress appoints annually the seat of the General Council, elects a number of members, with power to add to their numbers, and appoints time and place for the meeting of the next Congress. The delegates assemble at the appointed time and place without any special invitation. The General Council may, in case of need, change the place, but has no power to postpone the time of meeting.

4. On its annual meetings, the General Congress shall receive a public account of the annual transactions of the General Council. In cases of urgency, it may convoke the General Congress before the regular yearly term.

5. The General Council shall form an international agency between the different co-operating associations, so that the working men in one country be constantly informed of the movements of their class in every other country; that an enquiry into the social state of

the different countries be made simultaneously, and under a common direction; that the questions of general interest mooted in one society be ventilated by all; and that when immediate practical steps should be needed, as, for instance, in case of international quarrels, the action of the associated societies be simultaneous and uniform. Whenever it seems opportune, the General Council shall take the initiative of proposals to be laid before the different national or local societies. To facilitate the communications, the General Council shall publish periodical reports.

6. Since the success of the working men's movement in each country cannot be secured but by the power of union and combination, while, on the other hand, the usefulness of the International General Council must greatly depend on the circumstance whether it has to deal with a few national centres of working men's associations, or with a great number of small and disconnected local societies: the members of the International Association shall use their utmost efforts to combine the disconnected working men's societies of their respective countries into national bodies, represented by central national organs. It is self-understood however, that the appliance of this rule will depend upon the peculiar laws of each country, and that, apart from legal obstacles, no independent local society shall be precluded from directly corresponding with the General Council.

7. The various branches and sections shall, at their places of abode, and as far as their influence may extend, take the initiative not only in all matters tending to the general progressive improvement of public life but also in the foundation of productive Associations and other institutions useful to the working class. The General Council shall encourage them in every possible manner.

8. Each Member of the International Association, on removing his domicile from one country to another, will receive the fraternal support of the Associated Working Men.

9. Everybody who acknowledges and defends the principles of the International Working Men's Asso-

ciation is eligible to become a member. Every branch is responsible for the integrity of the members it admits.

10. Every section or branch has the right to appoint its own corresponding secretary.

11. While united in a perpetual bond of fraternal cooperation, the working men's societies, joining the International Association, will preserve their existent organisations intact.

12. Everything not provided for in the present rules will be supplied by special regulations subject to the revision of every Congress.

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ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS.

1. The General Council is commissioned to carry the resolutions of the Congress into effect. (A) For this purpose it collects all the documents sent by the Central Committees of the different countries, and such as it may be able to procure by other means. (B) It is charged with the organisation of the Congress, and to bring the Congress programme to the knowledge of all the branches through the medium of the Central Committees.

2. As often as its means permit, the General Council shall publish a report embracing everything that may be of interest to the International Working Men's Association, taking cognizance above all of the supply and demand for labour in different localities, Co-operative Associations, and of the condition of the labouring class in every country.

3. This report shall be published in the several languages and sent to all the corresponding offices for sale. To save expense the corresponding secretaries must previously inform the General Council of the approximate number of copies that may be disposed of in their respective localities.

4. To enable the General Council to fulfil these duties an annual contribution of TWO CENTS per member will be levied from affiliated societies for the use of the General Council, payable in quarterly instalments.

This contribution is destined to defray the expense of the General Council, such as the remuneration of the General Secretary, postage, printing, &c.

5. Whenever circumstances may permit Central Committees representing groups of branches *using the same language* will be established. The functionaries of these Committees are elected by the respective sections, but may be recalled from their offices at any time. They shall send their reports at least once a month, oftener if need be.

6. The expense of the Central Committees shall be defrayed by their respective sections. Every branch, whatever the number of its members, may send a delegate to the Congress.

7. Branches that are not able to send a delegate may unite with other branches to form a group to send a delegate to represent them.

8. Every branch, or group, consisting of more than 500 members may send a delegate for every additional full 500 members. Only the delegates of branches and sections who have paid their contributions to the General Council can take part in the transactions of the Congress.

9. The expense of the delegates is defrayed by the branches and sections who appoint them.

10. Every member of the International Working Men's Association is eligible.

11. Each delegate has but one vote in the Congress.

12. Every section is at liberty to make Rules and Bye-Laws for its local administration, suitable to the peculiar circumstances of the different countries. But these Bye-Laws must not contain anything contrary to the general rules and regulations.

13. The present rules and regulations may be revised by every Congress, provided that two-thirds of the delegates present are in favour of such revision.
