

THE SPIRIT OF SOCIAL SERVICE

How a Chicago Man Swung the Crowd.

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THE Social Congress at Ottawa was a splendid illustration of the strength and activity of moral feeling in the community and of the kind of service needed to promote a hearty and aggressive public opinion on those things which make for the betterment of the living conditions of the people. The great Congress formally marks the advent of a social renaissance in Canadian history. But it is much to be regretted that the representation at the Congress was not still more comprehensive so as to include representatives in the departments of Social Service from the Roman Catholic Jesuits and Unitarian bodies at work in this great field of service throughout the Dominion.

To secure the greatest good of the greatest number is the motive and incentive of all engaged in Social Service to-day. This motive expresses itself in two ways, amelioration and prevention; but the emphasis must be put on the latter, because it seeks to deal with reform at the root. In other words, social reform is a science rather than a sentiment. The greatest results can be achieved by working out this science into practical terms of legislation and social reconstruction.

Among the most commanding presentations of the various phases of Social Service were the child as the central figure, the home and the school in civic and rural communities. Unusual interest was stirred up by the addresses of Rev. Charles Stelzle, Consulting Sociologist of New York, on the Church and Industrial Life. Mr. Stelzle was at one time a machinist himself, and still is a member of the American Federation of Labour. He presented the workingman's viewpoint in a manner which must have been strikingly new to many in the audiences who listened to him.

ANARCHISTS.

Reviewing the world-wide conditions, the speaker told of the number of trade unionists, anarchists and that class of Russian peasants who for years had suffered death for an ideal handed down to them by one man. In this day we require thinking men who see that it is the era when man is come into his own. "Men died fighting for democracy of thought; then on battlefield for political democracy; and to-day are fighting for labour democracy. They are marching on and no human power can stop them, nor will the divine power." There is so much religion in the labour movement that some day it will become a question whether the Church will capture the labour movement or the labour movement capture the Church. We hear a good deal of the churches saving the masses. Some day perhaps the masses will save the churches. It is far more important to have mechanics in the Church than to have millionaires in the Church. The average working man is religious, though he may not always give expression to his religion in the orthodox way. The great mass of working men acknowledge Jesus Christ and believe in His Divinity.

When you talk to a workingman you need never apologize for religion. If you do, down in his heart he will have nothing but contempt for you. In the end there will not be one answer to the social question, but religion will be one answer. Socialism and anarchism stripped of their political problems are moral and religious problems. Working men are to-day responding to the appeal of the Church as they have never done in the history of the Church in the past 25 years.

The illustrations of the spirit of service in the example of industrial democracy as shown by the employees of the firm of Hart, Schaffner and Marx, of Chicago, was instanced by Prof. Graham-Taylor, of Chicago Common Settlement, and Dean of Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy.

"Two scenes stand out in sharp and significant contrast just now in Chicago. Against a dark background of hunger, despair and desperation, thousands of garment workers—men and girls, mothers with their children—stood for hours in a pitiless wintry wind on the great baseball ground which was the only place where they could hold their big mass-meeting free from police interference. For sixteen weeks these men and women had sacrificed their all—some of them even the milk for their babes—in brave insistence

upon having something to say themselves upon the conditions under which they earned their living and lived so much of their lives.

A MAN AGAINST A CROWD.

"A pact of peace was pending between them and the great firm which employs between six and eight thousand of them. A great labour union hall was packed with the striking shops' crews to ratify or reject the new agreement wearily reached by the officials of workers and of firm after their long, bitter and fateful struggle. A young man only twenty-three years of age stood in the midst of the surging, excited throng of eleven nationalities that shouted approval and dissent in many languages. Some of them had been misled by a fanatical national religionist to take their oath on the crucifix never to accept the agreement which had been fairly and squarely negotiated by the chosen representatives of both sides. A vote to adopt the pact had been reported to the meeting when the radical fanatics attempted to overthrow the decision. Then at this crisis of the struggle, the young man who had led the negotiation of the treaty stood forth and declared, 'You may take my life, but you shall not repudiate this agreement while I live.'

"That brightest spot in the dark scene glowed all through the atmosphere of the other scene—a lowly banquet in a side-street restaurant, given in honour of this young man, Sidney Hillman, by the shop chairman and others of the Hart, Schaffner and Marx employees. They had gathered to tell him what they thought of him, for he was leaving them to go to New York to become chief clerk of the Skirt and Cloak Makers' Union, and to represent them under the protocol of the preferential union shop. On either side of Mrs. Raymond Robins, who as toastmistress represented the Woman's Trade Union League, were representatives of the employing firm on the trade board and the board of arbitration—an eminent lawyer and a college professor. Between them sat the sturdy chairman of the trade board, James Mullenbach.

"Through the long evening, twenty-two shop chairmen and others, with the accents of several dialects, but the language of only one spirit, paid wonderfully heartfelt tribute to the man they honoured as mediator of their 'new industrial democracy.' Most of these speakers were the chosen representatives of the many shops in which they work with six thousand of their fellow workmen and women. Each of these shop chairmen presides over a weekly shop meeting, and through him or her every worker can reach the deputies of the firm and the whole body of employees, with any grievance or suggestion, which, if not adjusted, is finally decided by the chairman of the trade board, James Mullenbach, or in case of appeal, by the chairman of the board of arbitration, J. E. Williams.

"Representatives of firm and workers, while vying with each other in paying tribute to the integrity and ability of Mr. Hillman, which they did not hesitate to recognize as 'genius,' agreed, too, in proclaiming the agreement which created their preferential union shop, as 'an historical document introducing a new industrial era,' 'the working basis of a new industrial democracy,' or as Mr. Hillman called it, 'the new idealism in industry,' 'the new element in the labour movement.'

"From the two extremes equally remarkable attestations were given. The lawyer and professor took pride in their part in carrying out the instructions of the firm to the effect that 'the business is built up only by the good-will of the customer, which depends upon the good-will of the employees.' In obeying the firm's mandate, 'You get it,' each admitted how much had been learned from the other, sometimes more in being defeated at the other's hand, always in decisions of the chairmen of the trade and arbitration boards, which almost invariably had been 'right.' This expression of confidence in the integrity of each other, and of respect for the fairness of the final decisions and the friendly justice of the two men who made them, was echoed as heartily by the shop's chairmen 'our friends the enemy.'

"Most notable was the admission of the radicals who had bitterly opposed both Mr. Hillman and the whole peace pact until their opposition was overcome by the loyalty and justice with which

it has worked out. 'When we were hot-headed, he kept us back, when we were asleep, he waked us up.' 'When we tried to prevent him from speaking he always won our respect, so that we had to hear and agree with him?' 'We radicals, too, have learned a lot.' A man, who when the strike was on worked for another firm, said 'When I heard the whistle blow and hundreds left all to come out, tears came to my eyes. In thirty-two years I had never seen the like in the labour movement. That young man in the midst reminded me of a face I had seen in Germany—the face of the man who proclaimed by word what Hillman declares by deed, 'The world is my country, to do good is my religion.'

"Then Sidney Hillman stood forth again, holding in his hand the watch and chain which these thousands of his fellow workers had given to him as their young 'father.' He began by saying, 'There seems to be a certain Mr. Hillman who has been referred to, but he isn't myself. It is not I. It is the personification of the new idealism of our organization which you have referred to. If I had done the work, it would have been wasted because it would not have endured. It is the result of a movement bigger than any man or any locality. Out of this movement for industrial peace and democracy you and I are getting more than we give. Confidence in the movement was given us by the honesty, sincerity and integrity of those on both sides.'

"This new spirit of men and women is infinitely more important than any money or material thing contributed to the movement. The labour movement can never succeed under any other programme, not unless it is honest and works for peace. The benefits are greatest when the spirit is fairest. Our foundations are the spirit of brotherhood, of union through sacrifice and the making of peace not to settle war but as the best method for all, the best and only way to call out the highest qualities of democracy. Thus only will the greatest values be earned by trade and enrich the lives of all engaged in it."

These two wonderful scenes enacted in real life augur well for the highest spirit of consecration and devotion for the uplift of men through Social Service.

Notes from England

BY THE REV. W. H. GRIFFITH THOMAS, D.D.

THE question of paramount interest at present is the Bishop of Oxford's "Open Letter" to the clergy of his diocese on "The Basis of Anglican Fellowship in Faith and Organization." Dr. Gore deals with three topics; "The Claim of Liberalism," "Protestant Federation," and "Romanizing in the Church of England." At the present moment attention is being called to the first of these, and the Bishop takes a very strong line in regard to the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection, saying that any man who pledges himself to the constant recitation of the Creeds in his capacity as a clergyman is not sincere, if he personally does not believe that these miraculous events occurred. Bishop Gore is ready to give liberty for discussion, but he holds that we have adequate grounds for asserting that our Lord was born of the Virgin and rose again the third day from the dead. This position has already led to some letters in the "Times," one of the most important being from Dr. Sanday, who deprecates and even deplores the Bishop's attitude, holding that it is impossible to ignore the results of Biblical scholarship in the way indicated. We are therefore apparently in for a thorough discussion of the question of the miraculous element, and it remains to be seen what will be the result. According to the "Churchman," the monthly magazine of the Evangelicals, the second and third sections of the Bishop's letter give "almost as much pain as the first affords pleasure." Dr. Gore takes a very definite line against the action of the Bishops of Uganda and Mombasa in regard to Kikuyu, and the treatment of "Romanizing in the Church" is also considered to be very unsatisfactory. There is no question whatever as to the vital importance of the letter, or of the certainty that, coming from the source it does, it will have profound results in the Church. So far as possible I will endeavour to keep your readers informed of the developments of the three subjects, and especially of that which is now occupying the most serious attention. There seems to be no doubt that what is generally called "Modernism" in the Roman Church will have to be faced in the English Church as well.