

# THE LABOR ADVOCATE

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LABOR REFORM AND REFORM

Published by the Toronto Trades and Labor Council and D. A. L. 125, K. of L.

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY BY THE GRIP PRINTING & PUBLISHING CO. 20 & 25 FRONT STREET WEST, TORONTO, CANADA

Price: Single Copies, 5 Cents. Yearly Subscription, \$1.50, in advance. Subscriptions, 5 Cents.

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TORONTO, CANADA, MAY 8, 1901.

## "AS OTHERS SEE US."

The Trinity University Review, a pretentious little monthly publication, issued under the auspices of a "Board of Editors" twelve in number, has an article in its last issue on "Labor Journalism," evidently directed at the LABOR ADVOCATE. It begins by professing that the class of papers published in the interests of the working people should so often fall into the hands of men qualified neither by sound principle nor discreet understanding for their responsible and influential office. The Review, after making the usual professions of love and sympathy for the working-classes, proceeds to indicate, how, in the opinion of the aggregated intellect of its twelve editorial contributors, the LABOR ADVOCATE is leading astray "the ignorant and foolish," and demoralizing its editor's lamentable efforts in his position.

The first specification is that while workman "has duties to perform as well as rights to demand, yet of these duties we never read a word while the rights are writ large all over the page." So far as the workman's duties to his family or to society in general are concerned it is no part of the mission of a labor paper to re-tell him about them. He has had the benefit of the admonitions of the clergy—the religious and capitalistic press, the temperance lecturers, all sorts of official and volunteer moralists and exhorters from time immemorial. It is our business to emphasize his rights, concerning which all these classes of well-meaning persons have had little or nothing to say. As to the workman's duties as a producer it would be entirely unnecessary and superfluous to say anything of value by exhorting him to greater diligence or industry, inasmuch as the laboring class now fulfil those duties so well and produce so much. The capitalists and their political allies that maintain not only themselves but a very large class of idlers, parasites, and highly respectable loafers, who by reason of the workman's toil are strictly justified by the facts. What able to live without working it is other terms would the Review have us this class who need exhortation to regard to their duties, but the LABOR ADVOCATE does not reach them. The Trinity University Review is no doubt made by some of this class of luxurious idlers—for we suppose somebody must read it, and certainly nobody would have had anything better to do. Suppose it tries the effect of a lecture to the drones of society on their duties

and the wrong and injustice of living on the labor of others. The Review in accusing the editors of labor journals of insincerity and asserting that they probably do not care one iota for the workman or his interests, and would be the first to accept the favors of the capitalist," etc., simply judges every one by the low standard which prevails in connection with party and capitalist journalism. Venality is so prevalent, so universal we might say, in connection with the general newspaper press here, like the fellow who puts the result of the weighty deliberations of the Review's twelve editors into half-dime shaps, so ready to write anything in order for a few dollars—that it is no wonder if they conclude that all men are equally insincere and purchasable. There are, of course, scholars and fakirs who attach themselves to every movement to serve their own selfish ends, and the cause of labor has not been exempt from such. But there is not a single labor reform leader of any prominence or recognized ability who is not poorer by hundreds of dollars than he would have been had he devoted an equal measure of time and talent to some more popular cause.

These queer kind of editors are furiously angry all the time about something or other—generally about capitalism. They seem to loath money, an interesting and peculiar characteristic.

This is a queer kind of grammar and a queer kind of logic. It is precisely because we do not "loath" money, but want to get a reasonable share of it that we object to the system which allows a favored few to control its circulation.

Again, the Review charges us with "a noisy hostility to the cultivation of patriotism"—an accusation which could hardly be truthfully denied, even if we wished to do so. The only thing we regret is that we have not had the power to make a thousands part of the noise in ridicule and denunciation of the patriotic fraud and delusion that its well-paid upholders and their hirelings are continually raising in its favor.

The LABOR ADVOCATE believes that the development of which tends to keep the laboring class everywhere in subjection. It is kept alive solely to serve the selfish interests of the ruling classes, the military and the office-hunters, to furnish them with sinners, contracts and various pretexts for living off the public. It would have been more to the point had the Review attempted to put us to confusion by showing that patriotism benefits the worker, which it makes no effort to do.

The last count in the indictment is as follows:—

We are informed, with furious restoration, that the "moneyed-class" are utterly vindictive, having "neither heart nor conscience," and are "clashing for blood" of the workman. The wealthy speak with "devilish ferocity and hatred" of labor organizations, and would "had with exultation" the killing of any laborer when engaged in a strike.

If the Review had read carefully the articles from which these extracts are taken it would have seen that we furnished instances in point. What other conclusion can be drawn from the hanging of the four Chicago anarchists, though admittedly innocent of having through the fatal bomb which sent seven policemen to a well deserved fate—from the unavenged Morrocod massacre—from the May day slaughter at Fourmies—from the readiness of Police Magistrate Denison to trot out his cavalry and ride down Toronto into workmen during our street railway trouble—from hundreds of similar, if less fatal and sensational occurrences? The capitalists and their political allies should not have troubled to make so extended a reply to the Review's supercilious comments, on account of their intrinsic importance, which is extremely trifling. But as its remarks no doubt very fairly represent notions of the so called cultured and wealthy class in regard to labor orga-

nizations and labor journalism, we considered it advisable to give our readers an idea of how ungrateful and illogical they are, and how completely the literary representatives of the plutocracy are guided in their treatment of such questions by ignorance and prejudice.

## MEANINGLESS CANT

Why did the Commission invite Tenyson to prepare an ode for the opening of our republican World's Fair? Was there no poet in our own country equal to the occasion? And of all things to invite Tenyson! Fifty years ago, when he wrote "Locke's Hall," he had some red blood in him. Then his heart beat with "the great heart of creation." Now he is a scrawny old monarchist, who believes in the divine right of kings, thinks humanity should have a leader and a boss, and that things are well enough as they are, he himself being rich and a lord. This is a fine poet to be invited to write an ode for the World's Fair of the mightiest young republic in history.—Pittsburg Trades Journal.

Isn't it about time that the labor press of the United States dropped all this cant about the "mighty young republic," the glories of American democracy and that sort of thing? The United States government, controlled as it is by monopolists, bootlickers and the political flunkies of capitalism, is as despotic and as utterly regardless of the rights of the people as any king, dom or empire in the world. We perfectly agree with what our contemporary says about Tenyson. Like many other literary men who began life with some measure of sympathy with the people and faith in the progress of humanity, he has long since succumbed to social pressure and become a mere sycophant and narrow-minded pessimist. And for that very reason he would be just the man to write an ode for the Chicago World's Fair or any other occasion calling for the glorification of the kind of bastard republicanism which prevails over the lines. The forms of American government are slightly different from those which we enjoy under British institutions; but the spirit in which the laws are made and administered is identical. Under neither system have the masses any liberty or rights worth boasting about, much less fighting for.

## THE STREET RAILWAY.

The City Council has been again tinkering with the specifications under which the street railway is to be leased and operated in case of its being again handed over to a private corporation. The changes are of course entirely in favor of the monopoly, the object being to induce higher bids than any yet received. The clause providing that on the expiration of the term the real estate taken over in connection with the road shall be handed back to the city without any increase of price by reason of the increased value of the land, was struck out. This clause embodied a most important principle, namely, that the increase in value of land rightfully belongs to the community, and not to the individual who happens to be in possession when the increase takes place. Moreover, its insertion was intended to prevent the need of a long and costly arbitration, such as the city has had to pay for in connection with the taking over of the road.

We are glad to see that the clause providing for cheap fares, at the rate of eight tickets for a quarter, at certain hours of the day, though struck out by the Street Railway Committee, has been reinstated. The Committee, in eliminating this clause, perversely misunderstood the arguments addressed to them by a deputation from the labor bodies who declared in favor of a uniform low rate of fares and against any class distinctions. The idea of the labor organizations is that all citizens—and not merely workmen of working-men—should have the benefit of reduced rates, and that the general price of tickets should be put at as low a rate as will suffice to pay the expenses of the road. But some of the aldermen chose to misunderstand the statement of the deputation to this effect and to make it the excuse for striking out in committee the clause

for cheap morning and evening fares, whereas what was really desired was to extend the reduction so as to include passengers at all periods of the day, and do away with the appearance of an invidious class distinction. It is to be regretted that this course was not adopted. There is no reason why a revenue should be derived from the street car service to help pay the taxes of property owners. The proper scheme is to run the street cars as a public enterprise, and to put the fares for all at the lowest figure which will pay expenses.

But we must be thankful for small mercies at the hands of the present Council.

## BLOODY MAY-DAY.

The last of May working day in favor of an eight hour workday in Europe have been characterized by several bloody conflicts between the working people and the police and soldiery. It is evidently the policy of the capitalists, as the representatives of the capitalistic class and the guardians of their unjust privileges, to provoke disturbances by the exercise of measures of repression and parade of military force, in order to have the opportunity for shooting down or imprisoning the most conspicuous leaders of the movement, and so coving the masses into subjection. The bloody massacre at Fourmies, in France, in which some twenty people including a number of women and children, were killed outright and many others badly wounded—like the Morrocod slaughter in the sister "republic" and boasted land of liberty—shows what the privileged classes and their administrative tools are capable of doing in order to prevent labor from getting even a slight instalment of its rights.

With such lessons repeated again and again in connection with almost every labor conflict on a large scale, there can be no room for doubt that capitalism is resolved to contest every inch of the ground, and to use every possible means, whether of fraud or force, to perpetuate the serfdom of the masses. No fear of God or man; no sense of justice or humanity, has the least influence over the minds of the selfish, avaricious and brutalized crew who in every country control the public resources and shape the national policy, with the sole aim in view of preserving the supremacy of their class.

One encouraging feature of the disturbances elsewhere is that the workers exhibited a praiseworthy determination not to allow all the killing to be on one side. In several places they made a brave and effective resistance to the soldiery and police. In Home two grenadiers were killed, and several of the troopers who charged the crowd were injured. At Lyons a policeman was killed, and at Cleley, near Paris, four policemen, belonging to a force who dispersed a labor demonstration, were wounded by a revolver shot. And in Cleveland, Ohio, during a disturbance at the lumber docks of Woods, Jenks & Co. "several members of the company were brutally beaten by clubs, and had to be taken to their homes in ambulances." Beating with clubs is a brutal process at best, but workmen have been clubbed to death time and again without the assistant press organs thinking it necessary to emphasize the brutality of the thing. In attacking the members of the company responsible for the difficulty, the Cleveland strikers showed vastly more sense than if they had followed the course more generally pursued and clubbed the poor unfortunate devils of scabs who were driven by starvation to work for such wages as they could get. These incidents, happening in the course of a single day, are an auspicious indication of the development of a bolder spirit on the part of organized labor, and a disposition to strike back, instead of tamely submitting to violence and oppression.

"Resistance to tyrants is obedience to God."

It costs about one hundred thousand dollars each to bury dead congressmen;

and senators. The past congress paid out over half a million dollars of the people's money to bury the members and senators who died.—Toronto Free Press.

And cheap at the money too! If the whole outfit could be placed beyond the possibility of restriction or replacement by the same kind of cattle, on similar terms it would be one of the most economical jobs ever undertaken in the interest of the American people.

The Ontario Legislature has been prorogued and the Dominion Parliament opened. So far the proceedings at Ottawa have been simply a rehashing of the stump speeches of the campaign and an infinite amount of profitless wrangling between the fellows who have office and the other fellows who want it. The Government proposes very little in the way of new legislation, which is fortunate for the country, as nothing in the way of progress or enactments can be expected from the present Government. As nearly all the legislation they undertake is in the direction of robbing the people to enrich monopolists of all sorts, the less they do the better.

It is to be hoped that the City Council will sustain the course of the Board of Works in regard to the rival telephone companies and instead of allowing competition, make the best possible terms with the Bell Telephone Company. As the LABOR ADVOCATE was the first paper to point out, telephone competition would lead to increased expense and trouble, notwithstanding the nominal cheapening of the rates, because those wishing to be in communication with the whole body of telephone users would be obliged to subscribe to both systems. Moreover, it would be a serious obstacle to the city resuming possession of the lines with a view to municipal management a few years hence.

Paris has long been regarded by steadily-going and orthodox Britons as a perfect sink of iniquity—Sodom with all the modern improvements. Yet wicked Paris has just turned the tables upon its English detractors in a very practical way by breaking up an establishment devoted to immoral practices, the proprietor and several English frequenters having been sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. Bearing in mind the notorious failure of justice in connection with the Cleveland street scandal in London, and the more recent developments in the case of Capt. Verney, the less Anglo-Saxon moralizers have to say about Parisian immorality for some time, the better.

This voting on the money bill to waste the means for improving the water works system, last Saturday, is a strong argument in favor of the admission of all citizens to franchise in connection with such measures. The theory upon which the suffrage is restricted to property-owners, when class are more deeply concerned in the permanent welfare of the city than their less favored fellow-citizens. But experience in connection with the voting on money by-laws shows that only a ridiculously small percentage avail themselves of their privilege. The vote on Saturday is the lightest ever cast on such an occasion, the total only numbering 1,105. It is high time that the power were taken out of the hands of a class who take so little interest in civic affairs, by extending the right of suffrage to all citizens.

The Prison Reform Commission appointed by the Ontario Government has presented an elaborate report. In enumerating the causes of crime it omits the most prolific of all—the monopoly of land and capital, and the consequent struggle among the masses for the chance of a bare subsistence. A document purporting to deal with the causes of crime and omitting the prime factor, is not worth the paper on which it is written. The Commission has grappled with the vexed problem of prison labor, and this feature of its work is more satisfactory. It strongly condemns the contract system,