

THE KNIGHTS OF LABOR

General Assembly in Session at St. Louis—The Order in Prosperous Condition.

POWDERLY'S ANNUAL ADDRESS.

Takes Strong Ground on the Immigration Question—Laboring Men Must go into Politics.

Powderly's Address.

The twenty-fifth annual session of the Knights of Labor met in St. Louis on November 15th, with a large attendance of delegates.

LABOR MOVEMENT

Said there was too great a tendency the multiplication of unions and the tendency of the labor movement to divide up, while that the opposing force—capital—was to consolidate, and thereby to gain strength to combat the forces of injury.

The crying need of the hour was an organization in which every interest might be cared for and in which all might meet on common ground.

IMMIGRATION.

He said that six years ago he had declared in favor of the restriction of immigration, and although his views were not received with favor by the order he had not changed them.

SECRETARY'S REPORT.

The report of General Secretary and Treasurer Hayes says the benefit insurance feature of the order is not very successful, owing to the lack of support of the members.

TAX ON INHERITANCE FAVORED.

A clause was adopted providing for the establishment of an employment bureau by the order. A suggestion to strike out of the platform the plank providing for a graduated income tax was rejected.

"Our Italy."

So Charles Dudley Warner happily terms California, and for a winter resort that gives pure air, soft and balmy, is a joy for the strong man and a wonderful strengthener for the weak and suffering.

A Patent.

Publisher—You have the climax of the story in the second chapter. Why do that? Author—It is a patent scheme of my own to keep women who read from knowing how the story is going to turn out.

WAYS OF LIFE.

When fortune smiles its sweetest smirk And favor slaps us on the back, When fate's steep hill seems easy work, And pleasures decorate the track.

When death shall enter at our door, And grimly seize his summons bold, When we shall suffer pain no more, And mother earth our form shall fold.

HER SISTER NELL.

When Tom Norton and his wife came from the North to the prairies of Northwestern Louisiana to try rice farming they brought each their most cherished possessions.

He brought also a very respectable financial backing and a fund of good, practical common sense. These saved him from collapse when he saw his theories knocked out by the hard facts of his new life.

Mrs. Kate brought her etchings, her water colors, her jars, vases, rugs and draperies. She had a rather worse time arranging these in a 'Cadian house than Tom had with his theories, which is saying a good deal.

John McLaie whose rice flat was over on Bayou Noe Pique, came oftenest and stayed longest. He was older than the rest and quieter.

He had dined with them, one breathless moon, and afterward crossed to the parlor which Kate had a trick of keeping cool and shady in the hottest weather. Kate filled the pipes, Tom took the sofa and Mac stretched in a most comfortable chair, smoked a while in silence.

'You're a decent sort of a fellow, Tom,' he said at length, 'and I don't envy you a thing, but this—' with a comprehensive wave of his hand—'isn't exactly calculated to make one enthusiastic over Black Jim's house-keeping.'

'This' included the excellent dinner just eaten, the cool shade of the pleasant room, and Kate herself in a most becoming gown.

'Well, then, why don't you do as I did, marry your best girl and bring her down here to look after you?' queried Tom.

Mac puffed away awhile before he answered, 'I haven't any best girl. I had one once—a nice, sensible girl—'

'I hate nice sensible girls,' interrupted Kate, but Mac went calmly on.

'Father died when I was just out of school and left me with mother, four children and a mortgage to look after. I laid the case plainly before my girl, told her there was bound to be hard work; but that I knew I could pull through, and if she wanted to take hold and help all right, if not, say so—and Good-bye, sweet-heart.'

'She wrote me the nicest kind of a letter, said she couldn't think of coming between me and my duty to my family; but she should always, etc. But it was Good-bye all right enough. I told you she was sensible,' he exclaimed.

Here Kate sniffed contemptuously. But even that failed to interrupt the even tenor of Mac's tale.

'So I went to work alone, and by George, how I did work! But I pulled through at last, as I knew I would; paid the mortgage, educated the children and provided for mother.' All this was delivered between the puffs of Mac's pipe in his usual quiet tone, without a trace of emotion on his thin face, and from first to last his amused smile did not vary.

He refilled his pipe and concluded, as if done with the subject, 'My folks have got out of the habit of thinking of me as a marrying man, and I reckon, as they say here, they're about right.'

'That was all right so long as there was the mortgage, the mother and the children to be considered, but now—' and Kate paused suggestively.

'But now,' said Mac, rising, 'I've no call to be dawdling here. Carter told me this morning that the twin levees were seeping badly. I've got to hold up all my water—if I make a crop so I came into the Magnolia saloon for something to sharpen up the shovels.'

He paused by one of the tables and took up a picture which lay there. It was a bright-faced girl with an air of spirited self-reliance.

'Now, that's a nice girl.' Mac answered after a moment's examination of the picture.

'She just is!' said Kate, emphatically. 'It's my sister, Nell. She's nice, but not nice and sensible,' like your stick of a girl.'

'Think not,' and Mac continued to give the picture the same careful scrutiny he was wont to bestow upon a seeping levee or a clogged pump.

'No indeed,' replied Kate, 'if there was hard work to be done, Nell would go at it with all the energy she devotes nowadays to having a good time.'

'Well, if you don't believe me, just go and see my sister Nell, Mr. John MacLaie,' said Kate with great dignity.

'That sounds alluring, but I'm too aged to run any risks. Before I do anything I must be assured of several things.'

Mac's eyes twinkled, but he spoke quite as if Kate were an agent for a new pump or a grading plow.

'What, for instance?' Fate's tone was crisp enough to have warmed Tom, but Mac went on calmly.

'Well,' he said meditatively, 'this—and again his gesture included the arrangement of the room—and the dinners you're always giving us, and the way you have of meeting Tom in a pretty gown when he comes in hot and tired. But I don't want to be too grasping. I wouldn't insist at first, anyway—on sitting with her in the dusk in a hammock, as I saw you and Tom doing the other night.'

'Wouldn't you?' asked Kate, with calm decision. Mac laid down the picture, rose and shook himself.

'Well, Carter'll be furious if I'm not back by supper time. Good-bye.'

He came back, however, out of the glaring sunlight to say: 'I fear I must insist upon another thing. I'm not proud, but there's a look about Tom's clothes that drives me to despair when I contemplate my own raiment.'

'I'll set up a clothes brush; it's much cheaper than—any other arrangement,' interrupted Kate.

Tom grunted an emphatic assent to this proposition and Mac finally mounted his pony and took his way across the hot prairie towards the distant timber line which marked the course of the Neze Pique.

This was in early June and the Nortons saw no more of him during the month. Carter, Mac's foreman, whom Tom saw in town, reported, 'Mr. John sho' gwine to beat hisself plumb out, do way he's gwine on. He's at dem air' pumps and levees early an' late. Say, if de hull rice flat air' flooded by de Foth' of July, de debil himself gwine to be pay.'

It was in the dusk of one of the first July days that Mac rode to their gate.

'Good-bye,' he called, without dismounting. They left the porch and came down the moonlighted walk for explanations—which he did not at once offer.

'What is that?' he asked at length, respectfully indicating with his whip the fleecy affair in which Kate had wrapped herself against the chill of the Gulf breeze.

'A shawl. Nell made it for me at Christmas,' she said, holding up a corner for his inspection.

'I've always thought of shawls as ugly, checked things,' Mac commented, and then abruptly, 'I'm going North to see—mother and the boys.'

There was a curious pause in this announcement, as if its ending had been reconsidered. Mac's usual quiet seemed reinforced to-night by an added constraint and after a little he rode away into the soft radiance of the Southern moonlight.

The latter part of the week Kate received her usual letter from her sister Nell. The week after there was none, nor the week after that. Her vexation was becoming serious solitude, when Tom brought her the following letter:

MY DEAR KATE: We've been so busy since Mr. McLaie came there hasn't been a moment to write letters. It was awfully nice of you to suggest his stopping off to see us. He talks to father by the hour about the country and to mother about you. He doesn't talk to me much, but watches me as if I were something unusual.

Father and mother seem to like him, but I don't—much. I'll write more next time. He's going to-morrow. Love to 'em. NELL.

P. S.—He's the strangest man I've ever seen. Yesterday I left him discussing to father on 'red rice,' and 'high air' pumps,' and all the rest of it, and took myself to the hammock under the old apple tree.

Presently he followed me with a plan of your house he'd drawn for a year. There wasn't any place to sit except in the hammock or on the grass, and you know how I loathe bugs and old worms; so I made room for him in the hammock. But before he sat down he leaned against the apple tree and laughed and laughed till I felt like a fool. He tried to make it up with me afterward by saying he remembered something you said to him once about swinging in a hammock. It must have been a very funny! I don't think I like him at all.

S. S.—Mr. M.—couldn't seem to remember any closets in your house. I asked him where you hid things. He said it must be on top of the armoire. What's an armoire?

Kate had barely time to catch her breath before Nell's promised letter came. It was as follows:

MY DEAR KATE: Mr. McLaie didn't go today after all, but he is really going to-morrow. And he is coming back in November. And we're going to be married then. Tom, don't you let Kate write to know how it all happened, for I don't know myself yet; my mother has always said some of us ought to go down there to help P. K. to company, and you know how self-sacrificing I have always been. I just told John I was writing to you. I'd give you my rice crop,' he said, 'to see Mrs. Kate's face when she reads your letter.' Good-bye. NELL.

P. S.—I think I do like him after all a little. —New Orleans Times-Democrat.

A Sure Sign. Little Dick—Papa, how does thunder, sour milk? Papa—It is not the thunder, but the electricity.

How does electricity sour milk? It works certain chemical changes in the constituents of the fluid, which result in the formation of an acid.

Of course. But how? I don't know. I thought you didn't, or you wouldn't use such big words.—Good News.

He Wanted to Know. Dulely—Miss Fannie, why do you stare at me so? Miss Fannie—My eyes are a little weak, and I read in a newspaper that it strengthens them to look steadily at some green thing.—Texas Siftings.

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