

Portland Labor Press

Published every Thursday by the Central Labor Council of Portland and vicinity under the direction of the following Board of Control: R. G. Reuter, president, representing Building Trades Council; A. W. Lawrence, secretary, representing Printing Trades Council; Wm. Mackenzie, representing Metal Trades Council; W. H. Fitzgerald, representing Labor Union Council; O. A. Ottowson, representing Water Front Council; O. D. Fortie, representing Brewery Trades Council. Board meets first and third Mondays at the Labor Press office, Labor Temple, at 8 p. m.

C. M. Ryerson, Managing Editor, Office third floor Labor Temple, 270 1/2 Alder street, Portland, Oregon.

Subscription, \$1 in advance per year; 50 cents, one cent per week.

Entered at the postoffice at Portland, Ore., as second class mail matter.

Official publication for the Central Labor Council of Portland and vicinity and the Oregon State Federation of Labor.

Thursday, April 13, 1911



THE CONVICT QUESTION.

To employ convicts so that their products shall not be placed on the market in competition with the products of free labor is a problem that is receiving the serious consideration of those in authority at Salem.

While there is no law directly providing for the employment by the state of idle men in the penitentiary, Governor West, with characteristic aggressiveness, proposes to undertake their profitable employment without violating any law, and if possible inaugurate a plan that will eventually enlarge to include all the convicts and remove them permanently from competition with free labor.

The present contract with the Lowenberg-Goings company stove works calls for a limited number of convicts, whereas there are many more, and the number is increasing by reason of the influx of workmen, many of whom are doubtless brought here by the alluring announcements of so-called boosters who consciously or unconsciously conspire with employing interests to keep wages down by providing ample competition for the jobs. Workmen come with barely enough to get here and failing to find employment, seek diversion and succor in ways that land them in prison, though actually no more deserving of being there than those responsible for getting them here.

"These men must work," says the governor. From the standpoint of humanity as well as public economy, they must not be idle. To inaugurate some plan whereby they may be employed directly and entirely for the benefit of the state institutions is the idea that is taking form among the prison authorities and that cannot help but meet with the enthusiastic approval of working people generally and the public at large.

It is the hope of the prison officials, headed by Governor West, to begin in the near future to employ idle convicts in the manufacture of articles that can be used or consumed by the state institutions and not be placed on the market for sale. Just what may be undertaken first is not yet announced, but there are a great many things that men can make without any great outlay for special equipment. True, some things in the way of tools and machinery and possibly buildings will be needed soon, but it is confidently believed that a favorable showing can be made with such assistance as may largely be secured by voluntary action. Once started, it is confidently believed the plan will command a degree of public approval that will early make it permanent and complete.

That this plan of employing convicts is at once the best from every point of view is the belief of leading economists everywhere. Andrew Furuseth, that walking encyclopedia of industrial economy, opposed the working of convicts on the road because he thought the proper way was to set them to making things for the state institutions and that would in no way be offered for sale. He said free labor should build roads and would if the convicts did not.

It was but a few years ago that the problem of what to do with the convicts was deemed so difficult of solution that the state finally farmed them out for 40 cents a day with board and keep thrown in. The price is ridiculously low. To say they earn no more is insanely absurd. Go and see them work, think what free labor is paid and judge for yourself.

That this effort will receive the enthusiastic support of organized labor goes without saying. Now that there is genuine initiative by those in authority to really solve the convict labor problem in Oregon, let it be upheld with vigor and enthusiasm.

USE OF THE REFERENDUM

The Referendum should not be lightly used. It should not be used to gratify local or community spites. It should not be used in matters that could be settled by limiting in the future the powers of the Legislature.

Let us go slow on referendums, or else the first thing we know the power will be more difficult to exercise in the future on something of vital importance. An initiative measure to increase the percentage necessary to secure a referendum will stand more chance of carrying if we permit the referendum to be used in a vicious manner.

The Oregon University appropriations were once held up by the referendum. In 1908 the appropriations were confirmed by the people by less than 4000 majority. Organized labor supported the

university then and saved it. Since that time, however, the recognition of organized labor by the university, in its building operations especially, has not been such as might be expected from a grateful faculty. Now there is coming another referendum, and we will probably hear some frantic appeals from some very good people to save the University of Oregon. Organized labor can do it, and probably will, but to get kicked in the shins for saving a person from drowning gets tiresome after a while. There are too many "frat houses" put up by the fraternities of the university that leaned lovingly on scab labor, to secure from union men that full measure of devotion we will be asked to display presently.

WHAT TEDDY SAID.

Roosevelt's speech at the Armory last Wednesday night was an endorsement of the Oregon system of popular government. It was a straight talk. He has learned much since he went to Africa. He has lost much of his old habit of hammering at men; he is beginning to hammer at the system that rewards men for betraying the people.

He praised the Oregon system of electing United States Senators, and says it is much better than the system they have in New York; so much better that he wants all the States to have it. He is for the initiative and referendum and recall; balks a little at recall of judges, but he'll get over that. We have not recalled any judges in Oregon. The people have the power, but common power carries a feeling of common responsibility.

One of the best parts of Roosevelt's speech was that in which he advised the growlers and reactionaries to quit their foolishness and be men; to get in and help make the best of a system that has come to stay, instead of standing across the road and throwing bricks. The gentlemen in the front row at the Armory didn't applaud that part of the speech, for they belong to the brick-throwing brigade.

Roosevelt made some good points for the "Short Ballot." We elect too many of our public servants. Elect a very few, make them responsible, and then when anything goes wrong we can put our finger on the responsible man. Let the few who are elected appoint the other public servants, but leave with the people full power of recall over elective and appointive officers.

MUSIC IN THE AIR.

Why should the policemen of this city be compelled to work their eight-hour shift in the regular way and then go home and jump into their band uniforms and parade about the town and furnish music for the edification of a gang of political pirates such as were assembled to meet the honorable Teddy?

Isn't the head of the local police department aware of the fact that we have musicians in this town that make their living by furnishing music for such occasions?

For his information we wish to say that there are a considerable number of them. They are men of families. They own their homes and pay their share of the taxation necessary to keep up the police force, and they don't like to see this aforesaid force compelled to "butt in" where they do not belong.

You can bet your bottom dollar there will be one great big perfectly good howl go up if this sort of thing is not stopped.

We rather expect Simon and his gang to furnish policemen to protect strikebreakers, but when it comes to sending out the police band for the benefit of a few favorite politicians who have been chosen to bask in the reflected glory of T. R. at the price of 10 bones per bask it seems like adding insult to injury.

If you need a band, hire a good union band and pay the price, and maybe the men who compose it will feel more like punting up when it comes time to pay taxes.

PREJUDICE EXISTS.

Organized labor is always handicapped by the prejudice against it. When the Times office was blown up by gas from its leaky and rotten plant in Los Angeles last October the charge was scattered far and wide that the labor unions had blown it up with dynamite. There was no evidence at the time as to what was the cause, but the people who do not understand the power of the telegraph monopoly believed it.

Months have passed. A small army of detectives have scoured the country for evidence connecting the explosion with some union man. The public and secret rewards offered have been enough to tempt fake confessions from carefully drilled perjurers if there had been the slightest hook or splinter to hang their cooked evidence upon.

The natural evidence easily obtained, stumbled over at every turn, is so strong against the dynamite theory that Otis, with all his money and all his unprincipled hatred of organized labor, and all his anarchy, cannot bring enough evidence into court to convict a cat of licking butter. Still the lie goes forth that "the labor unions blew up the Los Angeles Times."

It shows an intense prejudice against organized labor, a prejudice which by its action day by day and far and wide, is gradually being reduced. The thing to do

is to keep on organizing and educating. The thing to do is to put none but union men on guard in all public positions, high or low, and to strive for those fundamental measures which shall give to the people more power, and to government a more truly representative character.

Last year an imported union-buster, almost direct from Russia, came to Los Angeles as adjunct-general to Infamous Otis. "Der unions must vent," was his declaration. Twenty thousand union men paraded there to show him they were not going. In a few days 35,000 people will parade to show they are still coming. If he keeps up his Russianizing of Los Angeles maybe there will be 50,000 next year.

In Oakland several strikebreakers have been fined for carrying concealed weapons, disorderly conduct, etc. Maybe the election of Stitt Wilson in adjoining city of Berkeley has made the police court bunch sit up and take notice that the workmen can use their ballots.

Two Harbors, Minn., is a little city that recently ruined itself by electing four out of seven councilmen and a mayor who were union men. The main thing is that they are members of organized labor. The hint should be sufficient to party managers.

Fifty "open shops" in Los Angeles have been found to be dangerous fire traps. Strange how the lovers of "industrial freedom" always seek the poorest buildings, the poorest pay and the longest hours for their employes.

The bakers of San Francisco have under consideration a demand for eight hours. The open shops of Los Angeles and Portland have the characteristic 12 to 18.

The enforcement of the six-day week for cooks in Spokane has given rise to a demand for more help and greatly increased the membership of the union.

Refuse to listen to the explanations of a clerk or proprietor who offers you some union product that has no label. It is a fake or he is a faker.

Abe Reuf, the California ex-railroad political boss, is preaching morality to the convicts. He will own the state penitentiary before long.

The miner's life is in the hands of the stock gambler who cares more for dividends than safety. The awful murdering goes on and on.

We are going to put the sign on the door of the Labor Press, "Enter without knocking, and remain under the same rule."

Tailors of Holyoke, Mass., recently went out for increased pay. Four days and the ship came in for full demands.

The Typographical Unions in Sacramento and San Jose are demanding an increase of scale to \$27 a week.

The label means more to organized labor than the boycott, for it is a terrible boycott that never sleeps.

The label means that you don't employ scabs when you get it on anything you or yours buy or use.

A cigarmaker is mayor of Flint, Mich., a city that casts over 14,000 votes at a local election.

Another land fraud town is being boosted in southeastern Oregon.

The label breaks up lockouts by the bosses.

The label wins strikes that never start.

IMPERATIVE.

Stockton News Advocate. The recall of the judiciary is giving the soulless corporations much concern of late and it is their last stand for control of the masses.

"Give us the judges to censor the laws of the country," say the corporations, "and we care not who enacts them."

It has been truly said: "Under our system of written constitutions the judiciary has made congresses and legislatures subordinate to judges as factors in government. It has made the people themselves also subordinate. There is no limitation whatever upon the political power of the judiciary—which is vested in the last resort in five out of nine supreme court judges—except the people's power of amending constitutions; and this power is so hedged in with limitations that even a small minority of the people can prevent action by a large majority."

If even the semblance of democratic government is to be maintained in this country, the application of the recall to the judiciary is imperative.

NOT FOR SALE.

The coroner of Milwaukee, Wis., has recently been able to bring home to several large employing corporations the realization of the fact that they were killing men in their operations without any necessity for it whatever. Scores of men have been killed this year for lack of simple protective devices. In the railroad yard heretofore "unavoidable accidents" have been found to be due to criminal negligence. Coroner jury verdicts have a value in the open market in most large cities, but in Milwaukee they are not for sale.

You hear less of "no politics in the union" since the more recent court decisions against labor. Until labor recognizes political discussion as a necessary part of the evolution of its economic organization, their advance will be slow.

SHORT SHIFTS.

By Alfred D. Cridge.

Don't monkey with the referendum is a sign that should not be painted out.

The average farmer is "sore" at the increased taxes he recently came through with.

Among the initiative measures before the people are some awful fakes. The Public Utilities Commission has the earmarks of one.

Before his election Congressman Lafferty promised to introduce a national initiative amendment in the House. Hope he hasn't forgotten.

Detectives have found out that Portland has lots of municipal rottenness. Next thing we know they will have nailed a Reuf on their discovery.

The Oregonian has been publishing some short communications on taxation that indicate people are thinking about those tax receipts and comparing notes.

All large cities have labor troubles. It is a sign of progress Portland has sidestepped to a large degree, but the clouds hang low. After a storm the grass grows.

What between the initiative measures and the direct primary, advisory vote on presidential nominees and Statement One on a U. S. Senator, Oregon will be a warm state next year.

Tax measures are being discussed in the country schoolhouses and granges. There is going to be one vast school on taxation in Oregon from and after date, with tens of thousands in the classes.

The workmen of Portland are somewhat shy of a fight, but if they are kicked into the ring and jumped on they will be badly scared at first, but when they get a few body punches can limber up amazing.

The Journal says a few things about taxation lately, too. Perhaps it will send a commission of its own to British Columbia, as one correspondent has suggested, to investigate the tax laws of Vancouver and Victoria.

That there will be a measure submitted to the people of Multnomah county in 1912 taking all taxes off improvements and personal property and placing them on franchises and privileges and land values is a certainty. That much we are sure of. Hurrah!

THE EIGHTH WONDER OF THE WORLD.

Ladies' Garment Worker.

The eighth wonder of the world, for which sages and philosophers have looked in vain through the misty centuries of the past, has been found. Its discovery was not heralded through the press, nor has it caused excitement among antiquarians; for it is a modern product.

In one sense, it stands pre-eminent over the other seven; for it is unnecessary to travel to some remote corner of the world to see it. It can be seen in every large center of commerce, and is so common as to attract no undue attention.

About it there is an air of mystery, an indescribable something which causes one to pause and gaze in profound wonder, commiseration, pity or abhorrence upon it.

The eighth wonder of the world is the creature of one of nature's freaks. Not in physical outlines nor intelligence, but in an abnormal development of selfish sentiment and a dwarfing of the powers of discernment. It is more familiarly known as the non-union workman; in its higher developed state it is known as the "scab." It is the workman who lives alone in the present, whose powers of vision are so defective as to prevent him from seeing into the future. He accepts the fruits of the labors of his fellowmen and remains deaf to their earnest appeals to assist in procuring what he is exacting and receiving.

That he has existed in all ages is borne out by the Scriptures, for to whom else do they refer when they say, "And I have given you a land for which ye did not labor and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them. Of the vineyards and olive yards which ye planted not, do ye eat."

The union has given to the non-union workman many things for which he labored not. It has given to him that degree of industrial liberty which he enjoys today, and he "smites the hand which has succored him."

Ghouls rob the dead. The non-union workman not only robs the living, but assists in fastening the chains of industrial slavery upon helpless women and little children.

UNION-MADE WRITING PAPER.

Organized labor has inaugurated a campaign against the American Writing Paper Company, of Holyoke, Mass., a corporation capitalized at \$22,000,000, controlling some twenty-three mills and associated with a number of other large paper companies who control the paper trade in what is known as the fine papers. Deplorable working conditions are said to exist in the plants of this concern, and efforts are being made to organize the employes. There is a union label water-mark paper on the market, and our members who are affiliated with fraternal, benevolent, political and religious organizations can be of immense service in the fight against the Holyoke company by tendering their influence in having the union product used wherever possible.

COULTER, THE IRREPRESSIBLE.

Peoples Forum, Sunday evening, April 16th, at the Medical Building Auditorium, F. E. Coulter, the irrepressible, who spread the doctrine of the Oregon way through twenty states and provinces last year, will speak. The exact subject will be given in the daily papers; but when Coulter speaks he says something that livens up the situation. Things are doing in Portland these days. Come and hear Coulter, and do not let any knocker turn you away from the Medical building by telling you there will be no meeting.

Painters in Brooklyn, N. Y., are demanding a new scale of 50 cents an hour for an eight-hour day.

Man's love of God is wrong unless it makes him love others.

The Grange

By E. G. Barger.

We are beginning to appreciate the fact of the farmers' significance when we dig down to get results, and more particularly to those who are organized for their own social and material benefit. I believe the farmer truly reciprocates this awakening, and is fully alive to the benefits to be gained by closer contact with his fellow workers in the cities. In the State of Oregon the Grange is a prime factor in the farmer's life and a stepping stone to a higher standard of living, as well as a marked educational institution.

To any member of organized labor who has the pleasure of attending meetings of the Grange it is at once apparent that they are working for exactly the same ends and for the same purposes, only each has their different methods of advance, and are following other courses.

Now it does seem a great pity that two such organizations, each representing a great factor in the world and working to further one purpose, should not be more interested in the other's aims and successful attainments, and get together on a more solid footing, where we can all work with unity.

I find the Grangers to be very anxious to learn more of their city brothers, and are anxious to find out how organized labor stands on various matters of vital interest to both; it seems to me that organized labor would be taking a big step forward by holding at least one open meeting a month or so through their central councils to members of the Grange who would be interested in the work of more closely uniting the two great forces. I think any member of organized labor will be always welcomed to the meetings of the Grange during their open lecture hours, which are generally held in the afternoon on the day of their monthly meetings. There are generally matters which come under discussion, and which organized labor is vitally interested in, and can be of great assistance if properly represented.

Wherever I have visited in the country communities around Portland I have found of late that the people are giving many matters much deep thought, whereas, in the past, it seemed that no one had time for the other fellow's ideas or business, and that each lived in his or her little old world alone, worrying over one's own difficulties and glorying alone in one's own successes.

It is getting about time when those who represent the people as a whole proceed on entirely different lines than in the past, and must soon develop this idea of helping to better the other fellow rather than the old time-worn idea of every fellow for himself. The people are awakening, and will arise as a unit, and it is well to be prepared to make the situation brighter and more universal for good and not for evil.

Was out around Estacada and Garfield Saturday and Sunday.

Report everybody busy out that way and plenty to do, so no necessity for idle men.

The boys were improving Garfield Grange hall and grounds Saturday, and now have a neat iron fence around the grounds, and the lawn sowed in clover.

The road supervisor is building a new road above Estacada, so as to lower the grade, and bed with crushed rock. The work is nearly finished, and looks good to the uphill farmers.

They have a rock crusher out in that district, and gather the rock off the neighboring fields for the roads.

The boys in Garfield Grange say "Bro." Mason, of Hood River, is a hot number, and strictly to the good. Well, we know that, and will be glad to see him any time at our central council. We ought to have him in the senate to get some results worth while.

House Bill No. 82, which prohibits the sale of convict-made goods within the state, unless they are labeled convict-made, applies to goods which may have been made years ago. The bill will go into effect as a law about May 10, and the merchants will be wise to fire out the truck. No one but a slouch will wear such stuff made by slaves.

J. W. Hays, secretary-treasurer of the International Typographical Union, with headquarters at Indianapolis, Ind., will be the guest of the local typographical union April 26-28. Mr. Hays will be on his way to San Francisco to make arrangements for the convention of the union, to be held in the Bay City next August. The executive committee of Multnomah Typographical Union No. 58 is perfecting plans for the entertainment of Mr. Hays, and as old Multnomah never does things by halves, it is certain that the distinguished guest will always remember the reception and entertainment tendered him by No. 58.

On the 8th Mr. Alfred D. Cridge, of the Labor Press, spoke to the Hillsboro Grange on "Taxation." The Grangers recognize that tax measures of great importance are going to be before the people at the next election. On the 15th Mr. Cridge speaks to the Grangers of Yamhill along the same line. They want to know, and from questions asked they are going to find out, why taxes are high on the workers in city and country.

In view of some recent court decisions this paper wants to plead guilty of contempt of court; a contempt so profound that you can cut it with an ax. If it is wrong to criticize the judiciary it is a far greater wrong for the judiciary to lay themselves open to criticism.—Bellevue Journal.

Efforts are being made in Spokane to secure from the building trades a refusal to handle product of unfair machine shops.

If you would reap a harvest of love, sow the seeds of kindness.

Bargains for Easter Week

Commencing Monday we shall place on sale our new, fresh, up-to-date stock of Ladies' Waists, in silk, linen and lingerie; the newest ideas in neckwear; ladies' silk, linen and cotton hosiery—all these will be offered at special Easter prices.

We have just received our Spring and Summer lines of Men's Underwear and Hosiery, which will be included in the sale.

Compare Our Prices With Those in the High Rent-Paying District.

Becker, McLoughlin & Sweeney

441 Washington Street. Special Prices on Warner's Rust-Proof and Thomson's Glove-Fitting Corsets.