

Editorial Page of The Canadian Labor Press

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A WEEKLY NEWS LETTER.

VALIDICTORY

With this issue of the Canadian Labor Press I sever my connection with the publication. Hereafter I will in no way be connected, either directly or indirectly, with the Canadian Labor Press. I wish to thank all of those who assisted me during the two-and-a-quarter years I have been employed as editor of this newspaper.

J. A. P. HAYDON.

THREW UP THE SPONGE

Toronto Printing Pressmen and Assistants have thrown up the sponge in the fight for the forty-four hour week. The daily press has made much of the affair. It has concealed the full facts, whether deliberately, we are not in a position to state. The Toronto Pressmen and Assistants are not affiliated to any International Union but for a number of years have had a purely Canadian union affiliated to the Canadian Federation of Labor. However, to their credit let it be stated that when the International Union declared a strike in Toronto to force the 44-hour week the printing pressmen and assistants in Toronto joined in the struggle. Their finances were limited owing to the fact that they had a purely Canadian Union. They were in complete isolation. They fought as best they were able. Then at the expiration of their resources, indeed long after their resources had been used up, they threw up the sponge and were compelled to submit for the time being to the dictates of their employers. The International Typographical Union fights on alone in Toronto.

The lesson should be a warning to those in our midst who shout for National Unions. Certainly employers in Canada would welcome the idea for it would make more easily the destruction of the labor movement and would allow the "low-wagers" and "open-shoppers" full sway. Canadian workers, members of International Unions, know that they have complete autonomy through the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada and will have none of this National "bug." Thanks.

MINERS FIGHT IN WEST VIRGINIA

Coal miners in West Virginia, members of the United Mine Workers of America, have been on strike for over thirteen months. They have been subject to all kinds of abuse at the hands of armed thugs, gunmen, etc., employed by the mine operators. Arrests have been made from time to time of the officials of the various local unions. No sooner have the officials been arrested and temporarily taken from the field of work than new officers are appointed to fill the vacancies. Miners have been arrested on the slightest pretext and despite the protests of the great producing masses the State legislature has turned a deaf ear to the cry of the workers. The miners in West Virginia, as in most of the mine fields of the North American continent, live in houses owned by the coal operators. Shortly after the strike took place the miners with their wives and families were ejected from the company's houses. The United Mine Workers sent a large number of tents into the district and the striking miners and their dependents were housed in the valley in tents. Not content with driving the miners and their dependents from their homes the company directed its gunmen to fire into the tented colony. Many volleys of shot were fired from the hills into the tented colony. This in an endeavor to destroy the splendid morale of the striking miners and their families. Despatches, appearing in the "press that always does its master's bidding," would lead one to believe that the miners were responsible for the outrages that are daily occurring in the mine field of West Virginia. The facts are to the contrary notwithstanding the "news specials" appearing in many of the daily newspapers of this country.

The United Mine Workers of America have fought a clean fight in West Virginia. They have been subject to many hardships. Some of its members have been brutally murdered by the operators' hired gunmen. The tented colony, whence the miners with their families were driven by the operators, have been molested by these paid murderers. Despite it all the miners have stood firmly together. There has been no desertions. The United Mine Workers state that if the "armed guards," private detectives, soldiers and thugs are removed from the mine fields of West Virginia, peace will once more be restored.

Some idea of the appalling conditions in West Virginia may be gleaned from a letter written by James A. Baumgardner, financial secretary of Local Union 4804, Williamson, W. Va., to the Mine Workers Journal recently in which he said he was arrested at the Norfolk & Western station on June 10 for no offence except that of having a copy of the United Mine Workers' Journal in his possession. Members of the state police saw the paper, he said, and placed him in jail at Williamson.

"We are not allowed to talk, under Governor Morgan's martial law, but the boys are brave," Brother Baumgardner said. "We have stood firm and held on for a year and a month. This arrest will show you what we are up against in West Virginia."

The story of the strikes in the coal fields of West Virginia and Alabama, two gigantic strikes which have been in operation for months, would make pages of reading. The tactics of the operators in both districts are almost identical. The men throughout it all—and their dependents too—have been very brave indeed. They have demonstrated to the rest of the working classes what solidarity really means.

The United States Federal Government has ordered an investigation into the strike in Alabama, but up to the present the "civil war," as called by the daily press, continues in West Virginia. Some interesting information will be given the public as to the coal operators' tactics during an industrial dispute. Much has been written about the Bolsheviks of Russia. The tactics of the coal operators of West Virginia and Alabama put to shame the atrocities of the Soviets. And we still have some in our midst who are demanding freedom for Ireland. We heard an American labor editor declare, not so very long ago, "Come and free us." He was referring to the "Irish constabulary" of Pennsylvania, this being the system of police protection adopted in that state, due to "interests" of the United States Steel Corporation. We suggest that all lovers of justice and freedom use some of their influence toward freeing the great producing masses of West Virginia and Alabama.

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Fire Protection

Fire prevention is simply good housekeeping. This statement is made so frequent that it is now familiar to all.

Fire prevention also requires constant study if we are to eradicate the fearful fire loss sustained by the United States and Canada every year.

The year of 1920 brought about wonderful results along this particular line of education. The Fire Marshals' Association of North America, which concluded its fifteenth annual convention in New York City in December, adopted resolutions pledging its members to obtain enactment of legislation providing for teaching of fire prevention in all schools.

Splendid results will no doubt be the ultimate outcome of this. Inculcate in the minds of our youth the necessity of being careful and you have sown a seed which will ripen into maturity in after years. Scientific men have said, "Give me the first seven years of a child's life and you can have 'all the rest.'" If fire prevention is made a part of a child's life the cares and perplexities of after years will not blot from his or her memories the lessons learned in the schoolroom.

Twenty-five million children are in school-rooms approximately 200 days each year. There are on the average five school fires each day, due in a great measure to carelessness. Think what this means in property loss, let alone the expiring of the lives of the little tots. Poor building construction is the result of carelessness and no wooden-constructed school building should ever be permitted to be erected.

A burned city does not replace itself. Fire insurance does not replace lost property. The fire waste is really not paid for by insurance companies. Fire insurance is added by manufacturers and merchants to the cost of the goods, and whoever buys a loaf of bread, a hat, a coat or a shoe, pays it. The cost of the fire tax is concealed in the price of the goods.

Every fire is paid for by all the people. Insurance is collected from all and paid to him who has a fire; hence the man who has a fire intentionally or unintentionally takes the money from the pockets of his neighbors. Carelessness is the direct cause of

two-thirds of all our fires. A careless throw cigarette through an open side-walk grating is supposed to have caused the great Baltimore conflagration.

We are all familiar with the traditional Mrs. Murphy's cow, which caused the great Chicago fire. This fearful disaster is brought forcibly to our minds year after year in our

observance of International Fire Prevention Day. The Governor General of Canada and the President of the United States by proclamation, have set aside the 9th day of October of each year as a fitting reminder of the fiery God that wreaked his vengeance on the city of Chicago back in the early 70's.

Fire, the greatest discovery of all

the ages. It enables man to live in any climate. It forces the wheels of industry to turn and promotes the wealth of the nation. But when it breaks forth in all its fury it is

beyond the power of man to subdue. Let us unite, educate and agitate to safeguard North America against this national enemy.

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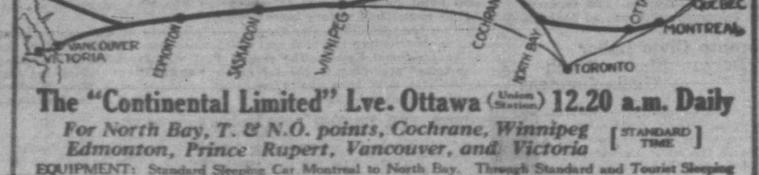
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