

THE LABOR WORLD

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MAYOR CULLUM'S ADDRESS.

We have read with much interest, and a pardonable degree of pride in its rhetorical excellence, his Honor Mayor Cullum's address before the 6 o'clock club of Superior.

He paid some well merited compliments to the personnel of the aldermen and administrative employees of both cities, and argued in substance that certain infirmities of our present system were due to our having a municipal government by a board of aldermen instead of a government by a board of commissioners.

We ourselves, are but a mere student of the commission form of city government, and his honor's arguments in support thereof we have considered with great care.

With his usual methodical manner he enumerates the objections to the present system seriatim.

The first of his objections refers to a case of alleged "logrolling" between certain Duluth aldermen, whereby London Road in the First ward got a much needed resurfacing, and the Eighth ward had a number of its dangerous bridges fortified and strengthened.

Is there a fallacy lurking here that has eluded his honor? We think there is. There is certainly no moral turpitude involved in agreeing to assist another, in consideration of receiving assistance from him, when the objects sought to be attained by both men are honorable and praiseworthy, as was the fact in the instance referred to by the mayor. Combinations are censurable only when their purpose is to accomplish disreputable ends, and a board of commissioners is no more proof against such a possibility than is a board of aldermen. Its character of the men and not their names of office that counts.

His second objection to the present system is, that council men are frequently recruited from the workers, such as blacksmiths, cigarmakers, carpenters, etc., and that their position in the council increases their prestige as trades men. Perhaps this is so, and perhaps it is not. Our own observation has been that it is not. We have known more trades men to ruin their business by "going in to politics" than we ever knew were benefited by it.

But if the statement were true, it applies with no greater force to cigar makers or carpenters than it does to dentists, lawyers, bankers etc.

We have not overlooked the insinuation in the mayor's address that trades people as aldermen are susceptible to improper influences. If the mayor meant just that, it is unfortunate for his statement that the history and experience of every American city and legislative body in the land flatly contradicts it.

We are quite reluctant to believe that the mayor is advocating a commission plan of government just to keep working men from holding legislative and administrative offices, and turning over all such positions to representatives of the big interests, although that is the clear inference

from his speech as reported. We prefer, however, to continue our faith in the mayor's democracy, and charge the apparent unsoundness of his argument to the error of the reporter.

The element of novelty about a commission form of government renders it attractive, at first thought, but we have observed, as we presume his honor has, that our American cities are not today "falling over one another" in their haste to adopt it, as they were some months ago. The fad is subsiding, and people everywhere are beginning to realize that the proposition of improving the administration of cities is not so much one of form as it is of men.

From the standpoint of efficiency and economy of administration, Des Moines under its commission form of government, is not as well governed today as Duluth under its home rule charter, with Hon. Marcus B. Cullum as chief executive, supported by a council of capable and honest men even though they are "recruited from the ranks of the common people, workers in the trades and other business."

GREAT MAN DEPARTED.

Thomas L. Johnson is gone. His life history is too near us to do justice to his worth. The generation who will succeed ours will be in a better perspective to realize what this great man has accomplished for his day, and the extent to which the world is better for his having been in it. A truly great man has departed, one who cheerfully devoted a fortune to fighting for the rights of the common people, and finally without a murmur faced comparative poverty himself. Few men of this generation will stand higher in the estimation of the next than Thomas L. Johnson.

PLAYGROUNDS.

People everywhere are beginning to realize that public playgrounds for the children are the best investment a city can make.

One hundred and ninety-five American cities have under way the establishment of playgrounds for children during the year. As many more are contemplating taking up the matter as "soon as they get to it."

It is a hopeful outlook. It shows what can be accomplished in this country with a little agitation. A few years ago when a city or two look up the matter of playgrounds, comparatively few people considered the matter seriously. It was considered a sort of impracticable fad. Today no serious-minded person doubts the wisdom of establishing playgrounds, and the only trouble any city has in establishing them is raising the money. They no longer have to oppose a hostile public opinion.

People are finding that children must be provided for; that it is not just to anybody to bring children into the world, with never a spot of ground they can call their own. They are not wanted in the house; they are too noisy. They cannot be tolerated at the office; they are in the way. They must not be allowed to play upon the lawns; they destroy the grass. Besides, everybody hasn't a lawn. If they play on the streets, they are run over by vehicles—and that costs money. So there is nothing left to be done but to purchase lots and establish public playgrounds, where the children of the neighborhood may find youthful sport that is as necessary to a well-developed child as food and air.

So we are getting around to the point where we are establishing these needs for the children—to the point where we begin to realize our responsibilities to the offspring. In fact, we are getting to that point of enlightenment where we are understanding that every child in the city belongs to every person in the city, in the meaning that every child is going to have an effect and an influence upon the whole community. It is

going to become an asset or a liability not only to its parents, but to the organization we call society.

Thus the fact that a man has a large yard and can furnish his own children with a playground does not release him from reliability in the matter of other people's children. For how can he hope to have his own children grow into useful and healthy men and women if they are thrown into contact, as they are, with useless and unhealthy children, rendered so by lack of playgrounds. Indeed, the healthier a person is, the more opportunity he can give to his own children, the more it is to his interest to see to it that every other child in the city is given opportunities. There is no such thing in civilization as one child not being influenced mentally, morally and physically by the rest of the children.

UNFAIR EMPLOYER.

The unfair employer—the man to whom no obligation is sacred and who is ever on the alert to take advantage of his business rival and his employees—is a curse and a detriment to any community.

If all employers were fair and would act on the square, there would be few strikes or lockouts. Well paid workmen are the real backbone of a community, and it is the amount of money in circulation paid out as wages that gauges the prosperity of a town or city.

The tactics of the dishonest employer not only work to the detriment of the wage earner, but disarrange business and help to bring on and perpetuate hard times. If employers would get together, meet the representatives of the union and agree to pay a mutually satisfactory rate of wages, instead of trying to cut one another's throats, there would be no need for any of them to gain a dishonest advantage by reducing wages.

The living wage is the basis of prosperity. It is the unfair and unscrupulous employer who causes trouble, and is a curse to any community.

The old barons of the Middle Ages used in general the thumbscrew to extort property; we moderns use, in preference, hunger or domestic affliction; but the fact of extortion remains precisely the same.

Whether we force the man's property from him by pinching his stomach or pinching his fingers, makes some difference anatomically; morally, none whatever; we use the form of torture of some sort in order to make him give up his property; we use, indeed, the man's own anxieties, instead of the rack; and his immediate peril of starvation, instead of the pistol at his head; but otherwise we differ from Front de Boeuf, or Dick Turpin, merely in being less dexterous, more cowardly and more cruel.

More cruel, I say, because the fierce baron and the redoubted highwaymen are reported to have robbed, at least by preference, only the rich; we steal habitually from the poor.

We buy our liveries and gild our prayer books with the pilfered pence, and thus ingeniously dispose a given quantity of theft, so that it may produce the largest possible measure of delicately distributed suffering.—John Ruskin.

A man joins a labor union and strikes for it and fights for it if need be, for the very reason that the union is the surest guarantee that he will secure work, and, best of all, living wages. The most industrious, the most loyal, the most competent workmen are to be found in the labor unions for the reason that the union offers them the protection and incentive to work and get ahead that can not be found in going it alone on their own accord.

Trouble makes you acquainted with a number of people who are really worth while.

OVERPRODUCTION.

One of the most curious phenomena of modern industrialism is that of overproduction. It is hard for the average person to conceive of a superabundance of food clothing, and other articles at the same time that thousands are starving, freezing, and existing only in the midst of the most shameful conditions.

Yet such is the structure of the present social organization that while warehouses and storage plants are filled to overflowing with every sort of commodity men and women and children, human beings if you please, in every city and village in our land are suffering for want of daily sustenance. There is a famine at the same time there is plenty.

The explanation of this paradox ought to be simple for the man who thinks—honestly. Could this phenomenon of overproduction exist, for instance, if the wage-earner, the individual who produces wealth received in return for his labor a fair proportion of that which he produced?

The real fault lies in the fact that the workingman is unable to buy back, on account of inadequate remuneration, all that is created by him, and consequently each day a surplus is accumulated to be stored away while men starve.

Such, moreover, must forever continue to be the case until workmen, conscious of their economic power, unite to make it otherwise.—The Observer, Grand Rapids, Mich.

[We are in receipt of a number of articles from the national Grange officials professing to prove that Canadian reciprocity would be the ruin of the American farmer.

It is easy enough to make assertions, but quite another thing to prove them.

When the American farmer realizes that protection can not protect him, as he will realize soon after the adoption of the Canadian reciprocity agreement, he will be as eager to throw off the protection that doesn't protect but does burden him, as he has been to retain protection in general on the supposition that he gets some of it.

JUST THE POSITION OF TRADE UNIONISM

"There are colossal fortunes, and there are depths of poverty. There are those who know not what to do with their wealth, and those who have to cry out for a mere pittance to keep body and soul together." There is serious need of reform, but it must come through legitimate channels, not by principles which are "subversive to personal integrity, domestic integrity and national integrity."

FATHER GASSON.

Mayor Cullum's communication to the city council relative to certain revelations made in the Minnie Cookman trial has the right ring, and it is hoped the council will do its full duty in the premises, now that the facts are clearly before it.

LAUGH AND LIVE LONG.

Thackeray truly remarked that the world is for each of us much as we show ourselves to the world. If we face it with cheery acceptance, we find the world fairly full of cheerful people, glad to see us. If we snarl at and abuse it, we may be sure of abuse in return.

The discontented worries of a morose person may very likely shorten his days, and the general justice of nature's arrangement provides that his early departure should entail no longer regrets. On the other hand, a man who can laugh keeps his health, and his friends are glad to keep him. The perfectly healthy laughter comes often.

Too commonly, though, as childhood is left behind, the habit fails, and a half smile is the best that visits the thought-lined mouth of the modern man and

woman. People become more and more burdened with the accumulations of knowledge and with the weighing responsibilities of life, but they should still spare time to laugh.—Ex.

TWO SCOURGES.

You may tell a man over and over again that he is wasting his life, his opportunities, his abilities, and he will heed you as he heeds a well meaning, though unskillful German band; but speak to him on the subject of mortality, tell him that he gives signs of tuberculosis, of nephritis, of fatty degeneration of the umbrageous nerve, and you have his attention at once. This is why doctors—even poor doctors—are regarded with respect.

Al the doctors—speaking of good ones now—have agreed that the constant increase in heart disease and Bright's disease is the result of increased rapidity and increased standards of living. The increased rapidity works through the nerves; the increased standard works through the stomach.

If every union man should constitute himself an organizer and should give one evening of each week to organization, if he should single out one non-union neighbor or acquaintance and persist in an effort to organize that man, what a short time it would take to unionize all the workers of our country! And if all were organized how much less difficult it would be to secure higher wages, shorter hours and better conditions of life and labor!—John Mitchell.

The Minnesota legislature could have granted no greater favor to the despoilers of their constituencies than to have defeated the initiative and referendum.

"The determining principle in fixing the standard of life should be the discovery of the minimum needed to maintain full efficiency."

Ill fortune never crushed the man whom good fortune deceived not—Johnson

Our Question Box

Such questions will be answered in this column as appertain to a more or less degree to the good and welfare of our readers. Questions strictly sectarian in nature, assigned to the waste basket or returned to the questioner, as a due sense of propriety may determine.

Duluth, Minn., April 17, 1911.
 Editor Labor World:
 Does the Christian Science church, as an organization aid or defend its healing practitioners when prosecuted for alleged practice of medicine? Or, is each practitioner expected to bear the expense of his or her own defense?

NEAR SCIENTIST.

Answer: We are not informed as to the matter about which you inquire, but will quote from a New York paper on the subject, and the article may give you the information you desire.

For the first time the official head of the Christian Science church has decided to give voluntary help to its practitioners when prosecuted by public officers.

Aroused by the action of the Medical society of the county of New York, which has charged two prominent "Scientists" with illegal practice of medicine, the Christian Science board of directors of Boston have retained Samuel Untermyer of this city to defend their practice of "healing." Heretofore; it is said, the church has given only unofficial advice and assistance to its members.

The two practitioners against whom cases are pending in the New York courts are Willis Vernon Cole and Wentworth Byron Winslow, both of whom are registered in the Christian Science Sentinel as qualified practitioners. Mrs. Frances Benzecry, an agent of the Medical society, is the complaining witness in both cases. The case against Cole is awaiting trial in the court of central sessions. Winslow's is to be heard in the efferson market police-court on April 25.

Duluth, Minn., April 18, 1911.
 To the Editor Labor World:
 What do you know about the so-

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called "Loyal Order of Moose?" I have been urged to join it, but want to know something about it.
 Yours Respectfully,
 P. J. M.

Answer: We are not well informed with regard to the order about which you inquire. The following are its declaration of principles:

"This brotherhood is founded upon the splendid principles, purity, aid and progress and is designed to bind civilized mankind close together with bonds of fraternal love, and to teach great truths, which have for their purposes the elevation of society.

The aims and purposes of the Loyal Order of Moose are to inspire lofty sentiments relative to humanity's welfare.

Religious and political rights are fully recognized by the teachings of the order, but questions and references of a political or sectarian nature find no place within its sacred precincts, and are forbidden within its portals.

"He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, but he that hateth his brother abideth in deep darkness"

Dr. John D. O'Brien of St. Paul is one of its past supreme officers.

We presume he will be glad to give you such information as you desire.

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Duluth, Minn., April 18, 1911.
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