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SAN FRANCISCO ELECTION.

It is reported from San Francisco that Abe Reuf, Mayor Schmitz's legal and political adviser, and considered to be the shrewdest politician in the city, lost out in the primaries August 8. The reports state that he secured 168 delegates to the opposition's 231, in the Republican party. While this may be considered a defeat, the facts are that Reuf had a hand in the primary election of all the parties, including the Union Labor party. Reuf is backing the candidacy of Schmitz for re-election in November, and will be supported by the labor unions of San Francisco. While the latter have not been altogether satisfied with Schmitz's administration, on account of certain police irregularities, they have come to the support of the administration in order to defeat the Citizens' Alliance candidate put up by Herbert George. The primary election will have no direct bearing upon the general election, and even in the Republican convention Reuf has enough delegates to make it interesting. Mayor Schmitz will be chosen as the standard-bearer at the convention of the Union Labor party, and should the Democrats fuse with the reform Republicans against the candidacy of Schmitz the party lash will not be strong enough to whip them all into line. The interest manifested at the primaries is but a forerunner of the work that will be done at the general election. It may be possible that the old parties will put up a candidate friendly to the labor unions for the purpose defeating Schmitz, and in fact, this is in contemplation, but there is no chance for a man who is known to be favorable to the Herbert George contingent of union smashers. The Citizens' Alliance started the opposition to Schmitz by crying "graft," but it looks as if they had cried themselves out of a party and will get little comfort in the change if Schmitz is defeated. The primary election in California is still conducted upon the old party plan, and does not indicate with any degree of certainty how the election will go. The battle is yet to come.

Notwithstanding the threatened boycott of American goods by the Chinese, and the difficult task of fixing the responsibility of the same upon reliable parties, the price of lumber in the West has not been impaired, and no notice has been given that the Celestial has eschewed the use of wheat and flour altogether. From the best information obtainable it appears that the boycott was started by the Chinese guilds and students. But this fact matters little, because we have a boycott here against the admission of coolie labor, and it is going to stick. The few million dollars that we might lose in export trade will be more than made up by the exclusion of a few millions of the cheapest laborers in Asia and the saving we will realize in the difference will fix the balance on the right side of the ledger in the long run, even if the Portland Chamber of Commerce has seen fit to become alarmed over the threat held out to us. It is indeed strange how such a fine lot of patriotic gentlemen, and

brave, can be induced to lay down their arms within their own fortifications upon a threat of people scarce able to maintain a government.

The Labor Day committee, acting for the Federated Trades Council, will announce at the meeting of the Council tonight that it has secured Cedar park, near St. Johns, in which the day will be celebrated. The committee has also secured the speakers, and a quick car service has been promised by the street railway company to accommodate the people. The Women's Union Label League and the Ladies' Auxiliary to the Multnomah Typographical Union will have charge of the refreshment stands and lunch counters on the grounds. While there is yet a few preliminaries to be worked out the committee will be able to submit practically a complete report of their work, which will be followed by advertisement. Cedar park is one of the popular resorts near the city, and affords an excellent dancing pavilion, which will be put to use in the afternoon and evening. The report of the committee will appear in the next issue of the Labor Press.

In Jack London's latest production, "The War of the Classes," he says: "A capitalist such as Collis P. Huntington, and his name is legion, after a long life spent in buying the aid of countless legislatures, will wax virtuously wrathful and condemn in unmeasured terms 'the dangerous tendency of crying out to the government for aid' in the way of labor legislation. Without a quiver, a member of the capitalistic group will run tens of thousands of pitiful child laborers through his life-destroying cotton factories, and weep maudlin and constitutional tears over one seab hit in the back with a brick. He will drive a 'compulsory' free contract with an unorganized laborer on the basis of a starvation wage, saying, 'Take it or leave it,' knowing that to leave it means to die of hunger, and in the next breath, when the organizer entices that laborer into a union, will storm patriotically about the inalienable right of all men to work."

The complete victory of the San Francisco printers and pressmen for the eight-hour day is now a matter of history. With the exception of a few small offices the shorter work day is operating in the printing industry of the Golden Gate City, and has become a fixture. It can be cited as the most complete and neat victory ever won by a labor union. Not even a boycott was declared upon any of the establishments, not a dollar was asked for from the International strike fund, the locked-out members received sufficient money from the local to meet their expenses, and there was a good treasury left when the employers called for an armistice. And all this was done with Herbert George and the Citizens' Alliance upon the coaching line for the employing printers.

The Spokane Typographical Union has been outdone by the Ladies' Auxiliary in a manner that should make them feel like the proverbial "30" cents. With \$1500 in the treasury, and practically every member working, they declined to send a delegate to the annual convention of the International Typographical Union, which meets in Toronto August 8, while the Ladies' Auxiliary of Spokane will be represented at the convention of the Ladies International at the same time and place. Mrs. M. L. Laumer is the delegate chosen, and is herself a practical printer. Hereafter Spokane should be known in the records of the International Typographical Union by the standard set by the auxiliary of that local. The latter has simply been outdone a little by a band of brave women.

R. A. Harris, the man selected by Governor Chamberlain to represent the union labor interests upon the Good Roads Commission, is a member of the Multnomah Typographical Union, a conscientious and competent worker in whatever he undertakes and will perform the duties of his assignment with credit to himself and his friends.

At Saginaw, Mich., there has been a strike of the street railway employees for many months, and indications are that the fight will be continued for many months more, so far as the Railway Employees' Union is concerned. In pursuance to a vigorous demand from the strikers the In-

ternational Union has purchased three automobiles of the very best type in the market, capable of carrying twenty-four passengers, and if the venture proves a success nine more of the same pattern will be furnished. The machines are of the gasoline motor type, and their speed is eighteen miles an hour.

Harry Austin, delegate from Multnomah Typographical Union to the annual convention of the International Typographical Union, which convenes in the city of Toronto, August 8, left for the East last Saturday night over the Northern Pacific. Mr. Austin is a faithful and old-time member of No. 58, and the honor conferred upon him has been earned many times over by his labors in the interest of his craft.

JUDICIAL PREJUDICE.

Massachusetts Bench Against Union Shop Agreement.

A great deal of satisfaction has been expressed in the "great dailies" over an "important labor decision," recently rendered by the supreme court of Massachusetts. The death-knell of the union shop all over the country, if we are to believe the gleeful editors, has at last been sounded. The decision of the highest court of a state, even if erroneous, settles the law at least for that state.

These are the facts, briefly stated: A non-union shoemaker sued an officer of the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union for procuring his discharge from employment. This discharge had been procured under a contract made by the union with a certain firm, the firm having voluntarily agreed not to employ except members of the union, nor to retain in its service any non-members. The non-union man had no contract with the firm, and the latter was at liberty to discharge him at any time, with or without cause.

The suit involved the question of whether the union officer had the right to demand the discharge of the plaintiff, or whether he wrongfully injured him and is liable to damage for such injury.

The supreme court held that the union shop contract (upon the general legality of which it did not expressly and directly pass, as the question was not properly before it) of the union with the firm did not justify the defendant's demand for the plaintiff's discharge, and that the latter had been wrongfully deprived of a substantial right and was entitled to damages. Let us analyze the reasoning of the court's opinion. It says:

"We have no desire to put obstacles in the way of employees who are seeking by combination to obtain better conditions for themselves and their families. We have no doubt that laboring men have derived and may hereafter derive advantages from organization. We only say that under correct rules of law, and with a proper regard for the rights of individuals, labor unions cannot be permitted to drive men out of employment because they choose to work independently. If disagreement between those who furnish the capital and those who perform the labor employed in industrial enterprise are to be settled only by industrial wars it would give a great advantage to combinations of employees if they could be permitted by force to obtain a monopoly of the labor market."

What combination of workmen has contended for the right or privilege of obtaining "a monopoly of the labor market by force?" What bearing has this wise remark upon the case the court was considering? Had the defendant or the union used force to procure the discharge of the plaintiff?

Again the court says that "unions cannot be permitted to drive men out of employment because they choose to work independently." The word "drive" tends to confuse the mind and arouse prejudice. It has no place in judicial phraseology. There was no evidence of "driving" before the court. There was evidence that a firm which had made a union shop contract for its own benefit had been asked to comply with the terms of that contract and had done so. It had discharged a man it had agreed to discharge and had a perfect lawful right to discharge. It had been asked to do what it had a right to do, and according to the peculiar logic of the decision one man may not rightly ask another to do what the latter might do of his own motion

with absolute impunity.

Verily, we are getting some startling legal propositions and theories in these labor cases, propositions that, as the chief justice of the New York court of appeals has frankly stated, would not be entertained for a moment in commercial cases.

Will the courts say that even one man may not ask the discharge of another or refuse to work with him, and that is not competition but monopoly? This would be absurd, for it would imply that a man can refuse to work for certain reasons only, and not for any and all reasons or without any. It would imply the destruction of a great part of the workmen's freedom, but if one man may refuse to work with a non-union man, why may not several do so in concert?

Why may workmen not make a union shop contract, and after making such a contract, ask that the employer comply with it? The Massachusetts court gives no reasons that will stand analysis; it refers us to no recognized principle; it tells us arbitrarily that this is, and that is not, "competition."

The decision, regrettable as it is, will not injure the union shop principle, first, because it does not say that union shop agreements are illegal per se, and such agreements can continue to be made even in Massachusetts; second, because in any event the union shop can and will be secured and maintained even without expressed written contracts.

In Illinois union shop contracts have been declared void and unlawful. There has been no change in the situation. Where employers and employees find the union shop advantageous, they establish it one way or another, judicial obiter dicta to the contrary notwithstanding.

The union shop is based on economic advantage and mutual interest. It gives the employers stability and efficiency and responsibility. The "open shop," where it is not a humbug, a cloak for the sweatshop, is, in the long run, wasteful, because it means friction and lack of responsibility.

Strong, well-organized labor has no occasion to trouble itself about anti-union shop decisions. There is more fallacy in them than practical danger.—Samuel Gompers, in Federationist.

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