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OF ORGANIZED LABOR

TRADE UNIONS ARE THE BULWARKS OF MODERN DEMOCRACIES.—W. E. GLADSTONE.

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No. 38

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WHAT UNIONS DO

A Few Facts That Will Benefit
Anyone Who Cares to
Be Informed.

The following very excellent article, contributed by A. W. Jones, formerly of Minnesota, but now a member of the Cigarmakers' Union of Portland, should be read and digested by every thinker upon the industrial economics of the day.

Owing to a number of strikes that have occurred, not only in the East and West, but in our own city and vicinity, the attention of the public is more strongly drawn to labor organizations at this time than at any time in history. It seems to be the prevailing idea that unions are organized solely for the purpose of extorting exorbitant prices for labor performed, and that organizations are a detriment to the business interests of the country. That such is not the case can be proven by any one who will study the question on its many sides. It is not organization that fosters strikes, but rather the lack of it, as is proven by the fact that in several of the most strongly organized crafts the system of sending representatives to meet a like body of employers who mutually agree upon and sign a wage scale for a given period with the result that the employer can figure on large advance contracts with a thorough knowledge of what his produce will cost him, thereby giving him a great advantage over his competitors who cannot figure on the stability of the labor market. This system has been tried and has given satisfaction to all concerned.

This is an age of co-operation and it would be wise for employers to join hands with their employees for their mutual benefit as in the case of Denver, Colo. A few years ago the central labor body of that city started a vigorous agitation urging that people patronize home industries and soon the small manufacturers who have since become large joined in the movement, together with the merchants, with the result that Denver is now rapidly becoming known as a manufacturing center. The same is true in the case of the City of Boston. The man who would attempt to tell the people of either of these cities that trades unionism was a detriment to business would be up against a very stiff argument.

The average trades unionist is a conservative man and one who fully understands the influence of strikes upon general business, hence, when he enters into a strike it is because he can no longer submit to the injustice of his employer, and retain his manhood and independence.

To those not acquainted with the workings of labor unions, I will give a brief synopsis of how strikes are declared in most cases, showing the steps that are taken before the gauntlet has been thrown down.

Before a local union can engage in a strike it must in most instances, send a full and complete statement of the facts to its international or central office to be sustained and the men who pass upon the application are most conservative. In fact they are selected from their many thousands of members for this very quality, and when they consent to a strike one can rest assured that the causes leading up to it are good and sufficient.

This is an age of organization as witness the fact that almost every day we read of the organization of huge trusts and combines, and I want to say that the same conditions that permit the vast combinations of capital, compel labor to organize so that it may secure that which belongs to it by right, namely, a fair day's wages for a fair day's work.

Just as soon as the workingman realizes his helplessness as a unit, so soon will he hope and strive to hasten the day when all men shall be as brothers in deed as well as in word. The principles of trades unionism properly applied cannot but improve the social and moral character of its members, as it teaches obedience to the laws of the land, toleration in religion. Its basic principle is the greatest good for the greatest number, believing it is better that all who work should have the necessities of life rather than that the few should have all and the many suffer.

Another thing for which the trade unionist is striving is the abolition of child labor and efforts in this direction should receive the support of every man worthy of the name. Even those who are well supplied with this world's goods would do well to remember that though they are up today they may be down tomorrow and their little ones may be forced into the factories to fight the fierce battle for bread in which sometimes even strong men fail. If one stands before the factories in the great cities of the East one will see little children, some of whom are hardly strong enough to carry their lunch baskets pouring into a man, while the men who should support them are begging for work but are unable to secure it.

It is our preachers and ministers who should take up this question, as the God they preach is the God of children. Did he not say "Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven?" Did he intend that children, who should be playing in his sunlight, the light of health and happiness shining on their faces, should be thrust into factories at tender ages to become both moral and physical wrecks? Not at all, and for this reason, if for none other, every father and mother should bless the trades union for its efforts.

Hasten the day when every worker is organized, for then will there come

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STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR CONVENTION

This being the last issue of the Press before the convening of the great State Labor Convention, we can now give to our readers a definite idea of the success of this great undertaking, so fraught with interest to the working people of our whole state. When we say the working people of the whole state, we mean all the wage-earners, whether members of labor organizations or not. The fact must not be lost sight of that organized labor works for the benefit of all and to better the material conditions of all the workers, not alone those in our ranks, but those who remain outside and are the greatest menace to our success and prosperity.

This forthcoming convention, out of which will be born the Oregon State Federation of Labor, will stand for a substantial gain for the laboring people of Oregon. The proceedings and deliberations of this meeting will be heard throughout the length and breadth of the American continent, adding as it will another state to the 27 other states which have recognized the wisdom of championing the rights of the people through a State Federation of Labor. There are many wrongs to right, and there is a grand and glorious work to be done at this meeting. The serious duties and the by no means light responsibilities of the delegates will, we feel sure, from the personnel of the delegations elected to represent the various organizations, be well taken care of. Each union seems to have exercised most extraordinary care in the selection in every instance of their staunchest union men and most serious students of the labor problem. All the labor organizations of the city and state have elected their full quota of delegates, and will certainly be represented in the convention. There are a few in the city and some from outside points which have not yet sent in the names of their delegates. There are several delegates in the city from outside points who will remain until after the convention. Amongst others are Mr. Joe Woods, representing the Sheet Metal Workers of Baker City, and Mr. P. A. Hantz, delegate from the Federated Trades Assembly, also of Baker City.

A large and enthusiastic meeting of the delegates to the convention was held last night in the Red Men's Hall, A. O. U. W. building, to discuss the work of the convention. State Organizer G. Y. Harry gave quite a lengthy explanation of the workings of conventions of this character, reading from the proceedings of the conventions held in our sister State of California. A great many of the resolutions covering matters of state control introduced there are appropriate subject-matter for use with us. It is of the greatest importance that the delegates furnish to the convention resolutions covering all matters in the interest of and for the protection of the working classes, as it is upon such matters a convention of this sort feeds, and the importance and ring of these papers will determine largely the success of the undertaking.

The policies and work of the State Federation of Labor for the ensuing year will be cut out and determined in the same manner. Resolutions covering such matters, if adopted at the convention, stand as the instructions to the executive board, and it becomes their duty to carry out such policies as are covered by these several resolutions.

From the secretary of the committee in charge of the arrangements for the convention the names of the delegates in Portland and throughout the state have been secured. Those received so far up to date are as follows:

PORTLAND.

Federated Trades Council—H. Gurr, A. R. Lawton. Leatherworkers—C. J. Gaither, J. Coughlin. — Baldré, Fulton and San Teamsters—J. Helton, E. Tonly, A. Batchelor. Boilermakers—H. McConghly. — King, Riggers and Shipliners—H. Arndt, F. Shoeffler. Marbleworkers—M. A. Goethy, O. E. Minar. Sheet Metalworkers—C. Houser, G. Y. Harry. Woodworkers—J. Versting. — Harlan, T. W. Pratt. Cooks' Alliance—Messrs. Nelson and Watkins. Butchers—James Weston, E. N. Westphal. L. L. A. No. 263—T. Connors. — Biglin. — Woodward, E. L. A. No. 264—C. Hornby, J. Early. Steam Engineers—C. Nelson, C. W. Watkins. Team Drivers—J. J. Ferris, W. H. Hembee, Glaziers—Peter Lollick. — Jones. Laborers—John Connors, Thos. Brann. Horseshoers—V. McCullough, Otto Brunke. Cigarmakers—A. W. Jones, H. A. Duke. Printers—W. H. Barry, G. H. Howell, H. G. Kundret. Barbers—W. Wanner, J. A. Goldrainer, M. Roggoway. Painters and Decorators—W. Freeman, H. D. Steward, F. Peterson. Pressmen—Grant McDonnald, Paul Schuele. Theatrical Employees—W. E. Day, H. P. Emery. Retail Clerks—F. G. Smith, G. H. Perry, E. C. Gunther, W. Alberts. Shipwrights—J. M. Lissberg, C. Thompson, C. Mercer. Beerdrivers—P. J. Neimus, Frank Hoffman. Expressmen—Messrs. Spence and Williams. Electricians—Messrs. Green and Frisbee. Brotherhood Railway Trainmen—E. H. Schroeder, T. H. Burkhardt. Stablemen—C. T. Davis. Joseph Summers. Bridge and Ironworkers—J. M. Darling, G. J. Prael, George L. Smith. Teamdrivers, No. 162—N. H. Bird, J. W. Garner. Carpenters and Joiners—E. Melton, C. Zeigler, W. H. Brackett, E. A. Caldwell, Frank Marion, T. E. French, S. E. Correll. — Mahr. Laundryworkers—W. O. Powell, Mrs. Havens. Millmen's Union—J. A. Bushman, C. J. Berkey, H. J. Hix, C. H. Bateman, George Adams, Charles A. Chamberlain. L. L. A. No. 263—W.

McClark, John Bengen, C. W. McDulin, Brewster—J. Nugent. — Veazey, Bricklayers—W. H. H. Blaney, William McLean. Musicians—W. H. Levanway, A. H. Websters, J. H. Everest, Bookbinders—W. H. Strickland, W. C. Booth. Plumbers—Messrs. De Mange and Hay. Lathers—J. S. Strowbridge, J. K. Carr. Tailors—Frank Calkins, Charles Mickle, Railroad Trainmen—H. H. Schroeder, T. H. Burchard, Coopers—John Follene. — Myers.

BAKER CITY.

Federated Trades Assembly—P. A. Hantz, F. L. Bowen. Typographical—W. M. Moore, Mrs. Emma Boyd. Bricklayers and Plasterers, No. 2—C. T. Seifert, J. J. Dougherty. Carpenters and Joiners—William McMurren, T. E. Grant. Retail Clerks—H. M. Gilliam, F. J. McGovern. Cooks and Waiters—C. E. Haight, J. E. Troy. Federal Labor Union—Fred Johnson, G. T. Shaw, A. C. Brinkman. Plumbers—W. W. Cox, F. W. Bishop. Sheet Metalworkers—Frank Wood, A. M. Moore.

LA GRANDE.

Trades and Labor Assembly—H. W. Thompson, James N. Murphy. Carpenters and Joiners—G. J. Wassenaar, E. F. Trump. Bricklayers and Masons—S. R. Howarth, Sylvester Keltz. Federal Labor Union—George Grant, J. K. Fitzgerald.

PENDLETON.

Painters—C. W. McLyman, C. J. Wilson. Typographical—T. C. Warner, Miss Lucia Bowman. Retail Clerks—Martin Finnernan, A. F. Zoelner.

SALEM.

Typographical—James E. Godfrey, J. W. Baker. Carpenters and Joiners—F. Thomas, W. Weichter. Painters—William Wicke, Charles A. Bort. Barbers—W. E. Bathe, E. G. Ristine.

ASTORIA.

Fishermen—H. M. Sorensen, J. F. Welch. Bartenders—Olof Anderson, James Hanford, Clerks—Messrs. McEwen and Strewneyer. Barbers—J. Ohler, Thomas Chambers. Carpenters—Adolph Johnson, J. N. Jorgensen. Teamsters—E. Gurhard, H. Morgan.

OREGON CITY.

United Textile Workers—E. E. Howell, S. J. Burford, M. L. Miller.

ALBANY.

Federal Labor Union—Jasper Custer, William Eagles. Carpenters and Joiners—B. F. Russell, Kaspar Krapp. Sheet Metalworkers—Charles Medin, E. J. Upham.

Olympia, Wash., April 21, 1902.
Mr. G. Y. Harry, Portland, Or.—

Dear Sir and Brother: I notice that you are meeting with success in your endeavors to form a State Federation of Labor, all of which is very encouraging. As president of the Washington State Federation of Labor I would be glad to come to your convention and explain the workings of our Federation to your delegates. Kindly let me know the date and place of meeting, so that I could arrange my work to be with you. Believe much can be accomplished for labor through such movement.

Awaiting your reply, I am
Yours fraternally,
WILLIAM BLACKMAN.

Mr. Blackman will be here Sunday. He is Labor Commissioner for the State of Washington, and is a man of much ability and highly regarded by all classes of people.

LAUNDRYWORKERS ON A STRIKE

Out of about 325 laundryworkers in the City of Portland, 252 went out on a strike last Monday morning for an increase in wages and recognition of their union. They were forced to take this stand by the bosses themselves shortly after the union was organized. The bosses insisted that the union should submit its scale of prices, so that the proprietors could have a basis to figure in making charges during the coming year. The wage scale was submitted and refused. There was not an item mentioned in the bill of prices but was reasonable and within sufficient range to give the proprietors a good profit on their investment and volume of business. All the employees asked for was an advance sufficient to give them a living. The bosses wanted to arbitrate

the matter. For weeks a committee from the Laundryworkers' Union parleyed with the bosses, and lost their situations while they were at it. After exhausting every means possible to effect conciliation, the difference was submitted to the Federated Trades Council. The grievance committee took the affair in hand and could make no progress. It was then given into the hands of an arbitration committee. The latter met several times with the members of the Laundrymen's Association and devoted from three to five hours of argument at each sitting. The committee held out for sufficient wages that would enable the men and women to live respectably. A member of the association said it was no business of

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AT OREGON CITY

Strikers Visited by a Committee
From Portland Federated
Trades Council.

The strike in the mills at Oregon City has perhaps done more to cement the interests of the business men and the wage earners of that place than anything else that could have happened. For years men, women, boys and girls have meekly submitted to the grinding avarice of the owners until they were finally compelled to arise almost en masse and protest against further encroachments upon their strength and existence.

Pursuant to an invitation received from the new organization of textile workers in that city, Messrs. G. Y. Harry, Charles Mickle, A. W. Jones, Frank Curtis, A. R. Lawton, of the Federated Trades Council, and the writer, went up there Monday evening to speak a few words of cheer and encouragement.

Fully 200 persons assembled in the hall when President Brown called the meeting to order, the major portion of the audience being young ladies, a number of boys, heads of families, and a few men well advanced in years.

After a few remarks, Chairman Brown introduced Mr. Mickle, who congratulated the mill hands for the stand they had taken in contending for their rights. "With all of the cry from a few that organized labor was exceeding the bounds of reason in its demands," said Mr. Mickle, "there is yet one instance to be established in which labor has asked anything unreasonable. And it makes no difference how prosperous the great manufacturers become, how large an increase they secure in their volume of business, how many orders they have on hand, they refuse, as a rule, to share their increased profits with those who have furnished them with the brawn and muscle of their success. In their mad race for aggrandizement, they close their eyes to the wretched sight of their own making, turn a deaf ear to the pleadings of their people, and foist greater tasks upon the already burdened shoulders. In time weary nature rebels, the employe refuses to become an over-taxed slave to the employer. He and his co-workers, who have labored for years for a mere and meager living, leave, their situations. It is called a strike, and if in the extremity of his desperate situation a working man as much as departs one iota from the irony of the statutory law, he is proclaimed all over the land as an agitator, a disturber of the peace, a law-breaker and an anarchist."

"Mr. President, I see the greater portion of this audience is composed of ladies. It has been my observation that they make good union men. If the harder sex in this trouble hold the ground the ladies capture, success is yours. Of all things, stand together. There may be times when the horizon of victory is dimmed by passing fogs, but by being stout of heart, firm of purpose, and a unit in strength, your rights will ultimately win you the battle."

Mr. Jones was introduced, and, after carefully surveying the audience, humorously remarked that there must be a strike in Oregon City, at least he had heard so, and in part said: "It must be that your condition demanded that you should strike. It is reasonable to suppose that you are not different from any other class of wage earners throughout the land—that if you were receiving just compensation, or anywhere near what the institution could pay, there would be no differences at this time between the mill owners and mill workers of Oregon City. And now, since it has been necessary that you should resort to the measures you have taken, it should become your gospel to stand firmly together. If it comes to a case of starve, you had better starve with your heads in the air than, with your backs bent and broken. I understand that tonight the boss of the mills is to return home from somewhere in the East. To some the term 'boss' is an object that stamps terror into the hearts of the laborers. At one time in history the term indeed had an ominous sound to the laborer, who was in the true sense an industrial slave. That time is past. The evolution of the age has enlightened the employe as well as the employer. The latter stands for no more, literally speaking, than the former. The employer counts but one in the great combination of capital; the employe but one of the great army of union workers. The combination of labor is the natural resistance of the growing combinations of capital, and until some means of mutual conciliation is employed, there will be differences between these great forces. Manufacturers are fixing prices and regulating the markets through the medium of gigantic trusts in defiance of the natural law of trade—supply and demand. Then why should not the producers of all wealth have a right to do the same? It is but a matter of self-preservation at best, and why should not the masses demand a share of the profits from the things that God has bestowed upon his people alike?"

"Ladies and gentlemen, there is not one of you but is as good as Mr. Jacobs, the man you have been working for these years. The splendid waterway rushing past your city, turning the wheels of your great industries, was never designed more for one than another. What discrimination has been enacted under the guise of the law to the advantage of the minority classes can be remedied at the polls by the masses."

"I want to congratulate the ladies upon their excellent attendance here this evening. And I want to say, when

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