



THE VOICE OF LABOR.

THE labors of the Minister of Labor in the cause of Labor since Hon. T. W. Crothers assumed the portfolio are chiefly represented in the public accounts under the head of "travelling expenses."

During July, Mr. Crothers with his law partner Mr. Samuel Price of St. Thomas and party, had a pleasant trip across Canada in a Government car, the law partner having been made a Royal Commissioner by Mr. Crothers before leaving, so that they might travel together at the public expense. They visited the scene of industrial strife on Vancouver Island. The Minister made a personal and fruitless investigation. He came back to Ottawa and left his law partner behind to continue the investigation. A few days after Mr. Crothers' return to Ottawa the riots occurred and the Militia were called out. While things were in this condition Mr. Crothers hurriedly re-packed his grip and started for England. He spent six weeks there and returned to the Capital at the end of September to find the strike still unsettled. He reported that there was also considerable labor unrest in Great Britain, but held out no hope of any new legislation in the interests of labor as a result of his "investigations".

Comment is almost unnecessary. Nero fiddled when Rome burned. Mr. Crothers goes away on a holiday jaunt, at the country's expense, while the most disastrous industrial dispute of years, involving millions of dollars in industrial loss is in progress, and when his whole energies should be bent on bringing about a settlement and fulfilling his responsibility for applying the provisions of the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act.

Meanwhile the Minister's law partner spent two months in slowly writing a report at a substantial fee per day, telling the Minister what the latter already knows or should know from personal investigation.

Meanwhile the Dominion Trades and Labor Congress met at Montreal and voiced the protest of organized labor in Canada at the continued neglect of labor's interests by the Minister of Labor and at the

lack of sympathy shown generally by the present administration with the workingman as compared with the solicitude shown for the interests of wealth and privilege. Indignation went so far as to take the unprecedented course of a demand for the minister's resignation. Mr. Crothers' cool reply on his return was that the criticism of the congress "might be answered in a few words". But he did not condescend to add the "few words".

Meanwhile also the report of the Royal Commission on Technical Education and Industrial Training, appointed under the Laurier Government at the instance of Hon. Mackenzie King, is blandly pigeon-holed by Mr. Crothers. The report of the Commission gives the groundwork for the most important piece of constructive legislation in the interests alike of Labor and Capital that any statesman

of vision and courage holding the portfolio of Labor could desire. Mr. Crothers and the Government are willing to send thirty-five millions to London for Naval defence but unwilling to spend an equal amount for a far more practical and enduring form of National defence, which rests on the development of industrial efficiency and which meets "the German peril" at its very basis.

Labor and opportunity beckon. The Minister of Labor turns his back and seeks his own enjoyment.

WHO WAS RIGHT?

PREMIER BORDEN.

"To-day, while the clouds are heavy and we hear the booming of distant thunder, and see the lightning flashes above the horizon, we will not wait until another impending storm shall have burst upon us in fury and disaster."—House of Commons, Dec. 5th, 1912.

SIR WILFRID LAURIER.

"The Admiralty memorandum shows that there is no emergency, that England is in no danger, whether imminent or prospective."—House of Commons, Dec. 12th, 1912.

SOME INSIDE HISTORY.

"On the 13th of August (1911) I had met at St. Hyacinthe a number of the most important Conservatives and Nationalists from Northern Ontario. They had come especially for the purpose of inviting me to deliver two or three speeches in their districts. If I remember well, they had a letter from Mr. Cochrane, the present Minister of Railways and Canals. At any rate the invitation was conveyed on his behalf. . . Mr. Cochrane, usually very shy of his compliments, has since done me the honor of telling me that my arguments had made a deep impression, deeper still among English-speaking than among French-speaking people".

"A few days later there came to our office (LeDevoir) one of the most prominent members of the Conservative party, carrying under his arm the Voters' lists of all the Eastern Township ridings. He paid into our hands subscriptions to Le Devoir for thousands and thousands of electors. We asked nothing but the regular subscription price, deducting therefrom the ordinary commission paid to agents. We thus enjoyed the satisfaction of using Tory money to circulate the good Nationalist gospel everywhere".—Henri Bourassa in LeDevoir, June 2nd, 1913.