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THE FEDERATION OF LABOR CONVENTION.

By the Rev. Charles Stelze.

Under the shadow of the "injunction contempt" proceedings in Washington, the American Federation of Labor held its annual meeting in Denver, during the middle of November. It was a great convention, every way. Great in its personnel, great in the speeches that were made, great in the manner in which its business was transacted, and great in the subjects which were handled by the nearly four hundred delegates who attended the convention. The Federation has grown in membership and its financial strength. It is constantly developing its importance as a factor in the industrial democracy for the securing of which it is making such splendid efforts.

There was a strong undercurrent of sentiment which was easily aroused by the speeches which had in them an appeal to the moral and ethical ideals of labor. The general tendency was toward a more scientific handling of labor's affairs, especially in the better grouping of crafts. This was manifested by the formation of the Building Trades and the Metal Trades Departments, and in the probable inauguration of a department for the crafts engaged in the railroad industries. Such organizations should very materially reduce the jurisdictional strife which has consumed so much of the Federation's time in former years, and which has been a constant source of hindrance in the making of satisfactory contracts with employers.

The political program of the Federation was pretty thoroughly gone into. Despite the prophecies of the daily press, Samuel Gompers and the Executive Council were heartily applauded for their efforts in the last campaign. Indeed, there wasn't a suggestion of criticism from the convention with reference to their action. Mr. Gompers is more firmly entrenched than ever in the hearts and hopes of the Federation. It is quite apparent that he knows labor as no other man does, not only collectively, but as individuals.

The legislation of the convention looking toward better things for labor was put through with enthusiasm. The keenness of perception and the grasping of the really big things presented would have done credit to any kind of an organization. Surely no association of employers has a broader vision than had these delegates who represented the men of labor at their annual gathering.

AN ANECDOTE OF MOTHER JONES

"Mother Jones" is full of interesting anecdotes, says the Erie Union Labor Journal, which if put into print would make capital reading for all people interested in the labor struggles of the times.

It will be remembered that Mother Jones was arrested in West Virginia by order of Judge Jackson, of the Federal Court, for violating the injunctions issued by him during the miners' strike, in which he attempted to restrain Mother Jones and her associates from feeding striking miners.

The good little friend of the miners very naturally violated the injunctive order, and was very promptly notified of her arrest by the United States Marshal. The warrant was served while she was delivering an address. After reading the document she retorted in her characteristic manner: "Go and tell your judge that he is the worst scab I know of. He scabbed on his father."

During the trial one of the mine owners' attorneys asked the good woman if she had not said that Judge Jackson was a scab. Before Mother Jones could reply, the aged jurist turned in his chair, and facing the prisoner asked with firmness what she meant by such a charge.

Mother Jones, not to be outdone, proved equal to the occasion.

"Well, you see, judge," she began, "it was the first thought that came to me when the warrant was served, and I had to let it out. It didn't occur to me in forty years. But away back in the sixties I read in one of the Philadelphia papers that President Lincoln had appointed a lawyer by the name of Jackson on the Federal bench of West Virginia. I also remember the stir about the appointment, for the papers declared that the initials of yourself and your father were the same, and the commission failed to state whether the appointment was for Jackson, Sr., or Jackson, Jr. It was also stated that your father was out of the country temporarily, and you took the job. It was discovered later that the appointment was intended for your father. That is what I meant when I said, 'You had scabbed on your father.'"

This reply caused a general laugh in the court room in which the venerable judge participated most heartily.

When the trial was over and Mother Jones was acquitted, Judge Jackson sent for her, and in his typical Southern style greeted the old lady with, "Judge Jackson wishes to pay his compliments to Mother Jones, and that he did not scab on his father."

"I am glad of it," replied Mother Jones, "for it is pleasing to learn that I was not tried by a scab judge."

Teacher (to dull boy of the class)—Which New England state has two capitals?
Boy—New Hampshire.
Teacher—Indeed! Name them.
Boy—Capital N and capital H.

THE "INDEPENDENT" WORKMAN.

The workman who says he will not join a labor union because he wants to be independent and do as he pleases has not yet learned to think very deeply on the things that affect him economically. He simply echoes the voice of the selfish employer.

Independence is a precious term to the true American. But he does not always understand what it means.

A man is truly independent when he stands for that which is best for himself, his family and his country. The man who asserts his independence in getting drunk and making a beast of himself, a menace to his family and a nuisance to society, is not a high class of independent citizen.

The workman who asserts his independence in working for any wage his employer may elect and submitting to the conditions he may impose, cannot claim the enjoyment of a superior quality of independence.

Is it possible for the workman to do as he pleases? How far can he go in that direction?

Let him start tomorrow morning with the idea that he is going to do as he pleases and attempt to put it into effect. Let him please to get a raise of wages and a shortening of hours. If he is getting three dollars a day, let him please to get four. Will he get what he pleases?

Is the workman surrendering his independence by joining a union? No. He is insuring his independence. He is strengthening his independence, for "in union there is strength." As a union member he has a voice in everything that affects his job. Does the employer accord him a voice and vote in the adjustment of relationship between them? He has nothing to say. He must simply submit. He must do as the employer pleases.

What would be the degree of independence enjoyed by the American workers if the unions were not in existence? How many instances is it possible to find wherein employers improved conditions of labor without the intervention of union influences? Why do employers oppose unions? Because they make employees more independent, more manly, more American.

Be not deceived, workmen. When you are advised to adhere to the kind of independence advocated by selfish employers, be assured that the curtailment of your independence is contemplated.—Citizen.

WHY EVERY WORKINGMAN SHOULD BE A UNIONIST.

This question is answered in a forcible manner by W. P. Hicks of North Carolina, State organizer for the Amalgamated Woodworkers.

First—Because I propose to protest against any man or set of men stealing my right to health, home and happiness.

Second—Because I want plenty of good food in my craw along with the sand that is there, and I want to see my fellowman have the same blessing.

Third—Because I am not afraid to line up with my fellow workers and make an honest demand for that which is our heritage.

Fourth—Because I am opposed to filth and ignorance, and in favor of health and knowledge.

Fifth—Because I think more of an honest heart under a ragged shirt than I do of a block-headed individual with a bank account.

Sixth—Because a union man is never disrespected by anyone except a lot of red-eyed, money-grabbing individuals with more money than kindness.

Seventh—Because when I pay my dues into the union I feel that I am stirring some thickening into a bowl of soup for some poor, hungry, half-clad woman or child.

Eighth—Because I had rather be unpopular with a lot of double-chinned dough-heads than to show the white feather to my fellow workmen.

Ninth—Because I believe it is better to give than to receive and by being a union man I am giving my money and influence to those who deserve and should receive it.

Tenth—Because I am in favor of more bread and less brutishness; more pie and less punk; more homes and less shacks and less cowards and criminals; more health and happiness and less hell and hellishness; more honest women neatly dressed and less foolish women over-dressed; more live, loving husbands and fewer dirty, drunken drones.—Journeyman Barber.

BOSTON'S GREAT COTTON MILL.

Boston, November 30.—Eugene M. Foss announces that work is to be begun immediately on the construction of a \$5,000,000 mill in East Boston. For more than a year this project has been held in abeyance because of the business stagnation.

It is expected this factory will make Boston a textile center, competing for trade with Lawrence, Lowell, New Bedford and Manchester. Its 250,000 spindles and 7,500 looms will be operated by 8,000 workers. The mills, weave sheds and power station will cover sixty-five acres of land fronting on the Chelsea river. The land has already been purchased.

"I'm a great believer in spinning cotton on this side of the Atlantic, and I desire to see Boston made a great textile center," Mr. Foss says.

"We have paid too much attention to exporting raw cotton to England, where our finest textiles come from, and not enough to producing high grade manufactured products.

"We shall start building just as soon as the weather permits, possibly by the first of the year."

HANDING IT TO DOUGLASS.

The Big Shoe Manufacturer is "Getting His" for His Desertion of Organized Labor.

Labour papers all over the country are "taking a fall" out of the W. L. Douglas Shoe Company, which recently deserted organized labor and is now running a non-union shop. Douglas found it expedient and profitable for many years to run a union shop. He built up an enormous trade all over the United States and organized labor helped him to do it. His shoes are sold and worn everywhere and the enormous sale his goods achieved is largely attributable to the friendliness of organized labor and the unionists who were his patrons. Recently he demanded concessions which the shoe workers could not consistently give and in consequence he broke with the union. He is evidently of the opinion that his business being now firmly established he need not bother any longer with unions or union labels. Time will tell the correctness of his opinion. The Rochester Journal in its last issue handed Mr. Douglas the following lemon, which is only a fair sample of those dealt out to him by the labor press throughout the country:

"Only a few years ago W. L. Douglas was elected Governor of Massachusetts on the Democratic ticket. It was universally recognized that it was the labor vote that elected him, and the labor vote was thrown to him in accordance with the Gompers policy of 'rewarding friends,' because Douglas ran a union shoe factory. Having got political preferment at the workingman's hands, and having also got his goods widely advertised and got workmen all over the country into the habit of buying Douglas shoes, this Democratic capitalist, politician and 'friend of labor' has now broken with the union and is running an 'unfair' shop.

"This is exactly the measure of gratitude that the workingmen may reasonably expect from capitalists to whom they give their political support, just the measure of 'friendship' they may look for at the hands of members of the employing class. Douglas as governor did nothing for the working people; as employer he has done just so much as the shoe workers compelled him to do by the method of labor unionism, and has finally broken with them because he thinks he can now get along very well without their good will.

"Douglas is no worse than the average capitalist. 'Business is business' is his motto, on the political as well as the economic field."

A MISTAKE CORRECTED.

A gentleman residing on an island near Gasport many years ago, who was an ardent admirer of the fashion of the time and generation, and not wishing to be outside of the prevailing style of dress, ordered his tailor to call at his residence one morning and measure him for a pair of leather breeches. He lived with a granddaughter and she had ordered the shoemaker to call and measure her for a pair of shoes.

Promptly in response to the summons the tailor called, but it so happened when the call was made, the young lady was seated in her breakfast room, and the maker of the leather breeches was shown in. As she did not happen to know one handicraftsman from another she at once intimated that she wished him to measure her for a pair of "leathers," for, as she remarked the wet weather was coming on and she felt cold in cloth. The modest tailor could hardly believe his ears.

"Measure you, miss?" said he, with hesitation.

"If you please," said the young lady, who was remarkable for much gravity of deportment, "and I have only to beg that you will give me plenty of room, for I am a great walker, and I do not like to wear anything that constrains me."

"But, miss," exclaimed the poor fellow in great perplexity, "I never in my life measured a lady; I—" and there he paused.

"Are you not a ladies' shoemaker?" was the query calmly put to him.

"By no means, miss," said he, "I am a leather breeches maker, and I have come to take a measure, not of you, but of the gentleman who sent for me."

The young lady became perplexed, too, and recovering her self-possession, gave a hearty laugh, and referred her visitor to grandpa.

THE UNFAIR EMPLOYER.

How He Disturbs Conditions and Hurts Business—The Living Wage is the Basis of Prosperity.

The unfair employer—the man to whom no obligation is sacred and is ever on the alert to take advantage of his business rival and his employees—is a curse and a detriment to any community. If all employers were fair and would act on the square there would be few strikes or lock-outs. Under our present system of production the man who invests his capital in a legitimate business has a right to expect a reasonable profit. While we may not approve of the system and while we may agitate to replace it by a better one, we must yet realize that in the business world we must take things as they are. The wage earner has a right to expect a fair or living wage, and the employer has a right to expect a fair or safe return on his investment. There is no room for sentiment in

business either for the employer or the employee. The contractor, manufacturer or business man has to meet the competition of keen rivals; he has to take risks, and sometimes he fails and not only loses his business, but his invested capital. The first requirement of the business world is to transact business on a safe and equitable basis. It is the dishonest methods of the unscrupulous and unfair employer that is the greatest menace to commercial stability and progress. Let the fact be recognized that the worker is entitled to a living wage and the standard be set by committees representing both capital and labor, and let the employers agree to be fair in their competition and not cut below the standard scale of wages and business would be on an improved basis immediately.

The unfair employer seeks to gain an advantage over the fair employer by cutting wages and working his men a greater number of hours, thereby disarranging trade conditions. Thus, in the competition for work, employers are forced to figure contracts to the lowest possible cent to meet the unscrupulous competition. Merchants will sign an agreement to close on say Wednesday afternoon. Upon the dishonest and covetous will take advantage and slyly open to scoop in a little trade, with the result that ultimately every store in town will open and nobody any better off. The unfair employer is responsible for the system of poor workmanship. People want things cheap and give the preference, as a rule, to the lowest tenderer. The man who works his help long hours, who pays a low rate of wages and does inferior work can tender at a lower figure than the man who tenders on the square, who pays good wages and does an honest job. The result is not hard to perceive. Ultimately every tender is on the basis of a rush job. The man who puts in an honest tender is out of the race, while his competitor, who is ready to throw his work together, lands the prize. There we have a fruitful cause of strikes. To meet this unscrupulous competition the fair employer feels obliged to reduce wages, and is likewise compelled to lower the quality of his work.

Let us suppose for a moment that we carry this system to its logical conclusion. Suppose that every shop is an open shop, with the lowest standard of wages and the worst possible conditions, what advantage has the employer gained? When it is no longer possible to reduce wages, and in this respect we all are on a common level, when profits have been cut to the vanishing point, business is bound to suffer. The workers who do not receive a living wage will be poor customers of the merchant who will have to do business on a low wage standard. The prosperity of the merchant and the community depends upon the standard of wages paid. The man who only earns \$1 a day is only third as valuable to the community as the man who earns three dollars a day. The merchant knows by experience that \$3 mechanics are infinitely better spenders than the dollar laborer. Well paid workmen are the real backbone of a community, and it is the amount of money in circulation paid out as wages that gauges the prosperity of a town or city. Thus we see that the tactics of the dishonest and unfair employer not only works to the detriment of the wage earner, but disarranges business conditions and helps to bring on and perpetuate hard times. If employers would get together, meet the representatives of the unions and agree to pay a mutually satisfactory rate of wages and act honestly with one another instead of trying to cut one another's throats, there would be no need to try and gain a dishonest advantage by reducing wages. The living wage is the basis of true prosperity. It is the unfair and unscrupulous employer who causes trouble, and in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred is directly responsible for strikes.

LATEST MILL NEWS.

(American Textile Manufacturer.)

Statesville, N. C.—A. K. Loftin is starting a big cotton mill addition at Monbo, N. C.

Port Mill, S. C.—A current report has it that the two mills here will resume operations on December 1. A contradictory report has it that the mills will not start until the new year.

Kings Mountain, N. C.—The Cora Manufacturing Company is understood to be planning the addition of 10,000 spindles, but no authoritative statement has been made. There are now about 10,500 spindles in position.

Brevard, N. C.—Work is progressing rapidly on the power plant of the Transylvania Cotton Mill Company, which is at Little River Falls, some six miles distant. It is reported that the plant will be complete and the mill put in operation by January 1, 1909. They have 4,000 spindles and will make fine yarns, 40s to 60s, two ply.

Atlanta, Ga.—The Southeastern Mills have been incorporated by A. A. Smith and George C. Spier, of Atlanta, and Samuel L. Ayres and Samuel W. Bridges, of Boston, Mass. This company has a capital stock of \$100,000, and will manufacture cotton products, but details have not been announced.

Sanford, N. C.—Robert L. Steele, of Rockingham, N. C., was here last week and made propositions to the citizens relative to locating a bleachery at this point. Sanford is touched by the Southern Railway and the Atlantic Coast Line, and is on the main line of the Seaboard Air Line.

Henderson, N. C.—The second largest fire in the history of this town for thirty years occurred November 14th, at 4:30 o'clock, when Farham Bros.

four story brick bagging factory was totally destroyed, with its adjoining buildings in Wynder avenue. By strenuous efforts the residences on the opposite side of the street were saved.

Tarboro, N. C.—The rumors that the Tarboro Cotton Factory troubles were about to be compromised were based on a proposition that Mr. Bridges, the plaintiff, made the defendants, but as this has been rejected the end of the litigation is not in sight and the possibilities of a receivership looms up overshadowingly.

Concord, N. C.—The Kerr Bleaching and Finishing Works, the plant of which was burned some time ago, will be rebuilt at once. This was definitely decided on at a recent meeting of the stockholders. The debris has been cleared away preparatory to rebuilding. The machines have been shipped back to the factory to be rebuilt, and it is claimed that they can be made as good as new. The bleachery will be rebuilt at the former location, and the ground floor will be placed about five feet higher than before. The engine and boiler room was saved, and both are as good as before the fire. It is expected to have the bleachery in operation by next February.

Union, S. C.—The Aetna Cotton Mills has been sold at private sale to James E. Mitchell & Co., a commission house of Philadelphia, Pa., a creditor, for the sum of about \$200,000. This action was taken after two efforts had been made to have a public sale, both of which had failed, and it being deemed best for all interested to accept the offer made by Mr. Mitchell and close up the deal, so that the property might resume operations.

Neither trustee Alfred Moore nor referee J. H. Heyward would give out anything in the way of a statement, but it is learned on very high authority that the above statement is correct, and furthermore that the mill will resume operation within the next thirty days.

DON'T BE TOO SLOW.

We are in no hurry for you, waiting doubter. We are pretty well used to the results of advertising; quick with quick people; slow with slow people; sure with intelligent people. We are willing to wait for you slower ones, but let us tell you fairly sharper people are enjoying advantages that you are not. During the past four weeks we have opened the greatest collection of real values that we have ever shown. If it's anything from a paper of pins to a nice cloak or a pair of 5c. Sox to a nice suit of clothes we can serve you. The best way in the world to get an introduction to low prices and keep up the acquaintance is to call on us. Drop in and see our wireless umbrellas. They cost no more than the other kind.

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Max Morris—Fourth V.-President.
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Wm. D. Huber—Seventh V.-President.
Jos. H. Valentine—Eighth V.-President.
John B. Lennon—Treasurer.
Frat. Morrison—Secretary.

LOCAL UNIONS.

Greensboro Trades Council—Jno. C. Benson, president; Vernon F. McRary, secretary.

Iron Moulders—R. R. Wyrick, president; C. L. Shaw, secretary. Meets second and fourth Wednesday nights in each month.

United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, No. 1432—J. W. Causey, president.

Typographical Union, No. 397—J. T. Perkins, president; W. P. Turner, secretary. Meets 1st Sunday in each month at 3:30 p. m., in the Beville building.

Association of Machinists—A. J. Crawford, president; John M. Glass, secretary; R. M. Holt, recording secretary. Meets every Tuesday night in hall over Hennessy's lunch room.

Tar Heel Lodge, Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen—Meets every Wednesday night in Odd Fellows Hall on Fayetteville street. W. O. Reitzel, Master; J. G. Whitehart, secretary; J. T. Lashley, financial.

GOVERNMENT POSITIONS

46,712 Appointments were made to Civil Service positions in the past year. Good life positions \$240 to \$1,600 per year. Excellent opportunities for young people. Thorough instruction by mail. Write for our Service Announcement, containing full information about all government examinations and questions recently used by the Civil Service Commission. COLUMBIAN CORRESP. COLLEGE, WASHINGTON, D. C.

UNION MEN.

Patronize the merchants who advertise in your paper. THE LABOR NEWS is appreciated by merchants who are in sympathy with the workers' cause, or who look for the business of the wage earner, and they use its advertising columns. There is hardly a firm in this city that could stand out openly and say it did not care for the workmen's trade, but names could be mentioned of business men who have nothing but hard words to and in return for a generous patronage. Stand by the business men who stand by you. You can purchase as cheaply and advantageously from THE LABOR NEWS' advertisers, with as good treatment thrown in, as from any or all others combined. Patronize Home Industry. Patronize our Advertisers. Help your Friends. Get Union Label Goods.

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Davis New White Wax . . . \$4.75 Bushel
Currie's Rust Proof Wax . . . \$4.50 Bushel

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