

of the text of many of your recent sermons: "Unless either philosophers govern in cities, or those who are at present called kings and governors philosophize really and thoroughly, and these two, the political power and philosophy, unite in one, and till the bulk of those who at present pursue each of these separately are of necessity excluded, there shall be no end to the miseries of cities, nor yet to those of the human race."

The Grand Council of the P. W. A. have decided to apply to the Department of Labor for the appointment of a Board to arbitrate upon the differences between the workmen and the Dominion Coal Co. The company had asked for a renewal of the three years contract with certain modifications. The members of the P. W. A. opposed the contract, and, in this, seem to have been upheld by Council. The company issued two schedules of rates, the one providing for a three year contract, and granting higher rates than the second or no contract schedule. The workmen asked for a higher rate for the low wage laborers and mechanics, the company replied by stating that it would give 10% of an advance to ordinary able bodied laborers reserving the right to say who were and who were not such. At the same time the company stated that as conditions would not permit of costs of mining being increased, the increased wages, to laborers, must be met in part by a readjustment of pillar rates, and in part by an increase in the price of coal to workmen. The lodges are opposed to any increase in the price of coal, and refuse to discuss any question of any reduction. The company intimated that the second or lower rate, non contract schedule would go into effect on 6th, Jan'y, 1908. The men considered it expedient not to employ force in resisting, what they deem, a reduction and decided to apply to the Department of Labor to adjudicate on the differences. These are the matters in dispute between the parties, in substance, if not in words, as I understand them. The Morning Chronicle in its account of the meeting of Grand Council stamps as a practical speech that of a member who expressed the opinion that differences between employees and employer should be settled without recourse to Conciliation or Arbitration Boards. The member expressed himself as favorable to a square stand up fight when conferences, looking to an amicable settlement, had failed. The speech, if practical, expressed out of date, I hope, sentiments. All the better known among labor leaders are opposed to strife as between nations; to be consistent they must be as heartily opposed to industrial strife. But what did the speaker mean when he declared in favor of a straight stand up fight? What is a fair fight as between employers and employed? Are the employers justified in asking the men to leave the company houses, and are they justified in trying to have the places of their opponents in the fight filled. In a fair fight are the employees justified in stopping the pumps and withdrawing, in a word, the mechanics, so called, and in intimidating and preventing men willing to work from doing so? What rules govern the parties in an industrial fight? What actions on the part of either side may be called fouls, or hittings below the belt? Arbitration is

the better way of settling disputes.

At the time of the annual meeting of Grand Council of the P. W. A., last September, the papers intimated that the members of Council had expressed themselves as utterly opposed to the Lemieux Act and at the same time expressed approval of the Local Arbitration Act. Why this sudden change of front? It has been suggested that the reason the Local Act was not invoked is that it carries with it a penalty, for non compliance with an award. The men desire to be free to accept or reject the finding of the Board, as it suits them. The men receive the right to strike without hindrance, even if adjudged to be in the wrong. If the Board decides in favor of the men good and well, if against them the Board be hanged. This is wholly a lop sided sort of arbitration, indeed it would be no arbitration at all. For the sake of the good will I bear toward the P. W. A. I hope they have applied for a Board resolved to honorably abide by its decisions.

As a means of drawing opposing parties together the Lemieux Act may be a success; as a means of ending a dispute, where one side is bound to be belligerent, if it fails to get what it expected, it must be, at least in part, a failure. If the Board has no means of enforcing its awards upon the men, as in the late case at Springhill, neither will it have power to make the Dominion Coal Co. bow to its decision, if they think it harsh or unequal. What, then, must be the upshot? The whole thing a farce. I object to the Lemieux Act on the further ground that there is only one arbiter—the chairman. I know that the company appoint a, so called, arbiter and the men another, but really they are not arbiters but judges. A man cannot well be advocate and judge in one. The man appointed by the company will fight for them from start to finish, and the one appointed by the men will stick to their side through thick and thin. Of course there may be men who will decide against their patrons, but they are rare indeed. The P. W. A. were wise as serpents in selecting the genial, generous, even if glib, Dr. Kendall as their advocate and arbiter. They know well his leanings for he has frequently given bold and public expression to them. In grave trials the counsels on both sides are permitted to challenge each other as his name is called. Each counsel can ask the question of the proposed jurymen if he has formed any conclusions, as to the guilt or innocence of the accused, in his mind. If he admits he has he is asked to resign. Suppose the trial is for murder, the attorney for the state may ask the question of any one called to act as jurymen if he believes in capital punishment. If he answers he does not, he is at once excused. And so should it be with those called to act as arbitrators. Any one decidedly of opinion that companies and corporations are cruel and crafty, grab-balls and grind-balls, should immediately be asked to step down, on the ground that he cannot give a just judgement. I do not say that the worthy doctor ever had other than political grudges against the coal company but it might be nice to hear his answer to the query "Do you carry any bitterness in your heart to the company or

Continued on page 19