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REAL LESSON OF LABOR DAY

One week from next Monday in every state in the Union, with but four exceptions, Labor Day will be observed as a legal holiday, and organized labor, representing over 200 crafts, will march and parade and make merry. It is labor's own holiday, and as such should be enjoyed to the utmost by the men and women whose hands and brains have builded the republic, whose skill has put America in the forefront of human progress, and whose loyalty and devotion to republican principles has been the chief defense of the republic since its foundation. It will be the day on which organized labor parades in solid phalanx to testify to its collective devotion to the principles of fraternity—a fraternity that has no equal in any other organization. It will be the day on which will parade the principles that have stricken the shackles from human toilers, made labor honorable and curbed to a remarkable degree the arrogance of organized capital.

But as the union man marches along to the music of bands and the shrill and ruffle of fife and drum; as the union woman marches side by side with her brother as happy children freed from thralldom cheer and shout as the parade of fathers goes by—as all this takes place let earnest and thoughtful men look deeper into the day's observance and ascertain if possible a better understanding of the day's lesson and the day's opportunities. It is a grand sight to see the Grand Army of Toil marching in solid phalanx. It is a grand sight to see the men whose brain and brawn have builded deep and wide the fountain of the state marching by with stalwart step and shining eyes. It is a grand sight to see millions of men who are actuated by the feelings of fellowship marching shoulder to shoulder. It is a grand sight to see this magnificent army that is actuated by the spirit of brotherhood keeping step in time to the music of the bands. But there is something more to Labor Day than marching and parading, than bands and flags, than shouts and games, than merrymakings and rejoicings.

If the strength of organized labor can be made manifest on Labor Day, what might not be accomplished for humanity and justice if those same men marched and voted together on election day as they march and cheer on Labor Day!

Stop and think of it, brethren! Marching on Labor Day will never enact a law protecting life and limb and safeguarding home and loved ones. Marching in solid phalanx on Labor Day will never release a pale-faced boy or girl from sweat shop, mill or mine. Keeping steps to bands on Labor Day will not provide for the widow and orphan, wipe out injustice or make possible the ushering in the millenium of labor. None of these things on Labor Day will accomplish good for organized labor. But in the parade and in the close associations of the day will be found a lesson teaching thoughtful men the possibilities that lie in concerted action. And in that lesson lies the real essence of the day. Organized labor will never come into its own until its individual members free themselves from the cunningly forged chains of partisanship and stand forth free men, actuated only by a love for one's fellows and a desire to see even-handed justice dealt out without fear or favor. Greed and selfishness as exemplified in modern capitalism can afford to help organized labor make Labor Day a magnificent holiday as long as organized labor is lulled to sleep by the siren song of partisanship and allows that same greed and graft and selfish-

ness to profit at the expense of human effort. While organized labor marches in solid and swinging column through the streets of the cities on Labor Day, capital stands on the curbstones with cheers on its lips and contempt in its heart. Capital knows that the cheering men who go marching by will fly at one another's throats on election day, and out of the wrangle and the bitterness engendered by partisan politics capital will grab more than it deserves and labor will continue to take less than that which it owns and should enjoy. Solid columns on Labor Day mean less than nothing in the face of divided ranks at the ballot box. Long parades on Labor Day and divided ranks at the ballot box mean only the perpetuation of unjust rule, the perpetuation of the notorious perversion of justice, the perpetuation of gang rule, corrupt legislatures and venal judges. United ranks on election day mean the substitution of justice for injustice, right for wrong, triumph for defeat, respect for contempt, recognition for indifference. One grand united effort at the ballot box will make every day a day of rejoicing.

To the swelling and cheering and marching men who will march on Labor Day The Wageworker sends its warmest greetings. It would rather stand before them on terms of equality than to stand before kings and thrones. Their interests are its interests, their hopes are its hopes, their aspirations its aspirations. And may the day soon come when partisanship is lost sight of in the grander spectacle of unity, and the slave of party shall stand forth a free man with a ballot in his hand that will mean something for labor instead of something for the oppressors of labor. The real lesson of Labor Day is not in the parade, but in the power that lies within reach of the marching millions, and who have but to reach forth their hands and take into their keeping that which through all the ages has been their own.—Lincoln (Neb.) Wageworker.

A POLITICAL PROPHECY

Apropos the mission of M. Witte to the peace conference between Russia and Japan, the well-informed London correspondent of the Birmingham (England) Post writes of a remarkable forecast of the struggle in the far east. A Russian official showed him a memorandum prepared in 1890 by the late M. Vischnegradshi, a predecessor of M. Witte as minister of finance, to whom M. Witte is said to owe his advancement, and whose reported views he has certainly followed. In this memorandum M. Witte's patron predicts the present internal troubles of the empire, the consequent break of despotic power, and "the development of a representative system of control." But much more remarkable is it that such a prediction as the following should have been made fifteen years ago: "Reform will come to us from without rather than within the empire, and we shall not know it until some foreign power, but more likely England in coalition with some eastern power, is knocking hard at our gates. The danger must at all events come from the east, for in Europe we are too solid and centralized to be attacked successfully. It behooves us, therefore, to do all we can to prepare and develop our Asiatic dominion, and seek no other territory until we have made what we have quite invulnerable." Aside from its interest as a rare specimen of far-sighted political prediction, this forecast, with the wise counsel based upon it, was evidently the original inspiration of M. Witte's efforts to dissuade the czar from his premature venture on the present war.—The Outlook.

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