

The Messenger.

"EQUAL RIGHTS TO ALL; SPECIAL PRIVILEGES TO NONE."

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OFFICIAL ORGAN OF NORTH CAROLINA KNIGHTS OF LABOR.

LABOR'S CHIVALRY.

BY GERALD MASSEY.

Uprouse ye now, brave brother band,
With honest heart and working hand;
We are but few, toil-tried and true,
Yet hearts beat high to dare and do;
And who would not a champion be,
In labor's lordlier Chivalry?

We fight! but bear no bloody brand,
We fight to free our Fatherland;
We fight that smiles of love may glow,
On lips where curses quiver now!
Hurrah! Hurrah! true Knights are we
In labor's lordlier Chivalry.

Oh! there be hearts that ache to see
The day dawn of our victory;
Eyes full of heartbreak with us plead,
And watchers weep and martyrs bleed;
Oh who would not a champion be
In labor's lordlier Chivalry?

Work, brothers mine; work hand and
brain;
We'll win the Golden Age again;
And Love's millennial morn shall rise
In happy hearts and blessed eyes.
Hurrah! Hurrah! true Knights are we
In labor's lordlier Chivalry.

WINSTON, N. C., August 29th 1888.
—MR. EDITOR: I am glad you organized the U. L. P. at Raleigh on the 14, I was ready and anxious to go, but owing to sickness I could not leave home. I regret very much not being there. I shall now start organizing Union Labor clubs.

If you need me on the committee or anything else command me, I am willing to work anywhere. The farmers are awakening up in my neighborhood. They will never again be driven to the polls under the party lash as they have in the past.

Request all friends of the U. L. P. to put on the harness and push the work of organizing U. L. Clubs and report to you so you can publish them.

I have spoken to some Alliance men and they all say we ought to organize at once. Please let us know soon who the committee are.

I will accept and be organizer for Forsyth county provided you can't get a better man.

Fraternally Yours
S. A. H.

WILMINGTON, N. C., Sept 2d 1888.
—MR. EDITOR: I hope you will allow me space in your paper to say that I am glad to see the names of Streeter and Cunningham at your masthead, nominees for President and Vice President of the Union Labor party. If every workingman is of the same mind as I they would take their seats in Washington next March. Mr. Editor, I can't see why it is that workingmen can vote for either of the old parties. Both are oppressors of labor of all kinds. As to my part I can't see any difference in them, they are both friends to the workingman just before the election, and if every man had the same opinion as I have these old fossils would stay where they belong—at home. I want to see this country governed by machinists farmers and workingmen, they know each others wants and would not sit in Congress and growl over tariff when there are issues a great deal more important and when anything was done it would be in the interest of Labor and not Bankers, R. Rs., Monopolists, Bondholders, Tracts, Rich manufacturers, &c. O! God deliver the people from such oppression.

Yours Fraternally
K.

WHAT IS CO-OPERATION?

Newspapers published in the interest of the labor element make frequent reference to the benefits of co-operation, but, so far as we have noticed, none of these journals consider it worth while to tell us or make us understand what they mean by co-operation. True, if we hunt up the word in the dictionary, we learn that it means "concurrent effort," or "joint operation." This conveys only a crude or imperfect notion of the sense in which the word is most frequently used by the labor papers. They use it in the sense of organized and special effort by some order or society in some certain business from which it is hoped profits will result; some enterprise mutually owned or controlled by the members, who appoint officers, managers, clerks, etc., from their own ranks, and who are themselves also customers of the concern.

It may be termed co-operation for two mules to pull together in the same wagon. So it is for a thousand convicts to hammer on the same rock-pile. It is co-operation for land sharks and Congressmen to go divvy in a land-steal, or for one crackman to blow the safe while his pal runs away with the swag. But the efforts of our labor reformers and our co-operation agitators toward something entirely different from and to something above all other senses in which this much-abused word has been frequently used.

The existence of robbing and thieving associations, big and little, from time immemorial, and in every avenue of life, made it necessary for honest people to combine, organize and co-operate for mutual protection. Such a plan was necessary in order that civil people might be able to concentrate in one place enough power to repel the onslaught of the robber power. Thus it was that tribes and afterward governments were established. Self-protection is the first law of nature, and the protection of one's family, property and friends is only a part of the same law. The principle is, in the first place, a God-given right, and education, experience and civilization only confirm the law and cause people to seek out new methods of enforcing its supremacy. Even the brute creation has this instinct. A herd of buffaloes attacked by wolves, will present a line of horns and hoofs toward the common foe, while the females and young ones seek to escape. When a martin box is beset by a flock of blue-birds, who propose to capture the little home, the martins do not go out one at a time to be killed in detail, but all at once they assail the more valiant leaders of the blue robbers, whip them, and thus preserve their home, their nests and their little ones. The contest between scoundrels and honest men has not, however, resulted in victory for the latter. In the efforts of civil and honest people to build homes, live honorably and save something, they have been outstripped by the ingenuity of the robber element. Skill, industry, honesty, economy and patience weigh as nothing when put in the balance against corrupt laws, watered stock, shrewd rascality, combined brain-power and aggregated money. Our advantages of fine climate, prolific soil, free schools and model government must all go down before the syndicate, the trust, the combine and the robber power, whose name is legion.

The valor of our armies and the ex-

penditure of millions of lives and billions of money freed the black slaves, 'tis true, but where will we find the treasury to liberate 60,000,000 white slaves from mortgages, extortion, overwork, ignorance and poverty? Some tell us to look for relief in co-operation, but they do not tell us how to co-operate. We know that we must combine or co-operate, or the robber power will take all. The shysters, the mortgage fiends, the the corporations and rings all know how to combine, but the laboring, honest people are going as they please and doing as best they can.

The distinctive feature, or one of the distinctive features, of co-operation is that each workman being a participator in the profits, he will from self-interest work harder and practice more economy in the business than he would for wages only. It is presumed that in numbers there is strength; that numbers bring increased influence and patronage; that risks are distributed; that losses, if any, would be more easily borne; that capital aggregated can be more economically handled than if disseminated.

These and very many other advantages are claimed for properly-managed co-operation. It is almost invariably to enterprises of this kind that the labor press refers when it uses the word co-operation, and, as a rule, it refers to those societies composed exclusively of members of the secret order with which the paper is identified, as the Knights of Labor, Farmers Alliance, Grange, etc. What we all want to know, for instance, is the details for getting up, organizing and maintaining a co-operative society of, say, forty to eighty members (or families) in a small community for the purpose of running a store, factory, mill, or some such affair whereby the members could trade with their own house, getting a good quality of goods at market rates. It must be on a small scale, with small shares, and run with few attendants and few expenses. Managers, clerks and laborers must be members or shareholders. The funds of the concern must be secure beyond all question. The honesty and capability of the men in charge must rest upon something more solid than the fact that they are good, clever fellows. There should be a small but promptly-paid dividend, say, yearly; and a sinking fund or reserve to increase business, guard against fire, dull seasons, panics, etc.

Let well-informed or well-experienced persons tell us what they know about this sort of co-operation.—Charles E. Barroll in *Journal of United Labor*.

When we are making magnificent preparations to protect American labor from foreign pauper labor, would it not be well to devote a little time to the protecting ourselves from the monopolists at home, institutions that know more in a minute about skinning people than any foreign country knows in a year.—T. V. Powderly.

The Semi-annual statement of the Mutual benefit association, made up entirely of the employes of the Michigan Stove Company of Detroit, Mich., indicates an enviable condition of prosperity. The association was organized in 1882 and has paid nearly \$10,000 in benefits. The organization now embodies 255 members.

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