

Editorial Page of The Canadian Labor Press

A. P. HAYDON, M.C., Editor. A. H. BLACKBURN, Circulation Mgr.

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A WEEKLY NEWS LETTER.

PERSISTENCY REWARDED.

It was at the 28th Annual Convention of the Trades Congress (eight years ago) held at the Royal city of Guelph, Ontario, when a definite resolution for mothers' pensions was unanimously adopted. Notice was thus given to all the provincial executives to press for legislation at their regular interviews, and there is no reason to doubt that this action was taken, but a faithful record of such efforts to the various provincial cabinets would possibly be that consideration would be given to this matter as well as to other requests made.

With that persistency of effort which is responsible for the high pinnacle attained by the International Trades Union movement, the importance of pensions to mothers was not sidetracked, and today busy committees are to be found in various Ontario centres lending a willing and sympathetic ear to the claimants, who are to be recognized as entitled to come under the Mothers' Allowance Act of the Ontario Government. As aptly explained not to receive a portion in charity, but to be recognized as employed by the province in the guardianship of their own children. The loss of the bread-winner, through death or incapacitation, entitles the mother to this sphere of government service and the allowance paid is for invaluable service rendered to the province and the Dominion as a whole.

Labor advocates of this pension have at no time had any question of the necessity of such legislation. Notwithstanding open or subtle opposition to such from the time it was actively undertaken as a part of the workers' objective, continuous presentation of the case was made. In this instance the longer action was delayed the more convincing evidence was gathered, leading up to final success. It may be acknowledged that the former governments were pledged to introduce Mothers' Allowance legislation, and had collected valuable statistics with necessary data bearing on the subject, but the honor for introducing the law was left to the Labor-Farmer coalition. Work of this nature allows the title of banner province to be words of meaning and not an empty phrase.

As in other reforms the worker's thought was considered to be ahead of the actual need, but a survey of the work being undertaken by the various committees gives positive answer to the question of necessity, brushing aside any opposition to the aid about to be given. Mother love of the highest type possible is furnished in abundance at the presentation of claims, and the "carry on" slogan under stress and strain had been evidently adopted in the great majority of cases. Every claimant presents their own story and every case has its individuality.

It is no stretch of the imagination to link up the International Trades Union movement with the Mothers' Allowance legislation. The strongest advocates have been found within the ranks of the organized worker and full recompense for the efforts expended is in the conclusive proof that the statement of necessity was correct, the need for relief a truth, with the knowledge that practical assistance is assured to appreciative mothers of the province.

"COVER THE GROUND."

EVER on the alert to cover all forms of organization, the American Federation of Labor watch the North American Continent with increasing vigilance. The ramifications of the movement are such that whenever a new field is proposed to its network of organizers in this Dominion and the United States no wonderment is expressed, however far from the orthodox or ordinary thought the breaking of new ground is proposed. Crafts and callings formerly considered foreign to the linking up with the worker organized have fallen under the influence in just an ordinary matter-of-fact sort of way, and no longer create the question as to the propriety of joining the organized family.

Thus prepaid the next to call for attention is the "last call workers," in some respects but in truth merely the continuity of addition to the seemingly endless chain of organization work. Without further mystery it may be announced that organization of professional embalmers has been commenced, with San Francisco, California, leading off the affiliations. Looking at this craft from the sunny side the Trades and Labor Congress and American Federation of Labor have had lots of employment for embalmers if the work of preserving the reactionary and anti-movements deceased had been treated in this manner. Archives of such are so numerous that their preservation best shows how the standardized trade union movement of the world has prospered when the detractors have shared but a brief span of notoriety, the common lot of all anti-movements of shadow builders.

PORTSMOUTH CONVENTION.



Over 900 delegates representing some six million workers, attended the recent convention of the British Trade Union Congress.

LABOR WILL DO ITS FULL SHARE IN WORKING OUT CANADA'S PROBLEMS

Immediate Problem is to Develop a Production Organization That Will Benefit Workers and Serve Needs of Starving Nations.

In the past we have found it necessary to fight for that ideal agency that fought to establish special privilege. Those who have not been in the service of the workers, but to secure to wage-earners the rights and opportunities that all should possess. Our struggles may have brought discomfort to others, but they represented a greater evil—deterioration of the virility of a part of the nation. The great struggle of labor in the past has been to secure to workers in their industrial relations the rights of free citizens. We have fought to give the ideal of Canada—dominating influence—in shops and factories. Our militant struggle has won general recognition for our demands but our work is not all militant.

Across the Atlantic.

What Our Brethren in the Motherland Are Doing.

OUR WEEKLY BRITISH LETTER. LONDON (Saturday).—The public in Great Britain is only just awakening to the seriousness of the unemployment question. The proceedings of a "Society" at Coventry have gained notoriety out of all proportion to the strength of the movement. This society reflects the attitude of only 400 or 500 out of 5,000 unemployed. Nevertheless, what has happened in Coventry shows the danger of the growth of the revolutionary feeling among the men who are left without financial resources in face of a cost of living which steadily increases. Moderate labor men regard with apprehension the rapidly growing riot of unemployment in many instances just at times when bread is to be raised 3d a loaf, and it is probable that, when Parliament re-assembles, the Government will be not only assailed for its alleged failure to prepare for the possibility of a crisis of this kind. Nothing has been heard for many months of the schemes of afforestation and public works on a large scale, which were discussed after the armistice as suitable relief measures to cope with unemployment. The Unemployment Act does not come into operation until next month, but even if its benefits were immediately available, the sum of 15s. a week which is provided for, would be too small to meet the necessities of an unemployed man with a family. Not precise statistics are available, but it is estimated that in Great Britain 400,000 persons, including 200,000 former service men, are out of work or seriously under-employed. A special difficulty arises in the case of dock workers, of whom 20,000 in London and 8,000 or 10,000 in Liverpool are said to be working only one or two days a week. Owing to the fact that they work a day, or half a day, at frequent intervals, they will not be able to qualify for out-of-work benefits under the act, which requires that three successive days of unemployment must elapse before benefit can be claimed. Nevertheless, the dockers will be called upon to do the work demanded by the act. In view of this, the Transport Workers' Federation has approached the Minister of Labor to urge the adoption of an out-of-work scheme of maintenance, under which all dock workers would be registered and guaranteed a fixed weekly wage for the period derived by imposing a levy on goods handled. M. E. Brown, of the Dockers' Union, has suggested a guaranteed wage of 14s a week, but the dock employers would suggest a much smaller amount, and Mr. Brown's colleagues do not believe there is any chance of securing acceptance of a scheme, or a modification of it, were adopted, it would bring about a peaceful revolution in the conditions of casual dock labor. Miners in South Wales, Durham, Lanark and elsewhere still indulge in fiery talk, but it is pretty safe now to predict that there will be no general strike. Both Smith, president, and Herbert Smith, vice-president, of the Miners' Federation, publicly advise acceptance of the owners' datum line proposals, under which the miners are certain to get immediate advance of one shilling per day, and may get up to three shillings by a moderately increased output.

DO AUTOMATIC MACHINES RETARD THE EMPLOYEE'S ADVANCEMENT?

By John D. Babbage, New England Manager Miller Saw Trimmer Company, Boston.

This question has only one answer: No! But it is an old question, reaching back to the invention of the loom and the cotton gin, to the printing machine and improved typesetting machines, to the invention of the printing press, to the idea of reducing the amount of labor required in their operation and with a view to increasing the amount of production per unit of labor.

The long fight waged against the introduction of typesetting machines in newspaper plants through the present overworked in the printing craft. Their coming was vigorously fought and opposed by the hand compositors, who feared that it meant more to the development of the printing industry and to the general uplift of the workers in this industry than could be made possible under conditions of hand-set type. The old hand compositors, who were quick to see the success of this new venture, and who in so doing prepared themselves for better working conditions, shorter hours of labor and higher wages. The present overworked in the printing craft, who are not so quick to see the success of this new venture, and who in so doing prepared themselves for better working conditions, shorter hours of labor and higher wages. The present overworked in the printing craft, who are not so quick to see the success of this new venture, and who in so doing prepared themselves for better working conditions, shorter hours of labor and higher wages.

MACHINISTS REFUSE THE AIR ROUTE.

The convention of the International Association of Machinists at Rochester, N.Y., recently rejected every suggestion to withdraw from the A. F. of L.

Progress is not made fast enough, according to the so-called industrial unionists. The regulars agreed they would like to progress faster, but insisted that this is not possible by smashing the "machinists" organization of dividing workers for the employers' gain. The aviators sang the usual song of a few labor leaders sitting on the lid, making it impossible for the organized workers to move. The regulars charged the aviators with libelling democracy by their claim that millions of wage earners are thus led, and asked the fliers how few blue print plan of salvation based on arbitrary dictum by the few can remedy this alleged evil. The regulars showed that the A. F. of L. guarantees complete autonomy to every national and international affiliate, and that these may federate, amalgamate or re-organize in any manner they choose, but the action must be voluntary on the part of the members of these organizations, and not a mandatory decision by the few who now denounce labor leaders.

Here's To Woman.

Once Our Superior, Now Our Equal—Calm.

BRITISH WOMEN AND LABOR LAWS.

A slight misapprehension seems to exist in the minds of some people in regard to the conventions passed at Washington last autumn by the International Labor Conference. The conventions were not a country that was represented at Washington is pledged to put the convention before its Parliament while there are certain respects in which many people regard the Washington conventions as taking a retrograde step. They have the effect of putting women at a disadvantage with men in finding employment and in securing equality of treatment.

So far as Great Britain is concerned, the law in some cases is ready as far as the Washington conventions as for example, the non-employment of children up to 14, while there are certain respects in which many people regard the Washington conventions as taking a retrograde step. They have the effect of putting women at a disadvantage with men in finding employment and in securing equality of treatment.

Passing of the Silk Shirt.

No more hopeful sign of an approaching return to sanity is apparent than that evidenced by the passing of the silk shirt. Never in particular good taste, the silk shirt served only to satisfy a weakness of certain types of men for displaying an extravagance which, as a rule, they could ill afford. The silk shirt was but one of the wholly unnecessary extravagances indulged in by wage-earners during the past few years, and it served to illustrate the wild waste which was largely to blame for putting the cost of living to its present abnormal height.

POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES IS OVER 105,000,000.

The 1920 population of Continental United States was announced last week by the Census Bureau as 105,683,103. This was an increase of 13,710,842, or 14.9 per cent, since 1910. This total does not include the populations of outlying possessions which will be announced as soon as the figures for Alaska and the military and naval services abroad are tabulated. It is estimated, however, that these possessions have 12,250,000 inhabitants, so that the total population of the United States is in round numbers 118,000,000.

NO LONGSHOREMEN'S STRIKE FOR NEW YORK HARBOR.

A strike of longshoremen at New York has been averted by a one-year extension of present rates. Working conditions are improved.

NO STRIKES IN CHINA.

According to Rev. Benjamin L. Accell, a missionary from China, he believes that "labor problems" are the result of "over-population." The over-population, he says, are no strikes in China and that country is a poverty stricken. "I think that, perhaps, accounts for the fact that it has no strikes or other labor troubles such as America and Europe have suffered since the war," he said. "There are no organizations in China corresponding to the trade unions of America. To be sure, there are trade guilds that were started 2,000 years ago. Chinese are brought up generation after generation in one trade. It is difficult for a man not brought up in the profession to find work or to get into a guild. Where in America you pay \$5 to \$8 a day for carpenters, we pay from 25 to 35 cents a day. Unskilled labor may have had a 12-cent a day. But of course, there is a difference in living expenses. The laborer can buy his month's supply of food for \$1. Students pay only \$3 or \$4 a month for board."—Shoe Workers' Journal.

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