

The Public

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EDITORIAL

The Labor War.

One might be questioned for treating the recently announced purpose of the National Chamber of Commerce as a phase of the labor war of the world which seems now to be rushing on to a climax. None the less, it is a phase, a very prominent phase, of that war, as may be seen by considering the nature of the war itself. The labor war is a conflict, whether by political action or direct action or both, between two industrial classes—employers and wageworkers. These classes are forming definitely all over the world. The wageworking class have nothing but labor to chaffer with. They control nothing else; and, bereft of convenient natural opportunities for production, they cannot *control* that. The employer class, on the other hand, controls the natural opportunities for production, the other legalized monopolies in production, and consequently the labor-produced capital which is to modern production an industrial necessity. In this unbalanced industrial situation, the wageworking class is an exploited class and the employing class its exploiters; and out of that condition there has developed a revolutionary movement in the exploited class. This movement takes many forms, all the way from benefit societies and philanthropic aids, to militant trade unionism and the extreme schools of anarchism and of socialism.



Socialism, apart from its economic principles

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and programs (and these are of minor concern at present), is absorbed in the expectation of placing the exploited class in absolute industrial power. One great division is over the issue of doing this by political or by industrial methods; but the objective of both is industrial dominance for the labor class, which is now exploited by the employer class. Both divisions denounce the present political order as one which the employer class controls.

It is at this point that the recently announced purpose of the National Chamber of Commerce comes in as a phase of the labor war—of that irrepressible industrial conflict which is rapidly evolving between the employer class and the wage-working class. For this body of employers bears much the same relation to the employer class that industrial unionism bears to the wage working class. It differs in only one essential respect. Whereas industrial unionism regards our present political government as a weapon of employers, the National Chamber of Commerce purposes utilizing our present political government with organized precision and efficiency as a weapon for employers.

Elihu Root's Wisdom.

At last the plutocratic financiers have found a friend in their midst—that best of friends, one who tells unpalatable truths. This friend is Elihu Root. At the dinner of the New York Chamber of Commerce on the 21st, Mr. Root delivered this wholesome advice:

There are hundreds of thousands of people outside the great industrial communities who think you are a den of thieves; there are hundreds of thousands of people who think the manufacturers of the country are no better than a set of confidence men. We have before us now great and serious questions regarding the financial problems of the country, and this is what stands in the way of their solutions: It is that the men who understand the finances of the country are under suspicion. Great bodies of people will not accept what the experts say, what the men who understand the subject say, because they do not believe their motives are honest.

If, as the news dispatches report, there was consternation, no wonder. Financiers who have laughed at Bryan for telling them this these sixteen years, might well feel the jolt when they are told it by Elihu Root. There may also have been among them some disquiet as to Mr. Root's meaning when he called them experts. Was he making sport of their pretensions? Did he give his compliment such a setting as to imply, what

the thousands of people to whom Mr. Root is referred suspect, that those experts may be much the same kind in finance that foxes are in poultry. Perhaps Mr. Root didn't really mean to imply that. Yet the experts may be conscious of its truth all the same.

"Double Entry" Bookkeeping.

It turns out now that the Wall-street partner of the City of Chicago in the Chicago traction business keeps two sets of books—a public set for the partnership and a private set for the Wall-street partner.

"Whistling Up the Wind."

Big land speculators and holders of corporation franchises in Missouri and Oregon are quite as well pleased with their "great victory" over Single-taxers as President Taft is with his great victory over Mr. Roosevelt. President Taft shows by his utterances since election that he has as much confidence in the final outcome as the land speculators and franchise holders have. Whistling has long been recognized as a tonic for debilitated courage and paralytic confidence. For many years the Turks have been whistling merry tunes, but in recent weeks they have needed all their breath for running.

Celebrating a Victorious Defeat.

Carl J. Buell, democratic Democrat, was defeated for Congressman-at-large from Minnesota, but this did not prevent his organizing a glorification dinner for his successful rival, James Manahan, democratic Progressive. The toastmaster was S. R. Child, a prominent member of the legislature, who warned the assemblage that "if we do not socialize land values those values will socialize us." Among the speakers were Senator Clapp and W. I. Nolan, besides Mr. Buell and Mr. Manahan; and from all their speeches, Single-taxers might almost feel that Manahan's victory over Buell wasn't very much different, so far as their cause may be concerned, from what Manahan's defeat by Buell would have been.

Illinois Speakership.

For Speaker of the Illinois legislature, the only acceptable candidacy so far announced is that of Charles A. Karch of Belleville. Mr. Karch is a party Democrat. He is also a democrat regardless of party. In two legislatures of the State he has