

Secretary Redfield's Warning

If producers or manufacturers here and there should reduce the wages of their employes for the loudly proclaimed reasons that the new tariff had forced the reduction, thus unquestionably attacking the fiscal policy of the administration of the day, the right of the administration in mere political self-defense to utilize existing law by sending its agents into an industry to investigate the conditions under which it was conducted could not reasonably be denied. That it is the settled purpose of the Wilson administration to meet attacks of that character by government investigations can no longer be in doubt. Mr. Underwood, in closing the tariff debate in the house, spoke in no uncertain words:

"When great manufacturing institutions are ready to threaten their laborers with a reduction of wages because they say there has been adverse action and legislation in congress, or to reflect on the action of the government of the United States, that bureau has the power to walk into their offices and ascertain whether there is real reason for their cutting the rates of

wages of their labor or whether it is merely a selfish attempt to put money into their own pockets."

The bureau Mr. Underwood referred to was that of foreign and domestic commerce in the department of commerce. Its powers of investigation along the lines indicated are inherited from the old bureau of labor, originally authorized by congress in 1888. The legislative, executive and judicial appropriation bill last August transferred these powers to the newly created bureau of foreign and domestic commerce, which was a consolidation of the old bureau of manufactures and bureau of statistics. It is of interest now to note the extent of the power of investigation into a manufacturing industry authorized by the act of 1888, for hitherto it has been a power almost never utilized. The act charged the bureau:

"to ascertain, at as early a date as possible, and whenever industrial changes shall make it essential, the cost of producing articles at the time dutiable in the United States, in leading countries where such articles are produced, by fully specified

units of production, and under a classification showing the different elements of cost, or approximate costs, of such articles of production, including the wages paid in such industries a day, a week, month, or year, or by the piece; and hours employed a day; and the profits of manufactures and producers of such articles; and the comparative cost of living, and kind of living; what articles are controlled by trusts or other combinations of capital, business operations, or labor, and what effect said trusts or other combinations of capital, business operations, or labor have on production and prices."

The pottery industry is the first one that Secretary Redfield has determined to investigate with reference to the assertions of manufacturers concerning the tariff and wages. His blunt speech before the national association of employing lithographers in Washington showed that the lithographers may be investigated next in order, if they should carry into effect the threat contained in their circular that the new tariff "means workmen thrown out of jobs. It means that wages must go down." Undoubtedly, too, the department of labor could cooperate in investigating labor conditions, especially in case of strikes. The old federal bureau of labor investigated the Lawrence strike a year ago, and that was caused by a reduction of wages following the enactment of a state law, not a federal law.

Federal investigations, indeed, could be amply justified on various grounds. If certain manufacturers should use their power as employers to cut down wages or shut down plants in retaliation upon the federal government for adopting a new fiscal policy, the government certainly would retain the moral right of political defense. It would be justified in such cases in having it demonstrated that the real cause of the wage reduction or the shut-down was the cause publicly assigned. If the department of commerce could show that the business had been run inefficiently, or was disadvantageously located to compete, such facts could be brought out with fairness to all concerned.

During the recent strike at the Auburn (N. Y.) plant of the International Harvester company, the officials voluntarily explained their action in ordering the plant's removal to Germany as due to the fact that, strike or no strike, Auburn was an unprofitable place in which to make twine. Many old factories now owned by trusts are kept going for local or sentimental reasons, like the Auburn plant of the harvester company. Some of them, under the new tariff, may be shut down. Is the administration to remain quiescent under charges for political effect that the changes in the tariff forced the shut-downs when, as a matter of fact, the plants had been run at a loss, or without profit for years? It would be a weakening, if it did. The country is full of trusts which have scattered about these badly-located or worn-out plants, extravagantly absorbed during the combination process. The facts concerning them should be published, in case attempts are made to make political capital out of their abandonment under the new tariff.

On the other hand, if a plant is genuinely crippled or put out of business by lower duties, the facts may well be studied thoroughly in order that the administration and congress may be fully and truthfully advised of the conditions. Manufacturers in such cases should court investigation. If they had not sought to use possible business troubles as a political weapon, if they had not threatened curtailment

of production or reductions in wages in order to injure the party in power, thus mixing politics with business of their own accord, they could count on fair treatment doubtless from the present administration. Secretary Redfield is no academic theorist. He is a business man himself of long experience and he must be fully disposed to give every industry a square deal.—Springfield (Mass.) Republican.

CHRISTIANITY'S NEW TRIUMPH

It is not unlikely that the annals of the Christian religion will in some distant time point back to the days in which we now live as marking one of the great cycles of history. For within a fortnight there have occurred events which may well be the beginning of the vastest spiritual conquest the world has seen since Clovis the Frank in the heat of uncertain battle promised to worship the God of Chlothilde if victory should rest with his army.

Pepin routed his enemies. Next day with a thousand of his warriors he was baptized. So it was decreed that Germany and France and all western Europe should shape their ideals on the model of Latin Christianity.

Adown the history of the church stand such milestones. It does not require a very far flight of the imagination to see the fate of Christianity wavering in the balance when Constantine the Great had his vision of the fiery cross. Whether we believe that to be miracle or only a fervent legend, we can not but feel that it was in that sign that he conquered.

The religion of Mithra at that time was contesting foot by foot with the religion of Christ amid the moribund paganism of east and west. Mithra, too, taught brotherhood and justice. Had the Roman emperor made Mithraism the state religion of the empire, devout Americans today might play with their eyes toward a Persian village, instead of with their hearts toward Nazareth and Calvary.

And as Constantine called Christianity up from the caves and the catacombs and put it on the throne beside the Bosphorus, so Pepin made it the religion of Germanic civilization. The landing of Patrick in Ireland and the sale of the golden-haired slaves in Rome that attracted the attention of the first Gregory are two other milestones that mark the progress of the new religion over the face of the earth.

It is not improbable that Sunday, April 27, 1913, may take its place in Christian chronology beside the dates of those other epoch-marking events. For on last Sunday there was given to the Christian religion an official recognition scarcely less freighted with vast possibilities than was the official proclamation which made the teachings of Christ the state religion of the empire of Constantine.

Indeed, the Roman world of that day was but a fringe of civilization on the edge of an immeasurable barbarism. Counted by its millions, it was a puny thing as compared to teeming China of today, with its civilization which was old when Rome was founded. It was in China that the epoch-making recognition of Christianity was made on Sunday last.

On that date, in accordance with the request of the government of the new Chinese republic, prayers were offered for China in every Christian church and chapel in that country. And in the spirit of brotherhood thousands of Christian churches in this country joined in the appeal to a higher power to guide the new republic through the dangers that beset it.

It is scarcely a decade since the world was aghast at the cruelties practiced on Christian martyrs in

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