

THE ELECTION IN OHIO.

From the Cleveland Recorder, of Wednesday, November 5.

Tom L. Johnson has, for the fourth consecutive time, been handsomely indorsed by the people of Cleveland. He has every reason to be happy over the result. It should be remembered that when he began his campaign for mayor less than two years ago, there was not a Democrat in the courthouse, and it had been demonstrated that it was impossible to elect a Democrat in the city on a straight issue. Johnson was elected mayor, and he has carried with him the city and county ticket four times in succession. This is a record which ought to be very gratifying and of which any man ought to be proud.

Never, at any time, in the history of the county, have the Democrats had more than one of the common pleas judges. In a very few months there will be five judges of that party on the bench, four on the common pleas bench and one in the insolvency room. For 54 years there has been a succession of Republican county treasurers. Now there is a Democrat in that office and a clerk of the courts, two county commissioners, the county auditor and county solicitor. This is a record which is wonderful to contemplate when it is understood that the county has been Republican for generations.

The combination which was against the Democrats in the state of Ohio this year was a very hard one to meet and that the Democrats did not win out with no money and no organization is not at all strange. Tom L. Johnson went forth to fight the combined railroad interests of the state on the question of taxation. He antagonized the street car interests and all the other vested special rights. He not only had Boss Cox against him in Cincinnati, but also hand and hand with Cox was Boss Bernard and his master, John R. McLean. It was attempted to do in Cincinnati to Johnson what was done in Cuyahoga county to McLean. That the elements of evil there succeeded is no more than what was to have been expected.

That a brilliant preacher, who has been storming the castles of evil for a long time in Cincinnati should have found serious antagonism among the bosses and beer guzzlers of the wickedest city in America no more than was to have been expected. It was

not strange, either, that the hypocrites who parade under the cloak of religion should fight him. The slaves are not yet ready for redemption. The brave preacher made the fight alone and single handed and he will be on hand to do some more fighting when the occasion arises.

Men are much in any battle, but they are not by any means all. The truth of a cause is the real thing which must make it finally win or lose. A change so radical and gigantic as is involved in the adoption of the ideas of Henry George into our civic life and government cannot be brought about in a minute. The forces of evil, the money which has been stolen from the people by the special privileges which entrenched conservatism has enjoyed, all join hands to fight the adoption of a new idea. Walter Bagehot declares that the "greatest pain to the human mind is the pain of a new idea." It is so disturbing to all that has been in the mind before. It must fight its way and make room among the rubbish which has lodged there. But if it is true it will finally find a permanent lodgment. If it cannot demonstrate its truth there is little use in promulgating it.

When a cause gets far enough along to make it seem likely that it will be able to win some victories at the polls there are always a swarm of hirelings who see nothing in the whole business except that they may foist themselves upon the public in the capacity of office holders. These men only clog the advance chariot wheels of truth. It is only what has always been and what must always be that all things must be proved and only the good will be held fast.

Truth forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne;
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and
within the dim unknown
Sitteth God behind the shadow, keeping
watch above His own.

Those who see in the movement in Ohio only the personal ambition of Tom L. Johnson and his desire to be president, mistake both his motive and the cause for which he stands. They have never had any reason to thus regard the situation. He has given no encouragement to anything of that sort. If he had been personally ambitious, he would doubtless have compromised with evil. He would have coddled Democrats wherever he has found them. He would

have made friends with McLean and all the Lewis Bernards in the state and would have defended all the Democratic auditors who have favored the railroads. But the cause is greater than the man and the man is himself great enough to dare to do right. The people do not now comprehend it all but they will vindicate it some time.

After all how small a thing it is to be this or that, to hold this or that office. There are men who have been in the greatest positions which the world has known and are simply contemptible, while the men who have dared to stand for the right and to defy the powers of evil are honored and loved by mankind. It is a great deal better to be right than to be president.

A VISIT TO THE STRIKE REGIONS BEFORE THE STRIKE WAS SETTLED.

For The Public.

On October 8 I took train for Wilkesbarre, Pa., the heart of the striking coal mine region. I went to see with my own eyes and taste with my own taste the condition of the striking miners. I wanted to reach a conclusion also as to whether or not the miners could hold out until next fall, if necessary; and I also wished to know concerning the exigency of their just demand for an increase in wages and for an honest weight of the coal they mined.

I reached these conclusions: If the donations of the supporting unions continue in their present amount, the miners can continue their strike (as they will not starve to death) almost indefinitely—"until next summer," as some of the poor fellows put it. The week I was there each man received \$1.25, and each child 35 cents—the total, \$1.60, supporting the father, mother and child; and if more children, an addition of 35 cents per child. But I did not base my conclusions entirely on these figures; to really know how near a family is to starving to death you "must eat with the family," and you must eat with it unexpectedly. I did that.

Landing in Wilkesbarre at 6:30 a. m., I applied for admission at the gate of the coal breaker as a newspaper correspondent. The gatekeeper said "No," and he emphasized it by giving me an opportunity to look down the barrel of a revolver held extended by his right hand. I told him the gun was a nice looking one, etc., and then asked him if he would be kind enough

to direct me to the office of the coal company. He dropped the gun, gave me the direction and an hour later I was told by the superintendent of the company "to come around again in a day or two," and I took that medicine quietly and spat it out after I had left the office, as I knew it meant "No." Failing with the operators, I had but to affiliate with miners to discover as to whether many miners were at work. I went to Nanticoke, 44 miles below Wilkesbarre, where the miners said the condition was the worst in the district. Nanticoke is a city, or borough, as they call it, of 14,000 people, about one-half Polocks and their families—the lowest class of miners. One of the miners, a foreman whom I employed as guide, admitted me to dinner at his home, and the menu his wife had prepared was, in their nomenclature, sowbelly and beans, bread and warmed-over coffee; no sugar, no milk, nothing else.

After dinner he took me to the company house, where exist the thousands of Polock miners and their families. The Polock localities are designated as "Scalpertown" and "Boartown," the former a settlement of huts on a few contiguous streets, about 600 huts in number. Each hut is built of upright planks, battened and whitewashed on the outside, now yellow or gray with exposure. The huts are about 12 feet high in front, possibly 12 feet wide, with roof sloping to within a few feet of the ground; 30 feet back, and upstairs about one and one-half rooms; downstairs not three decent rooms. The coal companies provide about as good quarters for their mules in a big barn 500 feet from the human quarters. I ate supper with one of these Polock families, wife, husband and four children. The menu was bread, warmed over coffee, water, a modicum of milk.

The excellence of the above menu consists in the sharp appetite one always has just after eating. "You rise from the table," as the physical culture people say, "hungry." The above four little ones looked as if they had been hungry for five months.

No, the miners will not be starved to death. Yes, they can hold out, if necessary, till next summer, provided they don't freeze to death; and they will not freeze to death, I can assert most emphatically. On the other side of an alley wall in the rear of the huts and back of nearly all the company huts, is a coal box about 6x6x7, made of rough boards and roofed over, some smaller and some larger. These were

the miners' outside coal bins, and each bin, 600 about in all, was nearly filled to the top with coal. I could see it through the cracks of the weather-beaten boards. In the back room and sometimes in the cellar the miners also have a ton, a half ton, or two or more tons of coal. A humane superintendent has permitted these miners, men, women and children, for the last five months to pick the coal from the great culm heaps, a mile in circumference at the base, and 500 feet high—refuse slate, dust, now and then a piece of coal—all coughed up by the big, black coal breakers.

At noon hundreds of men, women and children climb down from the sides of these big black mountains, carrying baskets, coal scuttles and bags full of coal. Many a baby wagon drawn by the father and pushed by the mother and children, loaded with bags and baskets of coal, passed me on the way home. Night and day, for five months, the miners and their families have been picking out patiently, piece by piece, the coal from these great heaps of refuse. A family of four can on an average pick possibly a quarter of a ton a day. On pleasant evenings the black culm heaps are dotted with more stars than the skies above—the fathers, mothers and little children are picking coal till midnight by the light of the miners' lamps.

No, the miner will neither starve nor freeze. In the winter and during the wet weather, the condition of their homes is awful; and the long, sloping roofs leak like griddles; mud is everywhere about them. They pay in rent for these huts \$5.50 or \$6.50 per month, according to location. Five months' rent is due. When settlement of the strike comes, as it now seems to be approaching, a new problem will confront the poor miners. How much from their wages must they yield weekly to make up rent arrears? It seems to me they can yield nothing, as they are now living so close to the starvation line. When the father works he will need more food, and then he will have the rent as well as the back rent to meet. I pity the rest of the family.

A. P. POTTER.

LAND AND REFORM IN ARGENTINA. For The Public.

A brief glance at history may be useful in finding the cause of the present land distribution in the Argentine Republic. After the conquest of Peru by Francisco Pizarro, the conquered territory was distributed among his sol-

diers according to rank. To each of these estates, or "repartimientos" of land, were attached a certain number of aborigines as serfs. The feudal system was thus inaugurated with few of the checks to excessive oppression that existed in Europe. The repartimiento system, inaugurated in Peru, was before long extended into Argentina as far as the territory of the semi-civilized tribes extended, or the northwest arid region. The fertile, well-watered valley of the River Platte, and the desolate uplands of Patagonia, were then ranged by savage Indians, who were not finally conquered till long after the throwing off of the Spanish yoke, in 1810. For the semi-civilized tribes the Spanish conquest meant only a substitution of a European soldier for the native cacique as taskmaster; but the former exploited for personal gain alone, while the latter's mastery was as a social service.

The feudal land system, begun in monarchical days, was continued with the republic, though serfs and slaves have long since become free. The conquered land in the provinces* was already mostly held as private estates, the remnant, as it was won by degrees from the Indians, was sold off in blocks, with a square league (10.42 square miles) as a unit, at a nominal price. Army officers and speculators were often given "an inside track" at these sales. After the conquest of Patagonia by Gen. Roca in 1885, the army received a vast grant, to be selected at pleasure. Gen. Roca had 100 square leagues, colonels, five; lieutenant colonels, four; majors, three; captains, two, and lieutenants, one, with lesser areas to lower ranks. These grants were exempted for two generations from taxation, if held in the family of the recipient. There are some tracts yet held in common by Indian tribes in the provinces, as well as on the reservations in the territories.

The system of "colonies" is the method adopted by the nation to encourage agricultural settlements, and there were 735 colonies in 1895, against 53 in 1872. Outside of the 29 colonies of the government they are owned by speculators who handle tracts obtained cheaply from the government or from estancieros (estate owners). Each settler obtains a farm of 20 to 34 hectares (2.47 acres) in the provinces, or 100 hectares in the territor-

*At present there are 14 provinces, nine national territories and one federal district.