

LABOR ORGANIZATIONS.

(J. B. SULLIVAN IN NOTRE DAME SCHOLASTIC.)

Removed as we are from the world's conflicts, and with such peaceful environments, many of us are prone to disregard the great and the overshadowing questions of the hour. Every political canvass resounds with the notes of tariff, civil service and labor reform. The fact that these questions are an issue indicates a needed reformation.

Within the last few years the labor movement has forced consideration. The next few years must see the adjustment of the differences between capital and labor, or grave and terrible evils will result.

Labor is man's common lot, be his station lowly or exalted. We make a distinction, however, as to the classes of labor. There is certainly a difference between a man toiling in the mines or working in the fields and one in the counting-house or in the office. And it is partly this distinction, so marked, that engenders many of the disputes. No one will dare maintain that labor lacks dignity and nobility. It is a groundless assumption that labor is without certain and sacred rights.

The teachings of the Saviour of the world, as made known to us in the tenets and precepts of the Christian Church, have for eighteen centuries shown the worthiness of honest toil. Now if work is both dignified and necessary we may proceed, without further elaboration, to discuss the point at issue. Are Labor Organizations conducive to the best interests of a country? We think they are. The causes which render such organizations not only worthy but absolutely necessary are: (1) The domination of capital; (2) The inequalities of wealth and poverty before the law; (3) The discrimination and exorbitancy of our system of taxation.

The distresses arising from the aggressions of capital are of no recent birth. Peruse the annals of the past; history is fraught with countless examples of civil strife occasioned by wealth's aggression or penury's discontent. All the bloody conflicts and domestic struggles of ancient Rome, from the Gracchi to the establishment of the Empire, may be narrowed down to a contest between the classes and the masses. And let me emphasize this fact: that a country's weal or woe depends, in a great measure, upon the friendliness between capital and labor.

Now the question naturally presents itself: What is the present condition of the laboring men? If they were the serfs of power and opulence in times gone by, they are more so to-day. When your ancestors and mine were the slaves of ancient Greece and Rome, raiment and daily sustenance were no care to them. But to-day, with all our civilization and our enlightenment and our vaunted progress, in a neighboring state there are hundreds of men out of employment and hundreds of wives and children starving—actually suffering for the common necessities of life—and all through the caprice and arrogance of a monied aristocracy.

We are confronted with a stern reality. When these oppressed and tyrannized workmen unite for common interests; when they pool their issues and seek to redress their wrongs by lawful measures, they are branded as anarchists and socialists, and the ban of the corporations' law is placed upon them—I say corporations' law, because all our legislation, for a quarter of a century, has been hostile to the best interests of labor.

We may boast as we please of the sanctity and the equality of our judicial tribunals, but the stern and incontrovertible fact stares us in the face that there are members of our judiciary as susceptible to the influence of the "almighty dollar" as men in other walks of life. How difficult it is to convict the minions of wealth, be the evidence ever so conclusive! How rarely are the great railroad corporations beaten in a legal contest! There are monopolies and trusts to-day which are boldly and deliberately trampling upon the mandates of our courts, and they do so with impunity.

Another source of social disorder is the inequality of our system of taxation. If our direct system is vicious, our indirect system is outrageous. Though the wealth is centred in the few, the taxes are borne by the many. A poor man is taxed upon the face value of his freehold. The bondholder and the monopolist, worth untold millions and living in a brown stone front upon some fashionable avenue, hand in their figures for assessment. And need I say that they are very kind to themselves?

And now permit me to say a word in regard to our indirect system, which is misnamed a Protective Tariff. It is only protective inasmuch as it protects the rich and burdens the needy. Our present tariff has been defined, and well, as a "tax which pillages the many to enrich the few." It affords protection to a few manufacturers upon our coast to the detriment of a majority of our people. While the price of manufactured articles is increased there is no corresponding advance in wages. A tariff discriminates against labor in favor of capital.

Against such discrimination workmen are forced to organize to protect their common rights. The philosophy of their coalition is that "in union there is strength." Capitalists unite into companies and associations. They consolidate their wealth that they may reap a larger per cent. from their investment. Labor has learned a lesson. Daily toilers hope by combining to accomplish that which, if divided, would be impossible. Bankers have their protective associations; lawyers and doctors unite for common interests. Why should not the laborer, the locomotive engineer and the mason do likewise?

It is a mistaken idea entertained by many that we enjoy the rights of the present by the grace of Government. Our Government gives us no rights; nor can it. Its province is simply to protect us in those inalienable rights with which we are endowed by our Creator; and if it is only when governments fail in their sacred duties that protective organizations are necessary. Labor is the source of all capital, and therefore its rights should, in a measure, be respected. But monopoly is deaf to the voice of justice.

Probably the best representative labor organization that we have is the Knights of Labor founded in 1869. For some time its existence was kept secret to shield its members from discharge. The Knights have adopted this

motto, "That is the most perfect government in which an injury to one is the concern of all." This association demands: the abrogation of all laws which do not bear equally upon capital and labor; the substitution of arbitration for strikes, the prohibition of child labor, and of the importation of contract pauper labor. It demands the enactment of a law securing both sexes equal pay for equal work; it demands the reduction of the hours of labor to eight per day, so that laborers may have more time for social enjoyment and intellectual improvement, thereby enabling them to reap the advantages conferred by labor-saving machinery which their brains have created. It further calls upon governments to establish a purely national circulating medium, issued directly to the people, without the intervention of banking corporations, which money shall be legal tender for all debts public and private. Finally, it demands the reservation of public lands for the actual settler.

These demands are so direct and explicit that they cannot be misunderstood. They are certainly reasonable, and should be conceded. There is not a single one of these demands which, if granted, would not further the best interest of the masses. I cite the Knights of Labor in particular, because their platform of principles is an embodiment of the grievances of all other trade unions and labor societies.

These organizations must not be confounded with socialistic and anarchistic societies. They are not identical, nor even kindred. One teaches members that the wrongs they complain of are the results of unwholesome legislation, and the remedy must come through wise and judicious law-making; the other teaches that all legislation is vicious in itself. One would reform the present evils; the other would destroy the existing order. There is no bond of sympathy or kindred spirit between them.

Again, labor organizations are great educators. The political questions of the hour are their themes of discussion, and whatever has a tendency to make honest and intelligent citizens must be good in itself. If they possessed no other merit, this should commend them. Labor organizations are the implacable foes of monopolies, trusts and combines, and every one who has the best interests of his country at heart should applaud their existence.

The labor question is one of the great problems yet unsolved. Let us trust that our day may see its solution. If the wisdom of our statesmen prove successful it shall go ringing down the unborn years, a boon to nations yet to come. Now, as we are but in the morn of a second century, let us hope that our Government, born of the fealty of loyal hearts and hallowed by the life blood of devoted patriots, may never be the scene of such terrible disorders as have rent other lands less favored than our own. Let us hope that the prosperity of our present is but a foretaste of the greatness of our future.

Smoke the Union Cigar Pic-nic 5c.

NUMBERED LIKE BEASTS.

A Washington despatch states that the census supervisor of the fifth Pennsylvania district reports that many Hungarians, Poles and Italians in that district refuse to give census information. The supervisor proposed that such of these men as are designated by their employers by numbers be taken account of by numbers and in this way secure age, nativity and occupation. The census Superintendent very properly refused to countenance a system which treats men like beasts of burden by merely numbering them and directs the supervisor to employ enough enumerators and interpreters to thoroughly canvass these people and elicit the information called for.

Smoke the Union Cigar Nectar 5c.

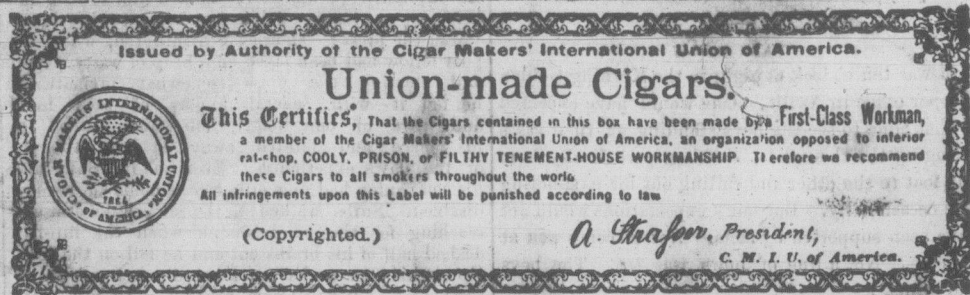
THE LINOTYPE MACHINE IN GREAT BRITAIN.

Three London compositors, who give their names, write us as follows: "As practical compositors and members of the London Society who have learned to work the Linotype, we consider it a great and successful invention, in no sense inimical to the interests of labor. We have been to Edinburgh and learned the causes of the dispute, which are entirely outside the merits of the machine—in fact, the men, on their own statements, were learning and willing to work the machines. The proprietors of the journal, however, were anxious to enforce conditions which they would doubtless have tried whether the Linotype existed or not. As a matter of fact, compositors can and do, consistently with being trade unionists, work the Linotype machines, and earn more money by them than by purely hand labor. We ourselves are securing a large increase on hand labor rates in London. In one office men are now receiving 10s. per week increase upon their former rates of wage in London. The Linotype is essentially an invention which 'lives and lets live.'"—St. James Gazette.

SUMMER RESORTS.

The Grand Trunk railway has issued an illustrated handbook of the summer resorts reached by its various lines and connections. These cover every variety of attraction, from salt to fresh water, from mountain to plain, from Chicago in the west to Portland and the Saguenay in the east, and include in many cases a choice of routes, by rail and water in some instances, by different rail lines in others. The excursions outlined numbers 268, and the fare in each case is given, so that intending travellers may know what the cost of their journey ought to be.

He Was a Bachelor—First Village Maid—Did you know the new minister had arrived? Second Village Maid—You bet I saw him get off the train and followed him home from the station, and what do you think? When he stepped in the mud I saw that horrid Miss Sniffkins whip out a string and take a measure of his foot mark, and I hear the old cat's set to work making him a pair of embroidered slippers.



This is a facsimile of the Union Label. It is printed on Light Blue Paper.

BLUE LABEL CIGARS.

All men having the interest of the working people at heart will ask for

UNION MADE CIGARS,

And when purchasing, are kindly requested to see that the

Blue Label!

is on each box.

The following are the particular brands to choose from, which are manufactured by strictly union men:

Nectar, Picnic, Stonewall, Jackson, Jolly Driver, Patronia.

They deserve your patronage and you ought to have them.

Get Your Printing from the CITY PRINTING

PUBLISHING CO'Y

(LIMITED) 759 CRAIG STREET

Pamphlets, Programmes, Newspapers Periodicals, and all kinds of Commercial Work promptly and neatly executed at Lowest Rates.

ESTIMATES GIVEN. BELL TELEPHONE, 1745.

HALLEY BROS.

16 Victoria Square. General Auctioneers, Commission Merchants, Real Estate Agents, ETC., ETC.

House Letting and Rent Collections attended to. Prompt returns and cash advances on goods. Telephone No. 2789.

PRINT AND PROSPER.

THE TRUE WITNESS BOOK AND JOB PRINTING ESTABLISHMENT

is now equipped with the most approved facilities for the prompt fulfilment of all orders with which they may be favored.

THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE

Is recognized as one of the best Catholic family papers.

Call and get estimates before placing your orders. 761 CRAIG STREET.

MCGALE'S BUTTERNUT PILLS!

(Are Sure and Certain) For Sick Headache, Foul Stomach and Constipation.

MCGALE'S COMPOUND BUTTERNUT PILLS are carefully prepared with a CONCENTRATED EXTRACT made from the BUTTERNUT and scientifically combined with other VEGETABLE principles that render them without doubt one of the best LIVER and STOMACH PILLS now before the public.

Can be sent by Mail on receipt of 25c in money or postage stamps.

B. E. MCGALE, Chemist, MONTREAL.