

transportation. This was proper, because that committee is now dealing with the general subject of street car transportation. But the majority of the council exhibited an animus against low fares which it will be well for voters to remember. According to one report, that of the Chicago Tribune of the 10th, the ordinance "was practically laughed out of court," the aldermen being so unwilling to "even listen to what the mover of the proposition had to say in its favor" that they "in a hurry sent it to the committee on local transportation for burial."

The true inwardness of this hostile attitude toward low fares may be inferred from a statement which Alderman Bennett is reported to have made recently, when explaining the traction situation. It should be noted that Alderman Bennett's evident disposition is to save taxes for real estate men at the expense of street car riders. He asserted on the occasion referred to that the legitimate cost for operating expenses in carrying each passenger is more than three cents, and that about another cent would be fair remuneration for invested capital, making a total cost of something over four cents per passenger. To this assertion he appended his opinion that the remaining fraction of a cent out of a five cent fare ought to go to the city. Of course he favors 5-cent fares. The very foundation of Alderman Bennett's scheme is rickety. It is not true that it costs more than 3 cents for operating expenses to carry each passenger. The operating expense is very much less than 3 cents.

In the course of the franchise negotiations now in progress in Chicago, it has been proposed that policemen and firemen be allowed to ride free, and the suggestion is advanced that the same privilege ought to be extended to postmen. That all these public servants should ride on street cars without expense to themselves, in aid of the performance of their public duties, is true. It is also true

that the expense ought to be borne by the locality—as much so regarding postmen as firemen or policemen, for the privilege for postmen would contribute to the efficiency of the mail service locally, rather than nationally. But there is no more reason why any public servant should be carried free back and forth between his home and his work, or to the theater, or the church, than there is for carrying mechanics and shop girls free. It would be a private service for which, if he didn't pay others would have to. Moreover, even when public servants on official business are carried free, it should be upon trip passes, so that no opportunity might be afforded the traction companies of throwing sand into the eyes of the public by pleading the burden of an indefinite amount of free transportation. Just at this time, if any extension of franchises must be made, especial care is necessary to avoid imposing obligations upon the companies which cannot be measured in dollars and cents. There ought to be no general provisions of any kind for free transportation for anybody. But between classes of public servants to be carried without personal expense to themselves, when on public duty, whatever system of keeping tally of their rides may be adopted, it is evident that postmen should not be discriminated against.

Whether we like it or not we shall all have to recognize, sooner or later, the fact regarding labor strikes which Henry D. Lloyd bluntly declared in summing up the case of the anthracite strikers before the arbitration commission at Philadelphia. To one of Chairman Gray's nagging questions, one of the kind that some of the labor leaders had dodged, Mr. Lloyd declared that the obloquy which falls upon "scabs" is analogous to that which the American patriots of 1776 visited upon Tories, because strikes are industrial wars. That is a statement of fact, not an expression of opinion, and it is the solemn truth. It is puerile, there-

fore, to condemn strikes because "scabs" are incidentally deprived of their natural rights by strikers. The question is not whether bad happenings occur in strikes, but whether strikes themselves are to be tolerated. And that question hinges upon another, one which men like Chairman Gray try deftly to avoid, namely, whether culpability for striking is attributable to strikers, or to the industrial institutions which are robbing the working class for the benefit of an idle or worse than idle privileged class. Our own view of this matter is that strikes are bad, but that strikers are not to blame for strikes. It is not necessarily the persons that deliver the first blow who break the peace. Those who drive them into a corner where they must either hit or suffer are the real offenders.

Tenants of some of the "sky-scrapers" of Chicago, 16 stories high and more, have been forced for several days either to abandon their offices or to climb laboriously up to them by stairways. After a test of endurance for a week, the dispute has now been submitted to arbitration, something that should have been done at first. The cause of the struggle originated in a disagreement between two labor unions—the union of elevator men and the union of building managers.

The building managers' union (called "association" because it represents "financial" instead of "labor" interests), resisted demands from the elevator men's union for a trifle higher pay, a slight degree of participation in "this wonderful American prosperity." In addition the elevator men wanted the privilege of sitting down at times during their long hours of monotonous work; they wanted their distinctive uniforms to be furnished by the building owners who require them to be worn, instead of being charged to themselves; and they wanted their union recognized. It was the wages question, however, that made the strike, buildings that conceded the scale of \$55 a month