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SUNDAY, AUG. 17

O. R. & N. Train will leave Union Depot at 8:30 A. M.

TICKETS 75 CTS.

Music by Everett's Full Orchestra.

OREGON VISITED BY SAMUEL GOMPERS AND PARTY

The appearance of Samuel Gompers and party in the State of Oregon on Sunday last, and the anticipation of their visit, renewed an interest in many inactive union men and women, and was the signal by which the question of organized labor was taken up freely on the street and in the homes by those untutored in the fundamental principles of unionism, as well as those who are identified with the movement.

Mr. Gompers, Max Morris and wife, of Denver, and W. B. Mahon traveled directly from Los Angeles to this state. Mr. Mahon came to Portland and met with the street-car employees Sunday evening. Mr. Gompers and Mr. and Mrs. Morris stopped off at Salem to address a mass meeting of wage earners and citizens of that city.

The meeting was held in Marion Square, and fully 2000 people heard Mr. Gompers and his colleagues.

Governor Geer opened the meeting and stated the object of the meeting was to consider the great question of capital and labor, the interests of the common people against the interests of capitalists. He then introduced G. Y. Harry, president of the Oregon State Federation of Labor, who acted as chairman for the evening.

In a few well-chosen words, Mr. Harry introduced Mr. Morris, secretary of the International Clerks' Protective Association, who delivered an able argument for trades unions and the union label. He also spoke of the horrors of child labor in the large and congested cities and the Southern States, and urged that trades unions of Oregon take up the fight for the little ones and put them into the schools instead of workshops. He thought that while Oregon was comparatively free from this stigma, it would be the easier to enact some law now dealing properly with the subject. He presented a heartrending view of the sweatshop system and entreated the people to lend a hand to stamp them out by using the garment-workers' label. He made a special plea for the clerks for shorter hours and better pay where they had not already been procured.

Mr. Gompers followed Mr. Morris, and was greeted with warm applause. The "Little Giant" at once rolled up his sleeves and waded into the subject of trades unionism. He said that trades unions were the "superstructure of society," and he left no room to doubt it. He entered into the ethics of the subject, and, with his earnest and honest reasoning, left in the minds of his hearers no doubt as to the good work being accomplished through the agencies of trades unions. Education and progress are the redeemers of the wage earners and the thunderbolt that bursts the chains of slavery.

Labor unions everywhere stood for better public schools. He asked assistance for the anthracite miners and the Roseburg strikers. The latter asked for \$2 a day for street labor, and the Salem unions should stand by them.

He closed with an eloquent plea for a continuance of the spirit of unity and solidarity in the Salem labor organizations, and he was heartily cheered.

Monday morning the visitors and their escort took the 8 o'clock train for Portland, arriving here on schedule time. They engaged rooms at the Perkins, and after a short rest were shown about the city. As is ever the case, Mr. Gompers was soon the victim of reporters, sketch artists and an army of admirers, as he is a man of unusual warmth and urbanity.

In the evening a delegation of local labor leaders met the party at the hotel and accompanied them to Cordray's Theater, where the meeting was advertised to be held.

The stage was artistically decorated with silk American flags and choice pot plants, and the theater was unable to hold the immense throng, many standing up in preference to missing the opportunity of hearing Mr. Gompers. Besides the speakers, the platform was occupied by a number of well-known local labor leaders.

Mr. Harry acted as chairman, and after a choice selection of music by the orchestra, Max Morris was introduced. He enlisted the attention of his hearers of the work and progress of his organization, the Retail Clerks, and declared that if it was not for the union clerks all over the land would still be working from 12 to 16 hours per day, including Sundays. His people, he declared, were entitled to a larger percentage of the profits realized from the goods they dispense and a minimum wage scale. He touched upon the child labor problem, and advocated

a system of compulsory education, and declared there never was a reform in behalf of the common people that did not emanate from the ranks of organized labor. This statement, true as it is, was objected to by a few in the audience who had not come prepared to lay aside their prejudices. The interruption was of no consequence, and did not delay the address. Mr. Morris dealt with his subjects in such a manner as to impart conviction. The peroration of his address was an argument for the general use of the union label. "Organized labor is everywhere uplifting womanhood and manhood," said Mr. Morris. "I ask you to purchase nothing, be it an outer garment or an under garment, a cigar or a broom, that does not bear the union label, the symbol of a brighter citizenship, a higher womanhood, a higher manhood."

W. D. Mahon was the next speaker. He is a man of fine physique, easy yet forceful address, and he entertained his hearers for fully an hour with sledgehammer blows of truth. He took up the labor question and characterized it as a purely business proposition, based upon the plan of business enterprise. Mr. Mahon said in part:

"We believe the policy and principles of our organization are respected by every thoughtful civilized man and woman. I will speak of the union labor movement, divested of its theoretical or sympathetic side, for in our business lives we view it from a thoroughly business viewpoint. This is an age in which the world is business, here, there and everywhere."

"Down through all the ramifications of life we find it moved and controlled by organization. This has come to pass in the last century, due to improved machinery. There is no escape from organization. The coffin trust dictates the price of a box in which we shall have final repose. In two years the Bible trust has put up 25 per cent the price of the sacred Word of God."

"Now, how are we going to meet this business world that confronts us? In Philadelphia some years ago street railway employees decided the conditions under which they labored were unjust. A committee went to the company with the grievance. It complained of the long hours and low wages. But the company said:

"This is a business organization, not an aid or charity society. We look upon labor as a commodity of the world, and we propose to buy it where we can get it cheapest."

"This is the case in the entire business world. Now, how do you propose to deal with it?"

"We say, deal with it in a business way. We organize the men of every calling and say: 'We, too, are a business organization. We have a commodity necessary to your business, and we require the shortest hours and highest wages we can get.'"

"A man who operates or conducts a car is just as much a business man as he who clips bonds in Wall street. And we are trying to educate working people to be practical business men and women. We have adopted the tactics and ethics of the business world in our business. If the other fellow will change his ethics and tactics, we will change ours."

"They say labor unions are unpatriotic, un-American, unlawful. Is a man who would dispose of his labor to greatest advantage to himself—is he un-American or unpatriotic? We insist that trade unionism represents bona fide citizens, and true Americans. We struggle for true citizenship, for improved conditions, for the elevation and preservation of this country, if you please. I defy any organization or society to show it has done more for men and women than has trade unionism."

"We boast of our republicanism. Where did it have its inception? In a trade union hall, in Philadelphia, in Carpenters' Hall, where met the patriots to promulgate the Declaration of Independence. Who gave us our free schools? The trade unions of Massachusetts fought for and established the system. Who has fought for free school books and who for abolition of child labor? Why, the trade unions. They have put child labor out of every state in the Union except five."

Mr. Mahon went on to tell how to strike is inherent in the very underpinning of society. "Even the preachers have a union, and they have been known to strike. There isn't a severer union in the world than the preachers' union. You must have your card in a

preachers' union or you may not preach in their preach shop. In my city this union got into a scrap. One of its members used to go down every morning to pray for the Ohio Legislature. One Monday morning they found they had a grievance. They wanted pay or they wouldn't pray any more for the Legislature. So they decided to go on a strike, just like a trade union.

"But several mornings later a preacher broke the strike of the preachers' union. He explained that the Catholic clergy did not belong to the union, and he feared they would pray for the Legislature."

"Labor is the only commodity in which the buyer and not the seller sets the price. And when you try to set a price on your brawn or your brains they get out an injunction."

"No world movement is based on a more time-honored principle than is trade unionism. Unionism is the bedrock of business. The question of the hour is not production, but consumption. Trade unionism stands for consumption. They used to disturb us by saying the law of supply and demand ruled the world. But the law of supply and demand is subject to the law of wages. This law in turn is subject to the law of organized labor. Trade unionism stands for this side of the business world, and the person who considers business from this standpoint cannot help but be the friend of the laboring man."

During his address Mr. Mahon was frequently applauded, and left a good impression with his audience.

The last speaker, Samuel Gompers, who has been at the head of the American Federation of Labor for more than 20 years, and the foremost figure in the movement today, kept the audience in rapt attention for more than an hour, despite the excessive heat of the crowded theater.

His address was deliberate, masterful, logical and convincing. He held that the movement of organized labor was but the natural tendency, and that there was no man who could substantiate his position in opposing the movement to organize labor. He said:

"What is your City of Portland but a union where the men, women and children surrender a part of their privileges in order that their rights may be safeguarded? What is our Government or our Nation but a large union? If I read history aright, there was at one time a party of the members of this Union that wished to withdraw. They called it secession, and at that time a great strike occurred. It was a long and serious one and lasted four years, and after it was over those who wanted to leave it were not permitted to do so. Now there are none prouder of their great Union than those who were not permitted to leave it."

"Just so we find the case in our union work at times. It is often necessary to use a little moral suasion, but in the end they are proud to be identified with the union that has uplited their condition. The man who would take a stand against the labor organizations would try to combat all the movements today. Boards of trade, manufacturers' associations, all such societies as these are the same movement. These men find it to their advantage to organize. If it is to the advantage of men who control millions to organize, why it is not much more essential for the workingman who owns nothing but his own labor to organize, that he may get the best price for his?

"The ministers, the lawyers, the doctors, all have their organizations and force their members to live up to them. If a doctor should violate the medical ethics as laid down by the medical society, he is put under a ban by the rest of the profession. The lawyers have a trade union. They do not call it that. They call it a 'bar association,' and think it sounds prettier. They have a system of apprenticeship, the same as we have in all of our trades. They call it 'student life,' and think that that sounds prettier. I care not how logical you may be, if you would go into a court where justice is dispensed and would wish to appear in defense of some one, the Judge, who is the walking delegate of the lawyers' union, would ask you to show your working card. He would not call it that. He would say your diploma, and think that sounded prettier."

"Can we be expected to be different from our fellows? We have simply learned the lesson that they have taught. We, too, have formed our societies, and have formulated our ethics, and one of the first rules is 'Thou

shalt not take thy neighbor's job,' and for any one that violates this law we have a pet name of our own that we apply to him."

"How often we read or hear discussions on the labor question, and after listening to them we are convinced that there is no labor question worth consideration, and that the condition of labor is pretty good, after all. Now, if we want to learn anything about navigation, we go to one who has made a study of this particular line. If we want to learn anything about astronomy, military tactics, finance, or any of the questions of the day, we go to some one who has made a study of this particular line. But if we want to get anything on the labor situation, we go to every other source and load ourselves up with a lot of invaluable information. I don't say that all of the papers oppose the unions, but the heads of the papers are employers themselves and cannot help but speak from an employer's point of view. When you hear a minister speak on the subject he voices the sentiment of the pillars of the church, and they are employers. I want to insist on it that if you are rational enough to look to the bottom of the situation that you hear the question from the standpoint of the laborer before you make up your mind. There are some that pray for the laboring man for five minutes a week and spend the rest of the time praying upon him. Then they call us agitators and even 'professional agitators.' At first these remarks used to sting, but when they called us 'professional agitators' we felt relieved, and took breath anew, for all of the professions are highly respected. And if the people are disposed to make our work a profession, there will soon come a time when we will be knocking at the doors of our colleges and universities and demanding our diplomas."

"There are many who want to divert our attention from the condition that we find and tell us that it will 'all be bliss over there.' To them we say that we won't surrender a bit of our right to the 'bliss over there,' but that we will continue to strive for a better condition here. What we want is a 'better now, and now.' If we are to have such a blissful hereafter, we want to get used to it, so that we will not be shocked at the grandeur of the heavenly world and will be able to appreciate it."

"We are often confronted by men who, when we talk to them of the labor movement, say, 'Pooh; there is no labor movement.' If they think that there is no labor question before the public today, let them go to the sweatshops and see there the miserable existence that is led. Let them see the stunted forms, the early decay stamped upon the brow of men, women and children. Ask these people if there is no labor question. Go into the mines where the workmen never see the rays of the sun. Go into their cabins and see the marks of despair, where the people own neither themselves nor their homes. They are taught by the company's teachers, preached to by the company's preachers, they are all the company's, and when they die they are buried by the company's undertaker and in the company's cemetery. Go to the industrial centers and see there the changes as the employer gains control more and more. See today strong men out of work and the women working in the factories. See tomorrow the men and women both out of work while the factories are filled with children. When the men are idle and the children are overworked, the condition is deplorable indeed. Go to these people and ask them if there is a labor question. Ask the men whose position is so insecure as to depend upon the whim of some employer or understrapper. Ask the workman who may find himself at any time in the midst of an industrial panic and is not in a position to help it, and in a short time may be asking for the privilege to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. In every case comes the emphatic answer, 'Yes. It is the burning question of the hour, and it demands the efforts of the best men and women to find a solution,' and it finds an echo in the hearts and minds of our fellow-workers."

"We all love the free Government under which we live, and are bound that it shall be maintained. Who is going to maintain it? The unorganized? Surely not, for they are working for their own interests all alone. An organization is a co-operation to help all concerned. The load falls upon the

(Continued on page 4)