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THE ELECTION.

Organized labor is one thing; politics is another. The late election demonstrates this fact: Out of about 8000 members of trades crafts in the city, about 1000 put their unionism before their party affiliations and supported the union candidates. The result is disappointing to many, who thought that organized labor would stick together when the opportunity was given them. It is true that there was no issue between the parties; it was simply men and party preference. The platforms of both parties declared for organized labor. One was as liable to keep the promise as the other. In this there was no issue so far as organized labor was concerned, but in men there was. The unions of Portland might just as well have had 11 union men in the next Legislature as three. This is an opportunity they have thrown away. It may not have seemed of more than ordinary importance to them, and it was indeed that it was not, but it is true nevertheless that organized labor is not thoroughly alive to its interests. Legislation is oftentimes obtained, through the present system, by trading. Eleven votes could demand greater returns than three, and 11 solid votes for a labor measure would indeed be a power.

There is some consolation however in what little showing the labor vote made. Every labor candidate ran ahead of his ticket. This, too, in spite of the knifing that was done them by persons in their own parties. There are many voters in the city who are opposed to organized labor in toto, and many more who are adverse to them entering politics. They imagine that if laboring men are elected to office they will employ rabid measures that will ultimately upset our republican form of government. Others are afraid to let union men into politics because it might be purified; and again there are others who imagine that the intellectual standard of the working man is not sufficient for the Oregon Legislature. The latter is truly a reflection on the learned class, if the average legislator in this state is a criterion. There was a considerable number of such voters who would have possibly defeated every union candidate on the tickets if it had not been for the laboring vote. Then the harmony in the labor element was disturbed by cheap politicians in the ranks who would sell their very soul for a little "pie." And there was a larger element who were apathetic and took no part in inquiring into the merits or demerits of candidates, save going to the polls and voting their party preference, as they always have and will continue to do for years to come. But there are fully 1000 union men in Portland who are alive to the needs of organized labor and how to get it. Upon these 1000 rests the responsibility and progress of unionism in Portland today. Here is a splendid army to lead the way out of the wilderness. The time is coming when the working people of our land will set aside party politics and vote for men and measures. It will be slow, and many years perhaps will have come and gone, unless some physical force beats a little common sense into the working people, as was the case in San Francisco.

One of the grandest achievements in this election, in which organized labor played a prominent part, was the passage of the initiative and referendum. This is a great stride towards a government by and for the people, and will be the means of restraining many pernicious measures that would be otherwise introduced by corrupt politicians and passed by the log-rolling system. While organized labor has not secured as much out of the election as it should,

still there have been some victories that will aid it in its onward march. Good things are not all obtained at once. The future holds many winning cards, and education with organization will be the greatest hand of all.

THE COAL-MINERS' STRIKE.

The strike in the anthracite coal regions has settled down to a silent and stubborn war. The miners have gradually added what little they could spare from their small earnings to a great defense fund, which will carry them for some time. The coal trust, on the other hand, has to shut up shop, and intends to starve the men into submission. That the miners have a deserved grievance is well known to those who are familiar with the question. The great coal fields are nearly all in the hands of combined railway companies, who have reduced the earnings of the wage-earner to such a plane as to merely feed the miner and his family and clothe them in the coarsest cloth. Hundreds of little boys, mere children, are forced to take the places of men when they should be in school receiving the intellectual strength that would enable them to successfully battle the trials of the world in after years. These boys grow into manhood under these conditions, and then people wonder why workingmen and women are so backward in the finer sensibilities. If he commits an act of violence through hunger and ignorance he is dubbed an anarchist. On the other hand, the corporationist uses his energy and takes advantage of his simplicity to grow rich. After the corporationist has his larder well filled he fills it some more by cutting down the pay of his hireling. If the man refuses to take the decrease the rich man turns him off and gets a man who will, and if he can't get another man he simply closes down the business the workingman has helped him make and starves the workingman out of his hole. Now, which one of these men is an anarchist? Already the striking miners in the coal fields are refused credit. For all meats, groceries and other foodstuffs they must pay cash. This move is forced by the wholesale merchants, who, doing a business of \$21,500,000 a year in the coal regions, refused credit to all the retail dealers, who in self-preservation must make their customers pay cash. The amount of wholesale business in foodstuffs done each year in the coal region is as follows: Wilkesbarre, \$4,800,000; Scranton, \$6,100,000; Carbondale, \$1,200,000; Pittston, \$800,000; Hazleton, \$1,000,000; Pottsville, \$1,700,000; Shamokin, \$1,800,000; Mahoning City, \$1,500,000; other towns, \$2,000,000. Total, \$21,500,000. Who created this business, and what percentage of it do you suppose the producer gets?

BAD DOCTRINE.

A few days ago in Denver, Colo., Eugene V. Debs made an address to a convention of union working men in which he admonished them to observe the law in the strictest sense, but "when you are shot down in the street," he said, "shoot back." The doctrine of settling differences with rifles will never emancipate the wage earner. It was arms that first made him subject; it is wisdom only that can ultimately liberate him. The force system obtains for a time midst a running sea of carnage, but it is so much misery and woe spent for naught. The inevitable law of right and justice will eventually prevail. That is the reason that the public is gradually and surely acknowledging the virtue of organized labor. Such doctrine as Debs' frightens the public spirit and no wonder. Strikes are not always conducted upon the lines of equity and conservatism. Sometimes violence is used, and by violence restrained. Both being wrong, there emanates nothing right, and the progress of both contending parties is retarded. To remedy a wrong by physical operation necessitates the destruction of something, and this was an error of the ancient tribes. Organized labor should not thrive upon the retaliative theory. It should make a practice of being right, even though it lose a few points by not being too hasty. It has the might, and being right, it need not resort to arms. Mr. Debs had better teach the proper use of the ballot, instead of the improper use of arms. He will never be a great leader who pleads with the hands and neglects the heart and mind.

The sudden death of ex-Governor Penoyer last week is deplored by all. However eccentric he may have been at times during his incumbency of various offices, he did not lose the confidence of the people. Whatever little irregularities he seemed to indulge in by way of diversion, they did not attach seriously to the regular business-like methods of his office. The real reason of Mr. Penoyer's success in public life can be attributed to the fact that he lived close to the people. He was generous, indulgent with his friends, and had a heart that could be touched. Whether an aged mother was pleading for clemency for a wayward son, or a little child whose heart was broken by the adversities of babyhood, Mr. Penoyer had a soul for them both, and all mankind. He was as approachable to a man in overalls as a person in the latest fashioned suit,

If he made mistakes, the heart was not responsible. These attributes and a love for justice made him great and won him the confidence of the people.

After a long and costly conflict, peace has been restored in South Africa. The terms of settlement were based upon concessions from both sides that could just as well have prevented the war. Both sides were stubborn and arbitrary. While the Boer as a rule has the sympathy of the people of this Nation in fighting for his country, yet the world will be better off with the settlement as it is. The rich mineral deposits and resources will be opened by the many instead of the few, as in the past. The Boer will be just as well protected, and will not be taxed greater than any other English subject in that land. True, he has to swear his allegiance to a sovereign, and this alone, against his will, is sufficient reason in our mind for him to contend against. We sympathize with him for his patriotism and independence, but further than this, the conditions that have existed in that country should not permit us to go.

No fault can be found with the decision of the court in the injunction case of the millowners against the Amalgamated Woodworkers, the Federated Trades and Building Trades Council. Against the latter two the charges were dismissed at once, as there were no grounds for the allegations. On the former, after a day's deliberation, the matter was vacated with the admonition that no violence be resorted to, and that the law should be observed.

Decoration Day was appropriately observed by the citizens of Portland. The muffled drum and dirge and flowers upon the mounds of departed kin and friends called to mind that life, with its joys ends seriously to all alike. Decoration Day is one of our most important holidays. It softens the hearts of men, instills veneration in the little child, enlists the beauties of sentimental memory, and awakens a sense of immortality and a trust in God.

The striking teamsters in Chicago have a grievance, but it is not sufficient to incite them to riot. Nothing weakens a man's cause so quickly as to fly into a passion, although his case may justify it, so far as merit is concerned.

SUNDAY MEETING.

A public meeting advertised and called by Vice-President Miller, of the State Federation at Salem, on last Sunday, was held in the City Council chamber, and a good attendance was had. The meeting was addressed by Mr. Dennis, of the Carpenters' Union of Salem, followed by Mr. Jones, of the Cigarmakers of Portland, who was followed at considerable length by G. Y. Harry, president of the State Federation, who went on the excursion for that purpose.

Mr. Harry spoke fully upon the subject of trades unionism and specifically defined the position the union man should take in reference to the non-union workingman, maintaining and showing by sound logic that the workingman to be fair to his fellow worker, should support and encourage the labor organizations by becoming a member of his trade union, instead of menacing its success by remaining outside the union. There was great interest shown in the meeting, and much good was accomplished.

Strenuous Struggle of Labor.

Despite that small fraction of our people which always insists that things should be permitted to take their course, and that all will turn out right in the end, it is clearly the practice in all phases of human life for people to be active participants in all the affairs in which their interests are involved. The demand is becoming more popular every day for active and practical means to help in the solution of the great problem of labor.

In a recent article, the United States Commissioner of Labor, Hon. Carroll D. Wright, says that:

"However men may differ, not only as to the propriety but the legality of labor organization, they recognize the great fact that labor is organizing and that trade unions and similar bodies, which virtually mean the consolidation and focusing of energy, are here as permanent institutions and are growing more numerous and more powerful as industrial development goes on."

In line with modern thought, he admits the contention of organized labor, that it is a struggle for improvement, and thus an aspiration, for struggle is always an aspiration toward something higher.

In our day it is idle for any one to entertain the belief that the workers can individually be successful in securing redress of wrongs or the attainment of rights against the combinations of capital. By the combination of the toilers men not only maintained what had already been secured, but make continued progress in the alleviation of the wrongs to which the workers are subjected, and achieve continued improvements, in the form of higher wages, shorter hours, and improved

conditions under which labor is performed.

Organization of the working people is an indispensable preliminary to any successful attempt to eliminate the evils of which the working classes so bitterly and justly complain.

A thorough federated effort, the combined action of all the unions exerted in favor of each, must of necessity prove more efficient than the action of any one isolated organization, and this, too, no matter how powerful it may be.

From the inception of the American Federation of Labor, it has insisted that while unions of divers trades and callings must be left entirely free to govern themselves, yet a bond of fraternity must be established, not only between the members of the same union, but also a bond between the members of different unions. It has labored to strengthen that bond by organization and education, so as to place the entire labor movement upon a higher, more effective and humane plane.—Federationist.

James M. Lynch.

The President of the International Typographical Union on Civic Federation:

If it is understood that the executive committee of the Industrial Department of the National Civic Federation is to jump into the breach at every threatened labor trouble, and that because of the exercise of its good offices a settlement is bound to follow, then the future of the committee is not strewn with roses.

The danger lies in great expectations. As a moral force, the effect of the committee's recommendations in any particular instance will be great. In its moral force, the great value of the committee exists. Fair, impartial investigation, followed by fair and impartial recommendation—therein lies the committee's duty. If that duty is faithfully performed, the results are bound to be commensurate and the benefit to all the people immense.

The gathering of prominent representatives of capital, labor and the public in amicable conference, in an effort "to find a way out," in itself has a salutary effect.

Many strikes result because of the arrogant and intolerant attitude of the employer. The wage earner has no rights which the employer is bound to consider, much less respect. Any request for the amelioration of conditions is interference, and the punishment meted out to the union representatives, if he happens to employ them, dismissal. Is it any wonder that under these conditions a strike occurs?

If the union's representatives are accorded courteous treatment, and if the requests which they proffer are considered, an amicable settlement usually results. If the appointment of the executive committee does no more than brush away the prejudice and intolerance to which reference is made, it will have accomplished much good.

Masters and Slaves.

One passage in Comrade Carey's reply to the Boston Advertiser is so important that we would call especial attention to it. He says:

"That some of them"—that is, of the capitalists—"are studying industrial problems, I have no doubt; that a few of them are honest in their desire to improve conditions, I quite agree; but the most of them"—even of the honest few—"are moved to study because the giant Labor shows signs of waking from his sleep of centuries."

Most emphatically, that is true. And the lesson of it is this: Even though you do not believe that Labor can alone accomplish its own emancipation, even though you think it must depend upon help graciously given from above, yet you must recognize that help from above, whatever it may be worth, will come only in proportion as you energetically strive for your own class interests. No master class ever emancipated its slaves of its own free will. Individuals of the master class have often helped the slaves to freedom. But they have never done so until the slaves themselves began to struggle against oppression. The more vigorously the working class fights the capitalists, both in the shop and at the ballot box, the readier will the capitalist class be to make liberal concessions.—The Worker.

RECENT INDUSTRIAL STRIKES.

Bradstreet Does Not Consider the Present Unrest Serious.

Ralph M. Easley, secretary of the National Civic Federation, has issued a statement dealing with the fear expressed in some quarters that the organization of the conciliation department of the federation might be responsible for the strikes that have arisen lately. He says the federation is not responsible, and adds that the true cause of these strikes should be looked for in the general conditions of industry and labor. He adds that he asked the editor of Bradstreet's for an opinion on recent strikes and received the following answer:

"In reply to your inquiry I would say that I consider the present appearance of unrest in several industrial lines as

due primarily to the natural desire of the workers to obtain a larger share of the prosperity which has ruled in general business for some years past. It has been noted that industrial disturbances have been one of the phenomena connected with great upward or downward movements in general business, and accordingly as advances in wages were sought or reductions in wages opposed.

"To one who remembers the great strike wave of 1886, and the immediate succeeding years, with the hundreds of thousands of employees who were rendered idle and the immense losses, running up in the tens of millions, to both employers and employes, the present and the past years may well be termed an epoch of industrial peace. When one compares the record as to strikes made in a year like 1886, when 500,000 men struck or were locked out, or the record of 1887, when nearly 400,000 struck, with a wage loss of \$13,000,000 (Bradstreet's figures), this, too, in a time of improving and comparatively good trade, the lack of friction at the present time, when no great bodies of men are idle through strikes, can be better appreciated.

"At this period of the year strikes are usually numerous, but one looks in vain for such a strike as that of May, 1896, when more than 200,000 men struck for a shorter day. It should not be forgotten that there are probably 1,500,000 more industrial workers (in manufactures alone) in the country now than 13 years ago, and that a certain amount of friction is inseparable from industrial operations in employing over 5,000,000 people in manufacturing districts."

LABOR NOTES.

The shingle mills of Tacoma are idle on account of a strike of the mill hands, who demand an increase in wages. About 200 men are affected.

Women butchers at the Chicago stockyards have organized a union with a membership of 200. They are employed as meat-trimmers in the packing-houses of Armour & Co., Swift & Co. and other big firms. This is the first union of its kind in the world.

Nonunion linemen in the employ of the Chicago Telephone Company, in Chicago, Joliet, Elgin and Aurora, have gone on strike for union wages and union conditions. The strikers took the places of the union linemen who went on strike last summer.

Union machinists, boiler makers, blacksmiths, steam fitters, gas fitters and plumbers of Des Moines, Ia., to the number of about 300, went on strike Tuesday for increased wages and shorter hours. The molders will strike if similar demands made by them are not met.

The annual convention of the Chainworkers' Union of North America is in session at Braddock, Pa. Among the more important measures to come before the convention will be a scale for the coming year. A number of radical changes in the government of the union are looked for by the delegates present.

Every dyehouse in Paterson, N. J., was closed last Monday as a result of the order of last week for a general strike. The strikers will send representatives to the Pennsylvania towns where silk dyeing is done, and to Petersburg, Va., with a view of bringing into the union the men working in the dyehouses in those places.

On May 29 a general Federal Trades Union was organized in Albany with 65 charter members and the following officers: William Eagles, president; Jasper Custer, vice-president; W. F. Hammer, recording secretary; Edward Hyer, financial secretary; G. L. Thompson, treasurer; Robert Murphy, J. J. Kubler and W. H. Warner, trustees; G. W. Anderson, guardian.

On account of the increase in the cost of living, the Continental Tobacco Company, of Louisville, Ky., has ordered an increase of 10 per cent in the wages of all its Louisville employes, who number more than 5000. It is said the order of the company is general, and that 30,000 to 35,000 employes throughout the United States will be benefited.

The Man Behind the Brush.

(A Parody.) There has been all kinds of gush about the man who is "behind"—And the man behind the cannon has been toasted, wine and dined. There's the man behind the musket, and the man behind the fence; And the man behind in paying dues, and the man behind in rent; And the man behind the plough beam, and the man behind the hoe; And the man behind the ballot, and the man behind the dough; And the man behind the jimmy, and the man behind the bars; And the Johnny that goes snooping on the stage behind the "stars." And the man behind the kisser, and the man behind the fist; And the girl behind the man behind the gun is on the list; The papers are a-booming them always with a rush; But they never make a mention of the man behind the brush.

—Painters' Journal.

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