"Various Authors, *[Interference in Trades' Disputes]*." *Workers Unite!: The International 150 Years Later*. Ed. Marcello Musto. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014. 124–125. *Bloomsbury Collections*. Web. 26 Apr. 2023. <<http://dx.doi.org/10.5040/9781501302367.0024>>.

Downloaded from Bloomsbury Collections, www.bloomsburycollections.com, 26 April 2023, 11:59 UTC.

Copyright © Marcello Musto, 2014. You may share this work for non-commercial purposes only, provided you give attribution to the copyright holder and the publisher, and provide a link to the Creative Commons licence.

Various Authors, [*Interference in Trades' Disputes*]²¹

One of the best means of demonstrating the beneficent influence of international combination is the assistance rendered by the International Working Men's Association in the daily occurring trades' disputes. It used to be a standard threat with British capitalists, not only in London, but also in the provinces, when their workmen would not tamely submit to their arbitrary dictation, that they would supplant them by an importation of *foreigners*. The possibility of such importations taking place was in most cases sufficient to deter the British workmen from insisting on their demands. The action taken by the Council has had the effect of putting a stop to these threats being made publicly. Where anything of the kind is contemplated it has to be done in secret, and the slightest information obtained by the workmen suffices to frustrate the plans of the capitalists. As a rule, when a strike or a lock-out occurs concerning any of the affiliated trades, the Continental correspondents are at once instructed to warn the workmen in their respective localities not to enter into any engagements with the agents of the capitalists of the place where the dispute is. However, this action is not confined to affiliated trades. The same action is taken on behalf of other trades upon application being received. This generally leads to the affiliation of the trades that invoke our aid.

Now and then it happens that the capitalists succeed in getting a few stragglers, but they generally repudiate their engagements upon being informed of the reason why they were engaged.

²¹ Extract from the *Third Annual Report of the International Working Men's Association* to the Lausanne Congress (1867), approved from the GC on 20 August – a collectively authored document that built on various inputs of information from local sections of the IWMA. First published in the weekly *The Bee-Hive* on 14 September 1867. The full version is reproduced in GC, II: 292–303.

During the London basket-makers' dispute last winter information was received that six Belgians were at work under the railway arches in Blue Anchor Lane, Bermondsey. They were as strictly guarded against coming in contact with the outside public as a kidnapped girl in a nunnery. By some stratagem a Flemish member of the Council succeeded in obtaining an interview, and upon being informed of the nature of their engagement the men struck work and returned home. Just as they were about to embark a steamer arrived with a fresh supply. The new arrivals were at once communicated with; they too repudiated their engagements, and returned home, promising that they would exert themselves to prevent any further supplies, which they accomplished.

In consequence of the appeals made by deputations from the Council to various British societies, the Paris bronze-workers received very considerable pecuniary support during their lockout, and the London tailors on strike have in turn received support from Continental associations through the intercession of the Council. The good offices of the Council were also employed on behalf of the excavators, the wire-workers, the block-cutters, the hairdressers, and others.