

In the same article it says of one of the mills at McKeesport, that—
 there the Amalgamated association had made itself so intolerable to the proprietors that they had fought themselves clear of it, and their mill was publicly recognized at the last signing of the scale, as nonunion.

Why does not the deunionization of this mill as distinctly indicate the purpose of the trust ultimately to deunionize all, as a demand for the unionization of some indicates on the part of the strikers "a determination ultimately to unionize all?" Undoubtedly it does.

While the nominal issue in this steel strike is only, as the Nation puts it, "whether three or four mills out of scores should be unionized or not," the real issue is indisputably whether the union shall be recognized in all or in none. The strikers aim to have it recognized in all; the trust aims to disrupt it altogether. According to the Nation, the trust properly decided that if there was to be a fight over this issue "it had better be made at once, before the Malakoff of the defenses had been carried or weakly surrendered." We agree with the Nation that from the trust point of view that was a proper decision. But we cannot see why a decision to make the issue at once and over a trifling difference, if proper for the trust from its standpoint, was not proper also for the strikers from theirs. Was it not as necessary for the Amalgamated association as for the trust to make its fight "before the Malakoff of the defenses had been carried or weakly surrendered"?

One thing of exceptional importance in the Nation's pro-trust editorials, which we have commented upon especially because they are typical of the mental attitude toward the steel strike of the comfortable but nonvenal classes, is their assumption that trades unionism is an "encroaching tyranny over free labor and free capital." That it is an encroaching tyranny is true. But organically it is and always must be too weak to

make its tyranny dangerous. Of all the tyrannies that threaten us, trades unionism is for that reason the least to be feared. The only possibility of danger from it is through federation with trusts, by means of contracts like that which holds the Chicago steel makers in their places at a crisis in unionism, or through a shrewd business agent as in the case of the locomotive engineers and Mr. Arthur, or by means of some petty profit-sharing device like that now proposed by Mr. Morgan. Such a federation would indeed make trades union tyranny dangerous. But the germ of this danger would be not in the unions themselves, but in the trusts with which they form offensive and defensive alliances. But there is another point. Though we do regard trades unionism as an encroaching but weak form of tyranny, we do not regard it as at this time making any encroachments upon "free labor and free capital." There is not now such a thing as free labor or free capital. Neither can be free without industrial opportunity, and opportunities are gone. The Nation's class, through the institutions which the Nation strenuously defends, has monopolized them.

Trades unionism as a mode of defense against industrial oppression made possible by abnormal conditions, is justifiable or not according to its efficiency. Only those persons can reasonably withhold their sympathy from it who prefer to give their sympathy to the oppressor and who lend their influence to the maintenance of the abnormal conditions that make the oppression possible. As a mode of defense, therefore, we heartily sympathize with trades unionism. Though not in our opinion the best method of resisting industrial oppression, it is one method. But as a principle of industrial organization, nothing could be worse than trades unionism unless it were something more potent. The trust is worse, for instance, but only because

the trust is better equipped with weapons of arbitrary power.

Some idea of the absurdity of trades unionism as an industrial principle may be got from the recent experience of the Columbus (O.) Press-Post. Unionism on that paper appears to have been carried to the point of divesting its editor and owner, who is responsible to the public for its editorial policy and business standing, of the management of the paper, and of placing it in the hands of labor organizations which, in these respects, are wholly without responsibility. An industrial system cut upon that pattern would be intolerable. Bad as the present system is, it does on the whole identify management with responsibility. Let us not be understood as ignoring the notion that in an ideal industrial system, trades would be organized and that each trade would govern its own plant and membership. For example, that compositors would absolutely control composing rooms, without other boss than their own chosen foreman, who would really be their servant. Nor do we see any objection to that arrangement, provided the organization owns its own plant and bears the responsibility of management, and provided customers are at liberty to patronize it or to go elsewhere as the interests of their management and responsibilities may dictate. But a dominant industrial system based upon present trades union principles and methods, would be as oppressive as a dominant religious system based upon the military methods of the Salvation Army.

If the reactionary reorganizers of the Democratic party get any comfort out of the action of the Iowa convention, we are sure the element which they delight to denounce as "populist" will congratulate them. Their press was getting itself into a good "ready" to say about the Iowa convention what it has been saying about the Ohio and the Pennsylvania con-

ventions. In Ohio the Democrats decided to confine this year's fight to local issues. But because their platform made declarations on national issues, yet was silent about Bryan and the Kansas City platform, the plutocratic reorganizers, echoed by the Republicans, shouted joyously, pointing to this omission as evidence that the party was swinging back into the embraces of its old leaders. In Pennsylvania, also, the Democrats decided to confine this year's fight to local issues; and, mindful of the misrepresentation to which the Ohio action had been subjected by the plutocrats, they were careful to say nothing at all about national issues except to waive them. But that made no difference to the plutocratic press. It promptly pointed now to Pennsylvania as well as to Ohio, for indications that Bryanism was being repudiated. Next came Iowa. For days before the convention the plutocratic press described it also as certain to reject Bryanism. Had the reactionaries kept quiet, they might now have had as much color for saying that the Iowa convention repudiates Bryan as they had for saying that Ohio and Pennsylvania did so; for in Iowa, too, the only issue this year is local—the question of taxing railroad property equally with other taxable property—and national declarations might properly have been left out of the platform, as they were in Pennsylvania, to avoid antagonizing Republicans who are with the Democrats on state issues. But after what the plutocratic Democrats said as to the silence of the Ohio and the Pennsylvania platforms with reference to the Kansas City platform, the democratic Democrats of Iowa could not afford to make their platform also silent in that respect. Nor have they made it so. Though the reorganizers did influence the committee on resolutions sufficiently to furnish the plutocrats with their coveted opportunity to name Iowa as another state which had thrown Bryanism overboard, the minority brought the question squarely before

the convention and it sustained Bryanism. This is the first occasion on which the "reorganizers'" issue has been tested. It was not tested at all in the Ohio and Pennsylvania conventions. Even in the Iowa convention many democratic Democrats voted with the "reorganizers" for local reasons, and so made the minority larger than it would have been on a perfectly definite test. But the Iowa convention did make a test; it did vote on the question of keeping the Democratic party in line with its democratic policy of the past two presidential campaigns. This is the first vote on that question that has been taken since the last presidential election, and upon this vote the reorganizing reactionaries were distinctly defeated.

The newspaper dispatches upon the faith of which we stated last week that "Mayor Jones, of Toledo, has announced his intention of supporting the democratic ticket," were somewhat in error. Mayor Jones writes that that was not his announcement, what he did announce being this:

As between Kilbourne and Nash, I am for the former; but shall probably vote for some republicans, some democrats, some socialists, some nonpartisans nominated by free petition; and for some offices I shall refrain from voting entirely.

One of the republican papers of Chicago—the Tribune—has collected statistics of the prices of vegetables, meats, butter, eggs, cheese and fruit in the Chicago market as they prevail now, and compared them with the prices of a year ago. The increase is phenomenal. It ranges from nine per cent. for butter to 800 per cent. for cabbage. Producers who get the benefit of these higher prices are doubtless grateful to President McKinley, who is understood to have caused the increase, but why should consumers be grateful? When Mr. McKinley increases the prices of commodities he ought in fairness to in-

crease the wages of consumers, but he appears to have neglected that.

A useful political work of no little importance has been undertaken by the Ohio State Board of Commerce, (353 Superior street, Cleveland), of which E. M. Thresher, of Dayton, is president, and Henry A. Griffin, of Cleveland, is secretary. The organization is one of long standing and of deserved influence in business circles. It begins the work to which we allude with an address to the citizens and business men of the state, in which it frankly and fully states its purposes, and invites financial assistance. It intends to make a non-partisan legislative campaign this fall, educational in character, in behalf of the following three civic measures, which it believes the next legislature can be induced to enact:

1. For a general law for the organization of villages and cities that will secure to each of them every desired power for municipal self-government and render special legislation as unnecessary as it is undesirable.
2. For an amendment to the constitution to permit local option in taxation and a general simplification of our system of taxation by means of which gains of great and permanent value to every business interest can be secured.
3. For a system of public accounting and auditing that shall be uniform throughout the state, designed to promote economy and efficiency in the administration of all branches and departments of public business.

The benefits of these measures, once they are fairly in operation, are simply incalculable. Uniformity of accounting would make every accounting unit in the state a check upon every other, and no corruption that bookkeeping can reveal would be practicable. Every chief accountant everywhere and all the time would have to be a party to the corrupt conspiracy or it would quickly be unmasked. A comparison of accounts, which any citizen might make, would instantly raise suspicion when reason for suspicion existed, and suspicion so excited would lead as quickly to exposure. Local self-government