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EDITORIAL

IT WAS AS WELL.

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THE almost simultaneous breaking out of the Paterson and the Lawrence strikes in the textile industry looked like a providential dispensation, whereby the feud might be healed between elements that one time had worked harmoniously within the I.W.W.

No two men will think exactly alike. Differences in temperament will bring shades of differences in opinion. Whatever the shades of opinion in the dominant numbers that launched the I.W.W. in 1905, they moved as one; indeed, each supplemented the others, and the others each, all moving towards a common goal—the establishment of the Industrial Republic; and a common means—the unification of the workers upon the political as well as the industrial field—for the attainment of the goal.

What with the increasing strain thrown upon the I.W.W.—owing to the increasing vehemence of the assaults of the Civic-Federated and now also Militia-of-Christized A.F. of L., together with the increasing virulence and subterranean tactics of the A.-F.-of-L.-ized Officialdom and Press of the Socialist party,—and what with the organic defects that flowed from an initial constituent convention made up, to a perceptible extent, of representatives who represented nobody, the energies of the I.W.W. were so reduced towards the end of 1907 that the sinister element of Anarchy, or “veiled dynamite,” kept under until then, asserted itself in 1908.

Since, that date there have been “two I.W.W.’s” in the land. One the legitimate successor, or continuation of the I.W.W. of 1905 with headquarters in Detroit; the other, an illegitimate off-shoot which, seeking to cover its own bareness with the good repute of the I.W.W., assumed the name, and set up its headquarters at Chicago.

Of course, a bitter feud started between the two bodies. Yet, bitter tho’ the feud was, the Detroit I.W.W., with its eyes steady upon the goal, the emancipation of the

working class, ever stood by whatever strike the so-called Chicago I.W.W. conducted that was conducted upon principles and with methods that made for the emancipation of the workers. This was notably done in the instance of the shoeworkers' strike in Brooklyn. The Detroit I.W.W. hoped that, schooled by practical experience, the misguided individuals in the "Chicago I.W.W." who had succumbed to the bane of Anarchy would pull themselves out of the mire, and return to the parent fold.

The simultaneous up-cropping of two giant strikes in the same industry, one in Paterson the other in Lawrence, the latter conducted by the Chicago, the former by the Detroit I.W.W., seemed to be a summons for unity.

In Lawrence, the Chicago I.W.W. was furnished the opportunity to realize by bitter experience the error of its pronouncement to "strike at the ballot box with an axe"—a pronouncement that, together, of course, with its correlated facts, is keeping Ettor in jail under charge of complicity in the death of Anna Lopizzo, notwithstanding his innocence, the riot having been incited by agencies of the American Woolen Company itself. It was to be hoped that, not Ettor alone but all sober and sincere leaders of the Lawrence strike, would have learned from that short passage at arms between Ettor and District Attorney Atwill, when the District Attorney, having extracted from Ettor the admission, made with manly straightforwardness, that his organization aimed at a "social revolution," put to him the question, how he proposed to bring that about, and thereby forced Ettor to dodge by answering: "That depends upon evolution."

While such scenes were going on in Lawrence, Paterson exemplified by contrast the superiority of the Detroit I.W.W., as a weapon for Working Class emancipation. Without lowering by an inch the I.W.W. demand for the abolition of the capitalist system of wage slavery, the Paterson strike, planted upon the platform that urges the workers to "unite upon the political as well as the industrial field," planted itself thereby upon the civilized plane of civil strife; it gave the master class no handle for police and militia outrages; it inspired its hosts; and conducted the strike in such manner that speedy victories were won, and the strike has spread to other trades and other towns.

The two experiences, merged into one, seemed a trumpet blast for unification, by rehoisting the I.W.W. 1905 colors over the Chicago I.W.W. The circumstance that William D. Haywood, the man who had presided over the 1905, the constituent I.W.W. convention, happened to be the leader of the Lawrence strike, seemed to be a

guarantee for the realization of the hope of unity. It was otherwise. The hope was dashed.

So far from healing the feud between Chicago and Detroit, Haywood fanned its flames. Yielding to the invitation of a branch of his Chicago body in Paterson, which, together with its “Direct Action” declamations and affiliations, had been left stranded high and dry by the Paterson I.W.W. strike, Haywood mischievously went out of his way to pick up a quarrel; he appeared on a Paterson platform; and there made the lamentable exhibition of repeating the manufacturers’ vilifications of the leader of the strike, for which the lie was given to him clear as a bell from the audience, and he was hissed so emphatically by that workingmen’s throng as to deem it advisable to drop that tack “like a live coal” and switch off to other matters.

Tho’ sad—perhaps it was as well.

The subsequent dastardly Anarchic conduct with which Haywood followed up, at Paine’s Memorial Hall in Boston on the 15th of this month, his attempt of March 7th to stab the I.W.W. strike of Paterson in the back uncovers the lamentable fact of the man’s constitutionally ruffian and double-dealing Anarchic nature; that he is flesh of the flesh, and bone of the bone of the crew that preaches “strike at the ballot box with an axe,” and recommends other acts of turpitude as weapons of Labor.

The issue of Anarchy might as well be settled, expressly, and once for all. Rather than “scotch the snake,” the Working Class might as well stave in the head of the reptile together with all its doublings, wriggings, twistings and convolutions, in plain view of the country. The coils of the Anarchist snake, insinuating themselves around the limbs of the Working Class are a menace to Labor’s emancipation.

Perhaps, after all, tho’ wiser conduct on the part of Haywood might have seemed to simplify matters, in the long run the trouble might have proved greater than for Labor to grip and fling the monster from its body, once for all, as was done by the International Socialist Congress—and then free the Labor Movement at once from Anarchy and all its hideous parasites.

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