

A PROFITABLE TOOL.

Samuel Parks a Product of Trust Corruption.

Without corrupt and unprincipled employers the industrial world would never have produced such a "labor leader" as Sam Parks. The article in the November McClure's Magazine entitled "The Trust's New Tool—the Labor Boss," fortified as it is by testimony in the court proceedings in New York City where Parks has been twice convicted, proves this. Parks may be all he is painted; he even may be worse; but whatever he is, he is the product of contractors who used him to ruin competitors, and who filched from their customers much more than they paid Parks for his betrayal of his union.

Parks is not an old-time labor man, tried by years of experience. Like a meteor that dashes athwart the heavens he came into prominence only last year; and like a meteor he seems destined to quickly sink into oblivion, a frightful example of what accident and opportunity can do for one who uses for his own advantage the material he finds at hand. As a rule, a business agent follows the orders of the union; in the case of Parks, by using the power the employers gave him, he cowed the honest members of the Housewrights and Bridgemen's Union through a system of weeding them out of good situations and placing his own henchmen in their place. He called strikes when he pleased, giving no reason to the union for the act, and spent the money of the organization lavishly without any accounting.

That Parks did help his union, there can be no question. Wages were low; he aided to make them higher. Hours were long; he assisted in reducing the length of a day's labor. Many men were outside the union; his effective work brought them into the fold. Still, these things would have been done had no Sam Parks ever existed. The occasion always brings the right man to the front, and without Parks this particular union would have had a leader anyway, and wages would have been raised and hours shortened.

Parks was corrupt; of this there is no doubt. When he went to New York from Chicago he found a peculiar state of affairs. New York has a building department. It is a favorite place for "grafts" among the builders—the employers. These bosses have paid "graft" and bribed building superintendents and inspectors. They spent money to be allowed to break the law. It was to their benefit to have on the "labor" side some man like Parks who would help them out in their schemes, and who would call union men off jobs being done by contractors outside of their ring. They wanted to ruin their competitors, and they got Sam Parks to help them.

But the corrupt bosses went further than this. As a rule they had in their contracts with their customers a clause that if work was delayed on account of a strike, the time in which the contract was to be completed should be extended. So when they wanted more time on a contract, they hired Sam Parks to get up a strike at the right time, and lo and behold! they escaped all penalties for not getting the job finished on time. Thus was competition between contractors killed, work slighted, and plenty of time obtained for finishing a building. It worked splendidly, both for the contractors in the ring and for Sam Parks.

Sam Parks became avaricious. He saw how easy it was to work the snap, and he started out on his own account. If a new firm came into the field he demanded of them an "initiation" fee, which gave them, when paid, the privilege of going on with their work without fear of a strike, and of hiring union or nonunion men at any old price that suited them. Beginning with helping the contractors to betray their customers, Parks ended with betraying the union that had given him such extraordinary authority.

It appears that the great power behind all this corruption was the Fuller Construction Company of Chicago, who when it started in business in New York City, took Sam Parks along, putting him on its pay roll as their agent inside the union. The Fuller Construction Company is capitalized at \$20,000,000, and it in turn is owned and operated by a gigantic corporation with a watered capital of \$66,000,000, known as the United States Realty and Construction Company. By its peculiar methods many of the old line contractors found themselves without any business, while the "trust" waxed fat with contracts and soon dominated in New York building operations. This corporation was fortified by influence in many ways. In the language of Ray Stannard Baker, "It was intimately related to most of the other great trusts and financial interests, which, after all, are nothing more than a family party, with headquarters in Wall Street."

The lesson of all this for labor organizations is, stick to tried and true

leaders. Do not run after strange gods in the way of those who promise great things. The conservative man will in the long run bring the average labor member the greatest results in the way of increased wages, shorter hours and better surroundings. After all, the labor leaders of the Sam Parks stripe are few; while those like Kidd of the Woodworkers, and Mahon of the Street Car Employes, and Perkins of the Cigar-makers are many.—Judson Grenel, in Boyce's Weekly.

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER.

W. R. Hearst Acquires Morning Newspaper Property in Los Angeles.

LOS ANGELES, Cal., Nov. 12.—(Special Correspondence.)—At the International Typographical Union convention, held in Washington last August, W. R. Hearst was petitioned to acquire a morning newspaper property in Los Angeles. This action was taken, as it was deemed imperative to have established a competitor in Southern California, which would offset the malicious and unwarranted statements made regarding organized labor by the union-hating Los Angeles Times.

Accompanied by Arthur A. Hay, special representative of the International Typographical Union, the business manager of the San Francisco Examiner was instructed by Mr. Hearst to come to Los Angeles and look over the field. The result will be the establishment of the Los Angeles Examiner, on the same aggressive and fearless lines followed by his New York, Chicago and San Francisco newspaper properties. The initial number will make its appearance the second week of December. The machinery is already on its way from New York City, a mammoth five-story building has been leased for a term of 10 years, and workmen—all union, no "independents"—are working two shifts, fitting up the future home of the newspaper.

To say that the union men and women of Southern California, as well as the citizens in general, regardless of political belief, are enthusiastic over the venture, is putting it mildly. The Employers' Association is almost frantic. Every pressure that can be brought to bear on merchants is being used to influence them not to advertise in the new paper. But the Examiner will enter the field with a larger circulation than the Times, and the merchants, business men and citizens have been waiting these many long years to throw off the thralldom of that detested and despicable hero of the Rubicon, Harrison Gray Otis.

Union men, women and sympathizers, we will attend to this creature, from now on, in the local field; but we need your assistance on foreign advertisements.

Write a letter today.

PATRICK HENRY IN 'FRISCO.

Patrick Henry Scullin, vice-president of Local No. 338, Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, and organizer of Local No. 131 in Seattle, is in the city for the purpose of creating a sentiment in favor of forming a plan whereby a settlement of labor questions can be made in a manner which will avoid strikes and boycotts and terminate with advantage to both parties, says the Examiner.

Mr. Scullin is the originator of a project for industrial peace and advocates the settlement of labor questions by arbitration and conciliation, by a harmonious discussion of the question by the opposing factions. Mr. Scullin is visiting the various cities of the states of Oregon, Washington and California. He is well known in the north and has assisted in settling and averting many strikes.

A committee of arrangements consisting of Mayor Schmitz, chairman; F. H. Whelan, G. B. Benham, president of the San Francisco Labor Council; Byron Mauzy, J. M. Young, Lewis Lossler, F. W. Koster, Warren Gregory, Isaac Upham and R. B. Hale has been formed for the purpose of arranging a meeting shortly to be held at Golden Gate Hall. The committee has addressed letters to the following clergymen, who are requested to speak at the meeting: Archbishop Riordan, the Rev. Bradford Leavitt, the Rev. G. C. Adams, the Rev. Jacob Voorsanger and the Rev. F. W. Clamper.

This is the same Patrick Henry who recently spent some weeks in Portland upon the same mission, but left disgusted and discouraged.

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CO-OPERATIVE COMPANIONS.

System Employed in France Claimed to Be Far Superior to Ours.

The government printing office in France has 350 compositors. The public printer has little concern as to the politics or unionism of these employes, for they hire and discharged themselves. They work in a co-operative companionship, with stunts and wages equal. Their non-political and perfectly fair methods are not unique in France. The city printing office of Paris with 80, and 34 Paris daily newspapers, with 700, union men are thus administered. In the National Typographical Union of France, which has a membership of 10,000, the system is followed by 1500 compositors.

This co-operative companionship, or "chapel" copartnership, dates in France from 1880. It has since gained steadily. To mark its development and promote its growth, the Paris Typographical Union from time to time issues circulars and pamphlets on the subject. In 1896 the union announced that up to that time not one employing printer who had taken up with the companionship had returned to the old system. Since that time however, the line casting machine has caused it to lose ground in some offices while it has gained in others.

When the companionship is introduced in an office, the compositors as a collective unit contract with the employer to turn out his work at the outset for the sum total as it previously cost him or perhaps for less. They give guarantees that, besides safeguarding his plant, they will complete all work on time and maintain the workmanship at a prescribed standard. The organization of the companionship being under control of the men themselves, they decide upon the number of regular and extra hands to be employed. They keep their own accounts. Hence the employer has no concern about his individual employes as to their loafing, incompetency, waste of material, or measurements of composition.

The companionship compositors decide whether they shall work by the piece or on a time scale. Piece rates are commonly preferred in book offices where the character of the work varies considerably, and where men slower than the average may be employed. The time system is invariably adopted on the daily newspapers. Under it every man is required to set on the average a stipulated number of lines per hour for seven hours. If a swift compositor exceeds the day's stunt, his surplus goes to the slow. If a slow man continually falls behindhand, he is dropped, as he would be, perhaps for less reason, by a foreman. The Paris union recommends a weekly instead of a daily stunt, that a man may make up one day the shortage of another.

In each city the union has its own regulations for the government of companionships. The Paris union has a list of twenty-seven rules. Among them: Only union men can be members. The companionship must pay all union dues, provide necessary extra hands promptly; show its accounts to any one interested; determine the stunt of work per hour; elect its make-ups, proof-readers, measurers, chairman, etc., and it must place on record at union headquarters its minutes and accounts. The companionship may expel a member only after trial by a committee and on a two-thirds vote. The union enforces the chapel's responsibilities to the employer.

A test of the companionship is in the production of the Official Journal, which corresponds to our Congressional record. It has been set up under this system since 1881. For its administration only two officials, a director and a bookkeeper, paid by the companionship, are employed. The Paris union publishes its opinion that ten officials would be necessary if the government did the work, so proverbially ineffective is public service in France. The Official Journal may one day be of sixteen pages and the next of thirty-two, sixty-four, eighty or ninety-six. Just before the adjournment of the national legislature, ninety to one hundred compositors are employed on the Journal, beginning at 5:30 in the evening and finishing at 2 or 3 o'clock next morning. These companionship compositors manage to get out the paper on time, though none of them have passed a civil service examination.

The financial profits to the fifteen hundred French compositors in the various companionships, while con-

siderable, sink into insignificance when compared with their mental and moral benefits.

The mass of the members of a companionship all increase their earnings, as they throw into a common fund and divide equally the higher wages previously paid the foremen, make-ups, and others of the abolished shop aristocracy. The partnership strengthens the trades union, as no contract is made at less than the union scale, and when non-unionists try the system the fact of being organized at all is a stepping stone to unionism.

The mental benefits ensue from the opportunities given companions to learn every part of the work. The general interest incites the hands to try out one another in the various positions, thus increasing the number qualified to act as readers, make-ups and foremen. In this respect the most striking result has been to abolish the superstition that in routine labor managing talent is rare. The companionship members know that a martinet is not needed to protect their employer's interests or to bullyrag them into doing their duty.

The moral benefits are the greatest. The companionship is a true form of co-operation. Within itself it permits no man to make a profit off another. It establishes a just equality, imposes a democratic discipline and trains men in the rudimentary principles of economic equity. No foreman in charge can rush the force at a slave-driving pace to make a record for himself. No companionship member can seek security of place as the reward of subservience or influence, but must depend upon his own capability and faithfulness, proven in the presence of the group, most interested. No employer can give to his relatives or dependents positions in which they may hide their incapacity. In the government printing office in France companionship members would not know what was meant if asked who was their member or senator. It would be inconceivable to them that a national issue could grow out of the dismissal from among them of an obnoxious deputy assistant foreman.—J. W. Sullivan, in Washington (D. C.) Trades Unionist.

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