

**Eastern Clackamas News**

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Editor and Manager.

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**A Friendly Warning**

Never has labor been so highly developed and organized as at present. Beginning with independent units in certain trades, unionism has spread to all industries and even the professions. The various unions are fast becoming amalgamated and affiliated, so that there is the prospect soon of a vast national organization, which can and will act as one. This is to be viewed with some misgivings, for such a combination represents an almost unlimited power for good and evil in commercial and industrial spheres.

So far this organization of labor has been viewed with sympathy by the general public, as it was recognized that this union was for the purpose of bettering the condition of the laboring man. There is no gain-saying that capitalism in the past was grasping, and treated its employees unjustly and selfishly. It paid the lowest wages for the longest hours that it could exact, and resented all attempts, to reduce the one and raise the other, until compelled so to do. As long as labor was weak and oppressed, it had the support of the public.

The constitution affirms that a man has certain unalienable rights, among which are life, liberty and the pursuits of happiness. The demands made by unionized labor for better wages, better hours and better opportunities to improve life and enjoy it, were just and right and received the sanction of all thinking persons.

But a change has now been made, labor is no longer weak and oppressed. It has become strong, assertive and dictatorial. Instead of being kept submissive, it now lays down terms and conditions, which are often arbitrary in the extreme, and also unjust. Labor is falling into the same error as did capital, viz: the selfish, unjust use of power. The social organism is such, that none liveth to himself alone, and every action of the individual is correlated to the whole. This principle is not seen as a rule, until individual action becomes group action with wider and farther reaching scope and effect. Then the result becomes more apparent and pronounced. But group action is only the amplification of individual action, and if the operation of the former is seen to be detrimental, it would be the same if it were only that of an individual.

The chief weapon of organized labor is the strike. But like all other weapons, offensive and defensive, the right to use it is not absolute. That is, it must be wielded justly, wisely and unselfishly, with a due regard to the rights and safety all parties involved. For a dispute between employer and employee, especially in public utilities, is not confined to these two, but includes all those who will be affected by the strike, and the interests of this third element are usually unconsidered. Hence a strike may involve a greater wrong than the one it was purposed to redress. Generally however, this third element is willing to endure inconvenience and loss to help out those who have a valid grievance, but there is a limit to its patience. When strikes become too frequent and no disposition shown to arbitrate the dispute, and especially when strikes are ordered because of some far remote grievance, and the business or whole communities is thrown out of gear, then

the general public will rise up and take action, to protect itself from opposition.

As one who is friendly to labor and wishes to see it enjoy the highest welfare, for on this depends immeasurably the welfare of the whole country, we issue this warning that the right to strike involves great moral responsibility, and if used unjustly, selfishly and tyrannically, it will prove suicidal. Because history clearly demonstrates this, that tyranny digs its own grave and in the long run will be overthrown. It matters not whether in the persons of kings, emperors, czars, dictators, autocrats, capitalists or labor unionists. As soon as any one assumes the position of a superman he is preparing himself for a violent fall. There is a sentence in an old book which should be read, marked, learned and inwardly digested, which declares emphatically, that "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people."

**Here Endeth Our First Year**

With this issue of the NEWS we complete our first year as editor. During this period we have learned a great deal in valuable experience, while financially we have done as well as might be expected under the circumstances. As to the quality of the paper the verdict lies with our readers. While we have done our best, we admit it is not what we hoped to make it. But until the subscription list is materially increased, we will not be justified in going to the extra expense of enlarging the paper. To do so will involve many and costly changes, such as a new and bigger press, and that would mean enlarged office space with increased rentals. The cost of everything in the printing line continues to soar, so expenditures must be closely watched.

We wish to express our thanks for the kindly appreciation our journalistic efforts have received and especially to our advertisers without whose patronage it would be impossible to continue publication. We look forward with a good deal of confidence, feeling assured that Estacada has a bright future before it.

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