

acterizing this species of assassination. If it were peculiar to a particular paper, the problem would be simple; but it is characteristic of the American journalism of the time. The time when a newspaper was the history of a day has gone by. Reporters of the present know that simple facts no longer constitute news "at the desk." Sensation alone secures space rates and good salaries. It is for sensation, therefore, that all of them strive; and little wonder is it if some of them manufacture the sensations that are wanted instead of collecting such drugs in the journalistic market as mere facts. The compensation for it all in Professor Zueblin's case is that reports of his subsequent lectures were for a time what newspaper men call "good stuff." Newspaper notoriety resulting from the false report of one of his lectures had paved the way to many a newspaper desk for the admission of correct reports on other subjects. This was worth while because Professor Zueblin really has useful things to say and the courage to say them.

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The End of a Career.

Russell Sage is dead. His long life was devoted to the accumulation of wealth.

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LABOR IN POLITICS—ANOTHER INSTANCE.

Several months ago we described three different attitudes toward politics as possible for organized labor to maintain.

One was holding aloof from politics altogether; another was admitting politics into labor unions; the third was leading labor unions into politics.

Of the first we expressed the opinion that if organized labor holds aloof from politics "it will in due time find its operations hedged in with hostile legislation and tied up with injunctions, its leaders in jail, its adversaries fortified behind impregnable special interests, their agents in places of legislative and administrative power, their lawyers on the bench, and trades unions in comparison with employers' unions as a rope of sand to a wire cable."

Of the second, we predicted that if organized labor admits politics into labor unions, "self-seeking politicians, and through them the gigantic financial interests with which labor is most desperately at war, will bring the labor vote into the service of its enemies, and the last days of organized labor will be worse than the first."

Of the third and only reasonable attitude of organized labor toward politics, we described three possible methods of leading labor unions into politics, namely, affiliation with a labor-class party, affiliation with some other independent party, or utilization of the machinery of one or the other of the two principal political parties of the country.

Our purpose at that time was not to discuss the relative merits of these methods, but to tell the story of one of the most intelligent, forceful, faithful and devoted labor leaders of the East, who, having no hope from permanent side parties, had adopted the policy of trying to gain control of the Democratic party in order to make it truly democratic. The labor leader whose story we told (vol. viii, p. 834) for that purpose, was Michael J. Flaherty, the sheriff of Kings county, New York, in which lies the Borough of Brooklyn. By way of contrast, we are now about to tell the story of a labor leader of the same locality and similar character, Alfred J. Boulton, register of Kings county, who, having no longer any faith in the possibility of utilizing the machinery of either of the two principal political parties, has adopted the policy of independent political action.

With reference to fundamental principles, economic and political, these two men are in agreement; they disagree only as to method—Mr. Flaherty standing for utilizing for the promotion of those principles the machinery of an old party, and Mr. Boulton with the same motive standing for creating the machinery of a new party.

I.

Alfred J. Boulton* was born on a farm near Toronto, Canada, in 1858. His father was English and his mother Irish. The eldest of seven children in a farmer's family, his opportunities for an education were meager; after the age of ten he could be spared from farm work to go to school only in winter. At twenty-four he left the farm and drifted out to the Canadian northwest, where he worked as a carpenter and lumberman, his natural aptitude taking the place of an apprenticeship. His experiences here prepared his mind for the acceptance of economic theories that have ever since colored his politics and in a measure determined his career.

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During the boom period of Winnipeg, in the early '80's, Mr. Boulton was in the vicinity of that city of phenomenal growth. It grew up on

*A portrait of Mr. Boulton, by Peter Aitken, one of the former wood engravers of the Century Magazine, accompanies this issue of The Public as a supplement.

the open prairie in so short a time that the processes of social development were dramatized before his eyes.

As a workingman he was naturally most interested in the relation of this unfolding of social life to the condition of labor. Except in one or two branches of employment there were no labor unions, and the building trades were not organized at all; yet, in spite of the fact that laborers were coming into the city every day by the hundreds, wages did not fall. On the contrary they went up and up. The wages of brick layers reached an average of \$7.00 a day of ten hours. No "iron law of wages" ruled in Winnipeg at that time, and the reason was plain enough. There were more jobs than workers. The incoming workers instead of diminishing the relative supply of jobs increased them, for they demanded more work than they themselves were able to do; that is, they were inclined to be consumers in even greater degree than they were disposed to be producers. So the competition at Winnipeg in those days was not among workingmen for work; it was among employers for workmen. This easily explained the upward tendency of wages.

But that peculiarity needed explanation in its turn. Why did the competition of employers for workers more than keep pace with the competition of workers for work? Mr. Boulton might not then have reasoned out the answer as he afterwards learned to do, but the facts were plainly before him and they made a lasting impression upon his mind. The whole of northwestern Canada was at that time open for settlement, and most laborers, as soon as they got a few dollars in hand, became settlers on government land. This immediately took them out of the competition for work and added them to the competitors for workers. Competition for work was, therefore, continually at a low ebb, and wages were accordingly stiff.

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Equally clear to Mr. Boulton's observation at that time were the circumstances which reversed that original condition and shifted the labor market from a superabundance of work with a scarcity of workers, and consequent high and rising wages, to a superabundance of workers with a scarcity of work, and consequent low and falling wages.

The Canadian Pacific Railway, which passed through Winnipeg, had received from the Canadian government a gift of 60,000,000 acres of land. The gift comprised every alternate section within ten miles on each side of the railway, and all those sections were exempt from taxation for

20 years. The railway company was therefore in no hurry to sell. Its managers knew that this land would rise in value with every new settlement on the remaining government land, and as the exemption from taxation made the policy of withholding quite easy, the company withheld for the expected rise. Settlement on the railway land was therefore prevented, and even on the government land settlement was discouraged. As the alternate sections, which the railway would not sell, tended to isolate settlers on the other sections, the natural effect was to throw intending settlers back upon the city. Mechanics and laborers consequently remained in Winnipeg. They could not buy building land there, for values had jumped enormously; and of necessity they competed with one another for jobs.

Now came the trade union. But with a superabundance of workers and a scarcity of jobs, trade unions could not keep wages up. In spite of all the influence of labor organizations wages kept falling until they were almost down to the level of the wage scale of eastern Canada.

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Another effect of this change from high to low wages came within Mr. Boulton's observation and served to influence his future opinions. In the days of high wages in Winnipeg there were but few burglaries or other kinds of predatory crime. Only when employment became scarce and wages low did predatory crimes become common. It was not difficult for a rational mind to draw conclusions from these facts as to the great cause of crime.

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Not long afterward Mr. Boulton was in British Columbia, where he witnessed a similar shifting of the balance of competition and observed the causes. The timber lands of British Columbia had been preserved for the people through the efforts of Mr. Fraser, a representative in the Provincial parliament from a district of Vancouver Island. This was done in 1870, when the stumpage or royalty for lumbering was only 25 cents a tree, and anyone could go into the lumbering business. The land grabbers came down upon parliament at this time with a project for putting the government timber lands on the market for sale outright to the highest bidder. But Mr. Fraser defeated the project. To do this he spoke for 26 hours without cessation. His long speech exhausted him physically, but it saved the timber lands for the people of British Columbia and he was returned to the parliament at every election

afterwards but one without opposition. The economic effect as Mr. Boulton observed it in the '80's, was to open the lumber business to every enterprising man of moderate means, thereby withdrawing him from competition for work and making of him an additional competitor for workers.

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Although Mr. Boulton had always been a reader of books, it was not until after these experiences that he became a reader with a purpose. But he was now fully ripe for the message which Henry George had given to the world in "Progress and Poverty;" and when he read that book, in St. Paul where he had made his winter quarters, he immediately grasped its economic philosophy and responded to its ethical principles. Nor did he merely acquiesce. Like so many other thinking men of vigorous purpose who have read this book, he became not only a convert but an apostle.

II.

Circumstances soon afterward brought Mr. Boulton to New York. There he became a stereotyper and has ever since continued to earn his livelihood in that vocation, except as the mutations of radical politics have drawn him into the public service.

Early in its history he joined the stereotypers' union, where his sincerity, good sense and wholesome enthusiasm soon made him a trusted leader. Though of radical temperament, he has always been regarded by his unionist friends as a conservative; but his is the conservatism of just purposes and thoughtful policies, and not of cowardice or self-seeking.

Almost from his becoming a member of the stereotypers' union, he has represented it in the central labor body, at first in the old Central Labor Union of New York and from 1893 to 1905 in the present Central Federated Union of New York. He was sent in 1898 as a delegate to the international convention of the International Typographical Union at Syracuse, where he was particularly active in bringing about the adoption of the resolution that at each meeting of local unions 15 minutes must be given to the discussion of economic questions. After this, Mr. Boulton was selected to lead the fight in the convention for autonomy for the stereotypers' union. As a delegate to the Workingmen's Federation of New York State, he represented the stereotypers at eleven annual conventions. At the convention of 1901 he was appointed chairman of the committee to report on the relation of taxation to wages, a report

that was adopted unanimously by the Auburn convention of 1902, and printed in its annual report. This report advocates the taxation of land values as a means of increasing wages and lowering rents.

Nor has Mr. Boulton's trade union activity been confined to the stereotypers' union. When, in 1895, the surface railroad employees struck in Brooklyn, he was very active in organizing meetings in sympathy with the strikers; and as a delegate of the stereotypers' union to Washington, he sought to obtain increased pay for the letter carriers.

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As foreman of the stereotyping department of the Brooklyn Citizen, a position to which he rapidly rose in his trade, Mr. Boulton had the leisure to extend his outside activities not only to the organized labor movement but also to other movements, both economic and political. Among these were the Single Tax Club, the Social Reform Club and the Citizens' Union. Of his connection with the Citizens' Union, Mr. R. Fulton Cutting, one of its most distinguished leaders, says: "I have known Mr. Boulton for years, and had a good chance to study him as a member of the Citizens' Union executive committee. We did not always agree, nor can I say that I was in entire sympathy with some of his views as to general politics and the claims of organized labor; but, even where we differed, my respect for the man's earnestness, good common sense, and entire honesty of character was never for an instant lessened."

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While he has some of the qualities of an orator, especially that genuine earnestness without which oratory becomes mere declamation, and although he is not without skill as a writer as appears from his contributions to periodicals, it is as an organizer that Mr. Boulton shines most. He originated and carried through the great meeting at Cooper Union of July 13th, 1894, to protest against the sending of United States troops to Chicago during the Pullman strike. This was the meeting at which Henry George defended Gov. Altgeld in his controversy with President Cleveland. He also managed the reception of July 4th, 1897, to Gov. Altgeld at the Academy of Music, Brooklyn, where, to a packed audience that remarkable man delivered one of his most remarkable addresses. As Mr. Boulton's ideal of a great, able, honest man, was Gov. Altgeld, the success of this event is one that he recalls with pride. He had long been a friend of Altgeld's. Their friendship began with Altgeld's pardoning of the so-called "anarchists" in

1893. Learning from the Governor's pardon memorandum that the men had been pardoned because they were not guilty of murder but had been convicted by abuse of court proceedings, he wrote Altgeld congratulating him on his fidelity and courage, and until Altgeld's death the two were in frequent correspondence. Mr. Boulton is proud also of the somewhat startling innovation he made when he organized the famous Workingmen's Dinner at the Grand Central Palace, New York, in April, 1899, where, for the first time in the history of such gatherings, women came and were welcomed as fellow workers in a common cause.

III.

Although a Canadian by birth, Mr. Boulton was not without American traditions when he crossed the line. Having been born near the New York boundary, he was among those Canadians who had kinsmen to the number of 40,000 in the Union army. One of his uncles is to-day a leader in the Grand Army of the Republic of Brooklyn. For these reasons possibly to some extent, but probably in greater degree because he was a born democrat, he fell readily into the current of American politics.

Upon coming to the East in 1887 he found Henry George at the head of the labor ticket in New York State, this being the year immediately following George's phenomenal campaign for mayor of New York a decade or more before his death. Always a progressive democrat, with no reverence for the traditional Democracy that has its face set to the past, Mr. Boulton immediately plunged into that labor contest as a supporter of George; and as a free trader and under George's leadership in 1888 and again in 1892 he supported Grover Cleveland for the Presidency. Convinced by the Cleveland policy of 1894 that nothing in the direction of radicalism could be hoped for from that branch of the party, he supported Bryan in 1896 and 1900, feeling even then, however, that the sincerity of many Democratic leaders was extremely doubtful. Confirmed in this view by what he regarded as "the betrayal of the Democratic party into the hands of Belmont and Ryan" in 1904, he abandoned the Democratic party and accepted the nomination for governor of New York which was tendered him that year by the People's party.

His expectations as to the vote of the People's party in that State were disappointed, the total for governor being only 6,015, but this did not alter Mr. Boulton's attitude with reference to political methods. Unlike those men of his own

views as to principle, who would crowd the Belmonts and Ryans out of the Democratic party, Mr. Boulton believes that "the sooner the Democratic party is given wholly over to the Belmonts and Ryans, the better." In his view "any man nominated by the Democratic party whom Belmont and Ryan would support, would be sure to betray the public interests if elected." He regards "the Democratic party at the South as just as reactionary as the Republican party at the North," and is confident that they will "sell out the party again as they did in 1904, if they think that by so doing they can elect a few more Congressmen and get a few more appointive positions on which to fatten."

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As an incident of his career as a labor leader, Mr. Boulton has engaged not only in general politics but with even greater pertinacity in the local politics of New York and Brooklyn. This has brought him forward on more than one occasion as a candidate for local office—a serious candidate, not merely carrying a banner in the hope of future results, but fighting for immediate victory.

In 1903 he was the candidate for county clerk in Brooklyn on the fusion ticket on which Seth Low was defeated for mayor of Greater New York. Also defeated, Mr. Boulton received 98,000 votes—about 3,000 less than Low received in the same borough.

Two years later, when a candidate for register, he was more fortunate. This year there was no fusion, but a distinct issue on municipal ownership of public utilities had been raised, with William Randolph Hearst as the candidate for mayor on the municipal ownership ticket. Boulton's candidacy for register was on the same ticket. As is well known, Mr. Hearst was returned as defeated by a small plurality, a return he is contesting as fraudulent. In the Borough of Brooklyn, however, the municipal ownership ticket was elected, and Mr. Boulton was returned as register by a plurality of 7,000, his total vote being 77,000.

IV.

It was in speaking of this result soon after the election that Mr. Boulton explained his position on the subject of independent political action, in a speech which indicates better, perhaps, than any other published speech of his, his reasons for adopting this policy rather than the policy of trying to make the Democratic party democratic. In the course of this speech, Mr. Boulton said:

The local Municipal Ownership League of Brooklyn, of which Mr. Flaherty is the recognized head,

was formed in the Fall of 1904, after the failure of Mr. Flaherty and his friends to defeat Senator McCarren in the Democratic primaries. A strong organization was built up along non-political lines, the constitution of the League prohibiting it from going into politics. Last fall, however, the League sought an alliance with the Republican party. At that time I took a stand in accord with views I had previously held and still hold, namely, that we should make a straight-out, independent fight, irrespective of either of the old machines, and that the moment the League made a deal with either the Republicans or the Democratic party, its nominees would be looked upon simply as job-hunters. I also stated that the time had come when the people were sufficiently disgusted with both the old machines to make it not only possible but probable that a straight-out, independent fight would be successful. The result of the last election proves that my judgment in this respect was correct. I am, therefore, opposed to having anything to do with the primaries of either the Democratic or the Republican party. I would regard any attempt to make a contest in that way as a betrayal of the principles and ideals for which we stood last fall. Moreover, aside from the question of principles at issue, it strikes me as a tactical error for a plurality party—such as our party was shown last fall to be—to permit itself to be taken into the camp of a defeated opposing party. Such would be the case if we—particularly in Kings county—were to subject our cause to the decision of an old-party primary. Then would the mountain come to Mahomet. Then—in less elegant phrase—would the tail wag the dog.

I believe the time is ripe for a movement that will take from both the old parties the voters who hold to real democratic ideals, leaving to the corporationists the then useless machines. In other words, if we take away from them the independent voters—the men who love country more than party—they will then control only the shell. And I believe that we can, in one campaign, force the managers and beneficiaries of both the old parties openly to unite for mutual protection, as they have long been tacitly united for mutual gains by means of public plunder. I am firmly convinced that the time is opportune for the promotion of a real independent party—a party which will stand for the people's interests, rather than one which takes its inspiration from the arcana of organized and corrupting wealth, as both of the old parties have done, are doing, and will in all probability continue to do.

The radicals worked within the Democratic party for sixteen years—from 1888 until 1904—vainly hoping to vitalize and moralize it, with the result that in 1904 that party was more under the control of corporation interests than it had ever been in its history. It had become the personal property of Thomas F. Ryan, August Belmont and a few other franchise grabbers. In 1904, the Democratic party sought to duplicate the work of 1892, that is, to get into office under false pretenses. In 1892 the radicals foolishly supported the candidate selected for them by the late William C. Whitney and other corruptionists. In 1904 the radicals were not so easily fooled, despite eloquent appeals from William J.

Bryan and other popular leaders. The Democratic party as an organization now stands discredited before the country having sacrificed upon the altar of expediency the great principles for which it stood in '96 and 1900. It is in much the same position now as a burglar captured before he grabs the desired loot.

The election of 1904 proved that the masses had lost faith in the Democratic party and that the only hope for the future was to build up a people's party to represent the ideals and aspirations of the great army of American toilers. I believe that the campaign of last fall formed the nucleus of that party, and I believe that in the campaign of the coming Fall, we shall succeed in electing William Randolph Hearst Governor of New York on an independent ticket. If we nominate him independently, the old Democratic machine in this State will find itself compelled either to endorse him or to become a very bad third in the race. Whether Mr. Hearst is endorsed by the Democrats or not, I am confident that he can and will be elected Governor of New York State. Think of the effect of such a victory on the masses of the people from Maine to California! Think of its effect on the campaign of 1908, when for the first time in the history of this great Republic, the producers of wealth, the workers, will be brought into direct conflict upon the political field with the receivers of all the net products of wealth! If not within two years,—for evolution is slow,—then surely in the near future, lais will be the great question on which voters must divide.

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Mr. Boulton's friends describe him as characteristically a man of simple and elemental sincerity, appreciative of humor, kindly, and of unassuming modesty. In principle he is a democrat of the purest type. In his office he is said to be making an enviable record, and in this connection he is praised for conducting himself as a servant of all the people, disregarding his connection with the labor and political interests to which as a citizen outside of his office and its obligations he is devoted. As Judge Gaynor said of him at a public dinner tendered him in celebration of his marriage recently to Frances Schroeder, youngest daughter of the late ex-Mayor Schroeder of Brooklyn, herself an active worker in civic reform, "Mr. Boulton stands out pre-eminent in this community as the type of man who can attend to his daily work and yet have some time left for humanity—for the social, moral and political welfare of the community at large."

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"I saw two cars fastened together, coming around the corner of Monroe and Dearborn, bound north, and they were labeled 'Limits.' What did that mean?"

"It meant that each one of those dumpy arks was the limit, and that therefore two of them were ~~limits~~ its. Ask me something hard."—Chicago Daily News