

WHAT LABOR IS HOPING FROM THE GREAT LEAGUE

By M. ALBERT THOMAS.

Director of the International Labor Organization and widely known as a French-Publicist.

Before I left Geneva I attended the first sitting of the Assembly of the League of Nations and the impression I received was that it will be very difficult to strike a middle line between an assembly of diplomats and a parliamentary assembly. If it approaches to a diplomatic assembly there is a danger that it might appear to be like a man separate from his fellows; if, on the other hand, it is too parliamentary, it is likely to lose the dignity which should attach to the super-state. The dilemma is a real one. I think the assembly inclines rather to the parliamentary side.

The first meeting was quite promising. The great difficulty for the League is that it must itself define the functions and construct its own mechanism. So far as the International Labor Organization is concerned, this difficulty hardly existed at all, for the composition, functions and machinery of the organization were precisely defined in the treaty. In the case of the League there was no such provision, and this constitutes one of the biggest of the problems it will have to tackle.

I have come to attend the special conference of the International Trade Union Federation, and I must remind you that my position is necessarily somewhat delicate. This meeting is thoroughly international. The organized working classes of sixteen countries are represented. So far as Europe is concerned, it is genuinely and authentically representative of the entire trade union movement. It only lacks support from the United States in order to be completely representative of all the important countries of the world.

It is very gratifying that the International Labor Office should have been invited to be present at this meeting. I am confident that after some months' experience of its work, our International Labor Bureau has preserved the confidence that was reposed in it at its creation.

OTTAWA TRADES COUNCIL ENDORSES CONGRESS ACTION.

Ottawa's central labor body at its last regular meeting unhesitatingly endorsed the Canadian Brotherhood of Railroad Employees, following an official communication from the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, advising that the charter of the C. B. of R. E. had been revoked. The secretary was instructed to write the two lodges of Railroad and Steamship Clerks, etc., advising them of the action and asking them to again affiliate with the central labor body. Mr. Adam C. Hay, Canadian vice-president of the Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks, etc., was present and stated that all Canadian locals are being advised to affiliate with the Trades and Labor Council.

HAMILTON TRADES COUNCIL SEEK 8-HR. DAY FOR WOMEN WORKERS.

Following an interesting discussion at its last meeting of the Hamilton Trades Council, a resolution was passed asking the provincial legislature to enact legislation providing for the 48-hour work week for women. Secretary Foster was asked to circularize provincial central labor unions to support the demand for the 48-hour work week. It is expected that the women workers in the province were operating on the 48-hour week basis, the statute called for 50 hours per week.

WOMAN MAY BE B. C. SPEAKER.

As a result of a cabinet meeting at Victoria on Thursday, Mrs. Mary Ellen Smith, who headed the poll in Vancouver at the provincial election in December, may be tendered the speakership of the legislature. She also had been named as possible minister of education or social service legislation.

VANCOUVER JOB PRINTERS STRIKE FOR HIGHER WAGES.

Commercial printing shops at Vancouver, B. C., are closed, job printers having gone on strike for a higher wage schedule. The men are asking \$60 and a 42-hour week. The master printers offered them the existing scale of \$48.30 for 1921 but this was refused.

SYDNEY RAILWAY STRIKES UNMOVED BY WAGE REDUCTIONS.

The reduction of 20 per cent. in wages announced on Saturday by the officials of the Dominion Iron and Steel Company makes not a particle of difference in our demands for recognition railway, and our attitude towards the company remains the same. George K. Wark, leader of the railway strikers at Sydney, N.S., stated on Sunday: "The men are to continue sitting for a favorable settlement," he added, "whether wages announced on Saturday by the company are higher or not the plant closes."

THE USUAL STORY.

Police officers who replaced striking policemen at Boston, Mass., have established unenviable records, according to the annual report of the Police Commissioner Curran. This official was most active in opposing the recent effort of policemen to improve conditions. He disbanded their fraternal organization and when they affiliated with the A. F. of L. he discharged many patrolmen. As a last resort the police struck.

LONDON PAINTERS SEEK INCREASE OF 10c. AN HOUR.

Journeymen painters and paper-hangers of London, have submitted a revised schedule of wages to the Master Painters' Association of that city, requesting an increase of 10c. an hour over the price paid in 1920. The new agreement is to be effective commencing on March 1. According to the 1920 contract, the painters and paper-hangers received 78c. an hour, and under the new schedule they would be paid 88c. an hour.

MORE BULLYISM.

The woman who pins her faith to a man had best use a safety pin. Practice makes perfect fools of some people. He who stoops to conquer may hear something rip. A good many bad men stay bad for good. A cold snap is not always a cold clinch. He also forfeits most who serves best. Some men stand in their own light, some also turn their backs on it. There is an end to all things except the chain of human events. —David Easton.

WIFE OF HIS BOSS.

For a man to be a boss, he must be a man. Do you want the whole world to know you're not free? —Printers' Pic.

BUILDERS PLAN TO ELIMINATE STRIKES

Standardized Wage Agreements to Be Employed.

Plans to eliminate strikes and labor disputes in the building industry in Canada will be placed before a general meeting of the Association of Canadian Building and Construction Industries, which has been called for Wednesday, Jan. 15, 1921. For some time the members of the executive of the association have been preparing a plan to have wages in the industry standardized by sections through the Dominion. They have also been at work on a standard contract form, to be used by contractors and sub-contractors in undertaking building work. By the use of standardized wage agreements and building contracts they hope to save the contractors and workmen thousands of dollars each year by settling all difficulties that may arise without a cessation of work, which usually comes when the building season is at its height. Mr. J. Clark Kelly, executive secretary of the association, has placed forms for bids, specifications and contracts, which were prepared by a special committee, in the hands of a lawyer. This consideration is being given to the matter of a general apprenticeship system to recruit the ranks of the skilled trades will be fully discussed.

Other questions to be dealt with by the meeting include that of a federal building code, recently proposed by the National Joint Industrial Board of Building and Allied Trades at a meeting in Montreal. The matter of a general apprenticeship system to recruit the ranks of the skilled trades will be fully discussed. Wage readjustments, cost of materials, and many other important problems are on the agenda. The session of the association is generally regarded as one of the most important industrial meetings to be held in Canada this year.

C. N. R. CURTAIL HOURS OF WORK RATHER THAN LAY OFF MEN.

Curtailment of hours in the shops of the C.N.R. over the western division, in preference to a layoff, is announced. Men will work 48 hours a week, with Saturdays off. Between 8,000 and 9,000 men will be affected.

PRODUCTION UNDER THE SOVIET SYSTEM.

In view of the statements reported to have been made by Mr. Washington Vandenberg to the various raw or semi-raw materials Russia was ready to export in exchange for the finished products and machinery which his syndicate was prepared to arrange to be imported, the figures of the relative production for 1913 and 1920 given recently by "Kommunisticheskii Zhurnal" of interest. Space will not allow of their being given in full, but the percentage of production of 1920 compared with that of 1913 is as follows:

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| Coal, 12 per cent; | brass, 33 per cent; | manganese, lead and zinc, no production in 1920; | platinum, 16 per cent; | iron ore, 6 per cent; | tin, 20 per cent; | sugar, 4 per cent; | alcohol, 5 per cent; | matches, 15 per cent; | glass, 6 per cent. |
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As these figures for production in 1920 are based on estimates, it is doubtful if the amounts actually produced will equal the percentages given. In very few cases has actual production under the Bolshevik rule come anywhere near the amount estimated.

CANADIAN GOVT OWNED SHIPS ON SEVEN SEAS.

Canada's ocean-carrying trade, by the medium of the Government ships has at last entered the grand old world link in this world-girdling enterprise was forged last week with the departure of the steamship Canadiana from Vancouver for Singapore and Calcutta.

After months of preparation the Canadian Government has completed its plans for sending the Atlantic and Pacific, and hereafter the boats bound East from Montreal and St. John, through the Suez Canal, will meet the boats bound West from Vancouver at the terminal port of Calcutta.

CONFERENCE BOARD OUTLINES APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM.

At the meeting last week at Montreal of the national joint conference board of the building and allied trades, a system of apprenticeship in Canada was outlined, of which the main features are the establishment of a national apprenticeship council of the building industry, charged with advisory and supervisory functions, the national council to issue forms of indenture for each trade, the boys to be apprenticed to the employer, who shall engage to give the apprentice the fullest opportunity of efficiently learning his trade.

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Keep the Machinery Going

The factory would stand still if the belts that turn the wheels were to fail. Belts that make the longest run with the least repair and adjustment are the workmen's best friend. No best time. Machinery in every factory should be driven, w.

Wife of his boss—For a man to be a boss, he must be a man. Do you want the whole world to know you're not free? —Printers' Pic.

CIVIL SERVANTS DEMAND THAT MERIT SYSTEM BE RETAINED.

A board of inquiry, composed of three competent and independent men, to investigate the method of administration of the Civil Service is asked for by Associated Federal Employees of Ottawa in an "open letter" to Premier Meighen.

The sole object of such a request, says the letter, is to preserve the merit system, and anything less will intensify the feeling still more serious incompetency and maladministration remain unexposed. The letter follows: "Right Hon. the Prime Minister of Canada, on more than one occasion within the last three months, the Associated Federal Employees of Ottawa, Federal Union #8, have endeavored to secure consideration of certain charges made by them involving the impartiality and competency of the Board of Hearing."

"In our communication to you, we stated that we had not the slightest desire to cause the least embarrassment to your Government or yourself, and asked, in a very respectful way, that the matter be given your early and most careful consideration. This consideration you promised to give, but so far, all that has been done is that the defendants in the case have been in possession of our memorandum to you proffering the charges, for some two weeks, have endeavored to sit as judges thereof and have taken certain ill-considered steps which put the whole matter of the Civil Service in a very unflattering light. "Again, sir, we repeat we do not aim to cause the least embarrassment to your Government or yourself, but we do demand that the merit system be retained."

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DISMISSED WELSH MINERS REINSTATED.

Following the conference at Cardiff, Wales, on Monday between the chairman of the Ocean Coal Company and a delegation representing the South Wales miners' executive, it was announced that the company had agreed to re-employment in their pits for the 11 men who were dismissed for strike colliery because their places had become unremunerative.

As applied to The Canadian Labor Press the dismissal of the men was recently reported by the Rhondda miners, and about 40,000 of them struck work just before the holidays demanding reinstatement. "Whatever I have tried to do in life, I have tried with all my heart to do well; that whatever I have devoted myself to, I have devoted myself to in earnest. I have never believed it possible that any nation or individual should give immunity from the companionship of the steady, plain, hard-working qualities and hope to build a great empire." —Charles Dickens, in David Copperfield.

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SAYS HOPE OF FUTURE LIES IN THE LEAGUE

LONDON, Jan. 15.—A mass meeting was held in Albert Hall tonight under the auspices of the League of Nations' Union to celebrate the anniversary of the formation of the League. The Minister of Education, P. A. Le Fisher, presided. The speakers included Lord Robert Cecil and Viscount Grey. There was a distinguished gathering of prominent men, and all the foreign embassies and legations were represented. A message was sent to the King, expressing congratulations for the league's good start, and a message from the Prime Minister, Mr. Lloyd George, was read, in which he said that he was convinced that the league would be successful in proportion as it represented all nations, and as these nations insist upon fair and open dealings with each other.

Lord Robert Cecil said that in consideration of the difficulties with which the league had been beset, it was no small feat that it was still living. He believed that if Great Britain would really lead the way towards the public the Premier mentioned, there was hope, amounting to a certainty of success. Viscount Grey expressed the belief that in the future people would no more think of parting with the League than of exchanging civil government for civil war. In the course of the meeting the King sent a reply to the Union's message, declaring his faith that in the League lies the sure guarantee of peace, and only in the fulfillment of its high idealism can the generation to come be saved from desolation and war."

"Upon your return to Ottawa today, may we ask for immediate action looking towards the formation of this board. Before this board the Associated Federal Employees of Ottawa wish to appear with courage."

"President, A.F.E. of O."

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