LABOR WORLD

News and Views of the Ever Advancing Army of Workers

BY UNIONIST

"If the murdered Homestead strikers could rise in their graves and see workers accept Carnegie libraries, they would no doubt be thankful—that they are dead.—Terre Haute (Ind.) Toiler.

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When it was announced that the Massey-Harris Co. of Toronto was going to cut wages recently, an interviewer was told it was not so; it was simply "the annual readjustment of wages." It's just the same, only it's different.

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The old Housesmiths' Union of New York, Sam Parks' organization, which bolted from Buchanan's International Housesmiths' Union, has decided to issue subordinate charters, and form a new and opposition International Housesmiths' Union.

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The Typographical Journal begins the year 1904 with volume xxiv., No. 1. The cover bears a new design composed of two craftsmen holding up in their arms an open book on a tablet, bearing the inscription, "We desire to excel in the work of our craft."

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At the convention of the bricklayers and masons at Trenton, N.J., President Gubbins in his report to the meeting, expressed regret that the subordinate organizations on a referendum vote had decided against affiliation with the American Federation of Labor. He advocated that the present convention declare itself in favor of such affiliation.

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The officer of the Toronto Irish Protestant Benevolent Society who made the statement recently that Phillips Thompson's letter to the British press that there were so many idle workmen in Toronto, was untrue, and that men were well employed, evidently now wishes he had not expressed himself thus, or at least he knows different. Scores of unemployed workingmen are being sent to the gentleman in question for work or assistance.

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President Tobin placed Delegate Tateman in the chair and refuted many of the statements made by the St. Louis man. John P. Murphy, of Lynn, Mass., caused a scene by charging the St. Louis men with being in collusion with Armstrong, of Lynn, Mass., representing the Knights of Labor. Several delegates asked why the St. Louis men had joined the Western Labor Union before this convention was held, where they were to have a final hearing.

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Quite frequently, when workers go out on strike, others in the same trade, in different cities send sympathy and offers of assistance should any be required. The papermakers at the Eddy Works, Hull, Que., are out on strike. As soon as it became known throughout the country, other paper manufacturers immediately sent the Eddy people sympathy and offers of assistance in filling orders, stock, etc. "Imitation is the highest form of flattery."

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The January Typographical Journal is responsible for the following: "The entrance of a scab miner at a Salvation Army meeting held in Outtrim, Victoria, Australia, was the signal for the forty others who composed the audience to leave the hall in a body. The captain announced later that he would see the Hall Committee and have the scabs kept out. He also stated that the commissioner would not permit a scab to be a soldier in the Army."

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The boot and shoe workers' convention, held at Cincinnati this week, at times took the form of a miniature battleground. The weapons of war were stentorian voices and swinging arms. Some time ago eight St. Louis locals had their charters revoked, and six new ones were granted out of the debris. One St. Louis man named Pinta was on the floor six hours; he was the ex-business agent. In his statement he charged President Tobin, Vice-President Lovely and Organizers C. J. McMorrow and F. A. Sieberman with collusion with H. M. Eaton, formerly secretary-treasurer of the International Union, after Eaton had become superintendent of the Hamilton & Brown factory at St. Louis. He was especially severe on McMorrow, who drew up the St. Louis contract, and Sieberman, who executed it, and he declared that the general officers were in collusion with the bosses at other factories. He insisted that they had been unfairly treated because they were "buffaloes" (Socialists).

"Health and Vigor depend upon the quality and quantity of the blood."—HUMANITARIAN

The Liver is the great secreting organ of the body, and when it fails to perform its office, bile accumulates and the blood becomes poisoned, causing many unpleasant symptoms, such as: dull, heavy, languid feeling, indisposition to attend to duties, pain in back or shoulders, sour stomach, constipation, dryness of the skin, restlessness at night, etc.
If these symptoms are not dealt with immediately, they become aggravated so as to induce severe illness. To relieve at once and cure permanently

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Alfred Moseley, the British sociologist, criticized the members of the Metal Trades Association at a banquet in New York recently, for their role of refusing to confer with striking employees.

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Congratulations to Samuel Gompers, who on Wednesday next, January 27, will be 54 years of age. Born in England, cigarmaker by trade, labor organizer since 1875, one of the founders of the A. F. of L., its president for twenty-three years with the exception of one year, editor of the Federationist, and known to the wage earners of the civilized world. Gompers is small in stature, and if ever the adage, "good things are done up in small parcels," were true, it is so with the workingman's friend, Uncle Sam.

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The lawsuits against the London machinists and boilermakers by the Leonard Machine Works, in which the labor men were victorious, have put new life into the London Trades and Labor Council and its subordinate unions. The costs, several hundred dollars, will be met locally, and no outside aid will be sought. The cigarmakers (as usual) led off with a 50 cent assessment on their membership to help defray the costs, which is being followed by other unions. All the unions in the city are paying a per capita of 10 cents per member to the Trades Council to place that body on a good footing.

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The trade unionists throughout the United States are becoming somewhat impatient at President Roosevelt in not filling the office of Commissioner of Labor. Carroll D. Wright, the present acting commissioner, has accepted the presidency of Clark University, Worcester, Mass., and has only been partially attending to the duties of the labor department. The unionists object to Mr. Wright holding the dual positions, and are pressing President Roosevelt to make an appointment as Commissioner of Labor. The feeling is also actuated by the recent decision of Mr. Wright in favor of the coal barons against the miners, and his tirade against arbitration. Labor leaders venture that the President, in view of the coming presidential election, will soon be forced to show his hand.

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The trade unions affiliated with the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada will likely soon be receiving from Secretary Draper the request to record their vote on the question of the establishment of a national law bureau and defence fund in connection with the Congress. Recent events go to show that the scenes of battle between labor and capital are no longer the strike, lockout, boycott, etc., but the injunction, arrest and law courts. Labor must be ready to meet these emergencies, and the sooner such a department is established the better for it. Thousands of dollars are frittered away here and there by isolated unions on cases being handled by men, as solicitors, doing their best, but not having made the cause of labor, its technical legislation, decisions, etc., a study, they are at a disadvantage. What is wanted is one or more permanent solicitors, who can grasp the situation and at least meet capital in court on an equal footing. Whatever the per capita or cost may be, it is not likely to deter the affiliated organizations from voting in favor of the scheme when presented.

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BRITISH LABOR POLITICS.

The Labor Representation Committee have issued an excellent leaflet on the question of "Tariffs and Labor Conditions." After reviewing the question of Free Trade and Protection, the leaflet says: We do not regard Free Trade as in any way offering a solution to the problem of poverty. It is economically sound, and so we support it at the present crisis. It is right so far as it goes.

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The burden of landlordism, the oppressive weight of mining rents and royalties, the unfair discrimination and the exactions of railway rates, not only handicap British industry in meeting foreign competition, but increase the difficulties of the wage-earners in making a living.

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The Labor party demands better education, a more effective application of science to industry, better equipped labor and commercial state departments, and, above all, graduated taxation of rents and of unearned and excessive incomes, so that the community may enjoy the wealth which it has created, and use that wealth to reduce the load of rates and taxes which is now oppressing legitimate industry. We also consider that in view of the high railway rates charged to British producers, the question of the nationalization of railways should receive immediate attention.

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These positive proposals we offer in reply to Mr. Chamberlain's appeals that we should retrace our steps and seek the assistance of a fiscal policy which we have already tried, and which neither protected our trade from loss nor guarded our people from starvation. We earnestly appeal to the workers of the country to support us in a campaign which will benefit the industrial classes by increasing national efficiency and securing a substantial reduction in the cost of production. Great Britain is not played out; she is bending under too heavy burdens. The British workman need never starve if his labor did not go to keep idle classes in luxury. Let our cry be: "Increase labor representation in Parliament, and decline to bear needless burdens."

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This manifesto is signed by all the Labor M. P.'s in the House of Commons, the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress, in addition to the members of the Labor Representation Committee.

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On the first of January the Labor Leader, which almost since its first appearance has been under the control of Keir Hardie, passed into the hands of the I. L. P., and will in future be the official organ of the party. In his valedictory remarks in the issue of Dec. 25th Mr. Hardie says: From the first it has been my intention that the paper should one day become the property of the Independent Labor Party. That, however, I thought would be when I was no more. The thought of parting with it is like consenting to the loss of a dearly loved child. But circumstances are always bigger than personal feelings. I have no longer the spring and elasticity of a few years ago, and that means that the pressure of work and worry must be somewhat relaxed. But, and this is really the deciding factor, the interests of the party require that it should possess its own paper. And so, subject to the fixing of a few unimportant details, The Labor Leader will pass under the control of the I. L. P.

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Mr. Hardie will occasionally write signed articles for the paper in future.

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There is a possibility of Mr. E. B. Ross, the well known authority on the South African labor question, and hon. secretary of the South African Free Press Committee, being adopted as Labor candidate for North Kensington. He addressed a meeting of the Paddington and North Kensington Trades and Labor Council the other day, and was well received. In the meantime Mr. Rose's name is being submitted to the various bodies affiliated with the Trades and Labor Council.

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The Walthamstow branch of the Operative Bakers and Confectioners' Union have passed a resolution approving of the parliamentary candidature of Mr. A. E. Holmes, Labor candidate for Walthamstow.

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It has been decided to form a Labor Representative Committee among the trade unionists of Lewisham.

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BRITISH MUNICIPAL ENTERPRISES.

The accounts of the electric lighting department of the Belfast corporation for the past year show a steady advance. The revenue amounted to £22,536, and the working expenditure to £9,004, leaving a gross profit of £13,532. After paying interest, sinking fund, etc., and clearing off a deficit of £547 brought forward, a net profit of £2,225 remains to be carried forward to next year's accounts.

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The accounts of the Edinburgh corporation's electricity department show a revenue of £103,365, expenditure £41,120, being a gross profit of £62,245, and a net profit after paying all charges of £14,533.

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According to the report of Mr. R. R. Greene, tramways manager, the first year's working of the Wallasey electric system has resulted in an excess of £7,780 in receipts over expenditure, after placing £4,400 to depreciation and renewal accounts. From this £1,408 has been put to sinking fund, which now stands at £1,640, and £3,772 16s 5d for interest on loans.

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The Bradford corporation have recently completed an important addition to their tramway system, and satisfactory results have been secured on a new route where for the first half mile the gradient is one in nine.

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Mr. George Carter, borough treasurer of Preston, has compiled an exhaustive and interesting table, showing the extent to which 84 towns in Great Britain benefit by their municipal undertakings. The town of Darlington, where Mr. Arthur Henderson, Labor M. P. for Barnard Castle, now occupies the mayoral chair, has its rates reduced 1s 8d in the pound as the result of municipal enterprises. Wigan with 1s 6 1-3d in the pound, and Carlisle 1s 5d in the pound follow close.

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Considerable success has attended the farming experiments of the Tunbridge Wells corporation last year. The committee controlling the two irrigation farms some time ago decided to devote a portion of the municipal estate to stock raising, and the result has been very gratifying. Recently the corporation entered some of its animals in the local stock shows, and carried off a number of awards.

Is Crime a Disease?

Dear Mr. Editor:—I was much interested in the essay, "Is Crime a Disease?" read before the Young Democratic Club by "G. C." Having taken an interest in the commonwealth all my life, and being now on the shady side of fifty, permit me to say that I have noticed that a great hindrance to the progress of social reform is the peculiar fact that orginal thinkers (and all social reformers are original thinkers) are apt to be dogmatic. In the intensity of our honest convictions we are unable to credit honest sincerity or legislative sagacity to those who differ from and often oppose us. All along the "far-flung battle line" between individual greed and collective comfort and prosperity immense progress has been made in the last fifty years. Yet I for one would like to see social reform advance a little faster than it is going. I believe that our slow progress is due to lack of co-operation among the various divisions of social reformers. You know the strength of an army lies not alone in the strategical skill of the general, but also in the intensity of its comradeship. Officers and men who are prepared to find fault with each other on the shortest notice and at every difficulty won't win many victories. In my life-work I have often been sorry that I have missed an opportunity to gain influence over a man, or, even worse, I may have carelessly said something that vexed him when I have later on canvased him for our cause I got a cool reception, and felt I had lost a vote. I rejoice in the prosperity of the Young Democratic Club, and I am right in line with G. C. in believing that the awful prevalence of crime and misery is largely provoked by our social system. Suppose we grant a man who robs society of ten millions a la Morgan or Schwab, hobnobs with kings, but a man who robs society of one thousand a la the safe-blower get ten years in gaol. Suppose we grant that thinking on these things drives a man to close a bargain with the devil and take to a life of crime, has he bettered his own condition or the condition of society by so doing? Is there not a more excellent way? Thus said the Lord, "Trust in the Lord, and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. It came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment." If any reader of these lines doubts the reality of these truths I would kindly invite him to enter next Sunday morning any Salvation Army knee drill, any Methodist class meeting, and Baptist or Presbyterian or Congregational prayer meeting and listen to the prayers and testimonies of young and old, rich and poor, and he won't hear one say that the good Lord ever saw him "stuck" and left him there. From poverty and sickness, from injustice and temptation, the Lord brought them out of all. You will hear more real romance than you'd find in a three-volume novel. We need not argue about the meaning of the word hell. We shall each know for ourselves in fifty years more or less, happy old age lies before the poor exploited victims of the capitalist, do you think I would bother with trades unions? It is because I believe with all my soul that that wonderful poem of Robert Burns, "Man was made to Mourn," has a divine side to it. "Proclaim liberty to the captive, and comfort all that mourn," that I am a trades unionist. If I believed that the drunkard and his family were enjoying themselves and preparing for an eternity of bliss, do you think I would bother with prohibition? It is because the drunkards themselves have held my hand and said, "I am ashamed of myself, Harry. I am miserable. I am breaking my wife's heart and taking all the joy out of the lives of my children, but I can't help it as long as the drink is sold I must have it." It is because I have seen the mother, wailing for her son, the wife for the husband, yes, and even the children for the mother, and because I know that there is a hell for unresisted evil even on this earth, that I am a prohibitionist.

Now, my brother social reformers, bear with me while I kindly ask you, Single Taxers, how much do you really pity the victims of house rents and ground rents and taxes, and how much does your indignation really boil against the land grabbers. Will you say, like the large-hearted David Livingstone grappling with the monster of African slavery, "I will join hands with anybody and everybody, Roman Catholic or Mahommedan, white man or black man, who will help to close up this great running sore of Africa." To my fellow-unionists I would say: "How much do you really pity the victims of the sweatshop, the train crews this bitter zero weather, fighting their way through blizzard and snowdrift, wife and babes at home praying for the only one that stands between them and a life of poverty and privation. How much do you really pity the factory hand, the sawmill hand, the coal or iron ore miner? Many of them have been caught in the machinery two or three times, perhaps with only one finger left on the right hand; this bitter morning they stand bravely to their machines as with aching stumps they feed the frozen boards to matcher, sticker or rip saw, that they may pay their way and keep mother and children in a comfortable home. How much, my brother? How much? Are you going to put up your lonely fight and accomplish nothing? Or are you going to co-operate with men who love humanity as much as you do, though in a different way, perhaps, and win a swift and furious victory. I think G. C. is a little hard on the church in denying it all credit in the uplifting of humanity. As one who wishes to co-operate with all unselfish social reformers, by they Socialists, Prohibitionists, Trades Unionists, Single Taxers, W. C. T. U. or Salvation Army and churches and who wishes to avoid and discourage any statements that may hinder such co-operation, I would humbly submit the following facts for the consideration of my esteemed fellow-workers:

1. Henry George, in that eloquent lecture on Moses points out that in that national constitution the life and comfort of the poor, the stranger, the widow, and the fatherless, yea, of the cattle and the birds, were protected from greedy cruelty by the laws of church and state.

2. Have you ever read "Labor Leader, Labor Laws and Labor Legislation," by George Howell, and noted the generous and valuable assistance given by Thos. Hughes, M.P., to the struggling trades unionists? Then read his Tom Brown at Rugby and Oxford, and see how chivalrously he exerted himself on behalf of oppressed labor, ever defending the poacher and machine-breaker against the county squires and yeomanry. In the "Manliness of Christ" Thos. Hughes says, speaking of the Sermon on the Mount: "In this wonderful proclamation the Redeemer swept away all false notions of manhood. He lifted humanity up to a healthy tableland, whereon it has ever since been fighting for its liberty with more or less of victory."

3. That great German reformer, Martin Luther, preached his sturdy notions of religious liberty with such energy that the German peasantry caught on with enthusiasm, and poor Luther was greatly troubled with peasant insurrections, but it was Luther who put life into them.

4. John Calvin himself. Of course he had his faults. Judge him by his environments. Have not Hon. Geo. Ross and Hon. Jas. Stratton got faults? But have you ever read how Calvin ruled Geneva? He helped to lay the foundations of that little republic that to-day can teach us lessons in legislation.

5. Wickliffe's Lollard preachers. About 1350, in the reign of Edward III. The toilers of England were then in a condition of serfdom; the land was swept by a pestilence that carried off one-third of the inhabitants. Labor was scarce. Wages went up. Rents and provisions went down. Land owners in and out of Parliament tried to keep wages down by law, and toilers were fined and imprisoned for asking high wages, and employers were also punished for paying high wages. The serfs formed unions and subscribed common funds for common defence. Who guided and advised these serfs? Wickliffe's Lollard preachers. All over the land went the "poor priest," preaching about the natural equality of man and calling in question the claims to superiority made and enforced by the noble and wealthy classes. In an instant and on the same day there broke out a rebellion extending over nearly the whole of England, known in history as Wat Tyler's rebellion; the suppression of it was followed by a long weakness on the part of the government, but that rebellion ended serfdom in "Merrie England." It is interesting to note how the humble ambitions of our ancestors stirred 500 years ago. They demanded four things: (1) the abolition of bondage; (2) the reduction of the rent of land to fourpence an acre; (3) the free liberty of buying and selling in all fairs and markets; (4) a general pardon for the past offences. In June, 1389, ended the serfdom of Englishmen. In France the lot of the toiler went from bad to worse until there came the terrible French Revolution of 1789. The preaching of the Gospel by Wickliffe's Lollard preachers gave England a start over France of 400 years.

6. To the Roman Catholic Church we owe a debt. Somewhere about the year 1210 the two orders, Dominicans and Franciscans, of begging and preaching friars began their great revival. Under vows of poverty they were saved from the corruption of wealth, and were able to reach the poor. They preached of a Holy and Almighty God, and demanded justice and mercy for all men; they helped on the emancipation of the serfs, and by educating them enabled many of them to rise to high positions in church and state.

7. What shall we say of Cromwell, himself a Calvinist, a firm believer in the decrees of God, "that God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." The church and state of his day had become one vast conspiracy to crush the liberty and conscience of our nation. Cromwell and his Ironsides grappled with the cruel monster, cut off its head and saved our nation. But what shall we say of the toadies at the Restoration, who grovelled at the feet of the royal blackguard, laid their borough charters at his mercy, permitted him to abolish Single Tax, which up till then had been England's fiscal policy, and let him lay the burden of taxation on the improvements of agriculture, manufactures and commerce. Yes, and from the taxes of the poor let him enrich the royal bastards of the Dukeses of St. Albans, Grafton, Portsmouth and Cleveland.

8. Think of Dr. Chalmers' great work at Glasgow, and how she now shines the brightest light in the world of municipal brotherly love.

9. Think of the noble Salvation Army. What comfort, encouragement and salvation they have brought into millions of darkened lives, and after years of house to house canvassing I can testify that when I struck a S. A. man I found one who would intelligently discuss social reform and most likely vote for it.

10. In the benefit societies, where I have lent a hand for the last thirty years, some of our best and most devoted officers are among the church members.

The Lord bless and prosper you, my brothers of the Young Democrats' Club, but believe me the work is great, and we must all stand shoulder to shoulder. Why make a long job of it? Why prolong the agony by unnecessary divisions? Let us endeavor so to think and speak of each other as to bind all lovers of humanity in one solid phalanx. We have no better foundation on which to build than on the work done by the brave, true hearts who love the Christ, and love the souls for whom the Christ died. I would conclude with the words of Robert Burns on the Calvinistic Covenanters:

"The solemn league and covenant
Cost Scotland blood, cost Scotland tears;
But it sealed Freedom's sacred cause,
If thou'rt a slave indulge thy sneers."

J. H. E.

◆ ◆

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