

Editorial Page of the Canadian Labor Press

POLITICS AND PEOPLE THROUGH THE TELESCOPE OF LABOR

Editorial Page of the Canadian Labor Press. DANIEL McCANN, Manager. CHAS. W. LEWIS, Circulation Manager. OFFICIAL ORGAN ALLIED TRADES AND LABOR COUNCIL OF OTTAWA.

AS THE BANK OF COMMERCE SEES IT. A VERY gloomy situation is portrayed in the May letter of the Canadian Bank of Commerce. The actual conditions as they exist in Canada are outlined and the Canadian Bank of Commerce gives little hope for the future, although it says "the situation assumes a less gloomy aspect when compared with conditions in almost any other part of the world."

The report of the Bank of Commerce is as follows: "Normally in May the influx of immigrants and the resumption of inland water traffic, and of agriculture and other outdoor industries, create commercial activity. This spring, however, the general dullness of trade, varying in degree in different parts of the Dominion, the domestic transportation problem, the continued decline in price of agricultural products, and a situation abroad that presents for the moment few satisfactory openings for increased exports of Canadian products are not conditions conducive to buoyancy. The best evidence of depression is the increased number of unemployed in industrial centres and the unusually large supply of agricultural labor in all parts of the Dominion."

"OUR UNION." TO speak of a union as "the union," meaning something apart from ourselves, is a misnomer. "Our union" is more to the point. It is as we make it, and it cannot rise higher than its units. But yet we have fashioned it fairly well. Our union, like any other human agency, occasionally makes mistakes, but in comparison it will show advantageously with any institution of the kind, either benevolent, religious or social. Its road has been a rocky one, but it has grown all the stronger and healthier for the knocks it has received. In its early days, derided by press and pulpit, persecuted by monopoly, laughed at by politicians and buffeted now by panicky gales or bayoneted again by militia, our union has marched serenely on, bringing down its tormentors, making supplicants of its enemies. In the past decade, thanks to the veterans who have gone on before, unwritten and unsung, our union has seen a mighty change. The columns of the press thrown open, searching, competing for its doings; academicians, scientists, art, espousing its cause, the church rapping at the door for admission; popular magazines, dramatists, novelists adopting its role, countering its favor. Our union today is a determining factor in all social functions, a main artery of the pulse of trade, of commerce, of all functions. It uses wages, prevents reductions and checks strikes and lockouts from the mere fact that it is. It promotes fraternity, sociability, it fosters temperance and liberality. Above all, it is an educational force. Our union is out on sectionalism; it is the embodiment of democracy; it knows no creed, rank nor title. It scoffs at the cheap snobbery of wealth and rejects its charity; for the self-styled "sets" and "upper tens" it has a healthy contempt, and upon the tinsel and brass of their striped defenders it bestows its scorn. Our union is of the people. We glory in its achievements, and we love its principles.

JUSTICE IS THE GOAL. THE trades union! That takes the individual, oftentimes careless of his obligations to his fellow-man, ignorant of the very causes of the evils under which he labors and works within him a revolution; fans to life the good that lies dormant in his nature; that moral sense which all possess; that makes of him an enthusiast—a man with new views, greater aspirations and nobler desires; a loftier purpose, a grander conception of society and life; that shows things in a different light, and awakens him to the fact that no matter what his occupation, how low his station, he is entitled to an opportunity to earn an honest livelihood, and no other can justly call himself master, notwithstanding wealth, gifts of birth—a generated spirit of independence and self-reliance that is the trade union's pride and honor, and which is the hope and safeguard of all civilization. True patriotism; not that hybrid brand too often sung today by the very class that persecuted the patriots of old, who would make slaves of freemen here. The trade union is right; and it is this sense of right that has defied the decrees of kings and priests in the past, and which, while suffering, defies the rulings of courts, judges and blacklisting corporations today. It lives both because of and in spite of them, and it will continue to live when its enemies sleep. Justice is its goal, and it seeks not a definition of that holy word in musty secretaries and law books, but in the plain words of the Bible, "Do unto others as you would be done by."

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BY J. A. P. HAYDON. Work on the Welland Ship Canal will no longer be carried on under the cost plus plan. This information was given to the House of Commons on Wednesday by the Hon. J. D. Reid, Minister of Railways and Canals. The House was considering supply for the department over which Dr. Reid has charge.

The work on the Welland Canal was started some years ago, but was abandoned during the war period. It was re-opened in 1918, and the Minister stated, "chiefly to give work to the unemployed. The Government could have profitably left the work over until prices had declined. \$5,000,000 had been expended on the work during the past year and some weeks ago the Government decided that the system of cost plus should cease and that tenders be asked for the work."

Trades and Labor Councils. OTTAWA.—The last meeting of the Ottawa Allied Trades and Labor Association was one of the most harmonious in many months. The executive's report, a very lengthy and constructive one, was accepted without challenge. It contained reference to the recent wage slashing by the employers of inside woodworkers; the attitude of the Ottawa Board of Trade in reference to civic laborers' wages and fair wage clauses in civic contracts, and other matters.

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The Welland Canal was completed through the rate from Port Arthur to Montreal. The rate was "very little more than the rate to Port Colborne."

Hon. J. A. Calder, Minister of Immigration, has introduced a bill amending the Immigration Act. The main feature of it provides for the repeal of the emergency provisions enacted in 1919 for the deportation, without trial, of persons guilty of seditious utterances. Labor protested very strenuously at the time these amendments were enacted in 1919 and has made strong representations to the House of Commons since that time.

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JOINT COUNCILS SECURE BENEFITS, CREATE HARMONY. Clark Reilly Tells Rotarians of Their Progress in the Building Industry.

OTTAWA.—Clark Reilly, secretary of the Canadian Association of Building and Construction Industries, told of important developments in the movement for joint industrial councils in a brief and interesting address before the Rotary Club of Ottawa, on Monday. He told of progress which has been made by joint councils of the building trades in several Canadian cities, and of the effectiveness of the joint industrial board which is conducted in Manitoba under the auspices of the Provincial Government.

HULL.—Dr. J. E. Fontaine, M.P., Hull, attended the meeting of the Hull Trades and Labor Council this week and told the delegates that he was heartily in accord with them in their fight for better wages. He declared that his moral support and his finances, which he had secured from the workmen, would be gratefully extended to the men in their fight against unjust reductions in wages. Dr. Fontaine, it will be remembered, was one of the speakers in the debate that was launched against Hon. Senator Robertson, who had refused to entertain the claims of the National Catholic Union for recognition.

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