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A SOCIALIST IN CONGRESS

Milwaukee, Wis., Nov. 21.—Victor L. Berger's powerful will made his life what he wanted it to be, in spite of his environment.

The first socialist congressman in America was born of well-to-do, middle-class German parents in Austria in 1860. They gave him a good college education.

But in spite of his conservative origin, Victor early developed very radical ideas and sympathies. His relatives abhorred his democratic ideas and made life miserable for him. "All my relatives believed I would be arrested and executed," said Berger, "and the worst part of it was that they believed that I would deserve to be hanged!"

Just as young Victor was about to become embroiled in radical politics in Europe, his family became poor and emigrated to the United States. Young Berger became a cowpuncher; he did odd jobs like mending washboilers. He learned the metal polisher's trade earning as little as $5 a week and never more than $12.

Often he did not have bread to feed his body or fuel to warm it. But he had his beloved books—his Marx, Engels, Darwin, Carlyle, Paine and Ruskin—to feed his mind and warm his enthusiastic soul. He lived in a 50-cents-a-week room. He was so miserable physically that he will not talk about this part of his life.

He was appointed teacher of German in the Milwaukee high school and held the position for several years. But what should this enthusiast do but throw up this job, which meant bread and butter on his table and a warm fire in his room, in order to launch a German socialist daily! A monthly could hardly have succeeded at that time, much less a daily. All his savings and much of his friend's savings were lost, and again came a period of starvation and freezing.

Follower of Debs.

Berger was a populist in 1896 and tried to organize the Eugene V. Debs sentiment in the St. Louis convention of that party.

When Debs was imprisoned for his activity in the American railway union strike, Berger visited him at Woodstock jail near Chicago. He brought a copy of Marx's "Capital" and this book made a socialist of Debs. Since, Debs the orator and agitator, and Berger the student, organizer and statesman, have worked together. Berger is as much respected as Debs is loved by his party.

The two were anxious to do labor political work, but they thought that the then existing socialist labor party was narrow, undemocratic and un-American. They had leading parts in the formation at Chicago in 1897 of the social democracy, later called the socialist party.

But it was as editor of the Milwaukee Wahrheit (German) and the Social-Democratic Herald (English) that Berger did his life work. He built up a powerful organization which gradually crept us on the old parties until, in April, 1910, it captured the city.

It was his party's "bundle brigade," numbering as many as 2000 volunteers, serving without pay, that did the work. They rise early Sunday mornings to leave pamphlets at every home in the city. Each man has a certain district to cover, and he covers it. He sees that each home gets the particular kind of literature it is ready to receive. Berger brings his arguments right home to the people. "Dear Madam, How Can You Pay Your Grocer and Butcher?" is a sample of the headings if his pamphlets.

Berger would often yield the candidacy of an office where there was a probability of election to some other "comrade" while he chose an unlikely one for himself, so as to bolster the movement in the place where it was weakest. He was elected alderman-at-large in April, 1910.

Berger is not a conservative socialist. He is as revolutionary as any in his beliefs and aims. He never compromises the international principles he believes in, but he knows how to pin them down to the particular country of the United Stats, the particular city of Milwaukee, and the particular time, the twentieth century. Because he is practical, and has succeeded, superficial observers have dubbed him a "conservative."

Sees Revolution.

He sees a revolution like the civil war ahead unless the American people abolish "wage slavery" by taking over and running the trusts under public ownership. But he believes the people should offer to pay the present owners of the trusts for the property, and not confiscate them. He thinks that if the owners obstinately refuse to sell, and the people refuse to buy, the breach between them would become so wide that it could be filled only by the bodies of men—just as the refusal of the north and south to settle the slavery question by the purchase of the slaves, while the question was still small enough to handle, led to an irrepressible conflict.

Berger's income is his wages of $30 a week as editor. His only extravagance is his books. His library is so fine that the University of Wisconsin covets it.

He married Miss Meta Schlichting, a pupil in his German class at the high school. They have three children.

There is a romance of socialism in Berger's love affair. When he fell in love with Miss Schlichting he did not propose at once. Instead, he carefully converted her to socialism before he asked her to be his wife. After suffering from his relative's bitter opposition to his views, Berger had vowed he would never marry a woman who did not agree with him.

Mrs. Berger is a home-loving woman but she was called to public life. She was elected to the school board in 1909, being the first woman socialist to be elected to a public office in America.

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FIRE AND POLICE AT NEWCASTLE

Reports Read at Meeting of Town Council Show Departments to be in Good Shape--Curfew Bell Discussed.

Newcastle, Nov. 18—The town council met in regular session last night, Mayor McMurdo and full board present.

Park and fire committee reported that (1) A firebell had been placed in J. R. Lawlor's field down town, at a rental of $8 per year. (2) It recommended dividing of town into six fire zones. (3) Distribution of cards giving full information of same. (4) Placarding of names on streets.

Sections 1, 2, and 3 passed, and 4 was held over.

The police magistrate's report for quarter ending Sept. 30th, showed fines and costs collected, $193. Magistrate's costs, $93; constables' costs, $1; moiety of fine paid complainant, $12.50; balance paid town clerk $86.

There were 26 cases of drunkenness, one of drunk and fighting, one for interfering with police, one for vagrancy, one for assault, and one for cruelty to animals, fined $25 and $5 costs, or two months.

The institution of the curfew bell to warn children off the streets at night was discussed. Ald. Layton said that girls from 12 to 16 were running the streets late at night and for no good. They should be looked after.

The matter was held over to next night to give the W. C. T. U. a chance to be heard.

The public works committee were ordered to get all available information re possibility and cost of opening street from Henry street into street back of McCullam street, to give better chance to get at the houses in case of fire.

Mrs. Butler, wife of Prof. Butler, of Kingston Royal Military College, is the guest of her father, Judge Wm. Wilkinson.

The Methodist ladies held an interesting social tonight at Mrs. T. W. Crockers.

The Presbyterian ladies gave a very successful tea and fancy sale tonight in St. James' Hall.

Mrs. F. H. Gough entertained a few friends pleasantly on Thursday evening. Games and music made the time pass rapidly. A dainty lunch was served about eleven o'clock. Those present were: Mesdames Wm. Witherall, L. Hill, W. J. Deane, H. S. Leard, J. G. Kethro, J. A. Follansbee and Misses Eleanor Lingley, Eileen Weldon and Mabel McGregor.

Mrs. James M. Troy entertained a number of friends at tea on Thursday afternoon in honor of her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Sherman Troy, of Boston. Mrs. Sargeant and Mrs. S. Troy assisted in receiving. Mrs. John Robinson, Jr., and Mrs. Sargeant poured the tea and cocoa. Those who assisted in serving were: Misses Roberta Nicholson, Miss Jean Robinson and Miss Helen Caie. Others present were Mrs. Allan McLellan, Moncton; Mrs. B. P. Steeves, Mrs. R. W. Crocker, Mrs. Wm. Stothart, Mrs. John Russell, Mrs. E. A. McCurdy, Mrs. W. J. Jardine, Mrs. O. Nicholson, Mrs. H. Sinclair, Mrs. John W. Miller, Mrs. Wm. Aitken and Misses Addie and Helen Stables, Nellie Lingley and Jean Aitken.

H. H. Mott, of St. John, was in town today.

BUDGET FROM BOSTON GIRL

New England Apples Have Western Varieties Beaten—Mis-statements in Western Women Suffrage.

Boston, Mass., Nov. 21.—Let the city of culture be clean. Police Commissioner O'Meara will excoriate the folk who expectorate. There has indeed, been a law against this misdemeanor for a long time, but the fact that a person arrested for this offence must be dealt with under the law exactly as a dangerous criminal would be dealt with, has led the officers to hesitate in prosecuting where there is no criminal intent. The enforcement of the law is now ordered, however, as the result largely of a communication from the chairman of the board of trustees of the Boston consumptives hospital, heartily endorsed by Mayor Fitzgerald. Grown persons who look intelligent and there are a lot of them in Boston, are to receive first consideration. Any one of the so-called privileged class, who is noted expectorating on the sidewalk, will be haled into court licketysplit. Women, who don't spit anyway, minors,who ought to have been taught better at school, and the poor and ignorant generally will not be dealt with quite so summarily at present unless their offences are particularly flagrant.

That Massachusetts hillsides can raise just as juicy apples as the western plains has been proved. Even Washington and Oregon have been beaten to a pulp. The Bay State's board of agriculture has just shown an exhibition of fruit as radiantly beautiful as a June flower garden. Many agriculturalists have contended for years that Massachusetts and New England in general have the goods on the trees. These men have now definitely proved their claim.

"The Boy Lied," according to a reprinted article which the Woman's Journal, the equal suffrage periodical published in Boston, is circulating anent an alleged "impartial" study in the best known of women's publications of the working of woman suffrage in the progressive western states where political equality has been established. It seems that the "investigator," Richard Barry, having the male instinct for accuracy and thoroughness lack of which is sometimes attributed to women as a disqualification for their using the ballot, went to the Rocky Mountain state and, after the manner of the muckraking writers, in short order, reappeared with his copy. From Miss Blackwell's detailed analysis it would appear that many of his statements of fact have just that careful regard for literal truthfulness, which every city editor soon learns may be looked for in the work of the average cub reporter when assigned to an important "story." True, the dates on which Colorado and Utah adopted woman suffrage are both misstated.

Mr. Harry's article, furthermore, states that "The Juvenile Court in Boston antedated the one in Denver," whereas in reality the act establishing the Boston Juvenile Court was approved June 15, 1906, and the first session was held Sept. 1, 1906, while Judge Lindsay's celebrated juvenile court had been established several years before that date. Again, Mrs. Lafferty, a woman member of the Colorado legislature is reported in the Barry article to have introduced at the last session, at Judge Lindsey's suggestion, seven different bills concerning the Juvenile Court. The records showed that she introduced only four of these bills. The "investigator," to show that a woman legislator cannot get things done, asserts that "the unimportant bills got through the important ones are still pigeonholed."

The record shows that all four of Mrs. Lafferty's bills were passed in the House, and that three went through the Senate and are now on the statute books. The other one was held up because of a slight amendment which Judge Lindsay accepted; it is now in the hands of the judiciary committee. Of the three bills which Mrs. Lafferty did not introduce, one became law; two failed in the Senate. So the account goes, bringing out a host of those petty inaccuracies of statement which, when found in a piece of writing supposed to be serious, most people believe to be evidences either of hasty and inconsequential preparation or of fundamental incapacity to get at the exact truth. The suffragists of Massachusetts are keenly interested in the growth of woman suffrage sentiment in the western states. They are jubilant over the great victory in Washington, toward which they contributed money, literature and speakers. They are naturally anxious that whoever writes about the workings of equal suffrage in Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, Idaho, or Washington, shall at least give a truthful presentation of the easily ascertainable facts.

Meantime, something's doing every minute in the equal suffrage centre of New England. It is the turn of the Boston association just now, to occupy the stage, literally, for two delightful comedies will be presented on Friday evening, Nov. 25, at Jordan Hall, with appropriate casts of clever amateurs. One of these plays is "Lady Geraldine's Speech," by Beatrice Harraden; the other is that fine favorite "How the Vote was Won." It is expected that not a few suffragists from the nearby cities and towns of New England will come Hubward for this affair.

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