

The Western Clarion

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SATURDAY, NOV. 11, 1906.

RIGHT WELL THEY DID IT.

If there is one special privilege accorded to the workman of the United States, it is that of making a political use of himself, and right well does he avail himself of the privilege of every opportunity. On last Tuesday, State elections were held in a number of States, and numerous city elections occurred in various parts of the Republic. From the press accounts, it seems that the "working mules," with their usual political sagacity, assisted in rolling up a huge vote for the various factions that constitute the political expression of the class that exercises its despotic rule over them in the field of industry. It is well known that countless thousands of these workers gail and chain under the yoke of the wage-system. Oftentimes their complaints are both long and loud against the miseries it forces upon them. They are continually protesting against a too meagre wage, too long hours of toil and the altogether exacting conditions that surround them in their employment. And yet the great mass of them are so dense in their ignorance as to be unable to see that their own political conduct is the sole means whereby all of these unfavorable conditions are fastened upon them, and their lot in life made continually more unbearable.

The forces that were contending for supremacy in the various States and cities on Tuesday, as represented by Republican, Democratic, "Purity in Politics" and Union Labor movements, were contending for nothing that could under any circumstances be construed into anything beneficial to the wage-slave, or in the line of advancing his interests. The political struggles of the various factions into which the capitalist class is divided, for points of vantage and place of power, can have no interest to any man who depends upon his labor for a living. Any wage-slave who will give to such conflicts his support by throwing his influence to, or casting his vote for, the candidate of any of these political factions in that sort of a fool that cannot be described in the English language. There are no exceptions enough to do his case justice.

Every vote cast for Republicans, Democrats, the Hearsts, and Towns of New York; Schmitz and his dirty gang in San Francisco, and the lesser political scum that rises to the top of the quagmire of capitalism, was a vote cast primarily for the continued rule of capitalist property, that form of property that has made of the earth an industrial hell and of the workman a servile and witless ass, and incidentally for the triumph of some particular factional interest within the confines of such form of property.

Nothing these henchmen of capital could offer, or ever did offer, could possibly advance the interests of the working fools upon whose political support they depend for their election. If the workers had as much intelligence as their four-footed brethren of the long ears and loud voices, these political tricksters of capital would not get their support.

Just how many workmen and others registered their recognition of the present brutal and vulgar rule of capitalism remains to be seen, as an account has yet reached us of the Socialist vote. It will come along in due time by slow freight. But whatever it is, it is the sole redeeming feature of the whole affair. If all workmen were still ignorant and unresponsive as politically, the outlook for the human race would be dark indeed. Humanity is today staggering under a burden of vice, crime and corruption that is all but overwhelming. It is continually an

increase. Nearly everyone is ignorant of it, and stupidly and thoughtlessly stand apart at the prospect. There is, however, no redemption so long as the great mass of workers—the wealth producers—remain steeped in that ignorance that prompts them to forge the political chains that bind them to the economic chariot wheels of their brutal masters—the Capitalists.

However small the Socialist vote, no one should be discouraged. It depends upon the Socialist workman to lighten the whole lump, and no matter how staggering the job may appear, let all hands buckle to the task. Until the mass of the workers are enlightened, they may be expected to continue to make fools of themselves.

THE STOGIE RAMPANT.

Recent events down around Cleveland, Ohio, have awakened within us fragrant memories of a past that had well nigh faded into an oblivion from which there is no resurrection. But now that memory is again quickened into activity there comes to us a veritable flood of pleasant recollections of the times when we wandered about in the jungles of the wage-market in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York, and though persistently pursued by the necessity of "taking and holding" a master, still found time to engage in stogie worship at the shrine of the "stogie," whenever we were fortunate enough to locate one. Whether the income we burned upon the altar was pleasing to the nostrils of the most high or the most high, we do not know, but we are free to confess that under its soothing spell we were lulled into a forgetfulness of the most trivial vicissitudes of a somewhat precarious mundane existence, and waited, as it were, into a realm so replete with gas palaces, good living, and fine raincoats to make Bellamy's dream appear as a sort of Chinatown existence in comparison.

While thus intoxicated with the fervor of our worship we little dreamed that we were even then in touch with what was to later become the chief factor in one of the greatest "epoch-making" and "epoch-marking" events ever recorded in the annals of time. But it was even so. Don't know what a stogie is; did you say? Why ignorant one, a stogie is a smoke; a plebian smoke; a sort of a poor and distant relation of the aristocratic cigar that affords its soporific and soothing qualities for the delectation of the King, Emperor, Czar, railway, financial and insurance magnate, editor or other well-to-do person. Being plebian it hath a sort of "lean and hungry look," which would indicate scant "filler." Its rough and uncouth exterior plainly indicates plebian "inwardness," much as the garb of a wage-slave affords a criterion as to what brand of goods is encased within. The plebian nature of the stogie is further emphasized by the fact that it sells at the rate of three for a nickel, or seven for a dime. The stogie is a native of the region of which Wheeling, West Virginia, might be taken as the center, and extending into the jungle in each direction wherever the tobacco plant grows. In the tobacco-growing districts nearly everyone smokes them, and as tobacco-growers are too poor to smoke cigars. The stogie when full grown is about the length of a lead pencil, but some what larger around. Many a time during our peregrinations in South-eastern Ohio, we have, while in affluent mood, generously tossed aside a stogie not much more than half consumed in order to give our poorer relations a chance to obtain a smoke within their means.

The stogie-maker is just now the king-pin of skilled labor. It must be remembered that stogie-making is a highly skilled trade as it requires as much skill to roll a stogie as it does to roll a cigarette. "Bowed by the weight of centuries" the stogie-maker leaped upon his elbows and rolled stogies. This was in Cleveland, Ohio. Unconscious of the power latent within him he busily bowed his neck to the yoke, and the brutal stogie capitalist exploited him without mercy. He never looked up from his work; never saw the sun, the stars, and other glories of the heavens; never enjoyed the beauties of the field and the forest; never got a real good lung-full of the life-giving Lake Erie breeze that occasionally blow over to the Canadian side in spite of the tariff; he was always too busy grinding out profit for his boss and the lack of necessity held him to his task.

One day there was a whirlwind in Chicago. This was no whirlwind that blew in a straight line, blowing from one place to another, blowing across and round like a wheel—blowing for its pleasure. It lashed up the clouds, scattered atoms in all directions, even as far as Cleveland. It was a powerful wind, a sort of revolution, very whirlwind, if such a term is permissible, and had a most marvelous effect upon working plugs through whose whiskers it blew to blow. It blew in through the windows of the stogie shop. The stogie-maker got a sniff of it. His sluggish blood suddenly quickened into activity of molten lava and coursed like wildfire through his veins. He suddenly became class-conscious and revolutionary, and renouncing his power rose to quite a good strong, and actually got rolling stogies.

The stogie capitalist at first looked upon his action as a mere subsidence of temper that would soon subside, but they "reckoned without their host." The stogie-maker was not the only one afflicted through contact with the peculiar wind that blew in from Chicago. From all parts of the country came not only words of cheer, but the snows of war in the shape of coins of silver, and coins of gold, banknotes large, and banknotes small, checks, drafts, express and money orders galore, until the total amount actually reached the enormous sum of \$464.30 and bade fair to reach the \$465 mark in the course of time. Then the wicked stogie capitalist weakened. Against this combination of class-solidarity and \$464.30 they could not stand. Prostrate at the feet of the stogie-maker they accepted the terms he laid down, and this victor one did not scruple to take his own in full measure. He took his freedom, that is as much of it as he could use in his business, and was a ten per cent. advance on the stogie of it that he had just possessed. Where he formerly got one dollar wage he now gets a dollar and a dime.

RUSSIAN FREEDOM.

A great deal is being said these days about the freedom attained by the people of Russia as an outcome of their struggles against the autocracy of the Czar. Freedom, in the sense commonly used, is most decidedly a relative term, and means little when measured by the standard of freedom in the full meaning of the word. If the sway of autocracy has been broken in Russia, and constitutional government is established, which at present seems probable, the people at that afflicted land may find themselves in possession of some privileges that have hitherto been denied them. They may be privileged to more freely express themselves in regard to their economic and political demands. They may be granted more extended rights of association, and a greater freedom of the press, than was formerly the case. It is certain, however, that in spite of all this the working people of that country will experience no lessening of that exploitation which has been practiced upon them in the past, and which has sapped their substance and heaped untold misery and suffering upon them.

There is but one way in which tyranny or despotism can express itself, and that is by plundering those over whom it is exercised. The rule of the tyrant or despot can be felt in no other way. Perchance the tyranny exercised over the Russian working people under the regime that bids fair to be established as a result of the downfall of Czarism, will be less harsh in its official expression, but that it will bear heavily upon the material substance of its victims, is far from certain.

Constitutional government is essentially fitted to the requirements of the labor-creating process of capitalist production. Contrary to the Chattel Slave and feudal schemes of robbing labor, the capitalist process depends largely for its success upon keeping its victims in ignorance of the robbery, or at least ignorant of the method by which it is accomplished. The Chattel Slave master and the Feudal Lord held their victims in leash for plunder by open and undisciplined force. Their military establishment was always ready to reduce the rebellious slave or serf to submission. The enslavement of the worker was so open and undisciplined that it was impossible to hide it from him and make him believe that it did not occur. It has remained for Capitalism, however, to bring forth a form of slavery whereby the last square-inch of hide could be applied to the slave's back without his being aware of the nature of his condition and hearing of his liberation.

Socialist Directory

Every Local of the Socialist Party of Canada should run a card under this head. \$1.00 per month. Secretaries please note.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA.
Headquarters, Vancouver, B. C.: Dominion Executive Committee, A. R. Stebbings, John E. Dufferin, Ernest Burns, C. Peters, Alf. Leah, A. J. Wilkinson, Treasurer; J. G. Morgan, Secretary, 551 Bernard St., Vancouver, B. C.

LOCAL VANCOUVER, NO. 1, S.P. of Canada. Business meetings every Monday evening at headquarters, Inglefield Block, 313 Cambie Street, (room 1, second floor.) Educational meetings every Sunday at 7 o'clock p.m., in Sullivan Hall, Cordova Street.
D. P. MILLS, Secretary, Box 836, Vancouver B. C.

LOCAL TORONTO—Meets 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, Temperance Hall, Bathurst St. F. Dale, Secretary, 41 Henry street, W. G. Gribble, organizer, 130 Hogarth St.

Union Directory

When They Meet; Where They Meet

Every Labor Union in the province should place a card under this head. Secretaries please note.

Phoenix Trades and Labor Council
Meets - every alternate Monday, John Riordan, president; John Riordan, president; P. H. Leary, vice-president; W. H. Leary, secretary-treasurer; W. H. Leary, secretary-treasurer, R. O. Leary, 198, Phoenix B. C.

Phoenix Miners' Union, N.A.
W. F. M. Meets every Saturday evening at 7:30 o'clock in the hall. Francis Knott, president. A. H. H. Barry, secretary.

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