

THE MONTANA NEWS.

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SPIES IN THE SOCIALIST PARTY.

The labor movement of the western country is honey-combed with spies; and the slimy reptile, the lowest of the tool by which the capitalist class keeps the badge of servitude and degradation upon the worker, is flying his trade of filth in both the labor unions and the socialist organizations. If American working men were not such dupes of every one who comes to them with an offer of friendliness it would be easy to detect the work of these loathsome betrayers of the aspirations of the working class. Every tree is known by its fruits, and a man can easily be detected by his deeds. Whenever experienced union men discover a person in their ranks who lives along without caring whether he works or not, makes a business of insinuating himself into the affairs of the organization, never neglect an opportunity to stir up strife and dissension, encourages suspicion and lack of confidence in those who are active and earnest in the work of the class struggle, they mark him at once or a spotter, and a paid man to nullify and destroy the work they have accomplished, and his chances of staying very long in that community are usually short-lived.

There is another species of spotter, more contemptible of anything, than the man that is paid by the employers' associations to go from place to place and disrupt and report, and that is the person who resides at a point and is friendly with the bosses, and agrees to hold the men level, and resists the effort for a raise in wages, pretends to a quasi respectability, but all the time uses his influence in an underhand way against any radical aggressive or effective action in the interest of labor or its resistance to the unjust and precarious conditions under which it lives.

These creatures that are less than human have cursed Montana and the industrial states of the inter-mountain region for many years, and are still cursing it. They are in evidence at all industrial centers.

The socialist party has also become the victim of their disintegrating influence. With the pretender, and class nothing but disrupt. Watch the man who opposes every constructive effort to make socialism an active force in the community. Watch the man who is shouting for socialism as a heaven over yonder but opposes, thwarts and fights any rational, practical, concrete action of the party in local affairs. Watch these people and go after them. They will soon wilt or vanish when they find they are discovered. They have not the staying qualities of those who are inspired with a true desire to make the world better through the uplift of the labor that makes the world.

If the socialist movement is good it must be good for something. A socialist that takes no interest in the affairs of his own town is simply a sentimental dreamer. It is practical men that man the world.

SOCIALISM IN UTAH.

A correspondent from Utah, a comrade that used to be active in the Montana socialist movement, sends in some interesting notes in regard to the socialist movement in the Mormon state.

Utah is an agricultural state. The omnipotence and omnipresence of the Mormon religion is due largely to the acumen of the founders in discerning that they must solve the economic problem first if they were to live at all. The devotees of the sect had landed in this desert, driven by the persecutions heaped upon them from

Jackson county, Missouri, and Hanvoo, Illinois. Their exodus was during the early gold excitement in this country, and when they concluded to settle in Salt Lake valley they were eager to delve into the vast surrounding mountains for the glittering treasure.

MATERIAL SECURITY.

Brigham Young told them they would starve to death if they went to hunt for gold, but if they went to work and scratched the earth and reared a little wheat they could live. So the Utah desert has blossomed as the rose, and the state is noted for its fruit and its fine irrigation projects.

The cooperative feature has been one of the solid bulwarks of the strength of Mormonism. The people have built in villages with their farms lying in the surrounding country. They live the meager, hardworking lives of the farmer class, knowing few luxuries. But real want is absent from the Mormon communities. The church takes care of its poor and needy, and this is done largely through the Women's Aid association. The ten per cent tithe which the Mormons pay to the church goes into the hands of the church hierarchy, and by them is invested in the great commercial enterprises with which the church is identified. President Joseph Smith of the Mormon church, successor of Brigham Young is the president and director of numerous large capitalist enterprises within the state, as the beet sugar industries, woolen mills, railroads, light, a great system of stores, and others of an enormous profit character.

TRANSIENT CHARACTER.

But this apparent economic security is deceptive, as the student of industrial and commercial conditions understand full well. No cooperative farmer, even if it were genuine, and extended to the entire population of one state or four states, could resist the pressure of the trust on every side. The farmers, by reducing their standard of living lower and lower, might retain their farms for a considerable period, but prices forced to the minimum, and the power of the banker through the mortgage men with the capitalist power held in the hands of their own church people, will soon ford these fragal people to confront the problems of life as evolving capitalism forces them upon them.

WILL NEVER LEAD OUT.

But with this character of population and industry it cannot be expected that Utah will ever lead out in socialist institutions. Socialist agitation here must take the form of education as to the analysis of the capitalist system, and whatever skeleton of an organization can be retained under these difficulties. The mining industry of the state is large, and the mining and smelting camps are locals of the Western Federation of Miners. This aggressive organization is sending out its socialist teachings from every center, and this, of course, has its influence in counteracting the hypnotism of capitalist ideas. Moreover, the socialist party pulls some six thousand percentage. But there is little or no constructive work, and practically no conducting of the party activities to positive ends. However, Utah shows this stage with that of most of the western states.

SOCIALIST PARTY BEGINNINGS.

The socialist activities began about eight years ago. Mrs. Hazlette was one of the early workers, and was the first organizer that went into the southern agricultural country, being also at one time national committee-man from Utah.

The party has been unfortunate in its internal affairs. A Salt Lake lawyer who afterwards went went into the republican party, at one time practically had the whole party interested in his own hands. His satisfaction arose, and there came a factional split that threw the organization into the hands of the national party, and for a number of years the state was declared in a disorganized condition. Strife of this sort retards the advancement of any movement.

Then the party met disaster in the attempt to form a local press. The paper established was called "The Crisis." A man by the name of Dalton came from Chicago to edit it. Dalton belonged to the bathing impossibilist crowd that was making itself a conspicuous minority at the national convention four years ago. He struggled along as a pioneer labor press has still to struggle in this country, until finally he sold out to the "American Party," a party extensively organized to fight the Mormon church, and turned his paper over to its use during the election campaign. He afterwards accepted an office from the city administration, and instead of starving with the socialist party he is now eating once more from the wages of capitalism.

CAUSES MAKE TRAITORS.

It may be said as an explanation of the reasons for Dalton's fall that he found so little cooperation and support in the Salt Lake party, that there was so little of a settled policy of action, that his powers of endurance at least gave way, and he became a tool in the hands of the enemy. However, that may be, it was a most disastrous thing for the socialist paper to come out and declare war on that religion. It would simply mean that only gentiles and atheists could be approved on socialist party principles. And as for fighting the Mormon church the anti-Mormon capitalist press is doing that far more powerfully than the socialists could possibly do even if they were inclined to do so. A discrimination in regard to religions is certainly not a part of the burdens that socialists are obliged to carry.

LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS.

The party at Salt Lake City has been at a low ebb of efficiency, last summer taking its charter altogether.

There are many life and intelligent socialists in the city, but as is so painfully characteristic of the western socialist movement a large part of them are not active in the party. But it has taken a fresh start and there is a movement on foot for better and more efficient work.

AT BINGHAM CANYON.

Bingham Canyon is a large copper mining camp of the Western Federation. The socialists are the most active here of any point in the state, having obtained possession of the city government a few years ago. But our socialist movement is greatly hindered by a lack of sound knowledge of a socialist program on the part of the terrible obstacles that are thrown in the way of socialists in office are such as might well baffle stronger and for more experienced hearts than working men taking up for the first time the reins of administration. And in their way our vote often drops back when we have once gained possession of places of authority. So the Bingham Canyon socialists were battered and betrayed out of office again.

POOR ORGANIZATION.

Generally speaking there is neither the enthusiasm nor the organization that there was in the party eight years ago. The State Secretary has difficulty in getting active work and of the locals, dues paid up, or even answers from their secretaries.

There is another burden that the socialist party carries here that is unknown in any other state. It very often happens that those who have adopted socialism are also those that have abandoned the Mormon faith, and besides being heretics against the established social standards these reformers are classed with the hated and despised "apostates." This works a double burden for these liberal socialists to carry, and it also makes it doubly hard for us to convince the faithful Mormons that socialism is a political movement for economic freedom. And the brave souls who hold their own under these trying circumstances deserve the honor of all coming generations.

It is a marvel that all of these working class voters do not take more interest in controlling their own politics. The member of the legislature from this district, simply laughs at the request of the working men, and flatly refused to present a bill making it unlawful to hold out a dollar for hospital fees without the consent of the worker.

What is needed in Utah is patient organizers, those thoroughly familiar with practical labor problems, who can spend unlimited time organizing the men and women, hunting them up individually and instructing them, and also those who are able to assist and strengthen the labor organizations.

It is not talk and oratory that is needed, it is patient, constructive work by those who know how to do it, building a solid socialist groundwork for a big political movement.

THE TINTIC DISTRICT.

The Tintic mining district covers considerable territory, and comprises the mining and smelting camps of Eurika, Mammouth, Robinson, and Silver City. A large number of men are employed in the district but the organization among them is poor. The Western Federation does not seem as able to make its organization in the west complete and effective, as the United Mine Workers have done. The Eureka union has put up a large cement building costing about \$16,000, and has paid out all but \$4,000 on it. But there are many men working who do not belong to the union. An unfair list of these ringneades to their class interest is published, and there are excellent union men working faithfully and devoting much time to strengthening the organization. The socialist sentiments is strong but not realized. Several city officers including the mayor were elected on the socialist ticket, but the party meetings have been dropped, the secretary is inactive, a fine woman's socialist organization has been broken up, and there is every evidence that the trail of the serpent spotter is at work.

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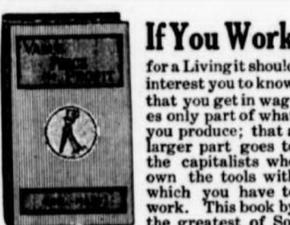
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