

THE HARBINGER.

ORGANIZATION. EDUCATION. ELEVATION.

VOL. I.

RALEIGH, N. C., SATURDAY, JULY 19, 1902.

No. 28

EDUCATE AND ORGANIZE.

BY MALCOLM J. MCCARTHY, TORONTO, MINERS' UNION, NO. 5.

Rise! Rise! Ye sons of labor,
Raise your banner to the skies;
Preach this doctrine to your neighbor,
Educate and Organize

Union is strength and Power,
Given to all who have the will;
'Tis our capital and dower,
Labor's mission to fulfill.

While we're single and divided,
Capital will keep us low;
Weak—our efforts are derided
By the force that wealth can show.

Elevate your cause and calling,
Educate your chosen craft;
Unionism keeps from falling
Into boss' selfish graft.

Stand together, firm and fearless,
In the cause be true and bold;
Show non-union men the peerless
Strength within the union fold.

Like a careful shepherd, reaching
Out among the scattered sheep,
By your precept daily teaching
Benefits that all may reap.

Preach the doctrine of the Union,
Single efforts don't despise;
Teach the strength of close communion,
Educate and Organize.

SHORTER HOURS—WAGES—STRIKES.

Reading recently a very able essay, written by Mr. William Trant, M. A., of London, England, I was much impressed with the pure and formal thought, the correct reasoning with which it was characterized; as also with its application in the line of comparison with the methods applied to similar conditions confronting our own people of to-day.

To draw a few deductions, I am confident, will not be uninteresting. It is a mistake to suppose that an advance in wages is the only object of a trade-union, or the sole purpose of a strike. Sometimes the men demand shorter hours. To work a less number of hours for the same amount of wages is naturally attractive to the workman. He not only sees that such an arrangement gives him more time and recreation and for the enjoyment of home pleasures and comforts, without calling on his wife to "pinch, cut and contrive," but that the reduction of hours causes more of his fellow workmen to be employed. The demand for a commodity being the same, and the number of working hours diminished, more men must be employed to produce the same amount of work in less time. Men who were forced to be idlers are thus provided with employment. These additional workmen are consumers—spenders—as well as producers, and the advantage of that he knows to consist in a general improvement all 'round. In thus benefiting himself, therefore, he is benefiting his class. No action of the trade-unionist has been crowned with such signal success as that taken to bring about a reduction of hours.

What is the most surprising is that the employers believe that they can get more work of a man when they work him to death. They forget that it is not the miles one travels, but the pace that kills. They ignore the doctrine of Adam Smith, that "the man who works so moderately as to be able to work constantly, not only preserves his health and strength the longest, but in the course of a year executes the greatest amount of work."

Capitalists do not pursue such a policy in regard to their horses, mules and

other cattle. The fact is, they are not thinking of their men. They are brooding over their valuable machinery standing idle, and calculating what it would bring then if it went on working a few hours longer.

It is now a well ascertained fact that, within certain limits, more work is done as a rule where there is a prospect of an early cessation from work than when men know they are doomed to several hours more of continuous employment.

A few years ago the average day's work in England was ten hours. On the Continent it was twelve; in Russia, sixteen or seventeen; and yet it is calculated that two English mowers would in a day do the work of six Russian ones. Russian factory operatives worked seventy-five hours in the week, when those in England worked sixty, yet the work of the former was only one-fifth of that of the latter. When the average working time of a miner in South Wales was twelve hours a day, those in the North of England worked only seven, yet the cost of getting coal in Aberdare, Wales was 25 per cent. more than in Northumberland. As has been said, "The workman who cannot tire himself in eight hours is not worth his salt."

It is gratifying to find that in England, as well as America, greater care than formerly is taken to prevent these strikes which, being foolish, were always disastrous. How easily this may be done is evident from the practice of some trades of keeping complete registers in which the fluctuations of the markets are as well acquainted with the prices of cotton and iron as the masters. Even this, however, is not always sufficient, and the employers show, with arguments seemingly plausible, that their profits are very small. The men, though unable to point out the fallacy in the reasoning, opposed to them, nevertheless are aware of its existence.

"We have been working at a loss for years," said a large English cotton manufacturer to a Union secretary.

"Yes," was the shrewd reply, "You have been losing your little mills and building bigger ones."

The cotton spinners of Bolton, England, in September, 1774, sent a similar reply to the notice of a reduction of wages given by the masters.

"The operatives," said the reply, "cannot judge of trade from your standpoint. They draw conclusions from circumstantial evidence, and contend that the princely fortunes that seemed to be amassed around us cannot have arisen from an unremunerative business; therefore, you must pardon them if it be difficult to make them believe that a reduction of wages is called for."

Following this illustration, Mr. Trant remarks: "It is certainly a fair question for discussion whether or not the rate of wages at the present day is as high as it ought to be, even in the best paid trades. Capital is increasing far faster than population. When the latter had doubled itself the former had quadrupled itself. It seems, therefore, merely obedience to natural law that wages should rise; and if trade-unions have failed in their efforts at all, it is in the fact that, while they have raised wages, they have not raised them enough."

As to the influence of trade-unionism on the trade of the country, I would

like to quote more elaborately from the paper of Mr. Trant, but want of space forbids; I can only illustrate the reflections which I hope may be of interest to readers of The Harbinger. There can be found in almost any section many who find futile excuse for opposing the effect of trades unionism, that it injures the commercial trade of the community in affecting prices. Now it is the "higgling of the market," as Adam Smith calls it which determines prices, and those who do not "higgle"—(Webster defines it to chaffer, to treat about a bargain, to haggle) to "higgle," even when "shopping," will generally pay more than the market rate for their goods. Strikes are of this nature, and are not only legitimate, but are the inevitable result of commercial bargaining for labor. They are no more opposed to trade than lock-outs. If a man may say to his men, or portion of them: "Business is slack, I give you a week's notice," surely, when the state of trade is reversed, the men may say: "Trade is brisk, give us more wages, or take a week's notice."

It was the notable J. S. Mill who uttered this truism:

"I do not hesitate to say that the association of workmen or laborers, of a nature similar to trades unions, so far from being hindrance to a free market for labor, are the necessary instrumentality of that free market—the indispensable means of enabling the sellers of labor to take due care of their own interests under a system of competition."

It seems strange that persons can be found who will deny that all legal means employed by those who live by labor, to increase the remuneration of that labor, or to render their means of living more secure, are no more a violation of the principles of trade than is the conduct of a dealer who withholds his goods from the market in order to raise their price.

Every one should remember that there were strikes before there were trades unions, and it is a fact also worth remembering that the most violent strikes have been where unions did not exist.—Samuel L. Leffingwell in The Carpenter.

THE ABUSED EDITOR.

Editing a journal is a nice thing. If we publish jokes people say we are rattlebrained. If we don't we are old fossils. If we publish original matter they say we don't give them enough selections. If we give them selections they say we are too lazy to write. If we don't go to church we are heathen; if we do we are hypocrites. If we remain in the office we ought to go out and hustle for news items. If we go out, then we are not attending to our business. If we wear old clothes they laugh at us. If we wear good clothes they say we have a pull. Now what are we to do? Just as likely as not some one will say we stole this from an exchange, and so we did. But it's a good thing, so pass it along.

—About 300 miners employed in the Durango (Col.) coal district are on strike because the operators failed to accept the scale submitted by the union which calls for \$3 per day for underground work and \$2.50 a day for outside work.

COMPULSORY ARBITRATION.

The Washington Post of last Sunday, under the caption "An Impossible Remedy," takes issue with the Boston Post, and discusses most ably the question of compulsory arbitration. It says:

"The Boston Post seems inclined to favor that plan for settling labor troubles which, for want of an appropriate name, is called 'compulsory arbitration,' in defiance of the dictionaries. It would be as proper to refer to conscripted recruits for an army as 'compulsory volunteers.' Our Boston contemporary depicts the enormous losses and general demoralization of business growing out of the coal strike in Pennsylvania. It says that the sailors in Boston find their occupation gone and the coal-carrying craft lie idle in the harbor. It says:

"These are not the only sufferers. So closely are our industries related, so dependent are they one upon the other, that a stoppage in a distant State cuts off the earnings of labor here. Nearly one-half the merchant fleet in Boston harbor is estimated, is idle or engaged in poorly paid competition elsewhere. It is the same at other ports, at Newport News, Norfolk, Baltimore and Philadelphia. The aggregate idleness due to this cause is stupendous. So many men who have nothing to do with the mining of coal are deprived of the opportunity of earning a living. Why? Simply because the managers of the coal trust have 'nothing to arbitrate.' Is it surprising that the demand for compulsory arbitration is growing? The well-being of the community at large, of all trades and all industries, requires that the power to create a crisis of this sort shall be extinguished."

"Bad as the situation is, it is not half so distressful as it will soon become if the dispute is not settled. But there will be no compulsion employed in the premises. Neither in this nor in any future emergency will that impracticable plan be tried in the United States. It would be a direct and gross violation of natural rights. Men have a right to work or to quit working. Any attempt to compel workingmen to accept and abide by a decision of a board of arbitrators would be utterly futile. That is self-evident. The idea of rounding up thousands of striking miners and forcing them to go into the mines and resume operations is as wild as any thought in the train of the maddest lunatic. Organized labor not less emphatically than organized capital would cry out against the proposition to force on them any plan of settling disputes.

"We can readily understand that an arbitrary decision acceptable to either side might induce that side to resume business if it could. If it were favorable to the wage-workers, they would report for work; if unfavorable, they would not. They would scout the idea of submitting to an arrangement to which they had not agreed. On the other hand, how would it be possible to compel the owners of mines, of rolling mills, furnaces, cotton factories, shipyards, or any other industrial plant to operate their works if they declined to do so?

"Arbitration is commendable in all labor disputes. It has accomplished a vast deal of good and is steadily growing in favor. There is ground for hope that it will be beneficently employed in the pending coal strike. But no scheme that embraces compulsion has any place in the adjustment of disagreements between employers and employed, because no such scheme could be either just or practicable. It tends in one direction to civil war; in another to socialism—State ownership

of all industries. An attempt to compel wageworkers to work on unsatisfactory terms would soon become war. An attempt to compel industrial corporation to operate against their will would soon end in public ownership and control of industrial plants."

LABOR'S RIGHT TO ORGANIZE IS FUNDAMENTAL.

We have always been willing to treat with our men," say the Chicago railroad managers, whose freight-handlers are on strike.

But not with the union to which the men belong, of course.

The railroad companies have formed a union called the Coal Trust are also willing to treat with their men—but not with their men's union.

So it goes nearly everywhere. Organized capital declines to give countenance to organized labor.

Labor is right to stand its ground in defence of the union principle whenever that principle is assailed.

Labor does right to strike in behalf of that principle, and to employ every other lawful method of enforcing respect for it.

Labor is right in despising, as an enemy and a traitor, any workman who, enjoying the higher standard of wages which union has secured, turns "scab" and takes a striker's place.

In a union the workman has as his own the strength of all his fellows when he asks for better wages and better treatment. Out of a union the workman has only the strength of a single individual.

When battling in defence of the union principle, labor battles for higher wages, shorter hours and everything that separates the free worker from the serf.

Labor, in battling for union, battles for decent family life, for the education of children, for self-respecting citizenship, for the good of the whole community.

Therefore, all that is intelligently patriotic in the community—all that is capable as comprehending that as fares labor so fares the State—gives its sympathy to labor's ceaseless struggle to maintain its rights to organize and to extort from capital recognition of that right.—New York Journal.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR DEMANDS.

1. Compulsory education.
2. Direct legislation through the initiative and referendum.
3. A legal workday of not more than eight hours.
4. Sanitary inspection of workshop, mine and home.
5. Liability of employes to injury to health, body and life.
6. The abolition of the contract system in all public work.
7. The abolition of the sweating system.
8. The municipal ownership of street cars, water-works and gas and electric plants for public distribution of light, heat and power.
9. The nationalization of telegraph, telephone, railroads and mines.
10. The abolition of the monopoly system of land-holding, and substituting therefor a title of occupancy and use only.
11. Repeal all conspiracy and penal laws affecting seamen and other workmen incorporated in the Federal and State laws of the United States.
12. The abolition of the monopoly privilege of issuing money and substituting therefor a system of direct issuance to and by the people.