

POWDERLY'S POWDER.

A Brand Warranted Safe From Premature Explosion.

A Circular Not Intended For the Public Eye, But Concerning Matters in Which the Public Are Deeply Interested—The Ring of the True Metal.

ST. LOUIS, March 25.—The following remarkable circular was made public this morning. It is the first official utterance of General Master Workman Powderly of the Knights of Labor, and in it he decries with startling clearness his very sensible views concerning strikes, boycotting, the eight-hour system and other important questions concerning organized labor:

*SECRET CIRCULAR
PHILADELPHIA, Mar. 18, 1866.
Order of the Knights of Labor of Amer.
The recording secretary will open this circular and file it in the hands of the master workmen whose duty it shall be to save it to the public at a full meeting either regular or special, in due time, and attend to it. Its extreme length must be excused, for I can go not to each assembly to speak on the present crisis, and take the method of reaching them.*

An order was recently issued to suspend organizations of new assemblies for forty days. It did not go out until a careful review had been made of the situation. Had I not been convinced that it was absolutely necessary for the salvation of the order my vote would not have cast in favor of the cessation of the work.

One of the gravest emergencies that ever faced a nation began suddenly before the eyes of our fathers, and to us it seems but a moment. Before taking another step in any direction I would like to go over the great mass of facts which have led me to issue this circular, ask them to speak frankly as I now talk to them, and tell me what you think the order is to do.

When a strike is taken, the men who have worked with it from the beginning, at critical stages must be sent home to their families, and be brought back to their members. It always has been, and is at the present time, the policy to make compensation and arbitration in the settlement of disputes between employer and employee. The law of knighthood demands at the hands of our members that we do more than words of men who had become disengaged with the ruthless policy of the strike as the remedy for the ill-conceived policy of workmen to have their compensation increased. We must know that we had disengaged the strike until all had faded. The men and women who have endured these wrongs for years have a right to a day's pay to learn how to right the wrongs. It is a wise and most satisfactory, as well as a lasting remedy. Six months will not teach them to do this. Six months will not teach them to be with the idea that they can learn them in six weeks or six months, and then work for a proper education. Is not work and education on a strike or locked out, and in too many cases the provocations comes from the employer? Is not work and education no matter what advantage we gain in the strike? It is only medicating the symptoms of a disease, and not the disease, and therefore fails in effecting a cure. The original sequence is a release, and a relaxation from more mental and a weaker physical condition. That is what we want, and read this letter to the end, for it may be the last. I will even write to you. My wife and I have labored much more than measured by the standard of our cents. My party must no longer be misinformed. While it is the chosen mouthpiece of the order, it is not the voice of the knighthood. And so we have word that the knights of labor do not intend to countenance strikes until every one of the men in the rank and file from a thousand cities and towns in the country are members of their organization. It is claimed by our members that arbitration is the best. This may be true of the past, but the last three months prove most clearly that the just claims of labor will be met by arbitration. The strike has started out. It is claimed that this is far better for employers and advances. But as it may be, let them be striking.

I am aware that the general order is not capable of performing the work required by the large gains in membership, and that the strike must be suspended upon our orders until the next annual assembly meets. The strike in February, and many as were organized in the first eight years of the order's existence. It is not clear that the hand of knighthood is properly trained before the assembly is convened. The organizers seldom if ever, in their assemblies, give much thought to the laws of knighthood, and this is not enough. They must devote their spare moments to further organizing, and adding any more strength to the order. To attempt to win concessions of gain with our present, now unorganized, men would be a waste of time, and cost us more than we gained. In fact, it would be most disastrous, and discredit regular work. Again, it seems strange that older and more experienced workmen quarrel as soon as organized, and have them expect pecuniary and moral help from the strike up front, and not a woman's premium for joining us. It is wrong to encourage them to do this, and that they are less up-to-date, and in any case, more ignorant, than the younger men, and I will have no instructions that will encourage them in the belief that they will receive assistance even if they command a hundred thousand men in the country. We must not sacrifice the potentialities of the gold mine of labor by resorting into useless strikes. To me, a strike is most unwise. Mind you, I keep my own counsel, and do not tell your own friends, but let us let it seek for information. If it is given the information, we may be compelled to let them get away with it. Even distinct assemblies, and local committees on instructions, to read answers that the order was intended for them, and that they may be taught. Let them be at it, they will be taught.

The knights of labor are not opposed to labor, but it was not well to call them "the ring of the true metal." In many instances the emperors have a controlling voice. The men who work for the order, in my opinion, would be best to treat their employers, who are rather than as a master, as a brother, and to regard the value as within the same. Take in all employees as possible. We must expect this, and we must never, ever, let them be used to tempt us to use political power, and to form associations which drag the order into the political arena.

We are strong, and any American will day, and we must have every return that could possibly be obtained without one. We are getting a success from State to State, and we are entitled to the same. We must expect this, and we must never, ever, let them be used to tempt us to use political power, and to form associations which drag the order into the political arena.

It is evident that we must be properly instructed, else we would be easily led astray. We are strong, and any American will day, and we must have every return that could possibly be obtained without one. We are getting a success from State to State, and we are entitled to the same. We must expect this, and we must never, ever, let them be used to tempt us to use political power, and to form associations which drag the order into the political arena.

There are two or three practical reflections that grow naturally out of this. The first is that the rage for wealth and display which has seized upon people with untasted powers and plenty of experience may be expected to spread to the boys who have as yet but little of the world and for that reason are easily caught by mere glitter. This being a natural consequence, it is not best for local officials to leave too great temptation in the way of any boys. If men of experience and maturity can scarcely be found who are able to withstand the temptation which go along with the handling of large sums of money, common prudence would teach that there was more danger in laying too great responsibility upon boys scarcely out of their teens. Let the boys be given work for awhile that doesn't carry with it much temptation.

That Tired Feeling

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