

THE TORONTO GATHERING WAS A WARMER

If I were asked what impressed me most during the Toronto convention of the American Federation of Labor I would answer: The great temperance mass meeting at Massey hall on Sunday afternoon. Rev. Charles Stelzle, who presided, and Mitchell, Lennon and Lewis, who delivered addresses, plainly stated that they were not prohibitionists, but their opposition to the licensed saloon was so emphatic as to be an eye-opener to those who may have imagined that the trades unions of the country are inclined to oppose the temperance wave. Five thousand people crowded the magnificent hall, and it was easy to see that it was an audience of wage earners. Every time one of the speakers took a rap at the licensed saloon the great audience cheered to the echo. As I sat there and listened to the speeches of John Mitchell, John B. Lennon and Tom Lewis, I thought to myself: "The American workman is beginning to study this great question from the standpoint of economics, and not wholly from the standpoint of 'personal liberty.'" Furthermore, it bore out what many of us in the labor movement have long asserted, that the trades unions of the country are doing more than any other agency to promote temperance, right living and civic righteousness. There is food for thought in the great temperance mass meeting of labor at Massey hall in Toronto during the week of the Federation convention.

Another thing that impressed me was the necessity of trimming a few Federation leaders down to their proper size, and of sending a few international officials back into the ranks until they again cultivated some sympathy for the rank and file. It is possible to keep a man in office on a fat salary for such a long time that he loses touch with the men he is supposed to represent. Far be it from me to act as a censor of another man's habits, but a distinct regard for the truth impels me to make the statement that I am almighty tired of seeing some big international officers spending the money of hard working mechanics and trying to lap up all the booze there is in sight. It is not my place to mention any names, but the carpenters ought to be sitting up and taking notice. At another time I may think it necessary to call the attention of another union or two to some facts. Do not understand from this that boozing was prevalent at the convention. Far from it. But a few "big guns" in the labor movement seem to have conceived the idea that their chief duty was to dispose of the entire visible supply. But there was far less drinking at the Toronto convention than one usually sees among a similar number of delegates attending a republican or democratic state convention in Omaha, or in Lincoln before the saloons closed.

One other thing was borne in upon my mind—the necessity of convincing a few "big guns" that they are not the entire labor movement. There is James Duncan, for instance. James is a big man, all right, all right; but I believe the American Federation of Labor would survive his sudden taking off. Pompous to a great degree, positive to the point of bullheadedness, and quite sure that unless the mantle of Gompers falls upon his shoulders the American labor movement will go to the demerol bow-wow, James Duncan rather gets upon the nerves of the mere men whose only duty is to pay the per capita tax and perform the menial duties around the barracks. When Duncan took it upon himself to try and tell the labor editors how they should organize, and who should be admitted to membership, he bit off considerably more than his jaws will ever be able to masticate. However, Duncan is afraid of one man, and that man is James M. Lynch. Duncan realizes that if ever he comes up for the presidency of the Federation Jim Lynch is the man he will have to beat, and it is great sport to see him jockeying for advantage. When the struggle comes I'll put my money on Lynch. I've had my differences with the president of my own international, but I'll cheerfully admit that for brains, organizing ability and readiness in debate—to say nothing of his skill as a parliamentarian—there is not a man in the American labor movement who has anything on "Jim" Lynch. Duncan knows this, and Duncan is scared.

John B. Lennon is one of the strong men in the movement. He has been treasurer of the Federation for two decades and is president of the Tailors' International Union. He was chairman of the laws committee, which heard the electrical workers' controversy, and after it was all over the protestants would have been willing to accept him as the third arbiter. Lennon was positive, but he was as fair as a human could be, and he was always courteous itself. Two or three national organizers on the committee were disposed to throw us all over the transom without giving us even a look-in, but Lennon wouldn't stand for it. The more I see of some national organizers of the American Federation of Labor the less I wonder at the lack of results from all the money we expend in organization. I'll take off my hat to John B. Lennon any day in the week.

The so-called Reid faction of the electrical workers have every reason to feel grateful to the Ohio and Iowa state federations of labor and to the stiff-spined central bodies that refused to be bulldozed into throwing out the Reid locals' delegates. If Secretary Morrison had not taken the bit in his teeth and revoked a lot of charters the Reid faction would have stood about as much chance of a hearing at Toronto as a tallow-legged cat chasing an asbestos rat through Hades. The machine had it all framed up to utterly ignore the Reid-Murphy faction and give the McNulty-Collins crowd everything in the way of recognition. This would have been carried out to a finish if the appeals and protests of the two state federations and of the abolished central bodies had not piled up with such ferocity that it was soon apparent that something had to be done to heal the breach. It didn't take Chairman Lennon of the laws committee long to see that the only way to make any progress whatever was to start from the beginning—which meant taking up the electricians' squabble. And that gave the Reid-Murphy faction their opportunity. When it came to the argument and the proof the Reid-Murphy faction had all the best of it. This statement is borne out by the fact that a convention which wasn't going to give the Reid-Murphy faction a pleasant look unanimously adopted a report that was a compromise dating back to the Denver convention and giving both factions another opportunity to get together. And Reid and Murphy smilingly declare that the convention plan suits them from the ground up.

Secretary Morrison has some peculiar ideas about the workings of the constitution. He holds that the constitution works "automatically" when the executive council profits, and that it

SOME GOSSIP ABOUT LABOR'S BIG GATHERING UNDER THE RED CROSS OF ST. GEORGE.

doesn't work at all when its working would be against the council. This may be a broad statement, and you may deem it necessary to have some proof to back it up. Well, here it is: Morrison held that according to the constitution any city central body admitting delegates from a Reid local automatically lost its charter. This on the constitutional ground that city centrals were debarred from admitting delegates from "dual or seceding bodies," and the Reid locals were so classed. All well and good so far. But that same constitution provides (1) that all affiliated internationals must pay their per capita to the Federation before the fifteenth of the month, and (2) that when an international was three months behind in its per capita its charter of affiliation was revoked and could only be reinstated by a vote of the convention. On February 24, 1909, the McNulty-Collins faction of the electrical workers paid the per capita tax for October, 1908, thus under the most liberal interpretation of the constitution being nine days behind and therefore without a charter. But the McNulty-Collins faction had been recognized by the executive council, therefore the constitution which worked "automatically" against the Ohio and Iowa state federations, and some thirty or forty city central bodies, failed to work the same way against the McNulty-Collins faction of the electrical workers. Secretary Morrison's only explanation is that the McNulty-Collins faction's money was tied up in litigation. But that don't go down with those who know the facts. If the McNulty-Collins faction has a majority doesn't it stand to reason that it would have as much money as the Reid-Murphy faction? And the Reid-Murphy faction has more money today than the entire brotherhood ever had before the split; it has paid every sick and death benefit and financed the best campaign of organization in recent years. During this time the McNulty-Collins faction has failed to give a waiting world any evidences of having paid sick and death benefits or doing any organization work. Secretary Morrison will have to come across with a better explanation of why the constitution doesn't work automatically in the reverse motion.

But it was, after all, amusing, to see the way the Reid-Murphy representatives everlastingly put the boots to the McNulty-Collins faction in the argument before the laws committee. It is only justice, however, to Peter W. Collins to say that he made a game fight against tremendous odds. Collins is a brainy man. There is no discounting that statement. But he clearly demonstrated that he was about all the brains his side possesses. McNulty was a mere "me too" appendage who relied on Collins and M. Grant Hamilton. There may be electrical workers who can give some explanation of how a McNulty was ever elected president of their

NEBRASKA STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR---CONVENTION CALL

Lincoln, Nebraska, November 24, 1909.—In accordance with the constitutional provision I hereby call the Nebraska Federation of Labor to meet in annual convention in the city of South Omaha, on January 4, 1910. The representation in the convention is as follows:

Each trades council or central body is entitled to one delegate, and each local union is entitled to one delegate for each 100 members or fraction thereof. Proxies are not allowed. The Farmers' Union, ministerial associations and auxiliaries composed of the wives, mothers, daughters and sisters of members of affiliated crafts are entitled to one fraternal delegate each. No delegate will be entitled to a seat in the convention with voice and vote unless the union of his or her craft is affiliated with the Nebraska Federation of Labor and all financial obligations of such local union to this Federation liquidated.

There is every reason why the organized workers of Nebraska should rally to make the Nebraska Federation of Labor a powerful influence in the social, economic and industrial life of the commonwealth. Nebraska's rapidly growing manufacturing industries render it imperative that better laws be enacted for the proper safeguarding of life and limb, and unless the workers themselves take the matter in hand there is little likelihood of results being accomplished. At this time I take occasion to point out some legislation calculated to benefit not only the workers and their families, but to benefit the entire commonwealth:

The enactment of a law providing for the establishment of a state board of arbitration and conciliation.

The establishment of a state printing plant to the end that the state may, in time, supply school text books, state supplies, etc.

A revision of the labor laws now upon the statute books.

A further extension of the employers' liability law.

The abolition of the convict labor contract and lease system whereby the labor of convicts is put into competition with free labor.

The better equipment of the Bureau of Labor and Industrial Statistics to the end that the Bureau may not only advertise to better advantage the resources of Nebraska, but may be of greater service to the vast and rapidly growing army of women and men engaged in industrial pursuits.

These are but a few of the important matters that organized labor should carefully consider and use the utmost efforts to forward. The importance of organization among the different crafts is well emphasized by the results that have accrued to individual craftsmen from organizations of their respective crafts. Until such time as the craftsmen of the state shall have perfected a thorough organization they can have little hope of securing legislation calculated to benefit them. In addition to securing this beneficial legislation along industrial lines, a thorough organization of the workers will forward the movement for the eradication of tuberculosis and the improvement of the sanitary conditions amidst which thousands work and live.

I earnestly urge all organizations of workmen to affiliate with the Nebraska Federation of Labor and be represented at the convention in South Omaha on January 4, 1910.

In due time the secretary, Frank P. Hart, will send out information as to hotel rates, place of meetings, etc. The election of delegates should be reported to him, 824 North Twelfth street, South Omaha.

Fraternally,
WILL M. MAUPIN,
President Nebraska Federation of Labor.

brotherhood, and all I have to say is that if there be such I'd like to hear the explanation.

In brief the result of the electrical workers' squabble was this: Everything was to date back to the Denver agreement. Each side was to select a member of the board of arbitrators, President Gompers to select the third. These three are to meet the representative of the warring factions and try to effect an agreement. Failing this a convention is to be held before September 1, 1910, and both sides must abide by its action. Only locals now in existence may be represented at the convention. The Reid-Murphy faction selected A. L. Urick, president of the Iowa State Federation, as its arbiter. The McNulty-Collins faction selected Frank Duffy, secretary of the International Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners. President Gompers selected a man whose name is Fry, if I am not mistaken. Who he is I do not know. Anyhow, he didn't select M. Grant Hamilton. I like Grant immensely, personally, but as an arbiter he doesn't impress me very favorably. Reid and McNulty both pledged themselves and their followers to faithfully carry out the terms of the agreement.

Now doesn't that sound good, especially after being told that the Reid faction would be accorded even common courtesy?

As usual the bogey of "socialism" was sprung at every opportunity. The minute something was proposed that didn't suit the executive council, a lot of fellows would immediately begin telling us that the "socialists are behind this—for God's sake don't let them disrupt the labor movement!" I heard that sort of thing until my democratic eardrums fairly ached. Of course it was declared from the usual toadying quarters that the whole Reid-Murphy faction was nothing more or less than a socialistic movement to bust up the American Federation of Labor. The funny part of it is that a lot of men making the charge actually believe it, and a lot of fellows who otherwise appear to be fairly bright actually swallowed it. It is getting so easy, you know, to holler "socialist" at the fellow who has the temerity to think for himself now and then. But it does not make any stronger friends for the machine. Quite the contrary.

Outside of the electrical workers' scrap there was little of interest at the convention. Peace was patched up between the carpenters and the woodworkers; between the machinists and elevator constructors, and between the warring factions of the car workers. Of course President Gompers was re-elected unanimously. Nothing else was thought of. Any man who suggested a change under present conditions would have been boiled in oil in front of convention hall. Morrison, Mitchell and the whole push were also re-elected.

When the committee on boycott reported John Mitchell took the floor and made a speech that set the convention wild. It was a speech calculated to add about seven hundred years to Mitchell's sentence, for he hurled defiance at the court that has tried to deprive him of his constitutional rights. Mitchell was not excited, either. He spoke calmly and deliberately; he chose his words with care. And that is what made the speech so telling.

The Toronto papers gave the convention scant notice, but the Associated Press, the United Press and the Hearst service had special representatives there, and as a result the convention was the best covered in the Federation's history.

The printers proudly claim having the most delegates on the floor. There were thirty-eight bearing credentials, four from the International Typographical Union, one organizer and thirty-three from city central bodies. Thirteen labor editors, all printers, met and organized the International Labor Press. The purpose of the organization is to more thoroughly cover the business field, and to secure something more than nice resolutions of endorsement for the labor press. Charles W. Fear of the Joplin, Mo., Trades Unionist, was elected president, and your humble servant was elected secretary-treasurer. This organization purposes cutting some more ice in the future.

The executive council, the international officers and the general organizers all stopped at the Prince George hotel—\$6 a day. The rest of us stopped at the Grand Union, Walker and Daly hotels—\$2 a day.

Egan of the Toledo Union Leader was unceremoniously bounced from the convention, but he became almighty pestiferous around the edges.

Sam DeNedry was on hand with his sledgehammer. Sam has it in for the "highbrows" and "face cards" and don't care who knows it. He also has a quiet laugh all to himself every time he thinks of President Kidd of Columbia Typographical Union, Washington, D. C. It isn't that way with Kidd, however.

Agnes Nestor, secretary of the International Gloveworkers' Union was chairman of the committee on labels. After she had reported all the usual resolutions about demanding the label she sarcastically remarked that if the convention delegates and those they represented acted out one-half the recommendations it would keep 'em all busy. And the convention laughed.

For a man who delivers the goods without making any fuss or assuming to know very much, commend us to John Mangan, who represented the steamfitters and gives Chicago as his residence. Mangan can say more in fewer words than the average labor leader.

Ike Hornbrook, who represented the Evansville, Ind., central body, is a teamster and is on an ice wagon. It was a joy to be in his company for his good nature fairly radiates. Hornbrook weighs about 275 pounds, and it is all good union meat, too.

The veteran of the whole bunch of labor editors, Joseph Buchanan, was there as the representative of the Hearst syndicate. "Buck" was sacrificing everything for the labor movement when a lot of us middle-aged labor editors were in knickerbockers. What he hasn't learned about the labor editor game isn't worth wasting time on.

Nebraska had three delegates on the floor—Theodore McCullough, who is one of the four delegates of the International Typographical Union and managing editor of the Omaha Bee; Louis V. Guye, who represented the Nebraska Federation of Labor, and the writer, who tried to represent the Lincoln Central Labor Union. The Omaha central body did not send a delegate.

About all the comment we care to make on the Toronto brand of November weather is that it is fully as bad as the Toronto brand of coffee.

MAUPIN.