

Editorial Page of The Canadian Labor Press



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The Canadian Labor Press
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 A WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

The American Federation of Labor is not a labor union. It is simply the federation of the national and international constructive unions of our time and country. It grew from a handful of devoted, far-seeing, practical men of labor to its present gigantic proportions. It is voluntary and unincorporated. Its cardinal principles are strict autonomy and self-government of the unions affiliated thereto. It is the clearing house and spokesman and defender of the rights and interests and hopes and aspirations of the toiling millions. It at no time and under no circumstances attempts to interfere with the plans and policies of any affiliated union. It advises, but never commands, and therein lies its great strength.

It stands always for the protection of the rights and interests of all workers, organized and unorganized.

It hopes to see the accomplishment of the mighty task of organizing all wage earners regardless of sex, colour, nationality, or religion, and ever strives to be helpful by its advice and counsel in this great work.

The American Federation of Labor has no panacea, no get-there quick plan. It is neither conservative nor radical. It is sensible and cautious. Reactionary? No! Impulsive? No! Progressive and constructive? Yes! It has the happy faculty of considering things as they are and sense to act accordingly. Its policy is to help to mould sentiment along constructive, correct lines. It realizes that the great constructive, trade union movement is seriously handicapped by a systematic poisonous propaganda. It ever strives to meet with facts this unrighteous propaganda and to offset its influence.

It will continue to be instrumental and influential in placing proper industrial laws on the statute books of the country and state government, and in defeating bills that would rob labor of its natural heritage and be detrimental to its rights, freedom and justice.

It seeks to make the best terms and conditions that it can for labor. It fully realizes material and conditions in the industrial world. It seeks to do the best it can with this material and conditions. It is not content with denunciation and the adoption of high-sounding resolutions. It buckles down to the actual present conditions, resolutely facing them and determining to get, inch by inch and day by day, better conditions for all wage earners.

It believes in our institutions. It seeks to destroy tyranny, oppression and things that militate harshly and unwarrantedly and without reason or justice against the best interests of the toiling masses.

It will be successful and grow in usefulness, strength, and influence in proportion to the assistance and cooperation given it by all wage earners and all constructive trade unions, local, state, national and international.

Patronize White Laundries Who Employ White Labor

SEVENTY MINERS MEET THEIR DEATH

Seventy miners were killed and sixty injured, some of them seriously, in a dust explosion in Dolomite mine No. 3, of the Woodward Iron Company nine miles from Birmingham, Alabama on Thursday, which trapped 450 workers beneath the surface, according to an official statement issued here tonight by D. E. Wilson, treasurer of the company.

Fifty men, mostly white, were caught under the wreckage of the great "skip" cars which plunged at great speed when they broke loose from their moorings at Tip 3, from a hundred feet above. The rescue crews found mangled bodies and a score of injured men entangled with twisted steel and splintered wood. The men were skilled workmen, many of the sub-foremen and electricians employed in the underground "yard."

According to one of the first miners to be taken out alive, the explosion came with but little warning to the men working deep in the entries. This miner stated that the first warning he had was when the concussion of the big head blast turned his body about. He started to make his way toward the mouth of the mine and was joined by other miners he said.

After they had proceeded a short distance, he stated, shouts of other miners were heard ahead of them and holding their breath as best as they could, muffled their faces in coats and clothing the little band of men struggled onward, finally winning their way to fresh air and thus gaining the entry way.

These men were among the first to reach the outside with the actual news of the terrible scenes inside the mine. They told of passing over bodies in the main entry and of seeing other miners, badly injured and moaning for help as the fatal after damp snuffed out their lives. A. J. Jones, a miner who was working in the forty-sixth west entry of the mine at the time of the blast proved a hero. When the explosion occurred, Jones gathered five white miners and 15 negroes, who were working near him and started to lead this party toward the mouth of the mine. The after damp became so dense, Jones said, that he felt the journey to the outside was impossible and together the band began to make preparations to die. Gathering about Jones, they sat down, huddling together to await death.

Suddenly they heard a man's voice asking if there were any men still alive within the range of the voice. Several of the men answered, "Fall down your brattices," yelled the voice. "It's all right here and if you can break through, we will all win out."

Jones led his men in the work and soon the little band was safely outside the mine, having passed through the main entry and thus reaching safety.

About thirty men saved their lives by blocking a passage way into the mine "trip" and thus shutting off effectively the poisonous gases and after-damp, until the fans were started again and cleared the way for them to reach the outside alive.

The disaster attracted a large crowd from surrounding communities and at a late hour tonight more than 1,000 automobiles were parked near the mine opening.

TRANSCONTINENTAL TRAVEL

In this country of great distances "Transcontinental Travel" demands that every consideration be given the comfort of travellers. The trip from Ottawa to Vancouver by the Canadian National Railway consumes the matter of a little over four days constantly on your train. Under modern travel conditions, instead of being a tedious affair, this journey by the "Continental Limited" may be anticipated with delight. Not a feature is overlooked in the equipment of this train—the modern standard sleeping cars with large comfortable berths insure restful nights, while in the day time the observation cars, well supplied with reading matter, including popular magazines and a fine library of books, furnishes diversion between time spent in sightseeing and rest. The superior service in the dining car leaves nothing to be desired. "The Continental Limited" operates daily from Ottawa to North Bay, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Edmonton and Vancouver. Close connection is made at Winnipeg for all important centres in Western Canada daily, except Sunday, and Central British Columbia points is made at Edmonton. For full information, reservations, and illustrated literature descriptive of the route of this splendid train apply to Canadian National-Grand Trunk City Ticket Office, cor. Sparks and Metcalfe Streets, Ottawa, Ont.

U.S. OWES BRITAIN NEARLY A BILLION

Unpaid Debts of Nine States to Old Country Total Over \$900,000,000.

Immediately after the general election negotiations will be opened for the funding of the British debt to America. But for the political crisis Sir Robert Horne was to have proceeded to Washington a couple of weeks ago to open the matter. In the coming months European indebtedness to America will occupy a prominent place in the public mind. What, under the circumstances, may be regarded as an interesting little footnote to current financial history has appeared in the "Spectator" recalling the fact that eight of the American States long ago borrowed money in this country which has never been repaid. Mr. Francis Moore recalls that the debtor States are:

Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina and South Carolina.

The money was borrowed mainly in connection with railway and banking enterprises, but the British investors who lent the money found, in due course, that they might whistle for either principal or interest. The total debt, so far as the original principal was concerned, was approximately \$12,000,000. Interest is in arrears from 40 to 80 years. If compound interest be calculated at the rate of 5 per cent we obtain a sum of about \$180,000,000. The letter proceeds: "It should be noted that the State of Mississippi has been in default since the year 1841. In this respect the words of the Forty-Seventh Annual Report (1921) of the Council of the Corporation of Foreign Bondholders will bear quoting—

By far the worst case is that of Mississippi, whose debt was contracted many years before the Civil War. With the exception of Russia, there is no similar case on record, so far as the Council are aware. The Russian repudiation, however, only took place after the establishment of the chaotic conditions still existing in that unhappy country, and is viewed with indignation by the better class of Russians, while the Mississippi repudiation occurred during peaceful conditions, and is apparently acquiesced in by the citizens of the most prosperous community of the world.

Most of the original lenders are probably dead, but many strongrooms in the City of London contain large bundles of their scrip if they have not been used long ago for the purpose of papering bathrooms. It may be asked, How is it that this position has existed for so long? I believe the fact is that, under the Constitution of the United States, no individual can sue a state. A state can only be sued by the United States Government itself. It has been found impossible in practice to get the necessary "move on." The State of West Virginia was one of the original eight defaulters, and a settlement of their loan was only completed in 1920, under a judgment of the Supreme Court of the United States, after half a century of her having consistently refused to recognize her obligations. "My suggestion," concludes Mr. Moore, "is that it would be an act of grace and justice if the United States Government were to assume this debt of, in round figures \$200,000,000, or alternatively as a quid pro quo, cancel that amount of the debt due by Great Britain to the United States of America."

The "Spectator" points out that the Washington Government is not more responsible for these debts than the British Government is for those of Dublin or Melbourne. Nevertheless, it is a matter upon which Americans might like to have their memories refreshed.

THE KLU KLUX KLAN IS ON THE CARPET

American Congress Has Not Debate on Klanners Activities.

The recent visit to Washington of Governor Parker of Louisiana, in connection with the Ku Klux Klan activities in his state, was discussed from several angles in the house today. Representative Aswell, Democrat, Louisiana, opened the debate with a denial of a story that the Klan had rendered the state government impotent.

Representative Wilson, Democrat, of Louisiana, followed with a denunciation of "the unwarranted assault on the people of Louisiana," and Representative Sandlin, Democrat, Louisiana, declared "conditions do not justify federal intervention."

We wouldn't mind travelling 248 miles an hour in an airplane, but we'd hate to have to stop at that speed.—Dallas News.

THE OPEN VERSUS THE CLOSED SHOP

A great deal is now being said for and against the closed shop, and since the future of trades unionism depends so much on the outcome of these controversies, those principally concerned should look into the question from the truly economic standpoint and study how one or the other situation may affect the greatest number of people.

Advocates of the 'open shop' claim that while they realize the need and usefulness of trades unionism and while they should like to see it thrive they are against that particular feature of it that calls for the closed shop. They do not realize that trades unionism can exist only because of the closed shop. If the open shop should become a reality trades unionism would cease to be. One is an inseparable part of the other.

It stands to reason that every employer would rather operate an open shop than a closed shop. That is to his immediate advantage, no matter how it may affect anybody else, and that is what each one ultimately seeks.

If, then, the open shop should prevail, the employer would have the right to choose his employees from among those who would work for the lowest wages and who would be most inclined to buckle down to the employer's will. It is easy to see, then, that several things would immediately happen which would break the backbone of trades unionism. First, through this widespread competition wages would come tumbling down and the trade unionist would not be able to stem the tide; secondly, the employer would be inclined to prefer the man or woman who has no fraternal affiliations, because such a one would be less likely to cause trouble and be more amenable to the ideas of the employer; thirdly, the working men and women would have little reason to enter or stay in the union under these conditions, since that organization would offer them neither good wages nor any other protection. The union would become useless, and the working people would go back to that period where they had to accept anything that was offered by their employer or starve.

Now, it is easy to see why some of the organizations of employers should advocate the open shop. Although they speak well of trades unionism in general, their real object is to undermine it. That is clearly to their advantage. These nice words about the trade union are a part of the scheme to allay the fears of the working people and to deceive the unwary.

At a recent meeting at the Ethical Culture rooms, where this matter was discussed one speaker (identified with a strong organization of employers) spoke highly about trades unionism but strongly advocated the open shop idea. When this writer asked him how trades unionism could exist with the open shop in vogue, he answered that the proof of it is that it exists today where quite a number of the shops are open.

Now here is where he errs. Trades unionism may exist when some of the shops in a community are run on the open shop principle, but it certainly cannot exist when every employer shall be able to introduce the open shop. Trades unionism is doing everything in its power to increase the number of closed shops; and the more shops it "closes" the stronger it becomes. On the other hand, it would grow weaker as the number of shops in operation grew in the opposite direction. If the efforts of the unions were to relax and the shops were allowed to open to non-unionists, trades unionism would soon lose its effectiveness altogether.

LEFT IN LURCH BY U.S. AFTER WAR

Europe is Suffering for Mistake of America Says Clemenceau.

George Clemenceau today laid at the door of the United States blame for all the unrest in which Europe now seethes.

Speaking before the Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York the aged French War Premier declared that America had left France "in the lurch" after the war.

"It was a great mistake, to leave without any proposal for an adjustment of matters," he declared. "It was the greatest mistake, and the source of all the evil that is taking place now."

"People ask me, 'what do you want us to do,'" he continued. "I answer, I don't know what I want you to do. I want you to interfere in Europe because you left it too soon. I want you to come back, make a little new trip to Europe, saying: 'Well, now, gentlemen, what's the matter with you—something gone wrong? I will give you some help. Can I be of use?'"

LONDON WORKLESS VISIT MINISTERS

A demonstration by the unemployed of London which some sections of the press heralded as likely to crystallize in acts of violence and consequent bloodshed, took place to day but without outward incident.

A few hundred persons instead of the predicted great throngs assembled on the Thames Embankment with the purpose of marching to Downing st. to interview the new prime minister, Andrew Bonar Law. Large numbers of police had gathered in anticipation of possible disorders.

The leaders of the demonstration were invited by the premier to send representatives to have a talk with the ministers of labor and of health. This was done, and, according to an official report, the ministers, after listening to the delegation, promised to refer their complaints to the cabinet.

While the leaders were conferring with the ministers the remainder of the crowd at the Embankment were invited to march to Hyde Park and await the outcome of the conference. Some of the leaders of the unemployed still insist that they must see Mr. Bonar Law and lay their plaint before him.

HISTORY OF JEWS IS PROLETARIAN

Says H. Edelstein, Prominent Montreal Educationist.

A large gathering of Ottawa Jewry assembled at Pythian Hall on Wednesday evening to hear addresses delivered by members of the Jewish Labor Movement. The speakers were Messrs H. Simonoff of Ottawa and Hyman Edelstein of Montreal.

Mr. Simonoff devoted the major portion of his address to the aims and ambitions of the three classes of Jews, the orthodox Jews, who hated progress as being heretic; the progressive Jews, many of them imbued with labor ideals, and the extremists, who were out of touch with Jewish National aspirations. The Jewish National Workers' Alliance was open to all who were pledged to National Jewish ideals and the establishment of the Jewish homeland in Palestine. He appealed to all local Jews to support these ideals and the Protective Benefit Association.

Mr. Hyman Edelstein confined his remarks to Jewish history from the time of Abraham to the present. The history of Jewry which was essentially revolutionary in character included the overthrow of idolatry, religious superstitions, and the false ideas of social and spiritual life. The Jews had been consistent rebels against tyranny and persecution in ancient as well as modern times, and the Hebrew prophets would now be called "agitators." Despite oppression and in defiance of kings, princes and priests the Jews had incorporated their writings into the national literature and were spreading the proletarian spirit.

PRINCE IN QUEUE WAITS HIS TURN

The House of Lords was treated to an interesting spectacle this afternoon when the Prince of Wales who outranks all of the lords, smilingly disregarded precedence by waiving his right to which he is entitled as heir to the throne.

When the Prince arrived to take the oath as member of the new parliament he found a queue of some fifty noble lords lined up waiting to perform the ceremony. The clerk of the house immediately hurried to the Prince to conduct him to the head of the line, but the scion of royalty shook his head and retained his place at the end.

Some of the slides shown of the different clusters and nebulae are among the finest examples of the photography of the sky. Pictures of star dust and clusters showing the fundamental structure of the shining skies were presented, and the interest of the lecture was kept at a high pitch until the end.

WORTH TRYING.

When the color of material has been affected by any stain, especially one of an acid nature such as fruit juice, it is worth while trying sal valatide as a remedy. This should be slowly dropped on to the affected part, and, in a large number of cases the color will be wonderfully restored. In any event, the material will not be damaged at all by the treatment.

Attorney Raney says that the names of all who break the Ontario Temperance Act shall be supplied to the Press.

And we thought this was a white man's country.

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LECTURE ON STARS HOLDS BIG AUDIENCE

Dr. Shapley discussed in a lucid manner the different methods of measuring the distances of stars from the earth. He explained how the old methods of finding out the distance of the nearest stars had completely failed to discover the distances of the millions of stars that were farther away, and that the scientists had found out a method of telling how far away they were by their light, and the use of the spectrum. Distances were told by finding out the chemical component parts of the spectrum of the light of stars. The discovery of the candlepower of the stars had also been very important.

By the aid of the spectroscopic method it had been found out that the light from the cluster known as the Great Hercules cluster had taken 35,000 years to reach this earth. "The light that leaves it tonight will be seen here 35,000 years from now, if there is anyone here to see it," he said.

A photograph of this cluster was shown on the screen and it was explained that the photographic picture was the result of a eleven hour exposure. This was one of the marvels of photography, that a photograph could be taken in eleven hours of what would take 35,000 years to reach the earth.

Five Eskimo tribes who have never seen a white man before have been discovered. Ah, well, good luck never lasts.

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