

The St. John Standard

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MR. KING AND LABOR.

Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King: "Speaking for myself, my intention in industrial problems is bred of my Liberalism. Liberalism is to be the expansion of higher human freedom. What the workers in one form or another are seeking is what we, as Liberals, have all along been speaking of as more in the way of equality of opportunity."

Mr. King's message to labor is sufficiently vague. It is contained in a discourse devoted to the creative properties of Liberalism; so it may be supposed he intends to tell labor that faith in Liberal principles is the condition of salvation. What Mr. King means by Liberal principles is not clear; neither does the history of the Liberal party in Canada afford much light. In opposition the Liberal party in Canada has professed faith in the political philosophy of Liberalism without making any great effort to visualize its application to Canadian problems; in power the Liberal party has been frankly opportunist the most of the time, and when it attempted to proceed on its principles it met with disaster. So when Mr. King talks vaguely of applying Liberal principles to the labor questions we can only interpret his intention in the light of what we know of Liberalism as a philosophy of political practice.

Liberalism as a political philosophy had a happy home in England some generations ago; its cardinal principles were freedom of trade, freedom of contract, competition, individualism, laissez faire and the devil take the hindmost. In the heyday of the operation of Liberal principles in England the Lancashire cotton manufacturers were making profits of one thousand per cent.; a system of child labor was in force which a Government blue book describes as undeniably horrible, and the whole mass of English labor was sunk in a condition of misery unparalleled in modern times. Mr. King offers an attractive prospect to Canadian labor; none but a madman would want to reproduce the conditions in this country that prevailed in England when Liberal principles were triumphant. For generations British labor has been fighting against Liberal principles, and it must be said that most of the progress British labor has made has been made in face of the opposition of the Liberal party.

The fact is Liberalism as a philosophy of political practice has gone the way of Currier's Catechisms and Goethe's Theory of Colors into the museum of history. Today it lingers in the world of thought as a reminiscence of a former stage of social development, just as a rudimentary remnant of a third eye remains in the back of our heads, a legacy that links us with our extinct ancestors of the shamanic age. Herbert Spencer was a conspicuous example of the peculiar effects of Liberalism upon a mind otherwise open to clear conceptions. As a scientist Spencer's perceptions were straightforward and clear; but when he dealt with questions of practical politics his perceptions were sometimes as distorted as if he was using the rudimentary eye in the back of his head. As a scientist he developed the evolutionary theory, and built up a synthetic philosophy the high lights of which still illumine the march of knowledge; as a politician he defended the obsolete and anti-evolutionary doctrines of Liberalism. As Dr. Jekyll he wrote his "Synthetic Philosophy"; as Mr. Hyde he repudiated the main principles of his philosophy in "The Man Versus the State". Mr. King may have this dual capacity. Only a madman would want to condemn labor to the tender mercies of Liberal principles.

BOOZE AND BUNCOMBE.

London will be confronted with trouble by an uprising of her East End population, if England adopts prohibition, says Rev. Dr. Campbell Morgan, pastor of Westminster Chapel, London. When Uncle Sam went on the water wagon, Gompers predicted revolution among the foreign-born. And the other day he was sermonizing about the good results of prohibition, which has principally hit the poor classes. The reverend gentleman from London who is preaching over the border expresses a view which has been strongly held by the classes in England. The magnificent fabric of the life of the classes in England owes something to cheap beer. Booze is the riches of the poor man. Church and State have cast a halo over the Englishman's pot of beer; the Divine Right of Kings has gone by the board, but the inalienable right of the lower orders to cheap beer is imbedded in the constitution of things. Where the cheap beer flows wages are low; booze is really the cheapest form of dissipation the working class can indulge in; when a fellow can for a few pennies' worth of beer feel like a live lord his interest in material acquisitions is not great.

Great British statesmen have figuratively taken off their hats to John Barleycorn; they have made no secret

of their belief that a sober Britain would be a hard Britain to govern in the good old fashion. Lloyd George has been dancing about like a pea on a hot skillet ever since his Government began to impose restrictions on the sale of booze and let the price go up. Nevertheless when the Rev. Mr. Morgan condemns prohibition because he fears revolution will follow in its wake it may be doubted if his soul is the abiding place of Christian charity. If, as his words imply, the existing order of society in Great Britain is founded on the degradation of the working classes who need beer to keep them content with their lot, a radical change in the social order ought not to have many terrors for preachers of the gospel of the brotherhood of man.

In any case the British working classes, drunk or sober, appear to have made up their minds to obtain a larger share of life, and to accommodate their desires some sort of a revolution in the existing order of society is necessary. Efforts to create a new Merrie England are less likely likely to be accompanied by civil tumult if the population is relatively sober and able to see its problems in proper perspective.

CIVIC RECONSTRUCTION.

The Trades and Labor Council has decided to start a movement to abolish commission form of government, and return to the British system. When the American invention was adopted here rather extravagant expectations were held out to the people, but few of them have been realized, and there has for some time been increasing discontent with the administration of civic affairs. Promptitude of decision and continuity of policy were to be features of the new system, but on the question of a street paving programme, for instance, commission form of government has exhibited a capacity for vacillation unequalled in the whole history of political wobbles. Assurances were given that commission would create a constructive interest in civic affairs on the part of the general citizenship; the interest excited has been mainly in the form of wonder that the commissioners were able to increase taxes without showing any appreciable improvement in the city's services or its physical aspects.

The movement of the Trades and Labor Council will probably attract considerable attention. Sustained interest in civic affairs has not been a characteristic of St. John citizenship; but the periodic revivals have always been marked by splendid displays of energy and enthusiasm. With the committees of the Commercial Club engaged in making a thorough survey of the city's industrial, commercial and social needs, and planning improvements and developments all along the line, and the prospect of a political movement to reconstruct the civic administration, the coming months are not likely to be lacking in interest.

COMPULSORY ARBITRATION.

Various Canadian papers are advocating the enactment of legislation which will make it a criminal offence for public or civic employees to engage in strikes which directly affect vital services or endanger the lives, health or property of the citizens at large. The Winnipeg strike and the Montreal water-works strike have afforded conspicuous examples of the inconveniences and dangers of strikes of civic employees. Provision for compulsory arbitration is an indispensable condition to declaring strikes illegal. At present Canada has legislation providing for compulsory arbitration in disputes affecting public services such as transportation, but the enforcement of such legislation when both parties show a recalcitrant attitude is not an easy matter. But even small strikes or lockouts now have such widespread effects upon related industries or services that public opinion is plainly swinging towards the views that compulsory arbitration is becoming a public necessity.

But civic and other public authorities are not always free from the responsibility for strikes. Sometimes they are very dilatory in dealing with legitimate grievances, and a public administration that allows its employees to come to a conclusion that a demonstration of solidarity is necessary before there will be action has nothing to be proud of. Civic authorities who are prone to play lady bountiful are often annoyed by self-assertion on the part of civic employees, and indisposed to consider demands, if the civic employees are newly organized. Until civic authorities show a keener disposition to arbitrate disputes with employees, the unions will not be keen for arbitration. But it is worth noting that the more powerful a union is the readier it is to accept arbitration, and abide by the awards. The International Bricklayers' Union has not had a strike of any consequence for many years. In that trade arbitration, though not compulsory, is accepted as a matter of course.

THE CARAQUET RAILWAY.

The indisposition or inability of the owners of the Caraquez Railway to provide a decent service is causing increasing annoyance in Gloucester County. Between the price the Federal Government is willing to pay for the railway, and the price the owners demand, there is a matter of between fifty and one hundred thousand dollars. The Northern Light says "the Local Government attempted to take a hand at improving matters, but the drastic methods proposed by the Minister of Public Works were, to all intents and purposes, disallowed by the Federal Government, following a protest by the railway owners." The Northern Light suggests that the County Council lease bonds to make up the difference in price, and argues that it would be good business, as the resultant progress in the county would probably liquidate the cost of the bonds. It adds:

"The people would be bound to benefit in many ways by efficient Government management of the railroad; the shippers would be saved many of the annoyances of conducting business at present; the Government would have its offer accepted and the railway owners would receive an amount which they could feel justified in accepting in justice to their bondholders."

WHAT THEY SAY

A Willing Worker.

(Exchange.) Mayor Church of Toronto scores 100 per cent. in the matter of regular attendance at council meetings. During his five years in office he has not missed a session.

Man's Best Friend.

(Calgary Herald.) A dog carried a lifeline through storm-tossed waters from a stranded steamer to the shore, and thus made possible the rescue of no less than ninety persons. If there is one animal more than another that deserves the best man can give it is the dog, best of all the dumb friends of mankind.

Returning the "Reds."

(Halifax Chronicle.) An excellent and timely example is being set by the American Government in the steps which it is taking for the suppression of Anarchism and Bolshevism in the United States. The proceedings will be watched with special interest by Canadians. The Dominion has been infected with and has suffered considerably from the same disease which is unquestionably spreading and showing symptoms of becoming more virulent. It is not a malady indigenous to either Canada or the United States. It has been maliciously brought in by outsiders of various kinds, who have been allowed the run of the two countries. It is high time now for their suppression, or at least for the indefinite curbing of their utterances and activities.

A BIT OF FUN

The Old Trick.

Second Mate—The cook has been swept overboard, sir.
 Captain—Just like a cook, to leave without giving notice.

Thinking of Manikins.

Mrs. Galey (in department store)—I want you to see the walking dolls, Jack.
 Mr. Galey—Lovely alimony! Aren't you afraid that one of them might recognize me?

Won't Matter.

"I'm afraid raw sugar is going to be scarce."
 "That will make no difference to us. We always use the cooked kind."

Easily Fixed.

"Yes, auntie, it is rather sudden, but I am to be married next week."

STOMACH AND LIVER TROUBLE

Once the liver fails to filter the poisonous bile from the blood, there is a clogging up and poisoning of the whole system which causes many troubles to arise. Therefore, upon the liver, more than any other organ of the body, depends the general health. Carelessness and neglect, and oftentimes wilful disregard of nature's laws will put the system out of sorts. The bowels become constipated, the liver inactive and the stomach upset. To bring the system back to its normal state, you should take Milburn's Laxa-Liver Pills. They live upon the liver, get the bowels back to their proper condition and tone up the stomach. Mrs. G. L. Cockett, Enchant, Alta., writes: "I have used Milburn's Laxa-Liver Pills and have found them good for both stomach and liver troubles. I have told others about your Laxa-Liver medicine and they have used them with good results."

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BY LEE PAPE

I was sitting at the setting room table getting ready to start to begin my homework, and pop was smoking a cigar and taking it out of his mouth every little while and looking at it with a satisfied expression, and ma sed, Willyum, is that one of the cigars I gave you for Christmas?

No, I can't say that it is, no, sed pop, and ma sed, I didn't think it was, the band is different, has the band anything to do with the quality of a cigar?

Only in a general way, sed pop, and ma sed, How were those cigars I gave you?

Fine, very fine, unusually fine, sed pop, and I sed, wich ones are they pop?—are they the ones in the box underneath the pile of fonograf records?

Wat are you talking about, how do you get that way? sed pop giving me a fierce look, and ma went and pulled the box out from underneath the records and opened it, saying, Well I declare, they're all still here all but 2.

They were there long, my dear, they're unusually fine cigars, but I always save the best till the last, its the same principle as dizzert sed pop.

Willyum Potts, I want to see you smook one of these cigars this instant, and I want to watch your expression while you smook it, sed ma.

But my dear, I still have half of this cigar to finish, sed pop, and ma sed, Finish it later, I don't like the band on it much, anyway. And pop put the rest of his cigar down on the ash thing and litt one of ma's and started to smook it slow, me and ma both watching his expression, wich it properly was much more satisfied looking than wat it would be, if no-body hadn't bin watching him except me, ma saying, Well, I must say you seem to be enjoying it.

My dear, its an unusually fine cigar, sed pop, and ma sed, Then smook another one as soon as you get throo that one.

O good hevins, I meen, Im afraid that would be too many cigars in one evening, sed pop. And he gave me another fierce look as if I had sumthing to do with it, wich I had, and pritty soon after that I quick finished my homework and went to bed on account of thinking ma mite go out of the room and leave me alone with pop.

"But you know nothing about house-keeping."
 "Well, there are plenty of magazines on the subject. I will immediately subscribe to one of them."

Conciliatory Attitude.
 "This naturalist says the grizzly is a nasty customer when aroused."
 "I am quite willing to believe him," said Mr. Perkleigh, with a shudder.
 "Dear me! If I should ever be so unfortunate as to encounter one of the creatures in a wild state, there's nothing I wouldn't do to avoid—ahem!—getting on its nerves."

Or Eggstracts Therefrom.
 "They say that music pleases the cows—makes them give more milk."
 "I wonder if literature would interest the hens, I think I'll read mine the market list."

His Scruples.
 Mrs. Flatbush—So your husband didn't go to the war?
 Mrs. Bensonhurst—No, he didn't.
 "What was the matter? Was he afraid?"
 "Yes, that was the trouble. If he went he was afraid he'd just make a slaughterhouse of the battlefield."

Except.
 The wife of a Japanese minister in London once attended a dinner party where a young Frenchman held the table spellbound for an hour by his talk on Japan.

He described the Japanese mode of bathing, the Japanese dress, the Japanese religion and form of marriage proposal—in a word, the most intimate secrets of Japan were exposed, and minutely described by this Frenchman.

He departed early. He had made a great sensation. After he was gone a young man said in an awed tone: "What a wonderful young man! He seems to know something about everything."
 "Except Japan," commented the Japanese guest quietly.



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