

Portland Labor Press



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The Postum Cereal Co., which has been a steady advertiser in the Los Angeles Times, and which ignored the petition of the International Typographical Union to withdraw its patronage from that paper as soon as its contract expired, is now endeavoring to make capital out of this fact, and seeks to increase its business by denouncing trades unions and stigmatize its members. Its latest advertisement is "A Boycott," in which it employs a series of misrepresentations, alleging that the boycott levied against its products by the printers is the work of a bunch of labor agitators and anarchists, who commit "outrages on the public peace," and disregard the lives, property, and liberty of citizens; that they are ignorant men, and bullies. Nearly a quarter of a page is devoted to this kind of tirade and buncombe, which is intended to prejudice the public against the unions and create for themselves a sympathy that will increase the sale of their goods. When it becomes generally known that the printers are the promoters of this boycott the public will wonder where the agitators, anarchists, fools, and criminals come in. It will then be seen that the Postum Cereal Company is a cheap outfit, advertising its goods by misrepresentation and demagogic methods, and endeavoring to saddle upon labor unions of less understanding the labors of the printers. If the Postum Cereal Company wanted to be fair it would lay the blame of the boycott directly upon the printers, but by so doing it would destroy the purpose of the article, for the public is fully informed as to the character of the Typographical Union, and the language used in the advertisement would hardly make good. The Typographical Union has asked organized labor all over the land to refrain from dealing with those firms that advertise with the Los Angeles Times, because General Otis refused twelve years ago to give his printers decent wages and hours, and ever since that time he has done everything in his power to retard the progress of the wage workers, and in nearly every number of the Times he swings a virulent pen against all forms of labor organization. If the Postum Cereal Company wishes to train with this class of people, it has no kick coming if the working people refuse to purchase its goods. Their reasons are but natural.

San Francisco labor is again to the front on the Pacific Coast with a plan of progressive unionism. This time they purpose starting and operating a workingman's co-operative store. The project is to be known as the Workingmen's Co-operative Commercial Company, and articles of incorporation have been filed with the County Clerk. At the head of the concern is Richard Cornelius, president of the Carmen's Union. The purpose of the new organization is to establish a store at which union rules and union hours will prevail. The company will engage in any line of business that it may find profitable, but in particular will deal in domestic and imported commodities of all descriptions, will engage in the brokerage and commission business, will buy and sell real estate and loan and borrow money. San Francisco will be the principal place of business, but branches may be established in other places. The period for which it is to exist is 50 years and the capital stock is \$50,000. Of this sum \$1300 has already been subscribed. Union stores

have been proved a success in Eastern cities, although they have never been attempted on the Pacific Coast. The opposition to union principles has forced the workingmen to keep their profits among themselves and the co-operative company is a beginning. The board of directors will be composed of 12 stockholders, to be chosen at each annual meeting. The first board is as follows: R. Cornelius, W. S. Shafer, J. H. Bowling, Patrick Lynch, William J. C. Goldkuhl, John Deveney, J. C. Rector, Matt O'Connor, Robert Bower, John Carty, P. M. Belknap. All the directors have subscribed \$100 each and the 13th \$100 is given by W. G. Burton.

Portland reforms are certainly sudden and vigorous. A few evenings ago boys and girls under 16 years of age were seen roaming the streets half drunk after hours. Today grown men headed for home are rounded up by the police and taken to the station who have not even been held up by a footpad. While the present stringent system is probably good to clear the city of criminal characters and protect the citizen, there would be less of the criminal class if a curfew ordinance was enacted that would regulate the hours of children under sixteen, and strictly enforced, and when it was proven that a saloon-keeper sold liquor to minors, mete out to him the knuckles of the law, there would be less need of rounding up men who happened to be out a little late. The remedy scarcely lies in the beginning at the top of a thing; a fire is best quenched by getting down to the base. Of course, the flame may be held in check, but as soon as you remove the repression, conflagration bursts forth with renewed fury. The best way to cure an evil is to remove the cause.

At the meeting of the International convention of the Typographical Union at St. Louis last Wednesday the question that "no member of the Typographical Union shall enlist in the service of any state in the United States as state guard, militiamen or rangers, under the penalty of expulsion, and being barred from reinstatement," was reported, upon unfavorably by the committee on laws.

As sentiment against this unfavorable report arose in the convention, Delegate Anderson, of Macon, Ga., chairman of the committee on laws, jumped to his feet. When, in a patriotic address, he quoted the famous lines of Sir Walter Scott—"Breathes there a man with soul so dead, who never to himself hath said, this is my own, my native land"—the climax was reached. Cheers resounded through the hall, and by an overwhelming majority the convention decided that nothing should be done to prevent members of the International Typographical Union from fighting for the Stars and Stripes.

In a special number of the American Federationist, Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, advised all state and city central bodies, and local unions, to secure the pledges of candidates for congress for the eight-hour and the anti-injunction bills before voting for them. The defeat of these measures for the past few sessions of our country's greatest law-making body has forced the suggestion of our only remedy upon our labor leaders, and then the promises of congressmen can only be depended upon when organized labor defeats a few of them in their districts. Of course there are politicians that never break their word; then there are others. The latter are more frequently found, and are always in the front looking for political crumbs. These fellows should never be taken seriously.

The Chicago Inter Ocean advises employers to deal with labor organizations as follows: "The cost of labor is one of the principle items that enters into competition between business men. No one can deny this. Then is it not a decided advantage to deal with an organization of labor that guarantees to the business man that his competitor is paying the same wages that he pays? And, besides, there is not a union in existence which places their minimum wages above what a man can support a family upon comfortably. Union wages are always reasonable wages. Employers of labor who object to the strictly union shops do so simply because union regulations require a standard of justice to the workmen that most employers want to violate in the interest of profits."

Last Monday the Brewery workmen and the boss brewers signed up a contract for three years. The agreement is really a renewal of the old one that has been operating for the past three years. Some little delay was experienced on account of the brewers asking for a raise of one dollar a week,

making their weekly wage \$21.00 instead of \$20.00. This the bosses contended against, using as an argument that since local option was elected in the state their business was uncertain, and they did not feel as if they were justified in paying more than the old scale. The brewery workmen finally conceded this point, with the result that all the breweries were signed up by Monday.

The coal operators who refused to enforce the checking weighing boss decision of Umpire Wright and caused a strike order affecting 80,000 mineworkers in the Wilkesbarre, Pa., district have backed down and offered to submit the point at issue to Judge Gray of Delaware, who was chairman of the strike commission. They asked the miners to consent to that, but the latter, while apparently favorably impressed, asked for a week's time to consider the matter. The grievance of the Cox Brothers' workers, which threatened an immediate strike of the 5000 employees, did not take long to adjust, the board agreeing that the suspended men should be reinstated and that they should receive half pay for the time lost.

PRINTING PRESSMEN'S UNION.

On Thursday evening, August 2, the Portland Printing Pressmen held their regular monthly meeting, at which time one candidate was initiated and several applications filed.

In compliance with a request from a committee from the Federated Trades laundry the members subscribed liberally for stock. Grant McDonald was appointed solicitor, and met with flattering returns.

W. S. McHugh, delegate to the pressmen's international convention, which met in St. Louis in June, reported that he had labored hard with the Pacific Coast delegates to get the 1905 convention in San Francisco, and their efforts proved successful. This is the first time that the international body of the pressmen has seen fit to meet in any city west of the Rocky Mountains.

A committee was appointed by President Ponnay to meet and entertain the delegates as they came north on their return east. The committee is composed of the following members: W. S. McHugh, foreman of Marsh Printing Co.; J. M. Young, foreman of the Oregonian press rooms, and H. A. King, foreman of the Journal press rooms.

An assessment of 10 cents per member per week was voted to the leatheworkers, to continue to such a time as the differences are settled.

C. C. Carlson was reported on the sick list, and \$50 was voted him from the sick benefit fund.

BARTENDERS' UNION.

The last meeting of the Bartenders' Union was held Tuesday afternoon, August 9. The meeting was well attended. There were four initiations.

A communication was received from General Secretary Jerre Sullivan stating that First Vice-President T. J. Sullivan succeeded to the presidency of the international in the place of Robert A. Callahan, resigned. Mr. Callahan was a visitor to the Pacific Coast early last spring, stopping in Portland a couple of days. The change comes to the members of the local here as an item of surprise.

The members will remember that at the next meeting on Tuesday, August 16, after the regular meeting, a smoker will be given. All members are urged to be present, as special features of entertainment have been provided.

EIGHT HOUR LAW UPHELD.

Judge Belt Awards Decision Against Contractor Broad.

In the case of George Gies vs. J. A. Broad, brought to recover extra compensation for work done on city contracts in excess of eight hours per day, Judge Belt rendered an opinion recently, giving a judgment to the plaintiff and sustaining the eight hour law.

After quoting portions of the city ordinance making eight hours a legal day's work on city contracts, the court says:

"This court has already held that the ordinance in question is constitutional, and I feel bound to follow that decision. Indeed, I am of the opinion that it should be upheld as constitutional, except, perhaps, that part which attempts to fix the minimum wages. It is doubtful, I think, if the Supreme Court will sustain that provision."

The court discusses the ordinance to a considerable extent and continues:

"It is conceded that the plaintiff worked nine hours per day for 37 days, and that he has been paid only \$2.25 per day. He is therefore entitled to judgment for 37 hours' work at 43-15 cents per hour."—Spokane Record.

EXCHANGE COURTESIES.

Knights Templar and San Francisco Unions Work Together.

At a recent meeting of the Labor Day committee of the Building Trades Council of San Francisco, correspondence was read which passed between P. H. McCarthy, president of the council, and Colonel William Edwards, chairman of the Knights Templar escort committee, offering every facility and assistance to the council and its affiliated unions in shaping the Labor Day parade so as to give the right of way to the incoming commanderies on their arrival in this city.

Many of the visiting commanderies are expected to reach that city on September 5, Labor Day, to attend the twenty-ninth triennial conclave, which will be in session there for a week, and fears were expressed that their entrance to the city might not be as pleasant as it should be.

The executive committee of the Knights Templar conclave was so impressed with the cordial good will of the Building Trades Council and its affiliated unions toward the visiting Sir Knights and the desire of the wage-earners of San Francisco to make the entry into the city pleasant and agreeable that it authorized Colonel Edwards to offer to the Building Trades Council, its members and their families the use of all its reviewing and grand stands at Van Ness avenue and Market street, to view the Labor Day parade.

The offer of President McCarthy was made to show the Templars and the world at large that organized labor is desirous of being in harmony with everything that will promote the welfare and prosperity of San Francisco. He had been informed that false rumors were being circulated in the East to the effect that the harmony of the conclave might be disturbed by the unions, which would have a parade on Labor Day that would interfere with the Templar demonstration. There were other false reports being given publicity to show that San Francisco was not an agreeable place to remain in because of the attitude and aggressiveness of organized labor. Instances were mentioned in the reports published in the Eastern press, which purported to have been sent from San Francisco, to prove that life was not safe there because of a strike of union hackmen and stablemen. It was said that persons riding in carriages were in danger of being mistreated and Templars were advised not to remain in San Francisco any longer than absolutely necessary to do their Templar business.

The Labor Day committee, by unanimous vote, approved the course of President McCarthy and accepted the offer of the Knights Templar to use the reviewing stands. The stands are capable of seating 5000 persons, and work on them is being rushed in order to have them available for the use of the unions.

GATHERING STRIKE DATAS.

Agent Says Rates of Wages Means Nothing.

A. M. Dewey, of the department of commerce and labor, is in Chicago, gathering data of the different strikes in that city since 1901. Mr. Dewey was formerly an officer of the Typographical Union, and also of the Knights of Labor in their palmy days. Speaking of his work, Mr. Dewey said:

"The federal bureau is getting ready for its next periodical inquiry into labor troubles in the United States. The information we are now gathering relates to the character of the strike or lockout, location in city and state, names of the organizations and employers involved, cause of the disturbance, date of beginning and ending, number of persons directly implicated, terms of settlement and other matters.

"With this data in hand, the bureau will send other agents to each industrial neighborhood of the United States where any troubles have occurred, and a visit will be made to every establishment involved as well as to the officers of the local union and other persons affected by the difficulty. Of course, our work is purely statistical, and we have no authority to interfere with a strike or lockout while it is under way. While we may take a lively interest in such strikes as that at the stock yards in this and other cities, we have nothing to do with them as agents of the government.

"My own inquiries into labor conditions throughout the country have convinced me, however, that rates of wages mean nothing, and that twenty cents an hour on a pay roll has but little relation to the ability of the worker to support his family in any community. Fifty cents an hour sounds like excellent wages, but if a man had only two hours' work a day it would mean but a scant living, even

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for an unmarried man. Permanent employment is of much more importance to the workers than rates of wages, always admitting that the rate is high enough to insure comfort to those who do the useful work of the world.

"My visit to the disturbed districts of Colorado was made four years after the great strikes of 1896, and it was amusing to me to see how easy it was for both employers and men to color their statistics before submitting them to the government agent. The mine owners then, as now, had a compact employers' organization, and kept a large force of detectives constantly at work furnishing news from inside union circles, so that every move of the union miners could be anticipated and counteracted if possible."

"You Can't Lose the Irish."

The great packing house strike demonstrates the above quotation very emphatically.

The big leader of the strikers is Mike Donnelly. The big leader for the packers is Mike Cudahy. Timothy Jay Mahoney is the boss talking delegate for the packers. Constantine J. Smyth and Attorney Fleharty

are the big talking delegates for the strikers, and Smyth does a double stunt by advising the strikers how to beat the injunction game and advising Sheriff Power how to give the packers the protection they want for their scabs at the minimum loss of political prestige with the union men. Mike Murphy seems to be the boss hot-air shooter for Cudahy in filling up the newspaper reporters with daily information about "everything-running-smooth-Paul-Morton."

The Irish seem to be in this great struggle at every point except one, as the Daily News reporter who spent three days in one of the plants reports that every race was represented among the scabs except the Irish.—God bless 'em.—Western Laborer.

Justice White, of the Supreme Court, Brooklyn, declared the eight-hour law unconstitutional and granted writs of mandamus to compel the city to pay \$13,000 to the Brooklyn Alcatraz Company and \$10,000 to the Uvalde Asphalt Company, payment of which had been withheld on the ground that both companies had, in the performance of contracts for city work, required their employees to work more than eight hours a day.