

A WAVE OF UNIONISM.

That Is Sweeping the Country
From One End to the
Other.

A wave of unionism is sweeping over this part of the coal regions, and farsighted men are wondering whether there will not be a reaction that will injure the cause of the workingman. Ever since the victory of the United Mine Workers last October the fever to form unions has raged in the heads of nearly all other classes of workers who did not have a union. As a result the men who toil for wages are being unionized from one end of the coal region to the other, and it would be difficult to pick out a trade or a class of workers which has not been unionized or is in the process of organization.

Since the coal strike unions have been formed by the bakers, stationary engineers (two branches), street car motormen and conductors, silk mill workers (girls and men separately), cotton mill spinners, laceworkers, barbers, iron workers, bar tenders, hotel and restaurant waiters, teamsters, brewers, store clerks, stage carpenters and property men, boiler makers, boot and shoe makers, gas makers, coal hoisting engineers, journeymen tailors, cab drivers and molders.

A dozen or more other unions are organizing. There must be the union label on everything sold or the storekeeper will find that he is rapidly losing trade. Union flour, union bread, union meat, union groceries, clothing, shoes, hats, beer—everything is demanded. Union papers flourish and boldly announce boycotts.

Good is coming from this organization, but much harm may result. The harm is in men looking on a union as a means to gain large pay with short working time, regarding the union as a power to compel employers to do as the workingmen like and using it as a constant threat over the moneyed men. Already this is felt, although the workers of the district are in but the first year of their unionism. Much as the conservative labor leaders deplore it, there are constant strikes and the cry of the organizer that the union is to prevent and not to encourage strikes is not falling upon listening ears.

The mine workers have been the foremost in striking, and there are now in this region nearly a dozen strikes, keeping idle some 3000 men and boys. The strikes are not justified, are not sanctioned by the union and are causing a loss to both the miners and the operators. Strikes have been declared on the impulsive heat of the moment, strikers have marched from one colliery to the next and induced the workers there to join them before the cause of the strike was known. In a score of cases a breaker boy or a driver boy earning from 60 cents to \$1.10 a day has been discharged for disobedience or neglect of work, and he has rallied the 100 other breaker boys or the other 25 driver boys to his side by crying that he is a union man and must be protected. Almost without fail they have rushed with a hurrah into a strike. As a consequence 400 or 500 miners and laborers earning from \$1.50 to \$3.00 a day have been compelled to lie idle, not that they favored the strike, but that without the driver boys or breaker boys the mine could not be worked. This has been as annoying to the miners, the labor leaders and conservative union element as it has been to the operators, and it has caused both a considerable money loss. The union leaders have threatened to take away the charter of the locals whose men strike without authority, but the locals are no more to blame than the leaders, and they can no more control their men.—Wilkesbarre Cor. New York Post (Non-union).

The total number of non-union bakers who deserted the bosses and joined the strikers in the big New York fight numbered over 600. The bosses are paralyzed and turn out very little work.

INTERNATIONAL UNIONISM.

Some of the Things That Have
Been Accomplished by
Organization.

Hugh McGregor, in speaking of International tradesunionism in the February Federationist, among other things says:

"If we now turn to the consideration of the progress made in the intellectual and moral conditions upon which the very existence of the trade union movement depends, we shall see that sunshine covers the whole field.

"The workman has come to feel that a reduction in the hours of labor is even more desirable than an increase of wages, since it gives him leisure to live, leisure to taste his freedom. He has come to feel it a crime to take the job of another engaged in a struggle to resist injustice or improve his condition, so that the dictum "thou shalt not take thy neighbor's job" has been added to the decalogue. Voluntary arbitration of all matters in dispute between employer and employe has become a custom so sanctified that they who refuse to abide are branded by public opinion as guilty. And, finally, employers are fast giving up their old-time claim that the property in their possession is theirs to use or abuse, and they are increasingly coming to regard themselves as public servants entrusted with a certain portion of the social funds for the proper administration of which they will be held morally responsible.

"Such in brief, is the progress that has been made in the industrial world during the present generation; progress that, in our opinion, removes the danger of a recurrence of former errors and renders international trade union organization, for the first time in the history of our race, now possible.

"Of the desirability of such expansion there can be little doubt. The great improvement in the means of communication has brought the uttermost parts of the earth in close contact. The mighty armaments of the western nations are engaged in battering down the barriers that have hitherto protected oriental people and their hand-made goods against the competition of our machine-made wares. The opening up of the eastern markets means the flooding of those countries with cheap western products and the consequent inevitable flooding of the western markets with cheap eastern labor. The vanguard of the unnumbered millions composing that mighty Asiatic horde, which has been for several years impinging on our frontiers, is destined ere long to sweep across them in a restless flood, unless means other than mere "exclusion acts" are taken to relieve the pressure at the source. The peaceful evolution of our workers are endangered by the clash of oriental and occidental industrial systems in different stages of development, the evil effects of which can only be averted by organization; not by organization on the part of one or the other of our two great industrial classes, but by organization of both. The organization of capital is no longer local or national, it is fast becoming planetary; and, if our working class is to be saved from an abasement of the standard of living fearful to contemplate, it is high time that the organization of the trade union became co-extensive with that of capital.

"The decision of the twentieth session of the American Federation of Labor to organize the 15,000 skilled workers of the island of Porto Rico on the basis of the trade union is but a first step in a grand march destined to encircle the world."

Organizer Pierce, who is in San Francisco in the interest of the American Federation of Labor, is expected to be in Spokane during March. There is talk of a rousing reception for him while here. He has done good work in California and should be given all the assistance possible when in Spokane.—Freeman's Labor Journal.

A POSTAL TELEGRAPH.

An Institution That the Govern-
ment Should Run in the Peo-
ple's Interest.

The Constitution of the United States gives to Congress the power "to establish post offices and post roads." And this grant is exclusive. No one can enter into competition with the Government in the carrying of mails. The Supreme Court of the United States has decided over and over again that the Federal Government may make use of any and all inventions that make for the better execution of the duties that devolve on it by virtue of the Constitution.

From the foundation of the Government the post office has always been considered a Government monopoly. To connect the telegraph with the post office is simply a logical development of the post office, says the New York Journal.

The adoption of the telegraph by the post office is no more radical or socialistic in its tendency than was the displacement of the post coach by the railroad. The post office was founded to transmit intelligence. It is bound to keep abreast of modern inventions. It would be admissible to substitute something else for the telegraph if that something else was better adapted to the purpose.

When the post office was first established, letters were not enclosed in envelopes, but were doubled up and sealed with wax. Then some one invented the envelope. The Government prescribed that all letters should be enclosed in envelopes. The Government first employed horses and wagons for postal transportation. When railroads were introduced the Government at once made use of them to carry the mails. Innumerable inventions have been and are now used to facilitate the mail service. How does it happen that the invention which is the most perfect of all for the transmission of intelligence is ignored by the Government?

There can be but one answer. It is in the hands of a powerful private monopoly, which has the Government by the throat. The first line of telegraph ever built was built by the United States Government and owned by it from 1844 to 1847. When this line was turned over to a private monopoly, Henry Clay, the Whig leader, and Cave Johnson, the Democratic Postmaster-General, earnestly protested. When the patriotic American citizen, Morse, invented the telegraph he designed it primarily for the benefit of all the American people. His invention is now controlled by two monopolies, whose service is wretched and whose rates are extortionate. There are 77,000,000 people in the United States. Not more than 500,000 have the benefit of Morse's discovery. But in every other civilized country in the world this American invention is thrown open to all. It is only in the country of its origin that private monopoly deprives the people of its use.

Ask the clerk to show his union card.

Don't forget the union label, the union card and union hours.

Working men patronize those who advertise in your paper, the Labor Press.

When you buy a hat or a pair of shoes, see that the union label is conspicuous by its presence.

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