

The People Will Elect.

The Federated Trades Council of Portland, the central body which represents several thousands of voters in the state, principally in Portland though, has issued a circular letter serving notice on prospective candidates for the legislature that the wish of the people in the matter of electing United States senators by direct vote must be followed out. This means that organized labor will take a hand in politics, and woe be unto the candidate who fails to make good on the proposition of electing senators by direct vote as now before the people of Oregon.

The people have long since taken the notion into their heads that they want cleaner and better politics. They propose that the disgraceful scenes that have been witnessed in the election of United States senators by the legislature shall cease. They now have a way to remedy the evil, although a poor one, and they propose to use it. The candidate for legislative honors will be compelled to abide by the decision of the people. Why not? Have not the masses for years demanded the direct election of United States senators? The candidate who fails to include this essen-

tial plank in his platform will find that he was not in the race when the primary ballots are counted.

The Federated Trades Council need have no fear but that the people will attend to this important matter at the proper time. The ultimatum issued by the Council, however, serves to make the issue stronger.—Brownsville Times.

Takes Fall Out of Parryites.

State Commissioner McCormick, of Indiana, who is conceded to be one of the most efficient composers of labor difficulties in the United States, discussing the causes of strikes in his state, takes a hard fall out of the Parryites as follows: "If the employer would begin to think that there is another side to the employment of men than his bank account; if he would think that the workman has a wife and children; gets just as cold in winter and equally hungry; if he would think that in the elevation of his men lies his greater gain, the conflicts would cease. Ninety per cent of the strikes are due to the fact that the employer has not been fair, or has utterly refused to treat with his men. It is not usually a question of wages, but of humanity."

A. L. MOHLER.

Omaha Western Laborer Eulogizes a Former Portlander.

The recent banquet given by the Omaha Commercial Club to Mr. Mohler, vice-president and general manager of the Union Pacific railway, was a brilliant testimonial indicative of the esteem in which he is personally held by the business people of this community. The arrangements and decorations were clever in design and most appropriate for the occasion and were no doubt fully appreciated by the guest of the evening, who fully deserved the honors extended to him.

Like the late S. H. H. Clark, whose memory and services will always be revered by Union Pacific employees, Mr. Mohler has risen from the ranks of practical railroad life and knows it by experience from A to Z. This fact has gained for him the respect and confidence of every employee on this great road and all its branches from the chief engineer to the apprentice boy in the shops.

Mr. Mohler came to us at a critical time when, if the truth must be told, demoralization, unrest and bitterness existed between the men and management, which has now, happily, passed away. In a short time under his administration order came out of chaos, quiet and contentment took the place of dissatisfaction and ill feeling, and since then everything has gone on as merry as a marriage bell. To bring about this condition of affairs was a task for a giant, but Mr. Mohler proved himself equal to the task and the enormous increase in the earnings of the road is evidence of the grand results of his methods and management.

When Mr. Mohler came here he brought with him a good reputation—or, rather, it had preceded him; a reputation for fairness and generous and honest dealing with his employees on the Oregon Short Line, of which part of the system he had been president and general manager. A good reputation may not travel as fast over a railroad line as a bad one does, but Mr. Mohler's good one traveled fast enough to gain for him the entire confidence of the men before he took charge, and his treatment of them since that time has, we believe, captured their hearts as well—but, be that as it may, we believe that there is not a more loyal or efficient corps of railroad employees on any railroad in the United States, and we doubt whether they are equaled today. The Western Laborer has been in pretty close touch with these employees, and the writer thinks he knows whereof he speaks.

Another pleasing circumstance that has attracted our attention is the absence of a heretofore familiar item in the daily papers announcing that "a committee of five had arrived in Omaha with a 'grievance' to lay before the general manager for adjustment. The gentlemen are stopping at the Arcade." Such a notice rarely or never meets the eye now, which is an indication that the occupation of the "grievance" monger of the K. of L. is gone; and it is a good indication. The absence of these ostentatious notices in the papers is an evidence that there are no "grievances" to adjust, or if there are any that they are adjusted in friendly conferences, such as was lately held at headquarters between the officials and representative men of the different departments without any badges or fuss and feathers in the proceedings.

This common sense method adopted by Mr. Mohler is a good one not only to adjust bickerings, but to prevent "grievances" from arising, and he should have the hearty co-operation of the men in support of the system.

The Western Laborer has not a reputation for practicing flattery toward anyone, great or small, because it generally speaks as it thinks of men and events; and we therefore pay no compliment to Mr. Mohler but what he has well earned from every employee in the service of the company and from the people of this community in particular; and we here present a homely simile to illustrate our idea.

Let us suppose two police officers on different "beats" or districts. One has a remarkable record for the number of arrests he has made, the heads he has broken and for his punitive vigilance generally; but on his "beat" burglaries and hold-ups are of frequent occurrence and he keeps the telephone wires hot with "hurry-up calls" for assistance to suppress riot and disorder and the general turbulence of his district. The officer

on the other "beat" or district has scarcely any arrests or clubbings to his "credit," but no housebreakings or hold-ups occur in the district committed to his charge, and he never sends in a riot call for assistance because he has no need to do so, and the residents of his district sleep in peace and security. Now, which of these officers is most profitable to his city employers and best fitted to perform the duties entrusted to him? It will at once be decided that the second officer, the man with brains, good judgment and vigilance, is the most valuable official, if he never had an arrest or clubbing to his "credit," rather than the brainless ass, however fussy and "active," who is always in trouble and turmoil.

It was the qualities of brain and good judgment Mr. Harriman and the Union Pacific directory sought in a general manager, and they found both in A. L. Mohler, who, according to the increased earnings, has "delivered the goods" without oppressing the employees, and for their sake we wish him long life and good health to continue what he has so well begun.—Omaha Western Laborer.

"Class Legislation."

The recent decision handed down by the appellate division of the New York supreme court, declaring that the law which prohibits the insertion in a contract between an employer and an employee of a clause forbidding the latter to join a trade union is unconstitutional, was as usual based upon the broad assumption that such laws are in the nature of "class legislation." This assumption is probably well founded; but if the principle involved in the decision of the court were applied to all the laws in existence, none but the Ten Commandments and their immediate offshoots on the statute books would stand the test of constitutionality. As civilized society is now organized, and doubtless will be for ages to come, men will always be divided into classes. Hence the great majority of laws enacted by our congress and legislatures must of necessity be in the nature of "class legislation," seeing that the interests of the various social classes are nearly always at variance, and that therefore but few laws will be accepted as just to all classes. If the classes into which human society is divided were of equal strength and social prestige and influence, the problem of human government would, of course, be greatly simplified. But as society now stands any law enacted for the protection of the socially weak against the socially strong is foredoomed to a troublesome and precarious existence. This is so because of the co-ordinate branches of our government, the judicial has always been, and still is, the least under the control of the plain people, i. e., the weaker classes of society. The results of this are seen in the frequency with which labor laws have been outlawed by the courts, while laws favoring the trusts enjoy the proverbial longevity of the cat.—Coast Seamen's Journal.

Give the Portland Musicians a big boost at their mammoth Vaudeville show next Wednesday evening at the Marquam.

Remembers His Friends.

In the November landslide in New York, Michael I. Doherty was elected sheriff of Kings county, Brooklyn. Doherty is secretary of the Brooklyn Central Labor Union and a delegate from the Musicians' Union. His salary is \$12,000 a year, and he has appointed the following assistants: Under sheriff, George J. Phillips, president of the Central Labor Union and a delegate of the Hatters' Union; salary, \$6000. Chief clerk, James Cullen, treasurer of the Central Labor Union and national secretary of the Metal Polishers' Union, salary \$2500. Warden of the jail, Maurice Carmody, sergeant-at-arms of the C. L. U., and a delegate of the Hatters' Union; salary \$3000. Deputy warden, James J. Flynn, business agent of the Metal Polishers' Union; salary \$2000. People are wondering whether the capitalists will obtain deputy sheriffs in case of a big strike.

See the champion Highland Fling dancers at the Plasterers' Ball next Wednesday evening.

What Are Living Wages.

A living wage ought to be sufficient to secure for every able-bodied, right-minded, sober and industrious working man:

1. Enough to keep not only himself, but also a family, in a healthy state of mind and body.
 2. Enough to permit all his children to take advantage of the public school system.
 3. Enough to enable him to acquire a home of his own.
 4. Enough to permit him to accumulate a bank account sufficient to furnish some security against sickness and old age.
- Is there any one prepared to say any working man, no matter how humble his work may be, ought to be content with less? Can we boast of our American freedom if we know that there are not only a few men, but millions of them, whose wage is so meager that it is an absolute impossibility for them to have a home or educate a family?

The Pressmen's Union of San Francisco has donated \$2500 to the Los Angeles printers' eight-hour fight.

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