

LABOR ADVOCATE

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MILITARISM IN THE SCHOOLS.

The protest entered by the Toronto Trades and Labor Council against the encouragement of the military spirit in the public schools was very much to the point. The Education Committee of that body in their report have voiced the sentiments of the great body of the working class, and we hope of very many liberal minded and enlightened citizens outside of the ranks of labor. It is surely an outrageous thing that our future citizens should be taught from their very cradles, lessons of hatred and hostility against a neighboring people among whom their lot is very likely to be cast as individuals. Unfortunately the tradition of "loyalty" has in all but a few instances availed to stifle free expression of opinion on the subject. Many who are entirely opposed in principle to the drilling of children with wooden guns by way of giving them a taste for military maneuvers and the celebration of the frontier skirmishes dignified with the name of "military exercises," are nevertheless afraid to fear they should be accused of disloyalty, or charged with annexation principles. The fire-eating loyalists who trade upon their professions of patriotism to secure fat offices together with the notoriety which is almost as dear to their souls, have manufactured a factitious public opinion in favor of this crime against future generations. Taking advantage of the moral cowardice and apathy of people on such questions they have assumed to represent Canadian sentiment, and to decry all who ventured a word of dissent as traitors and annexationists. These bulwarking tactics have so far succeeded in imposing upon our school system the rudiments of a military training calculated to instill into the minds of the young the false idea of military glory, and to make them in ripper years the ready and subservient tools of the self-interested classes who profit by the military system. And what is anything worse than this, the flag-raising celebrations held in different parts of the country under the pretence of inculcating patriotism, have been made the occasion of instilling feelings of hatred and contempt against the American people and their system of government. It is a shameful and scandalous perversion of our educational system that it should thus be made the vehicle of keeping alive old-time prejudices and border feuds, for the benefit of a privileged few who care not what ill consequences may result in the future, so long as they see good positions at the expense of the people. It is especially disgraceful to see ministers who should always lend their influence to promote peace and goodwill, rying with hot-headed militia colonels and pampered officer holders in the evil work of stirring up strife and implanting the seeds of national prejudice and lust for "glory" in the minds of children.

The straightforward deliverance of the Trades and Labor Council on this subject should call the attention of the public to the length to which this evil has been allowed to grow, simply because the press and those who should have spoken out boldly and fearlessly in its condemnation have lacked the courage to do so. It is not the swarming colonels, the bellicose persons and the fussy, self-important bodies who have this "pat-lie" craved on the brain were brought up with a round turn, and plainly told that while they may rave and bluster to their hearts content at public dinners and society banquets, they will not be allowed to till their venom into the breasts of the school children. It is general enough to have the ever of the general public afflicted with their bombastic rant and the people of other countries led to suppose that Canadians are a nation of braggers and fire-eaters. But the school-children ought not to be exposed to the evil effects of such pernicious training. Hon. G. W. Ross ought at once to put his foot down upon militarism in the schools, either in the form of drilling with toy rifles, flag-raising to the accompaniment of vainglorious, anti-American oratory, or the celebration of insignificant border fights which ought to have been long since forgotten.

THE MAYORALTY.

The result of the Mayoralty election last Monday was a genuine surprise to every one. Owing to the general idea that Mayor Clarke's return was a foregone conclusion, comparatively little interest was taken in the contest, an unusually large proportion of the electors abstaining from voting. Ald. E. A. Macdonald developed altogether unexpected strength, many supporting him as a protest against the present civic administration rather than from a desire to see him returned. This combined with a severe blow to Mayor Clarke's confidence on the part of the latter's electors by the comparatively small majority of 1090 votes, the total vote cast for Mayor Clarke being 8101 as against 7085 for Macdonald. It is admittedly a severe blow to Mayor Clarke's prestige as a rising politician, but we are inclined to think he will get over it. It is understood that Ald. Macdonald contemplates carrying the matter into the courts with the object of disqualifying the Mayor-elect on the ground that he is interested in the city printing contract.

The evident disfavor with which the citizens view the fourth term idea could hardly have been more strongly illustrated than by the large vote given to a candidate coming into the field at the eleventh hour, without organization, party backing, or a large campaign fund, against a strong man with the advantages of availability, personal popularity and the Conservative machine in his favor.

THE RESULT OF COERCION.

The adherents and admirers of the Salisbury government have all along stoutly maintained that the famine in Ireland was a fiction, fabricated by the Home Rulers in order to stimulate the flow of dollars from America. The Canadian economist newspapers lent their columns to the publication of letters from Ireland showing conclusively that the stories of famine were all rubbish, and that the people of Ireland were never so prosperous as under Balfour's rule. Those who ventured to express a different opinion, and urge the need of something being done to relieve the necessities of the peasantry, were told that they were agitators who were misrepresenting the situation in order to furnish an excuse for legging in aid of the Home Rule movement. And now, just as the outside world has settled down comfortably into the belief that there is no unusual amount of suffering in Ireland, and that the people in fact are doing exceptionally well—Mr. Balfour starts them from their complacent delusion by an appeal for charity to relieve the poverty which he says "is chronic in some districts, and will if the people are not aided, reach a stage of need distress in the winter and early spring."

So that after all the systematic lying indulged in by the Balfourites, and their apocryphal partizans in this country to convince the world that the

Irish famine was a myth created by the imaginations of the Home Rulers, the Irish Secretary now finds himself compelled by circumstances to admit that there really is widespread suffering in Ireland for want of food, which can only be alleviated by special measures. It would have been highly blameworthy if the Home Rulers had spread ground less reports of famine to accomplish a political object. But how much more cruel and distasteful a crime, is that of which the Conservatives have been guilty in endeavoring for the moment of partizanship purposes, to dry up the springs of charity, and thereby protract the sufferings of the famine-stricken people! The course of Balfour and his partizans in this matter is even more abhorrent to humanity, than the Coercion policy itself. The loyalist press which has echoed the cry "No famine in Ireland," must feel as badly "given away" by Balfour's eleventh hour appeal for the aid of the charitable, as they did when on the authority of the London Times and Piggott, they staked everything on a charge of forgery against Parnell.

The famine in Ireland now reluctantly admitted to be a reality of the sternest kind, is directly due to the much lauded Coercion policy, which was said to have made Ireland peaceful and prosperous. In so far as the power of the National League has been weakened, the only defence of the peasantry against the rapacity of their landlords has been impaired. The uttermost farthing of rent has been extorted by the eviction process, and the people have been compelled to part with the food supplies which they should have kept as a means of subsistence. The consequence is that instead of Ireland maintaining a self respecting attitude, and holding the harvest to feed her people in accord with the Home Rule policy, she is placed before the world through no fault of her own in the false position of a mendicant.

It is land-lordism backed by coercion which is alone responsible for Irish distress. Charity may mitigate the present sufferings of the Irish, but it can do nothing to permanently improve their condition.

One dollar contributed to fight land-lordism, by any effective method, is better than ten poured through the sieve of charity into the coffers of the land monopolist.

"WE NEVER FORGET!"

The following extract from a speech by the eloquent Wendell Phillips has been frequently reprinted in labor journals. But it will bear repeating and emphasizing, as one of the soundest pieces of practical advice ever tendered to the laboring classes:—

My advice to working men is this: If you want peace in this country, if you want to make yourself felt; if you do not want your children to wait long years before they have the bread on the table they ought to have, the leisure in their lives they ought to have, the opportunities in life they ought to have; if you don't want to wait yourselves, write your names so that every political trimmer can read it; so that every politician, no matter how short-sighted he may be, can read it: "We never forget! If you launch the arrow of treason at labor, we never forget." If there is a division in Congress and you throw your vote in the wrong scale, we never forget! You force us to do as you know and say: "I am sorry I did the act." And we will say: "It will avail you in heaven, but on this side of the grave—never!" So that a man in taking up the labor question will know he is dealing with a fair trader, a patriot, and will say: "I am to be true to justice and to man, otherwise I am a dead dog."

In this paragraph the great Labor Reform orator lays his finger upon one of the most ruinous and fatal weaknesses of organized labor—the tendency to forget and forgive. Working men, as a rule, have short memories. They blow with indignation over some monstrous injustice or insult thrown in their teeth by an oppressor or servile tool of monopoly, but their wrath is short lived. A few months or years go by, and the very man who has incurred their just displeasure, by a few smooth speeches and pie-crust promises, is able to win their votes for

Parliament or the City Council, like Brutus.

"They carry anger as the dirt bears fire, which, much enforced, sheds a lasting spark."

Trading politicians are cunning when they take advantage of this weakness to neglect the interests of labor, or lend themselves to measures which are directly opposed to the rights of the masses. They count upon the shortness of the working man's memory. They calculate the months or years which must elapse before the people have an opportunity of effectively resenting their conduct, and say to themselves, "Oh, election day is a long way off; they'll forget all about it long before then." And to the disadvantage and disadvantage of labor, this sin of calculation is, nine times out of ten, correct. The masses are forgetful and easily duped, and too often allow fair words and smooth professions to obliterate the stains on a villainous record, and efface the memory of flagrant injustice and intolerable wrong.

An instance in point is afforded by the course of some in the ranks of organized labor in connection with the Street Railway franchise. Could it possibly have been imagined by anyone who witnessed the scenes of the Street Railway lock-out a few years ago, and beheld the entire laboring population of Toronto routed almost to the fighting point by the brutal and despicable conduct of Frank Smith, that any Labor Reformer, with a spark of sincerity in his nature, would ever forget it! And yet there are those who have completely forgotten all that was then endured and suffered and lost; all the insults and slurs heaped upon organized labor by the wealthy class and their hirelings; all the taunts and sneers of contemptible curs and lickspittles, who in such conflicts take the side of capitalism—all these things which every true Labor Reformer should remember to his dying day, in the hope of avenging them; that they are actually ready to hand over the franchise again to the man who is responsible for these humiliations and insults. It is a stab to the cause of organized labor more deeply than its bitterest enemy could inflict.

"We never forget!" There can be no better motto for our guidance. Organized labor will never command respect until it learns to punish its enemies—to follow them relentlessly, vigilantly and persistently, and strike hard and heavy whenever the opportunity offers. If we deal with an enemy on the same terms as a friend—if we weakly forgive injuries and insults unatoned merely because the lapse of time has deadened the burning sense of wrong—the natural result will be that man will despise the power of organized labor, and where a choice has to be made, throw in their influence with the capitalists.

They, at least, "never forget."

LABOR REPRESENTATION.

The Hamilton Herald does not approve of the proposals to abolish the property qualification for municipal offices and to pay salaries, which the LABOR ADVOCATE advanced as the only means of enabling labor to be adequately represented in civic affairs. The Herald thinks it a prudent thing to require a property qualification for aldermanic candidates "so that the tendency to pile up debt for which property owners are held responsible will be avoided."

If this was the object of the legislation in imposing the qualification it certainly does not seem to have been successful. Can it be truly said that the tendency to pile up debt has been avoided, even although the aldermen are all drawn from the property owning class? The contrary is the case. Debts have everywhere been recklessly incurred and communities burdened with liabilities which the industry of future generations will be heavily taxed to meet. For though it is quite true, as the Herald says, that the property owners are held responsible for these debts it is the workers who in the end

must pay them. The burden is shifted in the shape of increased rents and higher prices upon the mass of producers.

The Herald quite overlooks the fact that municipal councils have many other and equally important matters to decide as well as those relating to the public finances. Questions come up before them relating to the health, morality and convenience of the citizens that ought to be decided on quite other and broader considerations than those of finance. In all these workings have as deep an interest as the wealthiest members of the community.

The proposal to pay aldermen strikes the Herald as objectionable on the ground that if this were done representing the electors would become a trade. If the duties of an alderman become continually more exacting it is merely a question of time when it must necessarily become a trade. But what then? Is there anything necessarily dishonourable about such a trade? Certainly the present system does not secure the best class of men. Aldermen by trade demanding fair pay for the work they do for the public might be an improvement—they could hardly give less satisfaction than the men who now give their services gratuitously.

With every word of what the Herald says about the evils of party feeling among workers we heartily agree and re-echo the sentiment that "So long as labor is willing to follow at the heels of Party, just so long will labor candidate find the doors of advancement shut in their face."

MINISTERS and other religious people who are worrying over the vexed question why the workmen don't go to church, might perhaps obtain some light on the matter by reflecting over the somewhat significant circumstance that Father Huntington, a clergyman of the highest standing in New York and the son of a bishop, has been refused the opportunity to preach in some of the churches of his denomination here solely because of his active sympathy with the cause of the oppressed.

Why should workmen attend such churches! And how could genuine Labor Reformers consistently do so!

In our last issue we expressed a doubt as to the reliability of the despatches announcing the collapse of the Scotch Railway strike. Thursday's cablegrams show conclusively that so far from the strike being over the men are bringing the corporations to terms. It is announced that the Provost of Glasgow has called a public meeting to consider the best means of settling the difficulties, and that Mr. Baird, M.P., a director of the North British Railway Company announces that the directors are ready to discuss the matter of grievances with their employees. "He pleaded," adds the despatch, "for a suspension of judgment upon the company." This is not exactly the language of men who have won a victory by starving their employees into unconditional surrender. That monopoly machine, the cable, has been lying as usual.

A PARTICULARLY flagrant case of judicial prejudice recently transpired at the Winchester Assizes in England, last month, when Justice Grantham sentenced William Sprow, Secretary of the Southampton Dockers' Union to jail for three months on the charge of intimidation and inciting to violence during the recent strike. The bitter animus of the occupant of the bench against labor organizations was clearly manifested in his remarks when passing sentence and also in the fact that eighteen others found guilty of the same offences were discharged on their own recognizances. Sprow was evidently singled out as a mark for the judge's spleen and vindictiveness because he was an official of the Union. Judge Grantham could not have out-raged justice or violated his oath of office in a more high handed fashion if his name had been Denison or Morgan.

The worst result of the municipal elections is the snap judgment secured