

kee two women were on the 4th elected members of the Board of Education.



Socialists in the Local Elections

According to the news dispatches there were several Socialist victories and some defeats in the local elections of last week. At Krebs, Okla., two Socialists were elected aldermen (giving the Council two Socialists and two Republicans), and the Socialist candidate for Mayor was defeated by only two votes by a Republican, there being no Democratic candidate. At the school board and judicial election in Milwaukee, the Socialists were defeated; but in Racine they elected one alderman and a justice of the peace, and in Superior two aldermen and two county supervisors. Manitowoc, which had gone Socialist before and then reacted, went Socialist again last week. Pasadena, California, elected a Socialist Mayor, as did Girard, Kansas; and in Galesburg, Illinois, the Socialist vote was so largely increased as to make the Socialist candidate for Mayor run second. The Chicago Daily Socialist reports Socialist victories also at Beatrice, Wymore and Red Cloud (Nebraska), Victor (Colo.), and Fort Scott (Kansas). [See vol. xiii, p. 1155; vol. xiv, p. 321.]



Pearl Button Lockout in Iowa.

A lockout of pearl-button makers at Muscatine, Iowa, of which but few facts have leaked out through regular press reports, is thus explained to The Public by Alice Henry, editor of Life and Labor:

Yet another industry is in the throes of an industrial disturbance, although the newspapers so far have barely alluded to it. It covers a wide area. The manufacture of pearl buttons is one of those great small occupations whose importance we overlook—until something happens. In this case the something that has happened is the refusal of a large number of the workers to go on living and working under dangerous and unhealthy conditions.

The pearl button industry has its center in the small towns on the banks of the Mississippi in Iowa and adjacent States. The workers in Muscatine, Iowa, one of the chief button-making centers, lately realized that individually they were helpless to better their lot. Only a strong trade union could do that. They proceeded very cautiously and carefully for some months, until at the close of February the employers began to be alarmed and by way of bringing matters to a crisis closed down every plant in the town on the pretext of being overstocked with buttons. The lockout has now continued for nearly seven weeks, the employes on their part refusing to return unless their organization is recognized. The union now includes 2,900 workers, men and women, almost the entire force of button makers in Muscatine. They keep the factories picketed, hold daily mass meetings with occasional parades, and are very wisely spending their funds, not in money benefits but on the

commissary plan, supplying meals and food to the members on production of tickets.

One of the ablest of the organizers of the American Federation of Labor, Mr. Emmett Flood, is now on the ground. Organizers from the Women's Trade Union League, Miss Emma Steghagen, Miss Katherine Finnegan, Miss Zelig Emerson and Miss Gertrude Barnum, have also been in Muscatine, while the secretary of the Button Workers' Protective Union, Miss Pearl McGill, a very young girl, but fired with the very spirit of labor, and Miss Pauline Lange, are in Chicago now telling the story nightly to their organized brothers of every trade. Emigrants from Muscatine have also been sent on the same errand to New York, St. Louis, Des Moines and also to the small button-making towns farther up the Mississippi.

What are the grievances which have driven these workers out of the shops? First, it would seem, as nearly always, comes the question of wages. It is all piece work, and as the workers are speeded up to turn out more, so are the wages cut all the time. When the married men find themselves unable to earn more than \$9.00 a week they are driven to seek the help of their wives and little children and you have a new home industry installed, the industry of sewing pearl buttons on to cards with a sheet of tin foil between for 1½ cents per gross. Pearl buttons are cut from the fresh water clam of the Mississippi. These are supposed to be clean when sent to the factory; but they actually have often bits of the shell fish adhering, which decay and make the water in the tubs not only exceedingly offensive but also poisonous, so that when the cutter puts in his hand to lift out the shells, he runs daily risk of blood poisoning, a risk far too often realized. Then the heating and ventilation of the factories is bad and toilet facilities are utterly inadequate. Still another grievance is the unprotected condition of the machinery. Fingers are gashed and tips cut off in the drilling machines, and occasionally a whole arm will be drawn into iron jaws whence it can not be released until the machine is taken to pieces. The workers consider that they should see the buttons weighed for as matters are at present, although a gross is supposed to be as in the schools books, twelve dozen, or 144 buttons, after a foreman has weighed a few hundred gross the worker finds that he is being paid only at the rate of so many cents per gross of, it may be, 160 or 200 buttons.



Unearned Increment in Toronto.

The city of Toronto has finally secured Parliamentary authority for "excess condemnation" upon acquiring lands for public improvement. This was given at the last session of the parliament of Ontario, by the insertion of the following clause in a measure affecting the city, the clause being now known as Clause 12 of an act respecting the City of Toronto, 1911:

The said Corporation may acquire by purchase, or without the consent of the owners thereof or of persons interested therein may enter upon, take and use not only land actually required for the opening, widening, extension or straightening of a street or

the laying out and establishing of a park or playground, but also any land within 200 feet of the limits or sides of such street, park or playground; and shall pay such compensation for any land so taken or injuriously affected by the exercise of any power conferred by this section as may be agreed upon, or in default of agreement as may be determined by arbitration under the provisions of the Consolidated Municipal Act of 1903. Provided that the corporation shall sell and dispose of so much of the said lands as are not required for such work, within seven years, or within such further time as may be fixed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.

This is the first time in the Province of Ontario, and probably the first time anywhere, that a city has been allowed by law to expropriate land for the special purpose of securing the added value given to it by public work. It appears to be one form of the movement for securing unearned increment for public use—interpreting the term “unearned increment” in the narrow sense in which it is most commonly employed, namely, that increase of value which attaches to land during the period between its purchase and its sale. [See vol. xiii, p. 949.]

+ +

The Ferrer Question in Spain.

After more turbulent and threatening debating in the Cortes over the trial and execution of Francisco Ferrer last year, the Chamber of Deputies on the 8th rejected by a vote of 129 to 23 a Republican motion demanding that the Government introduce a bill modifying the code of military justice and abrogating the law of jurisdiction. The dispatches report that the Premier, Mr. Canalejas, announced that the modification of the military code was already on the program of the Government and that the law of jurisdiction could not be abrogated before the military code was modified. The protracted debate thus ended as anticipated, in a noncommittal verdict. [See vol. xiv, p. 323.]

+

An incipient Republican revolt was reported from the Province of Malaga in the south of Spain on the 10th.

+ +

The Russian Constitutional Crisis.

Mr. Rodzianko was elected President of the Douma on the 4th, in place of Mr. Guchkoff whose resignation was reported two weeks ago. Mr. Rodzianko is classed as a Conservative, and was the candidate of the Octoberists. [See vol. xiv, p. 301.]

+

For the first time in its history the Council of the Empire, the upper house of the Russian parliament, on the 6th adopted an interpellation attacking the Government, by a vote of 98 to 52. The interpellation related to the action of the Government in promulgating the Zemstvo bill by Im-

perial ukase during a forced proroguing of the parliament, as reported last month. The dispatches report that the galleries were crowded for the discussion of the interpellation. Prince Troubetsky declared the government had violated the normal course of legislation and the stability of the fundamental laws reposing in solemn Imperial ukases. Senator Naryshkin, spokesman for the Conservatives, said the members of his party were not worried over the constitutional guarantees, but the Government's action had shaken the trust of the people in the Czar's word. Prof. Kovalevsky, representing the left wing, declared that the council of ministers had usurped legislative functions; its action meant that the council of ministers claimed a decisive voice in case of disagreement between the upper and the lower chamber. [See vol. xiv, p. 301.]

NEWS NOTES

—A conflagration in Tokio, the capital of Japan, on the 9th, swept over four square miles and destroyed about \$3,000,000 of property.

—One hundred and twenty-eight men, most of them Negro convicts, perished in a coal mine explosion at the Banner mines, near Littleton, Ala., on the 8th.

—Mr. James McCarthy will address the Chicago Single Tax Club (508 Schiller Bldg.), Friday, April 14, on “The Opportunities of Single Taxers in the Organized Labor Movement.”

—A bill which is reported in effect to provide for direct nomination of United States Senators, was passed on the 7th by the Minnesota Senate. A similar bill has been passed by the House.

—Governor Wilson, of New Jersey, sent a message to the legislature on the 11th, urging the establishment of the commission form of government for New Jersey cities, with initiative, referendum and recall provisions.

—A \$25,000 monument in Chicago to the memory of Governor John P. Altgeld is proposed in a bill introduced in the Illinois Senate on the 6th by Senator Waage. The bill was referred to the committee on appropriations.

—Men teachers in the elementary schools of New York city appointed hereafter will receive no more pay than women, the Board of Education having adopted that method of equal pay for equal work. [See vol. xii, pp. 494, 1095.]

—Senators Borah, Bristow and Culberson introduced resolutions in the United States Senate on the 6th for amending the Constitution so as to provide for election of United States Senators directly by the people. [See vol. xiv, p. 206.]

—Cornelius McAuliff, for many years managing editor of the Chicago Record-Herald, died on the 10th at the age of 61. Mr. McAuliff, though intense in his devotion to newspaper work as a profession, was independent in opinion and of radical mind as a citizen.

—Without a dissenting vote the Senate of Iowa adopted, on the 6th, a House bill providing for the