

The Commoner.

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The Strike Spreading.

At the hour of going to press the strike seems to be spreading. No one can say how serious it may become, but indications point to a prolonged contest between the steel trust and organized labor. Some who ought to sympathize with the employees profess to see nothing of importance at issue, but the fact is that the contest, while apparently over an abstract principle, it really involves the right of the laboring men to organize. It is undoubtedly the purpose of the trust to destroy labor organizations and the purpose will be relentlessly pursued if the time seems propitious. It is strange that any laboring man should fail to understand the nature of a private monopoly or give any support whatever to the enormous consolidation of capital which is now going on. It means death to the wage earner as well as the destruction of industrial independence. In a test of endurance between capital and labor capital has every advantage. Unless all the mills are completely unionized the trust can run the non-union shops and keep the union ones closed indefinitely. The trust can afford to lose a year's dividends if necessary but the employes can not afford to lose a year's work.

The strike is at present the laboring man's only protection but it is at present a costly and ineffective one. The ballot box affords the only permanent and complete remedy. If the laboring men would march to the polls and vote with the party that favors arbitration and opposes government by injunction and the black list, they would be able to protect their interests without a resort to strikes and lock-outs.

In the meantime, the strikers should be careful to avoid any resort to violence. Among a large number of men, especially when excited, there are apt to be those who would be willing to use force but the wiser ones should restrain these. The destruction of property or an attack on non-union men will alienate public sympathy and injure the course of organized labor. While the strike lasts let it be conducted within the law; when the strike is over let the men remember to vote the way they strike.



The Summer Vacation.

Those who are able to do so, have taken, or are taking, their annual summer vacation. The sea shore, the mountains and the lakes give rest and recuperation to those who can afford the luxury, while the Chautauquas scattered over the country furnish a more economical vacation and combine intellectual enjoyment with physical relaxation.

The first fact that presents itself to one

who visits a summer resort is that but a small proportion of the adults of the United States have either the leisure or the means to take an extended rest; the second is that those who work the hardest have, as a rule, the least time and money for a vacation. Considerably more than half of the men of the nation are engaged either in farming or in wage earning in the shops and factories, and their wives are occupied at home contributing by their work to the support of the family. It is needless to say that the summer resorts are not patronized as largely by the wealth producing classes as by the banking, manufacturing, trading speculating and professional classes. The republican farmers and laboring men who have been contributing from their scanty incomes to help the protected manufacturers, do not mingle with the beneficiaries of the tariff at the watering places. The possessor of visible property who is overburdened by taxation does not have a chance to take an outing with the possessor of invisible property who escapes taxation. The man who waters his cattle on the farm does not get an opportunity to make the acquaintance of the magnate who waters his railroad stock or his trust certificates. Those who hang about legislative halls and claim a portion of the nation's bounty on the plea that their industries could not live without it are conspicuous among the pleasure seekers, but the people who enjoy no special privileges at the hands of the government and are oppressed by the tribute collected for more favored ones are generally too busy trying to raise the money for the next assessment to seek the shade of the pines or the refreshing waves of the ocean.

Every unjust law, every measure of favoritism, every special privilege conferred upon the few at the expense of the many—all these have their influence in lengthening the hours of toil for the toiler and in shortening the hours of rest and respite. Life would be happier and the future brighter for the masses if rewards were proportioned to deserts and if the laws did not constantly tend to make "the rich richer and the potent more powerful."



The Silver Republicans.

The Silver Republican State Committee of Nebraska has held its last meeting. The following resolution explains the action taken:

"While we steadfastly adhere to the principles for the maintenance of which the 'silver republican party' was organized, and are proud of the record made by the candidates of our party, yet believing that those principles can, in the future, be best maintained by co-operation with the other organized reform forces, and deeming it unwise and inexpedient to longer continue our party organi-

zation in the state of Nebraska as such, therefore be it

"Resolved, That the organization of the 'silver republican party' in Nebraska be, and the same is hereby dissolved."

The Silver Republicans have made a manly and honorable fight for their principles. They left the Republican party when the money question was the paramount issue; they selected a name which distinguished them from the regular Republicans and they openly co-operated with the Democratic party. The Silver Republican organization did not resort to deception as the gold Democratic organization did, nor did the members of the silver Republican organization attempt to control the party they had left.

The time has come when these men feel that they can accomplish more through other organizations and they will as individuals act either with the Democrats or with the Populists, according as personal preference or local conditions may determine. They are honest and patriotic men and believe in the principles which have held the reform forces together. They left the Republican party because of their convictions and they will carry their convictions with them when they enter another party. They are intelligent men and will be valuable members of the organization to which they attach themselves. Such of them as choose to ally themselves with the Democratic party ought to receive a hearty welcome, for by leaving the Republican party to support the Democratic ticket they have shown themselves better Democrats than those who left the Democratic party to support the Republican ticket.



Why Not to Kruger?

On August 6th President McKinley sent to Emperor William of Germany a cablegram expressing regret because of the death of the Emperor's mother. Referring to this good woman, Mr. McKinley said: "Her noble qualities have endeared her memory to the American people in whose name and in mine, I tender to your Majesty heartfelt condolence."

It was proper that Mr. McKinley should express sympathy with the German Emperor because of his mother's death. But we are reminded that, although Mrs. Kruger, the wife of the President of the South African Republic, died more than thirty days ago, the President of the United States has not seen fit to tender his sympathy, or the sympathy of the American people, to the grief stricken President of a republic that is fighting for existence.

Let us ask ourselves seriously why this very apparent duty has been neglected.

It cannot be that Mr. McKinley feared to