

Beginning with the land-owning few on the one side of every question, and on the other slaves and helots, the many denied education, denied a voice in public affairs, denied their suffrage, held in ignorance and poverty by the laws and institutions of the land, the catastrophe of war changed the actual into a metaphoric lash. The ballot, when it came, broke to the hope of usefulness the promise given to credulity. When, finally, the sleight was acquired to fold the ballot (the first test of capacity to express a political opinion at the polls), and the Chinese puzzles were all worked out by enough voters to make it dangerous, a process of debauchery came into vogue.

It has been related that in certain enterprising communities, enjoying banking facilities, large deposits, say some thousands, made in a fictitious name on the day before election, have been checked out in hundreds of very small amounts on election day. Account closed, checks cashed, vouchers returned and all records dead and silent as Rameses, ten minutes after the official crier closed the polls.



The point, however, is that the auctioneering of votes may be reached by an ascending or descending stair. Where slave and helot were the basis of what now the basis is sale of votes, should be considered evidence that some progress has been made. Instead of no vote at all, a vote that may possibly be sold indicates a rise in the civic scale; the same practice where slave and helot were never known, spells progress backwards—meaning that slave and helot are there even now far along in the process of creation.

The creature who sells a vote never has brains enough to conceal the fact. A wretched, incompetent, tatterdemalion, unkempt, unshorn, unshod for months before election day, suddenly blossoms forth in a suit of store clothes, shoes, hat, a shining cheek and poll, with a cigar threatening the outside corner of now this and then the other optic. And general business is "generally good" during "election week." Selling votes is very similar to a practice that did once and may still obtain in the West: Indians trading blankets for drinks of whisky. Similar but very much more disastrous is the former, because the vote seller sells not only his own rights but the rights of every other voter, while the Indian does his own suffering.

But out of it all will come good, even among those least favored with early advantages. The consciousness is growing that ballot laws, the grandfather clause, etc., etc., are tricks and tools of monopoly, fakes pure and simple; Negro domination, the ignorant vote, simply the bogle man behind which monopoly has gathered into its control practically every opportunity of any value.

Desperately does monopoly contend to retain that control. It is possible that not everyone who wishes "time to consider" reform measures is an agent of monopoly, but you may wager the limit that every agent of monopoly is doing his level best to extend the "time to consider."



On the Eastern Shore there is the identical prob-

lem presented by a traction question in the metropolis, although there is no street car in hundreds of miles. Franchise problem? No. Transportation, ballot law, conservation problems? Not at all. It is a monopoly problem, always and everywhere, at bottom a land and a land-owner problem. Land owner with helot and slave, or land user with a race of freemen, that is the issue.

WESTERN STARR.

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## NEWS NARRATIVE

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The figures in brackets at the ends of paragraphs refer to volumes and pages of The Public for earlier information on the same subject.

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Week ending Tuesday, May 7, 1912.

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### The Labor War in Chicago.

What one side calls a "strike" and the other a "lockout" began in the principal Chicago newspaper offices on the 3d—the Tribune, the Record-Herald, the Examiner, the American, the Inter-Ocean, the Journal, the Evening Post and the Daily News. The whole truth about its origin is difficult—practically impossible at present—to discover. On the surface, however, it appears to have begun with a quarrel between the Hearst papers, the Examiner (morning) and the American (afternoon), although charges are made that this action of those papers was only the first open move in a plan of the publishers' union to break up the various printing-trades unions in detail. However that may be, the strike (or lockout, whichever it is) actually began in the press rooms of the Hearst papers.



Mr. Hearst seems to have had a contract of his own with the Web Pressmen's Union—the union of men who operate printing presses that print from continuous sheets of paper in rolls. His contract had been made before his papers joined the union of employers, which is known as the American Newspaper Publishers' Association and is a national combination with a Chicago "local." This contract expired on the 30th of April. Having meanwhile been admitted into the Publishers' Association, the Hearst papers notified their pressmen on that day that they would substitute for the expiring contract the contract of the Publishers' Association. Whether this notification was accepted by the pressmen as a substitution of contracts is in dispute, but it appears to be clear that no written or other formal substitution was agreed to by the pressmen's union. Questions regarding the matter arose on the following day, with reference to which each party asserts an offer to arbitrate and a refusal of arbitration by the other.

Upon the failure at that time to agree the manager of the Hearst papers declared their pressmen to have put themselves in the position of strikers. According to his version they walked out; according to theirs he drove them out. So far, the quarrel affected the Hearst papers alone—at least upon the surface. But as the Hearst papers had become members of the American Newspaper Publishers' Association, they demanded united support under the rules of that organization, and got it. On the 2d, the day following the pressmen's quarrel with the Hearst papers, the Chicago "local" of the American Newspaper Publishers' Association officially declared its contract with the Chicago Newspaper Web Pressmen's Union No. 7 "broken by the union and therefore terminated," and announced that thereafter "the press rooms of all the members of the Chicago local" of the publishers' organization, would "be conducted without recognition of the jurisdiction of Chicago Newspaper Web Pressmen's Union No. 7."



Whether justly or not, this action on the part of the publishers' union confirmed a widespread feeling in labor circles that the publishers' organization at Chicago was executing a concerted plan to crush them successively in detail. There was consequently an immediate hostile response from the newspaper drivers' union and the newsboys' union. A joint meeting of the members of these organizations was held on the 2d at which plans for supporting the pressmen were adopted. The same suspicion appears to have influenced the stereotypers' union. On the 3d they declared null and void by its own terms their agreement with the publishers' association (on the ground that it had been violated by that association in connection with the Hearst controversy), and struck work in aid of the pressmen. They were ordered, on the 4th, by the President of the International Union of Stereotypers (James J. Freel), by telegraph from Brooklyn, N. Y., to "immediately return to work," he declaring in his telegraphic message that their strike is "in violation of existing contract underwritten by" the International Union. According to the Tribune of the 7th, Mr. Freel followed his telegram with in an hour with a long distance telephone order to L. P. Straube, of the Chicago Stereotypers, "to order the men to return to work," which "Straube flatly refused to do." The Tribune of the same date made the following announcement: "President Freel and other International officers will personally order the men to return to work today." Having arrived in Chicago on the 7th, Mr. Freel and the vice president of the International Stereotypers' Union (Charles A. Sumner) issued a formal order directly to the members of the Chicago Stereotypers' Union, reciting the former's telegraphic order of the 4th from

Brooklyn, N. Y., to Mr. Straube as president of the Chicago Stereotypers' Union, and saying:

We have learned since our arrival here (Chicago) that the members of Chicago Stereotypers' Union No. 4 have not been made acquainted with the contents of the above telegram. We therefore again order our members to return to work, and appeal to all to immediately comply.



Of deliveries and sales of the big newspapers involved in this controversy there were virtually none on the 3d, 4th and 5th. On the 3d the Daily Socialist, which had suspended publication on the 30th (as stated in these columns at page 422) and resumed on the 2d, had the afternoon field entirely to itself, as it has had ever since. It started a morning edition on the 2d, under the name of the Chicago Daily World, which had the morning field almost exclusively to itself on the 3d, 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th, as to street and elevated railroad sales. Regular deliveries of the Tribune, Record-Herald, Examiner and Inter-Ocean began on the 6th, but their reading matter was in bad shape and much reduced, and they were late in delivery. Four-page sheets of them all were obtainable only at the publication offices and at some stores on the 4th, and on the 5th (Sunday) the few obtainable copies contained but little printed matter apart from the ready-made supplements. Deliveries on the 7th were apparently regular once more and the contents nearly normal.



Charges and counter-charges of violence are prolific in the local newspapers on each side, but so manifestly partisan on both sides as to make it impossible, without extended special investigation, to get at the truth of it all. From cursory inquiries and comparison of the accusations, we are of opinion that lawless conduct is attributable both to the labor-union side and to the publishers'-union side; and that the newspapers of each side, while publishing lurid reports of lawlessness on the other side, suppress all information about lawlessness on their own. So far as our observation and information enable us to draw conclusions, the lawlessness on the side of the labor unions consists for the most part of spontaneous angered outbreaks, although organized groups are in evidence at some points in connection with the destruction or spitting away of bundles of publishers'-union dailies—"scab papers" as the newsboys call them,—which have been delivered at the doors of dealers willing to sell them and by whom they have been ordered. On the side of the publishers' union, the lawlessness consists of unwarranted police interference, and of outrages by "huskies" of the kind that were employed recently by the publishers'-union newspapers in their war upon each other. One editorially verified instance may throw light upon the

matter. At about 9 o'clock on the morning of the 6th, an automobile of the publishers' union stopped in front of the Belmont avenue station of the Northwestern Elevated railroad. There were six "huskies" in it, and one more rode on a motorcycle behind. From this automobile, armfuls of Record-Heralds, Tribunes, etc., were carried into the station and piled upon the newsstand table without a word to the lessee. He had not ordered the papers and he cleared his table of them as soon as the "huskies" had gone, throwing them into a far corner of the station. In answer to questions elicited by personal observation of this whole affair, he said that he paid rent for this newsstand, that it was his property, that he was a member of the newsmen's union, and that he would not handle "scab papers." The only papers he had then on his table were The Chicago World and The Daily Socialist, which are distinguished by the newsmen as "union papers." Further inquiries drew from this dealer the statement that on the 4th and the 5th the same "huskies," or men like them, had covered his newsstand in the same manner with bundles of the "scab papers," and had placed there a representative of their own to sell them from his stand, in spite of his protest, and that two policemen stationed themselves near the front of the station on the street to protect the intruder and enforce the sale of the "scab papers." The owner of the stand, an industrious and peaceable and apparently truthful young man, who has served papers at the Belmont station for a year or more, asserts that all the news dealers on the Elevated system are, like himself, lessees of their stands and members of the newsmen's union, that they voluntarily refuse to handle the "scab papers," and that they are subjected to coercive efforts similar to those described above in his own case, by the publishers' union. As to street stands, many of which command high premiums for some obscure reason, it appears to be true that the police are preventing their use as far as possible for sales of The Chicago World and The Daily Socialist exclusively. They have taken away large numbers of street corner tables and forbidden the use of the places for newsstands. There appear also to have been a good many arbitrary arrests by the police, some of them justified, some of them not, and many of them discriminatory in favor of the publishers' union.



#### Railroad Strike.

A strike of Chicago freight handlers began on the 4th. In anticipation of the expiration of their contract with the Rock Island Railroad on the 1st of May, those employed by that road applied six months ago for an increase of wages, in order that the matter might be considered in time for renewal of contract. As no adjustment was made by the appointed time, the strike began; and when it began it included the entire force of freight

handlers on all the roads at Chicago, including checkers and receiving clerks. The General Managers' Association, which controls all the 24 roads centering at Chicago, had at the last moment offered an increase in wages of half a cent an hour. This was overwhelmingly rejected on referendum. An increase of ten cents a day had been asked for, besides a half holiday on Saturdays and double pay for Sunday work. Non-union freight handlers to the number of 600 joined the strikers on the 6th. Meanwhile, according to the Record-Herald of the 6th, "more than a thousand non-union men were imported" on the 5th, "to take the places of the 6,000 men who walked out Saturday noon," and "more are coming as rapidly as they can be engaged by local agents of the railroads throughout the Middle West. [See current volume, page 398.]



#### The Ohio Constitutional Convention.

The Thomas Fitzsimons plan of municipal government was adopted by the Ohio Constitutional convention on the 30th by 104 to 7. This plan provides for general laws for the incorporation of cities and villages, and additional laws operative in a municipality when approved at a referendum. All powers of self-government, inside the general law of the State, are given. Municipalities may construct, own, buy, lease or operate any public utilities, and issue bonds in payment, or may contract for public utility service. There can be no franchises, however, without approval of a local referendum. And municipalities may frame their own charters, subject to the general law of the State, if the citizens so decide at a referendum; the charter when completed to be also approved at referendum, as must be all subsequent amendments. "Excess condemnation" is allowed for the purpose of enabling the city adopting it to reap the "unearned increment" of land adjacent to public improvements, the bonds for such excess to be a charge upon the lands condemned and not an addition to the city debt. In the purchase or erection of a public utility, bonds issued above the limit of the city's debt are not to be a lien on the city property but only upon the utility. [See current volume, page 397.]



A hard fought controversy over taxation began on the 1st and continued through the 2nd. At a late hour that night the principle of the uniform rule as opposed to classification of property for taxation appeared to have a complete majority on the question of engrossing the uniform-rule proposal, which was carried by 65 to 25.



#### The New Mexican Revolution.

Fighting continues in Mexico between the Madero government and the insurrectionists. Emilio