

There is Lack of Labor and What It Has Done for the Local Laborer

The Amazing Results of Organized Labor in St. John and Vicinity—How Wages Have Been Increased, Hours Shortened and General Conditions Bettered by Concentrated Effort On the Part of Workingmen—The Life History of Several Local Unions.

Continued from Page 1.

However, within the last few years, a number of its members became dissatisfied with the way in which things were being conducted. A selfish and self-seeking clique had contrived to secure the reins of government and was using its power to further personal and political ends. It is not necessary to go into details, but the fact remains that for this and other reasons very many of the rank and file of the union, because dissatisfied with the way in which the interests of the organization they were working for were being handled.

Where the U. M. W. Came In.

Then came a movement to replace these officials, but the movers, though in majority, found themselves handicapped by some new constitutional amendments, which practically excluded them from the grand council of the order. Told in their attempt to do this, they began looking around for other means of getting rid of the objectionable control. The introduction of the U. M. W. of A., seemed to them to be the solution of the accordingly.

The U. M. W. Wins.

By the common consent of the Grand Council and Lodges of the P. W. A., however, a plebiscite of the members was taken and the question as between the two labor unions and it resulted in a large majority for the U. M. W., which therefore came into the Province and established its headquarters at the old site of the P. W. A. did not accept the unexpected verdict and it continues to do business with greatly diminished support.

The Labor Trouble of 1899.

In 1899, the miners of the Province, believing that they were entitled to better treatment along certain lines, put in a claim for additional wage concessions from the coal companies. The management of these companies took the ground that the concessions could not be granted, because the condition of the coal trade at that time would not stand any enlargement in the cost of production. However, a short time afterwards one of the coal companies in Cumberland and two in Pictou did grant their men certain advances in order to avert threatened trouble, but the miners in Cape Breton continued working for nearly a year at the old rates, and then they renewed their demands for treatment equal to that accorded the men on the mainland. It was then agreed to submit the matter to arbitration.

The Beginning Lost Confidence.

The case for the Dominion Coal Company was submitted to the arbitration board by one of the ablest lawyers in Nova Scotia. The case for the men was conducted by John Moffatt. The result was that the Company was ordered to grant the concessions granted in Cumberland and Pictou were a short time afterwards withdrawn. Rightly or wrongly the men felt that their demands had been sacrificed through lack of proper presentation, and here began their distrust of the Grand Secretary which brought about their efforts to remove him from office and which has culminated in the present deplorable industrial situation.

Changes in Constitution.

For certain reasons, which were regarded as being of sufficient importance, the Grand Secretary had been placed constitutionally open to competition. This did not suit the book of John Moffatt, when he saw the strength of the opponents and therefore the constitution was amended in 1903, so that "none but subordinate or Grand Council members, in good standing can be eligible for this office." Thus safeguarded from competition, Mr. Moffatt started in to carry on things with a high hand. In order to establish himself more securely he organized P. W. A. lodges outside the mining communities with the result that he precipitated the led it to a most inglorious end.

Taking the P. W. A. into Politics.

If a labor organization is to be effective, it is a generally recognized principle that it must keep out of party politics, but in 1906 in the heat of the election, John Moffatt threw this principle to the winds and organized the platform in favor of the Liberal candidates in this county. He claims now that he did this as an individual but, all during the contest, his misguided break was heralded by the Liberal party press as evidence that the P. W. A. vote was going to be organized, and John Moffatt did not find it convenient to deny claims of the Liberal Press until a few days ago.

The Lodges Rise in Resentment.

The upshot of this foolish endeavor to drag the P. W. A. into politics,

Everybody knows that Labor Day is a public holiday and are correspondingly grateful to the man, who ever he was, who conceived the idea of such an observance of the rights of labor. To the thoughtful person, however, the question may occur why the request for a public holiday should have been granted by the Government. The obvious answer is that the labor organizations have done good work for the people, and are deserving of recognition. A Standard reporter who sought information as to what practical results trade unionism has secured locally found that in nearly every calling in which men of toil engage, wages had been

higher wages. Seven years ago at the time of organization, the wage was \$1.20 a day and now the rate has increased to \$1.65 a day. The freight checkers have received a corresponding increase through the organization of a similar union. The clerks have recently organized and have already secured a decision from an arbitration board favoring their demands and they are only waiting for the finding to be carried upon by the Government. Hod carriers and unskilled building laborers have the Hod Carriers' Union to thank for an increase in wages from \$1.25 to \$1.30 a day to \$2 a day. This union is still flourishing and is affiliated with the International Union. The Laying Laborers' Union has secured a substantial increase in wages ranging now from \$3 to \$4 a day.

The Sheet Metal Workers.

Considerable number of workmen engaged in a rapidly growing industry owe a marked increase in wages to the Sheet Metal Workers' Union. These men were formerly a very poor class of workmen and had no means of redress until they had organized a powerful union. The large number of firms doing business in this line of work afforded opportunity to a good organization of men and as a result of the organization of the union, they received from \$12 to \$14 a week where formerly they received from \$8 to \$10. The union men do not control the situation as regards employment of all carpenters, and this is one of the occupations in which the non-union men draw the same pay and have the same privileges as the members of the union. There is no question that the existence of and steady persistence work accomplished by the carpenters' union has almost doubled the daily wage.

The Wage Question.

The wage question, however, affecting, as it does, the state of living of every man who earns his living by his hands, comes closer to the people of the city and it may be a surprise to many that the labor unions have been instrumental in securing an increase in the day's pay from 20 to 50 cents during the last ten or fifteen years. In some cases the local union has been organized merely for the purpose of securing the increase and allowed to run down after the goal had been accomplished. Ten years ago, there were twenty-two local unions and in the present time there are 3,000 union men in the city, representing nearly every calling. Today, if a labor parade was organized in St. John, there would be a showing, and the present time remains that here have been brought up to the standard through the medium of the unions and in many cases non-union laborers have benefited from the actions of the union men.

The Carpenter's Union.

One of the most thriving of the labor unions at present in existence is the carpenters' union, which is affiliated with the international association of carpenters and joiners. Formerly a poorly paid class, but since the organization of the union seven years ago, the carpenters have been able to secure a minimum rate of \$2.50 a week. No Greater Triumph.

Trade unionism has achieved no greater triumph than that of the history of the St. John Typographical Union. After a bitter fight, involving a number of strikes, every printing establishment in the city has been organized in favor of the Union. The eight hour day has been secured and wages materially increased as the cost of living advanced. The

Taxes and Rents.

The same leader discussed the increase in the cost of living, speaking particularly of the taxes and rents. "You cannot get a house with proper sanitary appliances," he said, "for less than \$150 a year, and if the laboring man is obliged to pay less he is just dragging out a miserable existence. He must send his boys and girls out to work when they should be getting an education and the school registers of the city will show this exorbitant up to this year. Many of our best mechanics are leaving the city, when formerly the wages are good enough, but there is no trade."

Notwithstanding the successful campaign for higher wages conducted by the labor unions in every calling of any consequence, the condition of the laboring man in St. John is not regarded very optimistically by the Standard. No one interviewed by the Standard, however, can be made of the wages paid, but the whole trouble is that in many occupations steady work is not offered and face to face with the men of muscle and brawn who depend upon their hands for a living no matter how good the wages, the dullness of the trade has resulted in slackness of work. The number of longshoremen at work, the lumber business shows little improvement and there is no chance for the employment of additional men in this line of work. A prominent labor man said when interviewed, that the trade and industry in general is in a slump when it was found that the end was in self defence the breadmaker of the family would fall back on the union to secure him enough wages to keep the wolf from the door.

The Right of Power Discussed by Wilfred Gribble—The Laborer Gets What He Is Entitled To and No More.

(Written Specially for The Standard by Wilfred Gribble.)

Today is Labor Day. One day in the 365 set aside in honor of labor. Just one day. Today thousands of men, tens of thousands, on this continent will parade the streets, hold sports on celebrations in honor of labor. Floods of oratory will be poured forth by our "labor leaders" in honor of labor, and tomorrow we will get up and go to our daily drudgery, if we have a job to go to, in honor of—capital; and we will spend another year to its glory, worship, and aggrandizement.

What has this to do with the subject indicated by the title of this article? Well, we will see: I have seen a few Labor Day parades—big ones—and as I have watched the workers marching by in thousands; averaging fine specimens of manhood, intelligent, well-to-do, and well-dressed, I have thought invariably what latent power lay in them, what they could do and get would do if they only knew enough to use the power they were exhibiting and to use it in an effective way. After all has been said, power is the keynote. Orders may talk about the rights of labor but labor has the power it will never get its rights unless it uses its power in the right way. Power is right. If labor has not the power, it hasn't the right. If power to enforce, what is the use of rights to labor? I wait for a reply.

May Be Misquoted.

I make this statement, well knowing that it may be misquoted by being taken away from its context—that labor has all it is entitled to right now. When labor uses its power in an effective way and gets what it is entitled to it will have them. How pitiable to hear a working man say, "I've got rights, but I've been denied them." One might as well say, "I have a watch, but it's been stolen from me." Men talk about their rights to workmen that have not had to sell their labor power to those who do own. Thus their labor power is a commodity offered for sale and subject to the same laws of supply and demand as other commodities, and unless successful peddlers of labor power talk about their right to work they are claiming a right to sell something that no one wants to buy. A merchant would say that he had the right to sell his wares to those who didn't want them would be just as original. Then we talk—that is, we that are foolish—about fair wages. Again risking misquotation, I say deliberately, that the workers have fair wages—they have the wages they have the power to enforce, and, if they use their power to raise wages, then those higher wages will be fair. If, on the other hand, wages are forced down, because of an increasingly overstocked labor market, those wages will be fair.

A Brutal Way.

Seems a brutal way of looking at it, doesn't it? Perhaps some folks talk about "fair wages" and "fair profits" will be kind enough to tell us just what he means by it. What does he mean by "fair wages"? Does he mean that a man should get 20, 50, or 100 per cent of his product? If not, what does he mean? What does he mean by "fair profits"? Just what percentage of the product is fair? Come now, let's know just what you do mean. Working men, we union men are getting hungry to know. We are getting tired of this everlasting talk about the rights of labor, "fair wages," "fair profits," and so on.

We are getting impatient. Abstract terms will not supply us and our wives and children with good clothes, good houses, good food, and other good things. You "great" labor leaders have these things now on your comfortable salaries, and we want them. We are beginning to see you are misleaders. We are waking up to our power to make what rights we choose.

And now let the writer give his definition of fair wages, a Socialist definition. To the workers, the full product of their associated labor—100 per cent, and of a fair profit, nothing at all. How is this to be brought about? By the workers using their political power—mark the word, power—to possess themselves of the means of production, to socially own it as they socially use, and so individually, enjoying what they socially produce. That's the Socialist answer. Do you like it?

LONG REACH.

Long Reach, Sept. 3—Mr. and Mrs. Edmund Whipple, who have spent the summer at Birch Cottage, have returned to Arlington Heights.



J. W. MADDIN, M. P.



CHAS. MCRYSTAL, Formerly President of St. John Typographical Union and Trades and Labor Council, Now of Los Angeles, Cal.



W. M. H. COATES, St. John Correspondent of Labor Gazette.



PETER C. SHARKEY, of the Freight Handlers Union.

The Increased Cost of Living Discussed by Local Labor Leaders

The Standard discussed the increase in the cost of living, speaking particularly of the taxes and rents. "You cannot get a house with proper sanitary appliances," he said, "for less than \$150 a year, and if the laboring man is obliged to pay less he is just dragging out a miserable existence. He must send his boys and girls out to work when they should be getting an education and the school registers of the city will show this exorbitant up to this year. Many of our best mechanics are leaving the city, when formerly the wages are good enough, but there is no trade."

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THE GREAT COAL STRIKE STILL ON IN NOVA SCOTIA, THE FATE OF THOUSANDS HANGS IN THE BALANCE.

Continued from Page 1.

As and labor parade, C. R. station, after a mobile parade starting at 11 p. m. The east will y regular morning Shedd, Springhill, Amherst points, all of which are expected to be big arrivals of visitors to the hotels and making preparations for a big crowd and will be able to accommodate all.

SEMPER ON LORD'S SUPPER BY REV. MR. CAMP

Subject of "The Last Evening—New Members."

minster street Baptist church, Rev. Wellington Camp, presided at an able service. The text, "This do in remembrance of Me," 1 Cor. xi. 24. The sermon was a timely and inspiring one, and the memory of Washington, Emerson and Long-

When he ended his earthly abode a love feast—the first of the series—was held. The bread and the symbols of Christ's broken body of shed blood, in partaking of which was necessary. The service, sitting together as brothers, all distinction of class and the members met as a family. Thirly it was a service, and forthly a service. "This do in remembrance of Me."

Director from Ottawa, Ontario, H. C. F. Tupper and son, arrived in the city on a vacation trip. Mr. Tupper is a member of the Ottawa and a graduate of the U. N. School of Agriculture. Mr. Tupper is a member of the Ottawa and a graduate of the U. N. School of Agriculture. Mr. Tupper is a member of the Ottawa and a graduate of the U. N. School of Agriculture.

th. Mass. Sept. 5—Delegates from the United States are at the fifth triennial congress of the Society of Mayflower Descendants, which closed here today.

land TORY

W. MADWICK, Director.

Grand Opera in regular program and rehearsals are on foot in the Boston Opera House. Office open for registration.

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