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THE WAGeworker

WILL M. MAUPIN, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

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THE DUTY OF TRADES UNIONISM.

Trades unionism owes a duty to itself as well as a duty to the country at large, and that duty lies along the lines of a more thorough education of the rank and file of the membership. Nor is this education to be secured wholly from books or from contact with men. It is to be secured chiefly from experience and observation, and the trades unionist who refuses to profit by such an education is a detriment to his union, to the whole body of organized labor and to the country of which he is a citizen.

The first thing that the real trades unionist must learn if trades unionism is to live and succeed is that his rights as a man, a citizen and as a unionist end where the rights of another conflict. In other words every man's rights end where another man's rights begin. The warfare that trades unionism seeks to wage is not the warfare of carnal weapons, but the warfare that must be waged in the mind and the heart. The appeal is not to brute force, but an appeal to reason. There is, and has been, entirely too much resort to the club, and not enough reliance placed on peaceful persuasion. There are leaders in the labor movement, just as there are leaders in political parties, and just as there have been leaders in all great reforms. And these labor leaders owe a duty to organized labor which must be done. If there are among these leaders men who believe in violence, they must be reduced to the rear ranks, for violence never won a strike, never gained a lasting concession and never failed to do a great injury to the cause of organized labor. If conditions as they now exist seem to invite violence, let unionists remember that they are responsible for those conditions, for at any time during the last quarter of a century organized labor has had it in its power to make the conditions better.

The great trouble with organized labor—and The Wageworker says it in all frankness—is that it has been too selfish, too shortsighted and too careless of its opportunities. It has been too selfish in that it has sought to advance its own interests without giving proper thought to the larger interests of the whole country. It has been shortsighted in that it has not always looked ahead to see what effect its acts might have upon the whole country, and it has been too careless in that it has neglected the greater opportunities offered at the ballotbox. The fact that organized capital today wields such an enormous power is due to the other fact that trades unionists have been so intent on advancing their personal interests that they have lost sight of the larger interests of our common country. The power of organized capital—which is but another name for organized greed—is based wholly upon the neglect of the ballot, or the failure to properly use the ballot, by the trades unionists of America. Trades unionists are too prone to be deceived by the promise of a temporary gain in the immediate present, and not earnest enough to sacrifice the little gain of the present for the larger and permanent gain of the future. The great mistake of trades unionism is that it builds for today rather than for all time.

The remedy for existing conditions does lie in the strike or the boycott. It does not lie in the musket or the sword. It lies in the ballots of free, independent and thinking American citizens who vote their own honest convictions instead of the selfish convictions of the political bosses. The trades unionist who is a bigoted partisan is little less than a fool. He prates of his unionism and then votes with the men whose every aim is selfish and fraught with political dishonesty.

Trades unions must become centers of education along political lines. Not long partisan lines—God forbid! But the principles of government must be studied, trades unionists must educate themselves along broader lines, and the appeal of trades unionism must be made to the heart and not to the physical feelings. The trades unions should be the greatest schools of political and social economy in the country. They must become such if the trades union movement is to permanently succeed.

THE ALDERMANIC NOMINATIONS.

The republican aldermanic nominations have been made, and in due time the democrats will get together and name seven candidates. This thing of electing aldermen to serve for four years is a most important one, and it is up to the wage earners of the city to get busy and see to it that they are represented. The corporations have been well represented in the city council since the time when the memory of man runneth not to the contrary. But when were the real workers of the city represented? Until very recently it took less than twenty-four hours for a railroad to secure an ordinance vacating a street and giving it to the railroad company for a right-of-way. It took six weeks to get a simple little resolution through the council requiring public printing to be done in offices that paid fair wages.

If the wage earners of Lincoln are ever to have a public park worthy of the name they must elect officials who will do the business. The men who have bought real estate and grown rich by sitting still while it increased enormously in value by reason of the toil and sweat and enterprise of laboring men are not anxious to pay taxes to secure a park. They can afford to go to the mountains or the seashore. But the workingmen who have made the city what it is can stay at home and watch their wives and babies suffer from the heat. The wage earners of Lincoln have earned a park a thousand times over, but they will never get it if they wait for the big taxpayers to make the first move. Why not ascertain what aldermanic candidates are in favor of securing a city park and then join in electing those men regardless of their party affiliations? It is all tommyrot to say that members of the council should be experienced business men—any man of ordinary commonsense and honesty will make a good alderman if he will do the right thing by his constituents. And the business man is just as apt to go wrong as the wage earner. Indeed, it is safe to say that the records will show more councilmanic crooks recruited from the so-called "business interests"

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than ever were recruited from the ranks of wage earners. At any rate "business interests" have never hesitated to buy whatever they wanted and could buy from councils, either by cash down or promise of future political preferment.

Let the wage earners of the city—the men who have made everything for Lincoln and only a bare living for themselves—get together and elect aldermen who will make the city do something for the wage earners.

Timothy J. Mahoney has been making some speeches against labor unions and against the open shop. Mr. Mahoney is a lawyer and draws a good salary as attorney for the Omaha branch of the Parry association. In other words he is the "walking delegate" of the Parry crowd. The union that hires a business agent, or "walking delegate," is denounced fiercely and the "walking delegate" called a lazy grafter. But Mr. Mahoney is a lawyer and attorney for his union. According to the Parryites that makes a difference.

All the brutality shown during the Teamsters' strike in Chicago would not equal one day's brutality shown by the capitalists who own the Pennsylvania coal mines or the capitalists who profit from the New York sweatshops. Yet the organs of capitalism devote columns to the Chicago situation and never mention the situation in Pennsylvania and New York.

The capitalists who corner food products and starve thousands to death are called "financiers" and looked up to as great men. The union men who assault a "scab" and send him to the hospital are called "murderous thugs." Which is the worst, assaulting a "scab" in a fair fight or starving hundreds of babies to death?

Mr. Post boasts that he can afford to spend \$20,000 every now and then abusing the labor unions in the advertising columns. Of course he can. After a good woman helped him to make his money he managed to get rid of her without giving her the half she was entitled to.

Get into the union game with your brains and hearts as well as with your pay envelope.

Get together, reason together and act together.

Educate, investigate, agitate and arbitrate.

A lot of Christians who imagine that they could die for their religion haven't nerve enough to pray with a Salvation Army band on a street corner.

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