

Saskatchewan Labor's Realm

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THE SASKATCHEWAN LABOR'S REALM

A Weekly Labor and Social Reform Newspaper.

Justice, Truth, Fraternity. "Labor Omnia Vincit."

HUGH PEAT EDITOR

Regina Trades and Labor Council

There was a fair attendance of delegates at the Trades Council meeting on Saturday last when the presiding officer called the meeting to order at 8-30 p.m.

The delegates from the several unions reported favorably on conditions of labor, considering the lateness of the season and the almost general closing down in the building trades. There are very few stone cutters left in the city but the few remaining are busily employed. Bricklayers have some two dozen men still in the city, and about a dozen of them are actively employed. The rest of the trades reported active conditions.

A communication was received from Mr. Hyman Roller, business agent of the Winnipeg Garment Workers, thanking the Trades Unionists of the city for the ready and generous response to the Garment workers' appeal for funds to enable them to bring their dispute to a successful issue.

Messrs. Jones, Gordon & Bryant were appointed solicitors to the Council by a unanimous vote of the delegates present.

The regular business of the Council was suspended in order to admit Dr. Shearer, secretary of the Presbyterian branch of the moral and social reform movement, and the Rev. Mr. Henry.

Dr. Shearer expressed his pleasure at being present and able to address the Council, as he was always gratified to have an opportunity of coming into closer contact with the working men of Canada. He referred to the recent Trades and Labor Congress of Canada held in Winnipeg where he was accorded a hearty welcome to address the Congress on the work and aim of the Lord's Day Alliance.

He was present at the Council meeting in his capacity of secretary of the new department which included the industrial problem, gambling, the drink question, the employment of children and so forth. His association with the laboring men of the country had brought him into close contact with many of the problems confronting the workers, and he was convinced that their aims and those of the Churches were in a great measure the same, and since there was so much in common between the two great factors there should be an even greater unanimity of feeling between them than there was at present. He referred to the stand taken by the laboring men of the country on the recent question of the Lord's Day Observance, and was pleased to know that it was due to the hearty co-operation of the laboring men with the churches that the universal day's rest for the workers had been obtained.

He stated that he had a special mission in coming before the Council tonight, and that was to hear the opinion of the delegates on the subject of collective ownership of the drink traffic.

He was convinced that the workers had a great deal to gain by abolishing the bar and the present all too prevalent system of treating. It was a heavy drain on the resources of the working man who could ill afford to be called upon by custom to spend 25c. or a half a dollar for a drink, and that they therefore should be in sympathy with the present movement which sought to abolish the bar altogether and to take the drink traffic out of the hands of private individuals who were only interested in the profits to be derived from the sale of liquor, irrespective of the harm that might ensue or of the danger to which the workmen were subjected. He advocated public ownership of the

drink traffic and was of the opinion that if the sale of liquor was placed in the hands of a strong commission the workers would be materially benefitted and the profits derived from the sale of such liquor could be devoted to worthy objects such as social clubs, etc. In conclusion he called upon laboring men to unite with the churches on this subject for the advancement of common principles. The objects of each were the same. Each was striving for the advancement of the common good and should therefore co-operate in sympathy. He sincerely sympathized with working men and was always ready to acknowledge that the workers had improved conditions and that by seeking to eliminate child labor they were striving for a high ideal well worthy the attainment. The workers had shortened the hours of labor, had assisted in securing the rest day for all, and were approaching more nearly to their rights.

The Rev. Mr. Henry then addressed the meeting and in a few well chosen words claimed kinship with the workers.

Minister of the gospel by profession he was first and foremost a man and was ever ready to associate himself with the workers in any scheme that had for its object the advancement of civilization and the welfare of mankind.

A hearty vote of thanks was accorded the visitors for their attendance and addresses, and on a vote being taken the Council declared unanimously in favor of public ownership of the drink traffic.

American Federation of Labor in Convention

Norfolk, Va., Nov. 11.—The twenty-seventh annual convention of the American Federation of Labor convened today for a session of two weeks, the opening ceremonies being held in the auditorium at the Jamestown exposition, in the presence of 400 delegates.

Gompers' Address

President Gompers in his annual address in speaking of the growth of the labor movement during the past year, said:

"During the last fiscal year we issued from the office of the American Federation of Labor 373 charters, as follows: International unions, 3; state federations, 1; city central bodies, 72; local trade unions, 204; federal labor unions, 93. Total, 373. We have now affiliated to the American Federation of Labor the following: International unions, 117; state federations, 37; city central bodies, 574; local trade and federal labor unions, 661. The international unions are made up of approximately 28,500 local unions."

Mr. Gompers further said: "Again, I feel it my duty to impress upon all our unions the importance of providing themselves with funds that shall stand them in good stead in time of necessity, to provide their members with the means to sustain themselves and their families not only during strikes and lockouts but also to constantly attain a greater measure of justice and right for labor without the necessity of either strikes or lockouts."

"In the endeavor to secure the just demands of labor without a strike a sense of justice on the part of employers can not be compared to a well-organized body of workmen with a well-filled treasury, nor is there so potent an influence of power to prevent a lockout as labor intelligently and compactly organized and prepared to defend its rights. No one has a higher appreciation of the

necessity of cultivating and imbuing in our fellow-unionists the spirit of self-reliance and the principal of solidarity than I. Experience has demonstrated beyond peradventure of a doubt that though some workmen thoroughly imbued with the determination to manfully uphold the rights of themselves and their fellow-workmen will endure the severest trials of poverty and hunger rather than sacrifice the principles for which they stand, the spirit of independence of the mass of men succumb when the gaunt figure of hunger stalks across the threshold. If we hope and expect that men shall assert and maintain their spirit of right and their interests, we must have the foresight so to conduct the affairs of our organizations as to provide at least bread, the commonest need to sustain life.

Labor Movement in Canada

"It has been our purpose to aid and assist to the fullest extent of our movement our Canadian fellow-workmen. In the transaction of our affairs we have regarded them as being part and parcel of the American labor movement as much as our movement is part and parcel of theirs. Geographical lines have in no way interfered with the fullest development of fraternal relations. Ignorant or prejudiced opposition to the beneficent work of the labor movement finds its counterpart in Canada as it does elsewhere. In Canada an expression of that feeling was illustrated in a bill by Senator Loughheed, the purpose of which was to make it a criminal act for any person not a Canadian or a British subject to incite workmen to go out on strike in Canada. Of course, it is well known to those who participate in our movement and others who are not hostile, that as a matter of fact our unions, our officers and our representatives do not incite workmen to go on strike either in the United States or in Canada; that strikes are entered into by workmen of their own volition after they themselves have determined upon that action and when no other recourse is open. The men of labor in Canada have as much right to conduct their own affairs as have any members of organized labor in the United States. It was not difficult, however, to discern that if such a law as Senator Loughheed proposed was possible of enactment, any aid which the labor men of Canada might ask of the United States trade unionists to go their and give would be construed as an act to incite other workmen in Canada to go out on strike. Organized labor of Canada, true to its own interests and to the welfare of all the people of the Dominion, as well as in justice toward the labor movement of the United States, protested so emphatically that Senator Loughheed's bill was killed by an overwhelming majority in the Senate and hence did not reach the house."

"In summing up the situation Secretary Draper, of the Dominion Trades and Labor Congress, substantially said. 'It is gratifying that the labor movement in Canada keeps pace with the progress being made in the United States. On every hand labor seems to be taking a larger and better view of its rights and responsibilities, with a consequent increase in the number of those who unite in trade unions with their fellow-workers for their social and economic betterment. For many years the development of the labor movement in Canada was confined almost entirely to eastern Canada, but within the last three years the west has sprung to the front, and to-day no finer example of enthusiastic work for the strengthening of trade unionism can be found than is in evidence from Winnipeg to the Pacific coast. The expansion of the Canadian west and northwest, industrially, is equaled, if not surpassed, by the activity and energy displayed by

trade unionists in their efforts to consolidate the interests of workmen everywhere. The session of the trades and Labor Congress of Canada, in Victoria, B.C., in 1906, gave additional zest to the movement, and the recent session in Winnipeg, Manitoba, cemented for all time the bond of unionism between the workers in the west and those in the east. It is not too much to say that organized labor in Canada has assumed a new dignity, born of the realization of the great work that lies before it, and that the future will see such a development in the organization and labor of Canadian workmen as to justify the best hopes of the present. Nor must it be forgotten that as organization increases the sentiment in favor of international trade unionism grows stronger. Not all the blandishments of capital nor the short-sighted attitude of a few disgruntled workers who clamor for a 'national' organization will suffice to offset the zealous, indefatigable and untiring efforts of those who believe that the interest of the working people, whether north or south of the line, are identical; that the same foes are to be met with everywhere; that the welfare of the little ones must be guarded, and that women-workers and men-workers must unite on all hands for their mutual benefit and the general uplifting of the common people. I am sure that the sentiments here expressed meet with the cordial approval and encouragement of the best minds of the entire labor movement of the American continent."

Child Labor Must be Abolished

"The humane work inaugurated and conducted by the labor movement to eliminate child labor in the industrial and commercial affairs of our country has borne good fruit and is destined to bring still better results. In the early history of labor's efforts to obtain this end, we were met by the bitterest and most relentless antagonism. Our motives were aspersed and our efforts ridiculed just as are now the demands which organized labor makes upon society in its claims for the present and for the immediate future. To-day there is not an institution in our country, political, commercial, financial or religious, but which is committed in some way to the abolition of child labor. Better than all, it is now the universal judgment of our people that the facts as to the existence of child labor shall be investigated and ascertained, and such legislation enacted as shall take the children from the factory, the work-shop, the mill, the mine and the store or anywhere they are employed for profit, and give to them the opportunities and advantages of the home, the school and the playground, that they may imbibe the sunshine and the light to grow into the physical and mental manhood and womanhood of the future. Several organizations have been formed to co-operate with the labor movement and the awakened public conscience is pressing home upon the law-making bodies the necessity for the abolition of child labor. A number of legislatures have given this subject their favorable consideration and action. Congress has discussed the evil of child-labor with a view to the enactment of a federal law dealing with the question generally. As to the advisability of that method of eradicating the evil there is a divided opinion. Some contend that the States can more effectually, and under our form of government should more properly, exercise that authority. In an event, the discussion in congress clearly indicates the general trend of advanced thought upon the question. At least, congress could enact a law upon the subject covering the territories and the District of Columbia."