

MRS. EHRGOTT DELIVERS AN INTERESTING ADDRESS

Mrs. Sarah B. F. Ehr Gott delivered a very interesting illustrated lecture Tuesday evening at the W. O. W. Hall, on the East Side. C. E. S. Wood introduced the speaker with one of his strongest short speeches. Mrs. Ehr Gott exhibited pictures on a large screen of the leading characters of the Los Angeles trial.

She pointed out that evolution means growth, and that history should not only relate but foretell. Society has evolved from slavery to feudalism, and is now in a transient state through capitalism to higher conditions. Privilege is the basis of all causes for the downfall of civilizations from the earliest dawn of history to the present time. The Los Angeles difficulty started twenty years ago when the Times of that city defied the Typographical Union. Harrison G. Otts was not a fair opponent. He made a most determined and vicious fight against all forms of organized labor, and year in and year out kept up misrepresentation and virulent abuse of every person connected with organized labor.

The speaker forcefully presented the idea that labor must organize since capital had done so. The workingman had only his hands and his brain power. If he did not organize he was lost. The closed shop was the only way that the worker could maintain his organization successfully.

"Labor implicitly believed McNamara innocent," she declared. Public sentiment was strongly in favor of them in Los Angeles and the big interests were well aware of it. The people were simply stunned when the confession was made, and the reaction undoubtedly resulted in the defeat of Harriman for mayor. Large interests with grafts unprecedented in the history of Los Angeles at stake needed that confession when they got it.

In closing, Mrs. Ehr Gott reminded the employers of labor that the conviction of two men in the destruction of life in the Times building did not settle the conflict between labor and privilege. The great issue between privilege or monopoly on the one hand, and labor and justice on the other, would continue. The people demand justice, the workers want justice.

"You have only pulled off the head of the weed when you have punished a few who advocate violence," she said, "and you have not stamped out the struggle. Unless justice is done and capital is deprived of privileges, the struggle in one form or another will continue." The weed produces more flowers and more seed.

"All violence is abortive and reacts on those who use it. The workers should use their strongest weapon, which is not violence in any form, but simply power of folding their arms."

She pointed out that in all lands the people were throwing off oppression, and that the scenes in Los Angeles were not in any sense conclusive but merely symptoms of the conflict raging in civilization today. The general strike was endorsed by her as more effective than violence or the use of the ballot.

There is a million dollars at work greasing the skids for the launching of the Aldrich central bank scheme, the money trust of all the trusts. Congressmen and Senators are the skids.

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BUTTONWORKERS FIGHTING.

Magnificent Battle for Living Wage Still Raging in Muscatine, Iowa.

MUSCATINE, IA.—This city has been in the throes of a lockout, and later a strike, involving the pearl button factories, for nearly a year. Notwithstanding that at one time it was thought a settlement had been reached, the owners of the factories violated their part of the agreement, and, as a consequence, the employees rebelled.

A few days ago one of the news-gathering associations sent Neal Jones to this city, and as a result, five illustrated articles are to appear in a large number of papers distributed throughout the country. In the first article, which has just appeared, the writer says:

"Two thousand people, mostly button-cutters and their families, have left the town. Fifty small merchants are pinched for money. Men and women are going underfed and pale-faced children are shivering for lack of proper clothing. And all on account of nine bull-headed button manufacturers. These nine manufacturers have turned the little corn belt city upside down, and for many months have held Muscatine in a state of civil war. Many of the people carry guns. Everybody here knows it is a downright shame, and now, at the eleventh hour, figuratively, they are awakening to the fact that the manufacturers themselves are almost entirely to blame.

"These manufacturers say that there is no way to settle the trouble, but there is always a way, just as in the Des Moines Railway strike, and the people of Muscatine who have previously backed the manufacturers, are beginning to realize that the manufacturers are goldbricking them. The manufacturers have bluffed their way through, inspiring the police, sheriff, and hired Chicago thugs to burst the heads of tottering old men. They have offered no remonstrance to the jailing of women and girls, deluded through some strange process of reasoning into believing that brutality will bring the strikers to time. It is amazing to note that even here and there can be found otherwise reputable citizens of Muscatine, who believe that this sort of anarchy is the way to settle a labor dispute.

"Yet good citizens are found encouraging lawlessness, and even the dignified Commercial Club has passed resolutions heaping embers on the flames. Men who stand high commercially, professionally and socially have so far forgotten themselves as to encourage, in the name of the law, crimes that ordinarily send men to the penitentiary. A crime is a crime, whether it is committed by a button manufacturer, a patrolman, a police judge or a sheriff, and the sooner Muscatine realizes that they are hypnotized into condoning worse acts than any they are able to lay at the door of labor, the sooner it will regain its feet. They have only to ask themselves just how much more consideration should be extended a button manufacturer than the average business man, and the strike will end."

ULTIMATE END OF "SYNDICALISM"

Chairman of British Labor Party Severely Criticizes Policy of Syndicalists.

WASHINGTON.—In the October number of the Socialist Review, J. Ramsay MacDonald, chairman of the English Labor Party, says:

Let us suppose that the strike is succeeding. The authorities will try to break it, and that will lead to the employment of force. Troops will be mobilized. So the syndicalist cannot avoid his revolution even if he tried. The old revolutionist knew his business, faced the facts, laid his plans; the new revolutionist does none of these necessary things. Let us assume that the transport services are held up, that the markets and shops are closed, that the workshops are deserted. What follows? The syndicalists make the fatal mistake of calculating that time will be on their side. Exactly the opposite. Time will work against them.

However complete the general strike is to be, it is only to affect, even to begin with, a majority. There will be a minority holding the same opinions as were expressed by the suburban dwellers during the recent railway troubles. They will represent the resistance which society must always offer to sudden change. Then there will be a great number of men who will become unemployed without in any way sympathizing with the strike or its purposes. The striker, every day that passes, becomes, in the eyes of an increasing number of people, not the savior but the enemy of society.

His assumption is that as the days go by society will become more helpless in his hands; the fact is that after the first two or three days, society will begin to organize itself against him, because society as well as the individual is moved by the will to live. The fact is, that the assumption of a progressive paralysis is false. Society will at once take steps to recover command of itself. It will not yield to the general strike; it will resist it.

On the day of his first triumph, when he declares his strike, the syndicalist signs his own death warrant and puts the noose about his own neck. The new revolution which, syndicalism and its advocates of the Industrial Workers of the World contemplate has avoided none of the errors and pitfalls of the old, but it has added to them a whole series of its own. It is a mere escapade of the nursery mind. It is the product of the creative intelligence of the man who is impatient because it takes the earth 24 hours to wheel 'round.

Wherever syndicalism has raised its Caliban head, it has declared war on political industrialism. The hospitality of the Socialist movement has offered so generously to all kinds of cranks and scoundrels because they professed to be in revolt against the existing order has already done our movement much

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harm. Let it not add syndicalism to the already too numerous vipers which, in the kindness of its heart, it is warming on its hearthstone."

CONGRESS RECONVENES.

Long Session Opens—Labor Bills to Receive Consideration at Once.

WASHINGTON.—The Congress of the United States convened in regular session Monday, December 4. The bills in which labor is interested were all introduced during the extra session and referred to appropriate committees. The eight-hour bill is on the calendar, having been favorably reported by the Labor Committee. In the closing hours of the extra session a resolution was passed authorizing an investigation of the Taylor and other kindred efficiency systems, and in accordance therewith meetings have been held at Watertown, Boston and New York and partial investigations made. A hearing before the Judiciary Committee of the House on the Clayton contempt of court bill was held on December 7.

CONTEMPT BILL HEARING.

WASHINGTON.—Hearings have been begun before the House Committee on Judiciary on the bill introduced by Representative Clayton of Alabama, chairman of the committee, to define and punish contempts of court. The Clayton measure contemplates the division of contempts of court into two classes, direct and indirect, and specifies that contempts committed during the sitting of the court or of the judge in chambers, or a refusal to obey the mandate of a lawful subpoena, or to refuse to submit books and documents, and the misbehavior of officials of court are classed as direct contempts; all other offenses against the court are classed as indirect contempts, the accused in such cases being allowed a jury trial. The hearings are to be continued.

STRIKE LOOKS BRIGHTER.

From every quarter comes favorable reports of the great strike on the Harriman lines and Illinois Central. While it is impossible to give in detail the exact situation, yet, from all information at hand the position which the strikers hold is exceedingly good. J. W. Kline, president of the International Brotherhood of Blacksmiths and Helpers, in nominal charge of the strike, says: "The strike on the Harriman lines and Illinois Central goes on; the prospects look much brighter for the men every day. Dead engines and bad order cars fill the sidings and clog the yards. There is no doubt about our final victory."

CIGARMAKERS VICTORIOUS.

LOUISVILLE, KY.—After a controversy extending over a period of three years a settlement has been reached with the firm of J. A. Lancaster & Co., cigar manufacturers, and the local union of cigarmakers. At the beginning of the contest the firm, after having built up a large business through the use of the Cigarmakers' label, announced its intention of conducting a non-union establishment. The result attained is exceedingly gratifying to the local union of cigarmakers as well as to the movement in general.

Every child in Oregon is entitled to free text books as a part of his education.

AFTER COUNTY AUTHORITIES.

Labor Commissioner Calls Attention to Evasion of Eight-Hour Law.

Although ignored by the presiding officer of the recent County Commissioner's Convention held in Portland, Labor Commissioner Hoff intends that county authorities shall understand and hereafter obey the state law limiting the hours of employees on public works.

Hoff was invited to the recent convention in Portland and solicited to address the body. He had definite information for the various county commissioners, which he knew some of them needed. He had been on the point of writing them, but on receiving the invitation to the convention, thought that would be a good opportunity to acquaint the several county authorities with the exact provisions of the eight-hour requirement which was being violated in more than one county.

A place was given Mr. Hoff on the program in the presence of Judge Cleeton, who presided. Hoff sat during the convention in plain view of that persanage, but was ignored by him.

Learning beyond a doubt that certain county authorities were trying to evade the eight-hour law by hiring workmen by the hour, Mr. Hoff has just mailed the following circular letter to each of the several county courts:

GENTLEMEN: From time to time reports have reached this office stating that the eight-hour law on public work was being violated, and I have written to some of the parties responsible for the same.

Some time ago I considered the advisability of writing to all the county judges and commissioners regarding the law, but on November 16 I received a very cordial invitation from the chairman of the "County Commissioners' Convention," which convened in Portland, December 12-14, to be present and address the same on the subject of "Labor on Public Works." I accepted the invitation, as this would give me an opportunity to explain the law and its workings to representatives from each county court.

During the days I was present at the convention I learned that some of the members, at least, were not clear on the law and especially mistaken in believing that the law could be evaded by hiring men to do the work by the hour.

Not being accorded the opportunity to explain the law to the convention, I beg leave through this circular to call your attention to the eight-hour law on public works. (See Section 5060, Lord's Oregon Laws.) I also call your attention to the opinion of the attorney general of this state regarding the same, in which he says in part:

"* * * in my opinion it is a violation of said section (5060, L. O. L.) for any employer to permit laborers or mechanics employed by the state or by any county in the state to work more than eight hours in any calendar day, regardless of how they are paid, or whether they are employed by the day, hour or minute."

Permit me to suggest that you send notice to all the superintendents, supervisors, etc., for whom you are responsible, calling attention to this matter. It is my duty as well as yours to see that this law is observed. The penalty for violation is a fine of \$100 to \$1000 or imprisonment not more than six months or both (Sec. 5061, L. O. L.)

Sincerely yours,

O. P. Hoff,
 Commissioner.

OFFICIAL TALLS OF STRIKE.

Secretary Scott of Shop Federation Board Says Roads Will Need Better Men.

That the Harriman railroad system will soon be compelled to secure some new engines or get more experienced shop workmen, is an assertion contained in a bulletin to the striking railroad shopmen of this district by John Scott, secretary of the Harriman Shop Employes' Federation Executive Board.

Reports from Los Angeles, Tucson, Ariz., Roseville, Cal.; Caliente, Nev.; Las Vegas, Nev., and Millford, Utah, are contained in bulletins sent to the local machinists by Mr. Scott.

One from Los Angeles asserts that the Harriman shops at that place are "so full of dead engines that no room is left" while in the Tucson shops it is declared that the big air hammers and motors have been put almost completely out of commission for lack of expert attention to the air compressor.

It is stated that one of the call boys at this place quit his position rather than call a non-union foreman and that a theatrical troupe was compelled to call off its engagement because of its inability to arrive there on time. Guards have been stationed about the works at Roseville, Cal., and Scott declares that the union men are having a hard time in keeping peace and order.

The free board system to strikebreakers is stated in Secretary Scott's bulletin to have been discontinued at Caliente, Nev., and it further asserts that 75 of the substitute shopmen quit at Las Vegas, where a large number of engines are said to be laid up for repairs.

HOLD FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING.

American Association for Labor Legislation Will Convene in Nation's Capital.

WASHINGTON.—The American Association for Labor Legislation will convene in annual session at the New Raleigh Hotel, Washington, D. C., on Thursday, December 28, and continue its sessions for three days. The subjects to be discussed may be classified under three general heads. "The Relation of State to Federal Workmen's Compensation and Insurance Legislation," "The Unemployment Problem in America" and "Safety and Health in the Mining Industry." Aside from a number of professors, attorneys and other eminent men interested in advancing labor legislation to conserve the human resources of the nation, President Compton, John Mitchell, Thomas J. Duffy of the Operative Potters, Capt. Cole of the Longshoremen, and other labor men are on the program to deliver addresses.

MANY MEN QUIT.

WASHINGTON.—Eight hundred men employed in the polishing and plating department of the Victor Talking Machine Company have ceased work because of the introduction of non-union men in that department. The trouble, it is asserted, was caused by a foreman, and if an adjustment is not soon reached, 2,000 men will be out.

OPEN EVENINGS.

Jimmy Dunn's "Store in the Air" will be open evenings during Christmas week for the sale of union-made suits and overcoats. Take elevator to room 315 Oregonian Bldg. and save on the high rent profits.