

REST GROVE PRESS
GEORGE HUNTINGTON CURREY
EDITOR AND OWNER

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THE LABOR PROBLEM AND THE PUBLIC

This week the PRESS has received at least 5 communications relating to the growing problem of the unemployed. Several of these letters are printed in this week's issue and more will follow. This unsolicited attention to the welfare of the American public indicates that the people of all classes are paying heed to the cries of the unemployed. One communication comes from a redhot socialist who criticises the solution suggested by the editor in last week's issue. While socialism may be the final solution, however we will reach socialism not by any one direct overthrow of present conditions; but when humanity becomes capable of benefiting by the cooperative proposals of the socialists we will find our form of government to be socialistic. Let us have more communications on this or other subjects. Discussion is the greatest reformer of the world, and always precedes and indicates an early satisfactory solution. The editor appreciates your contributions, whatever your viewpoint, and is anxious to print sincere letters upon any subject.

No less than ten candidates for governor and possibly that number may be doubled before the primary election.

FARM CREDITS COMING

Farm credits, which have been championed by the farmer's unions for many years have at last caught the ears of our law makers and party leaders. President Wilson is expected to favor the plan in his forth coming message to congress and some even go so far as to expect the bill to be presented and rushed forward in order that congressmen who hail from the large agricultural states can go before their constituent during the fall elections and point with pride to their efforts in securing an early passage of the bill.

The bill has so much general merit that there is little likelihood of it becoming a party measure and it is a foregone conclusion that some legislation whereby the farmer can secure credit on special terms of security and time of maturity and the creation of credit associations by which farming communities can finance their own operations, is assured.

People are just learning to think. The young men are forsaking "Top Notch" magazines for "Popular Mechanics" and the "Scientific American." The dime novel is being crowded back by modern fiction and essays dealing with the great problems of humanity. The people have realized that they must save themselves and are rapidly learning how to go about it. The people mean most of us.

A few years ago the announcement that the W. C. T. U was to hold a meeting would attract little if any attention. It is quite different today. Every W. C. T. U. has a ballot, not only the ballot she individually casts but her influence is equal to many additional votes.

There is no race suicide in the family of the PRESS readers. It is growing every day.

COMING OF HUNGRY MEN AROUSES DISCUSSION

Articles Written to Press Discuss Social and Economic Conditions

Much discussion has been aroused in local circles over social and economic conditions since the coming of the 77 hungry men into Forest Grove last week.

That the men were hungry and foot weary everybody will admit, after having seen the men fall to their rations. And another common ground for argument is the fact that the men were out of jobs. Admitting these points as common ground for the discussion the argument in regard to the men's condition has been both pro and con.

The Press has received several communications in regard to this matter, and this week is printing two of the letters. It is the policy of the Press to use part of its columns to the free discussion of questions without bias to either side. Following are the communications: (Editor Press).—"Once upon a time, and a long time ago," came one who voiced the hope of the race with infinite love and compassion. He told of a God the world had never known—the common Father of the coming race. He dreamed of a society strange and beautiful—the "Brotherhood of Man." The loving message He taught, the burden of his soul, can easily be found by those who seek for it. He was the lowly carpenter, the brother of the workers, the friend of men and champion of women. The fallen and outcast Magdalen found in Him a defender and with the other Mary and Salome went weeping to His tomb. "Call no man Master," said this sweet-souled carpenter, "for all ye are brethren." He cared nothing for the traditions of the elders or the sacred books. With Him it was, "It is written so and so, but I say unto you something different." He wrote no books, He framed no creed, He simply trusted some day the words He spoke, the dreams He dreamed, would find expression in the lives of men. Go with the carpenter to the humble home of Martha and Mary and listen with them to the sweet music of His voice telling the simple story of love and brotherhood as on the vine clad porch He told it time and again to these two women. Shrewd and crafty men sought to entrap Him but He broke no law. Scribe and Pharisee laid pitfalls for His feet, but He stayed close to their Scriptures and never fell. It was not His religion nor the lack of it that condemned Him to the cross, but His just laws for the poor and suffering.

He disturbed the peace of mind of the ruling class composed of the priests, the scribes and Pharisees. The money changers resented being driven from the temple and the usurers from exacting their bond. Last week we had the opportunity, as does not often present itself in a peaceful

community like this of exemplifying how nearly our lives conformed to these teachings and what did we do when word came that seventy-five footsore, hungry, drenched to the skin men and boys would be our guests for the night. Did we rush as we would if word had come that some of the prominent railroad officials would be our guests and throw open one of our best churches or auditoriums and spread a banquet for them? No, indeed! This was misery squalor, and want coming among us and we stood appalled at it. We sought to shift the burden. We brot all our petty excuses to bear upon it, we drew our skirts aside from these poor outcasts who had walked many weary miles on empty stomachs. We cast about for excuses even as the scribes and Pharisees had done and said, "These men won't work, therefore, they must take the consequences." We didn't go down into the secret recesses of our hearts and seek palliation for them, nor did we even wish to bring to mind the adverse conditions that had caused this deplorable state of affairs in our midst. We were resentful. These men were disturbing our peace even as they resented the disturber of the established order of things in that day. We constituted ourselves the rabble as the rabble before were not the lowliest, or even the poorest, for the intelligent poor loved Jesus, for had He not gone among them opening blind eyes, unstopping deaf ears strengthening palsied arms, weeping with them in their sorrows and joying with them in their joys.

We lashed them with our criticisms as it helped to ease our perturbed minds. One young woman said, "Only a bunch of I. W. W.'s, not deserving of any sympathy!" One of our high priests in high places wished for a horse whip to run them out of town. Oh, God, the pity of it! And they had thought to enlist our sympathy in their discouraged, miserable, despondent, hopeless condition. They had walked all day in the drenching rain, had been driven out of Hillsboro at the noon hour, where they had asked for bread and been given a stone, were hungry and they fed them not." It was after nightfall when they reached here cold and wet, hungry, and some of them ill, one of them so much so that our kin hearted mayor, after securing treatment for him, returned him to Portland, and these were our brothers and human beings with souls, "even as you and I."

A minister in his mistaken zeal, wished to go in and read to them out of his Bible, overlooking the fact that men can't be pious on empty stomachs, can't pray when they are starving, nor love their fellow men as they should when they are denied the chance of making a living. If this minister, and I don't know who he was, had only taken a suit of underwear in his pocket and given to the man who hadn't a stitch on, how much more Christlike it would have been, as Jesus always looked after the physical condition first. Since leaving here their spokesman has made the statement they are not I. W. W.'s, that only a small per cent

are foreign, that they are not a bunch of idlers and ne'er do wells, but unfortunate men and boys looking for work.

In solving the problem of the unemployed it serves little purpose to dwell upon the undeserving, for those are always with us even in prosperous times, and in the accounts of these men leaving their jobs after a few days employment wouldn't it be well to see what is back of them? At Salem we know the resident workmen were antagonistic to their being employed, so might it not be possible for them soon made it so uncomfortable for them they were compelled to leave? And the ones who were employed here to cut wood among the timbers found no one willing to furnish them meals and sleeping quarters as the word had gone before that they were I. W. W.'s and dangerous men.

Oh, the inhumanity with which these poor, homeless, discouraged, workmen have been treated. Some one evidently with a heart of stone, made them the victims of a practical joke before leaving Portland by inviting them to a dinner at the First Presbyterian Church, and when they arrived there they were told it was a banquet spread for the Rotary Club. How gracious and kindly it would have been had they turned it over to them. Instead, policemen were called to disperse them.

Albany grudgingly gave them sandwiches and coffee and then threatened to turn the fire hose on them, "if they didn't scatter instantaneously."

Independence did a worthy act, when she gave them meat and vegetables with which they forthwith prepared them a "Mulligan" stew, coming the nearest perhaps to a balanced meal they had had in their journey, coffee and sandwiches seeming to be the prescribed diet, and think of the wealth of this glorious Willamette Valley! Our cellars are filled to overflowing with fruit, vegetables, and dairy products, and the nation as a whole is just as prosperous. The United States statistical report for 1913 says, "Never as a nation were we more prosperous, the crops never more abundant and the granaries filled to overflowing with the wealth of the land." They should have appended, and want and misery never so prevalent, stalking hand in hand all over this fair land.

In last night's paper (January 16) in one column it says, "The idle army of workers numbering between six and eight hundred who are quartered in the Gypsy Smith tabernacle resent being called hobos. They say they are simply unfortunate workmen out of money and out of employment. The city gave 400 work yesterday and each was given the chance to break one cubic foot of rock for which they received seventy-five cents. Many more applied than could be accommodated."

In another column it said, "Dr. Carl Jacobsen a wealthy brewer, died last Sunday and bequeathed most of his fortune of \$40,000,000 to art purposes, and there you have the situation in a nutshell, the conditions that have been busy the last twenty-five

years, making millionaires at one end of the line and paupers at the other.

President Bushnell, in his inaugural address, said the sociologists of the country were studying these questions as never before and cited the fact that "J. P. Morgan at the time of his death had control of nine billions of dollars, or one-fifteenth of all the money in the United States."

A woman died not long ago and left an estate of \$40,000 to found a home for cats and the sons of men, haven't a place to lay their heads. However, with all these wrongs which I believe have now almost reached a culmination. I believe we have cause to be optimistic. I'm not a Democrat, but I have real faith in the present administration.

Already the J. P. Morgan syndicate is being dissolved and the interlocking directorates abolished and there will always remain a few misguided people like the woman with the cats.

The administration has disposed satisfactorily of the tariff, currency bills and are now ready to regulate the trusts. The new income tax law will do much toward abolishing the building up of large fortunes and in that way will provide a more equal distribution of the wealth of the country.

Many good books are on the market today educating the people along humanitarian lines, among which two of the latest, "The Inside of the Cup," and the Call of the Carpenter" will surely do much good as they are popular and are being extensively read.

Another hopeful phase, there never was a time in the history of the race when the people were hungering for a real, live, vital, livable religion as they are today. They are looking to a religion alive with the sense of a living and present God and therefore efficient in dealing with physical and moral evils, diseases and sin. The age-long call for brotherhood is sounding the length and breadth of the land as it never has sounded before, and we are realizing more and more that it is only because we have transgressed the laws of nature and the teachings of the Bible and the meek and lowly example of the Savior that all this darkness and misery has been upon us.

A word more, as this article is growing lengthy. Forest Grove is a clean, kindly, beautiful and intellectual little city in which to live, and we should be thankful we were spared the ignominy of these men being turned from our doors. Our mayor and his council did the very best they could for them under the circumstances, handicapped as they were by public opinion and dis-

interestedness on the part of the majority of the people. They spared our city the shame that will always attach to the places that turned them away. Therefore, I think we should tender a vote of thanks to Mayor Sanford, the city council and all those who assisted them in their humane work. Respectfully, MRS. ALICE J. SCHEETZ.

Advocate Socialism.

(Editor Press).—The writer wishes to commend the editor on his heroic, if unsuccessful editorial attempt to solve the problem of unemployment and hopes he will not be disheartened if the writer hopelessly punctures his "Practical Solution." Many wise and distinguished men for many long years have sought diligently for a solution of this growing problem, but success has steadily refused to crown their efforts. They have failed because under the present system of production and distribution, there is no solution.

Under capitalism, labor is a commodity of which the capitalist is the sole consumer. To insure profits it is necessary that there be a wide margin between the price of labor power (wages) and the price of labor's products. In order to maintain this margin it is absolutely necessary to have, even in seasons of prosperity, a large reserve force of workers compelled by necessity to compete with their more fortunate brothers for a job. It is this sharp competition for jobs between the workers that enables the employer to keep wages down near the point of subsistence. Without this competition labor would be in a position to demand more and more of its products until the profits of the capitalist were eliminated.

Upon the basis of statistics gathered in the year 1890, a season of prosperity, Dr. Washington Gladden estimates that there must have been an average of 1,139,672 persons unemployed during the whole of the year ending May 31, 1890. The census of 1890 shows the number unemployed some part of the year to have been 6,468,964.

Quoting from Robert Hunter's book, "Poverty:" "So long as the system of industry demands a surplus of labor which may be but casually employed, so long indeed, as there is such a thing as enforced unemployment, just so long will the forces of vagrancy be ever active. Neither artificial employment nor charity provision can remedy the evil. The worker or himself is helpless. He is a wastrel begging to be used in a competitive system which, in its present form, demands his continued exist-

ence. The editor is right when he says: "It is not a problem for one city, neither for one state, but for the entire nation." However, so long as a system of employment only where profits can be realized, obtains, it is scarcely within the realm of possibilities that the millionaires and corporation attorneys in our legislative halls will do anything so suicidal to their class interests as to favor legislation which had for its object the employment of this reserve of labor. The real solution of this problem will be given by the writer at a future date.

FRED F. HUGHES. Cornelius, Ore., Jan. 19, 1914.

TRAIN SCHEDULE

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OREGON ELECTRIC

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