

The Workmen's Advocate.

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE SOCIALISTIC LABOR PARTY OF NORTH AMERICA.

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ENTERED AT THE POST OFFICE AT NEW HAVEN, CONN. SECOND CLASS MATTER.

NEW HAVEN, DECEMBER 12, 1886.

BLACKLISTING.

There has been some talk in the local papers of late in regard to blacklisting workmen, arising out of the case of one Thomas Meaney who says he has been blacklisted by railroad corporations, and has brought suit against them. These corporations, if they acknowledge having blacklisted Mr. Meaney, will no doubt also say that they did it, not to injure Mr. Meaney, but to protect themselves against an incompetent man, or, if the man is acknowledged to be competent, it may be insisted that he was an "agitator," a dissatisfied man, or a disagreeable man, at least in their opinion, and they only use the right of employers to combine to protect themselves against such.

This blacklisting looks very much like boycotting, and as boycotting has been declared to be a criminal conspiracy in this State of Connecticut by a jury (juries decide as to the law as well as the facts in the Nutmeg State) we cannot see why blacklisting by employers should not also be deemed a criminal conspiracy.

On the other hand, it has been decided by a judge of the Superior Court (Stoddard) that boycotting is not necessarily a criminal conspiracy—not if the object of the boycott is to benefit the boycotters or their friends—even if the business of the boycotted party suffers by the withdrawal of patronage or by the refusal of certain people to have further business relations with them. We applauded the judge's decision and called him a just judge. The jury in the case of the boycotters decided, however, that the object of the boycotters was to injure the firm or corporation boycotted.

Now, in the case of the blacklisting railroad corporations, the same judge might make a similar decision, and we could not consistently do otherwise than approve; yet the same jury might also, if they were consistent, decide that the corporations intended to injure Mr. Meaney and, consistently also, find them guilty of criminal conspiracy.

While, according to the able judge, men have a right to work or refuse to work for whom they please, it seems to us clear that a corporation or firm has a right to employ or refuse to employ whom it pleases, unless indeed, there is some provision in its charter that would limit its power in this direction.

What then? Are workmen to be subjected to the wanton will of the owners of railroads or other industries? By no means, unless the workmen permit it; and they do permit it when they allow private ownership of industries.

There is but one logical and possible remedy—the State, that is, the people in common, must own and control the land, the means of transportation and the means of production.

COMBINED AGAINST US.

It will be interesting for many of our readers to know that one of the results of the political movement in New Haven was the combination of the capitalist parties against the Labor Party. To be sure, they had each a candidate for Mayor, but, as far as Labor was concerned it was tweedle-dee and tweedle-dum between them.

One of the first objects of the political labor movement is to force the enemy to unite against us, and to make a clean and plain issue between the class who honestly between that they were born booted and spurred to ride over their weaker neighbors and the people who honestly believe with Thomas Jefferson, "that all men are created equal," and should be guaranteed by Society an equal chance for liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

The mass of voters who divide their patronage between the two corruptly managed parties, hoping continually for a change for the better, only deceive themselves while they support a set of scheming politicians in office. When the masses discover that there is no necessity for choosing between the two political evils, but that there is a straight, honest and practical course to pursue, a course that promises to "lead them out of Egypt," they will only too gladly throw off the yoke of party and join in with Organized Labor. This done, there is but one course for the "booted and spurred" to pursue, and that is to unite for a death struggle with their "inferiors" and die.

UNREASONABLE ORDINANCES.

Of late attempts are being made, in different States and under various disguises, to break in upon time honored customs and liberties of the people, partially by legislative enactments, but more frequently under color of police regulations. A decision of the supreme court of Michigan, rendered October 28th, is of more than local importance. An ordinance of the city of Grand Rapids providing that:

"No persons, associations or organizations, shall march, parade, ride, or drive in or upon or through the public streets of the city of Grand Rapids, with musical instruments, banners, flags, torches, flambeaux, or while singing or shouting, without having first obtained the consent of the mayor or common council of said city," was held to be unreasonable and invalid because it suppresses what is, in general, perfectly lawful, and leaves the power of permitting or restraining processions to our unregulated official discretions. Mr. Justice Campbell, giving the opinion of the court, among other things, remarked:

"It has been customary, from time immemorial, in all free countries, and in most civilized countries, for people who are assembled for common purposes to parade together, by day or reasonable hours at night, with banners and other paraphernalia, and with music of various kinds. These processions for political, religious, and social demonstrations are resorted to for the express purpose of keeping unity of feeling and enthusiasm, and frequently to produce some effect on the public mind by the spectacle of union and numbers. They are a natural product and exponent of common aims, and valuable factors in furthering them."

The guardians of the peace, eager to make workmen's processions and the display of their banners a punishable offense, will please take notice.

PROPHETIC!

It is not often that a poem appears in the editorial columns of a newspaper, but the following, by Alice Carey, is so pertinent and so applicable to the existing social conditions, that we believe it will appeal far more forcibly to our readers than would columns of editorial comment and explanation upon the same subject.

Under the present social system

there may be said to exist three classes of people, corresponding to the three bugs mentioned in the poem; the class of the capitalists, the class of the professional politician, and the class of the wage-worker. To-day we find the capitalist and the professional politician snugly ensconced beneath the rugs, while the wage-worker is left out in the cold.

The moral of the poem is so pointed and the ultimate result of the present conditions so graphically predicted therein, that we are constrained to call the attention of our opponents to the same as a fit subject for their serious consideration. It will be well for every workingman to cut the poem out and paste it in a conspicuous place on the wall, where it will not be likely to escape his memory. We clip the poem from a capitalistic contemporary:

BUGS IN A BASKET.

"Three little bugs in a basket, And hardly room for two! And one was yellow, and one was black, And one like me or you. The space was small, no doubt for all, But what should three bugs do?" "Three little bugs in a basket, And hardly crumbs for two; And all were selfish in their hearts, The same as I or you; So the crafty ones said: 'We will eat the bread, And that is what we'll do.'" "Three little bugs in a basket, And the beds but two would hold; So they all three fell to quarreling— The white, and the black, and the gold; And two of the bugs got under the rugs, And one was out in the cold!" "So he that was left in the basket, Without a crumb to chew, Or a thread to wrap himself withal, When the wind across him blew, Pulled one of the rugs from one of the bugs, And so the quarrel grew!"

"And so there was war in the basket, Oh, pity, 'tis, 'tis true! But he that was frozen and starved, at last A strength from his weakness drew, And pulled the rugs from both of the bugs And killed and ate them, too."

"Now, when bugs live in a basket, Though more than it had better agree— The white, the black, and the gold— And share what comes of the beds and crumbs And leave no bug in the cold!" —Alice Carey.

"GOOD FOR THE SOUL."

Our brilliant evening contemporary, the Register ("dem."), blurted out editorially the following "honest confession" the day after election:

"These men [the workmen] have too often been given a stone when they asked for bread. They have not lost their confidence in the principles of democracy, but they have become discouraged at the inefficiency shown by the leaders of it. And to speak out honestly and frankly, we do not blame them. We are somewhat discouraged ourselves."

There, there—don't take it so much to heart, neighbor. Don't be discouraged. We're not downhearted at all, nor discouraged. Things are improving. If we could have an election every month and increase our vote in the same ratio as we did at this election, the "principles of democracy" would soon be established in this city. But we must have patience. Meanwhile let the Register man read the WORKMEN'S ADVOCATE regularly, heed the wholesome lessons therein contained and then honestly help advance the principles of true democracy, and thus hasten the good work.

NOTES.

The result of the election last Tuesday was a gain of about 1,000 votes for the Labor Party over the vote at the State Election last month. An encouraging sign for the working people.

The Avelings are doing much to make Socialism better understood by the American people, and the rapid formation of American Sections of the S. L. P. speaks as well for faithful work of our distinguished visitors as for the appreciation of "a good thing" by our people.

The Springfield (Mass.) Socialists and, indeed, all who are interested

in the discussion of social and political economy there, will no doubt have a fine treat at the debate soon to take place in that city with Comrades Aveling and Shevitch as the champions of Scientific Socialism. It would be well worth a trip from New Haven to hear them.

Next week we shall print the last of the series of "Extracts from Grundt's Co-operative Commonwealth" with which the reading matter of the WORKMEN'S ADVOCATE has been enriched since its first issue. The valuable book may be had at the office of the ADVOCATE, and those living in other cities can order it of the Secretary of the National Executive Board, S. L. P., Mr. W. L. Rosenberg, 172 First Avenue, New York City.

Brother Pinney, of the Winsted Press, says: "One thing we are sorry to see totally neglected by our friends, the labor reformers, and that is civil service reform." But Friend Pinney does not mean "the Pharisaical and pedantic little monster nursed by the schoolmarm of the mugwump fraternity." He would have the people within the precinct of an officer have the right to elect that officer. Agreed. We Socialists, at least, are truly democratic in this matter, and go even a step further when we call for the "imperial mandate," which gives the people the power to recall that officer and replace him at any time. We join with our Winsted friend in recommending the consideration of this matter to the Cincinnati Conference.

WHAT OTHERS SAY.

A DANGEROUS ARMY.

The Great Army of the Unemployed. This is the power that breaks strikes, reduces wages, and is an ever-standing menace to the workers everywhere. It is an unorganized army—but, driven by its necessities and manipulated by Organized Capital, it has in many a fight worsted the disciplined forces of Organized Labor. The great Southwestern strike was won by Jay Gould by calling in this great army of the Unemployed; the Chicago packers used it to defeat the eight-hour strike; everywhere and always, in fact, it is the Unemployed army—but, driven by its necessities and manipulated by Organized Capital, it has in many a fight worsted the disciplined forces of Organized Labor.

Not long ago the national bureau of labor estimated that this army of unemployed numbered one million souls, while other authorities put the number at about two millions. Think of it—an army nearly as large as the Knights of Labor and trades unionists combined! A hungry army, anxious for work to gain money to keep the starvation wolf from the door! No wonder men are found ready at times to betray the cause of Labor by "scabbing," as in Chicago and elsewhere. It is a credit to unorganized, unemployed labor that, under such conditions and such temptations, there is comparatively so little of this industrial treason.

With this great army of the Unemployed always at the call of Organized Capital, what is to be done? The only reasonable answer ever yet made is this: First, get this great army of unwilling idlers organized. Then, working through peaceful means—at the ballot box and through legislatures, assemblies and unions—so reform the industrial and social system as to give these idle an opportunity to earn a decent living by honest labor.

There ought to be no lack of paying work for everybody in a country which as yet averages but seventeen or eighteen inhabitants to the square mile. But there will, must be, this lack, so long as the raw materials (land, mines, etc.) as well as the tools of production and transportation are monopolized by Organized Capital. Shut out from the soil by land-grabbing corporations and private speculators—shut out from opportunity to employ himself by the great cost of machinery and the impossibility of hand work competing with it—the workingman is rapidly becoming a mere wage-slave

who must "humbly beg his lordly fellow-worm to give him leave to toil." And if this boon is refused, what can he do?

There is no end of work for a national labor party. And this is the reason such a party is bound to come to the front.—Grand Rapids Workman.

COMMUNICATIONS.

NOTE TO CORRESPONDENTS. Write plain and clear, and make them short. Write only on one side of the paper. Be as good natured as you can under the circumstances.

To the Workmen's Advocate:

At last we have an English party organ. Who will not rejoice at the realization of this long felt need and not try, now that we have such a powerful weapon, to agitate and educate with redoubled energy? The Socialistic Labor Party is a party of agitation and propaganda and until it has gained solid ground among the American laborers its work is of circumscribed value. We congratulate ourselves, therefore, on the appearance of the WORKMEN'S ADVOCATE as a Party organ, and also thank our National Executive Committee for its efforts to realize the general desire of the Party. We have a difficult task before us; the soil, tho' fertile, is uncultivated as yet; the understanding of Scientific Socialism is very rare among Americans, and the WORKMEN'S ADVOCATE will have a difficult task to perform. Therefore, comrades, let us be up and doing; let us spread the seed of truth, hoping to reap good fruit. What is needed now most of all is to popularize Scientific Socialism and to show the fallacies of doctrines current among American laborers, such as "private co-operation," etc. And there could not be a more favorable time for agitation of Socialism than now. The workmen of America have awakened from their slumber, and have shown themselves capable of independent political action and we must "strike the iron while it is hot." The splendid effect of the lectures of Dr. Aveling and wife will certainly help a great deal towards the reception of Socialism. To work, then, comrades! We are armed now, we have a powerful champion in the WORKMEN'S ADVOCATE; let us then do our duty and we shall conquer our greatest enemy—ignorance. At the same time I take opportunity to make a practical suggestion. Most of our American Sections are yet very young and probably many of them inexperienced. Would it not be well, under such circumstances, if all the American Sections form a closer union through the WORKMEN'S ADVOCATE by interchanging their views and opinions about practical organization and agitation? I would propose that somebody connected with each American Section send a detailed correspondence to the WORKMEN'S ADVOCATE, stating the conditions surrounding this organization, the mode of agitation, etc. It would not only bring all the Sections into closer connection, but would also be of great practical value to young Sections and those of limited experience. Let us try this plan. We can lose nothing and certainly gain much.

Fraternally, G. M. PRICE, Of the Buffalo American Section.

To the Workmen's Advocate:

I have just finished reading the WORKMEN'S ADVOCATE all through, advertisements and all, and am pleased to find it good, healthy reading. There is not a word in it to which the most law-abiding citizen can object nor is there a sentiment expressed therein that the most sincere Christian can refuse to endorse; even church-members will be hard set to find anything in it to censure. Capitalists and the capitalistic press will no doubt deprecate its appearance and censure those who circulate it and those who read it inasmuch as heretofore they have persistently instilled into their minds the idea that Socialism is all bad and all wrong, whereas if you continue to keep your paper up to its present healthy tone and high standard the people will read it, and will ere long learn that by uniting under the Socialistic system there will be Work enough and Bread enough for all and that there would be no difficulty to obtain them now were it not that the capitalists unite to concentrate in their own hands the means of living which rightly belong to no one class but to the whole people, and that Socialism simply aims to give to everyone that which he has a right to, viz: the opportunity to earn his living by labor and to secure to him the full product of that labor. May every success attend you.

Yours sincerely, ADAM RAMAGE, HENNING, MASS., Dec. 6.

NEW BEDFORD SLAVES AGAIN.

To the Workmen's Advocate: In your New Bedford letter last week a mistake occurred. The case is this: The second hand in the weaving room left his place, to take a higher position in another mill. But before leaving, of course, some respect must be shown him by the slave weavers, over whom he used the whip for the benefit of the corporation who employed him. It was the fixers who made the collection to make a present to the second hand driver leaving the mill. The fixers, of course, would be expected to contribute; but it was the poor weavers, whose wages average from eighty to ninety cents per day, and not the fixers' wages, as stated in your last issue. The sum obtained was \$65, and a gold watch and chain was bought and presented to him. The name of the receiver is Hersame, and the new second hand, if he is ambitious, will use the whip more vigorously than his predecessor, in order to get two gold watches and chains when he leaves his place. M. S. NEW BEDFORD, Dec. 6.

THE SOCIALIST SPIRIT.

Extract from Grundt's "Co-operative Commonwealth."

(CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK.)

Those of the working classes who become enrolled in our effective minority can do no better than strengthen these trades unions in every possible way. Through them their fellow-workers are sure of getting Socialist hearts—the Socialist heads will come in due time. And bear in mind that it is these organized labor-battalions that are to form the lever by means of which the new ideas are to move Society.

Just on account of these organizations, and because they will become invaluable skeletons on the establishment of the New Order (as we have emphasized in another place,) we think that the United States, but particularly Great Britain, are nearer the realization of Socialism than generally supposed.

Most Americans remember the rising of the workmen in July, 1877. That rising was to Socialists, also to those who held aloof from it, a most promising sign. The first revolt of American white slaves against their task masters!

That it was accompanied by excesses by the most neglected stratum of Society was unfortunate but unavoidable. This stratum is just the worst heritage which capitalism leaves on our land.

In a very short time we shall have another series of years of hard time. Remember what we said about "Crises" in the second chapter. We expect another revolt then, more serious than the first. That most likely will also be suppressed with comparative ease.

A few more years elapse. Another "crisis," yet more severe, shows its hideous head. The screws of distress are turned yet more on the wage-workers. Another most serious revolt. Possibly powder and shot will suppress that, too.

But in the fulness of time we shall have a labor revolt that will not be put down. Then is the time for the energetic Socialist minority to exert its influence. There is nothing that the people in such a crisis hail more than leaders, nothing they hunger and thirst more after than clear-cut definite solutions.

All the horrors of the French Revolution and the sad fact that Napoleon the First became a necessity were due to the circumstance that the revolution had no leaders. We do not mean to say that the revolution was a failure, for it did accomplish every one of its objects: the abolition of privileges, the dispossession of the landowners and free competition, but the price paid was exorbitant.

In our civil war, on the other hand, it was the abolitionists that successfully assumed the leadership, and probably exerted all the influence to which they were entitled.

That the Socialist minority must do when the crisis comes, and make out of a revolt—another revolution.

Be confident that the people will follow. In such times men become awake, shake off nightmares; the experience of years is crowded into hours. Novelties which at first sight inspire dread become in a few days familiar, then endurable, then attractive.

That is one way in which Socialism may be realized. Again, we have heard of the "anti-monopoly" movement. That is a war, political and otherwise, of one class of fleecers against another class of fleecers; of industrial and mercantile cannibals against moneyed and corporate cannibals. There is no love lost between the two classes, just as little as between two veritable cannibals. No one can tell to what extremities the war between them may not go. But the following correspondence to the New York Sun from Titusville, Pa., of Nov. 4th, 1878, may give us an idea of possible conflict events:

"The fact is, the State of Pennsylvania has had a narrow escape from an internal civil war. Had certain men given the word, there would have been an outbreak that contemplated the seizure of the railroads and running them, the capture and control of the United Pipe Lines property, and in all probability the burning of all the property of the Standard Oil Company in the region. The men who would have done this, and may do it yet, are not laborers or teams."

The Coming Revolution may arise out of a similar struggle between our fleecing classes. Revolutions, however, have no precedents. The wisest of us may err as much as Ulrich Von Hutten did in the days preceding the Reformation, Ulrich was far in advance of Luther when the latter took hold of his mission. Then he wrote in a letter, still extant, to the effect that he heard that a monk had become rebellious. "It delights me," he wrote in substance, "to hear of a rebellion in the bosom of Holy Mother Church. How I wish the two parties may tear each other to pieces!" Yet it was just Luther and not the clear-sighted nobleman whom the logic of events selected as its organ.

Just as impossible it is to say, when we may expect the Coming Revolution. But it is worth reflecting on, that a prudent man in 1853 would hardly have taken upon himself to foretell the abolition of slavery in 1863.

But the Great Change is coming. In the words of Carlyle: "Will not one French Revolution suffice, or must there be two? There will be two if needed; there will be twenty if needed; there will be just as many as needed."

The "democratic" sheets reflect the sadness of their capitalistic owners. Those confounded workmen are at the bottom of it.