

NATIONAL CONSOLIDATION OF LABOR. UNREST.

	Page
KNIGHTS OF LABOR:-	1-15
Purposes of, and need for	1
Constitution for General Assembly	2
Constitution for local assemblies	4
Opposition to, because of secrecy	5
Powderly	6
Growth of the Order	8
Secret order of March 13, 1886	9
Question of strikes	10
In politics	11
K. of L. and Anarchists	12
Decline of Order	13
K. of L. in Baltimore	14
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR:-	16-21
Predecessors	16
Aims and objects	16
Membership and Policy	17
General history	18
Organization	19
RAILROAD STRIKES OF 1885-1886:-	22-29
Report of U.S. Comm. of Labor	22
K. of L. Manifesto	24
Taussig on the Strike:-	
Stoppage of traffic	25
Policy of Mr. Hoxie	26
Change of public opinion	27
Violence	28
Death of Hoxie	29
THE EIGHT-HOUR MOVEMENT:-	30-41
Early history	30
Illinois Labor Bureau on,	31
Laws on hours of labor	36
Illinois State Register on,	37
Movement in Illinois	38
HAYMARKET RIOT AND CHICAGO ANARCHISTS:-	42-53
Annual Cyclopedic on,	42
Chas. Ed. Russell on,	
Captain Bonfield	43
Eight-hour movement	44
McCormick troubles	45
Haymarket meeting	46
Police activities	47
The trial	48
"Afterwards"	49
Altgeld on,	51
"O wild Chicago"	53
Ill. Centennial History on,	53

	Page
LATER EIGHT-HOUR MOVEMENT:-	54-56
From Commons' History of Labor	54
THE HOMESTEAD STRIKE:-	57-61
Annual Cyclopedia on,	57
Penn.Bureau of Industrial	
Statistics on,	60
THE PULLMAN STRIKE:-	62-77
Causes of,	62
The General Managers' Assoc.	64
Rents	65
Comments of the <u>The Nation</u>	66
Brand Whitlock on,	68
H.D.Lloyd on	69
New England Magazine on,	70
"Inner History"	72
Court opinion	76
Altgeld-Cleveland Controversy	76
BIBLIOGRAPHY	78-81

THE KNIGHTS OF LABOR.

"Labor is noble and holy. To defend it from degradation; to divest it of the evils to body, mind and estate which ignorance and greed have imposed; to rescue the toiler from the grasp of the selfish-is a work worthy of the noblest and best of our race. In all the multifarious branches of trade capital has its combinations; and, whether intended or not, it crushes the manly hopes of labor and tramples poor humanity in the dust. We mean no conflict with legitimate enterprise, no antagonism to necessary capital; but men in their haste and greed, blinded by self-interests, overlook the interests of others and sometimes violate the rights of those they deem hopeless, helpless. We mean to uphold the dignity of labor, to affirm the ability of all who earn their bread by the sweat of their brows. We mean to create a healthy public opinion on the subject of labor (the only creator of values or capital) and the justice of its receiving a full, just share of the values or capital it has created. We shall, with all our strength, support laws made to harmonize the interests of labor and capital, for labor alone gives life and value to capital, and also those laws which tend to lighten the exhaustiveness of toil. To pause in his toil, to devote himself to his own interests, to gather a knowledge of world's commerce, to unite, combine, and co-operate in the great army of peace and industry, to nourish and cherish, build and develop the temple he lives in is the highest and noblest duty of man to himself, to his fellow men and to his Creator." X

This is the substance of a printed copy handed to every person on his or her becoming a member of the Noble Order of Knights of Labor of North America, a society of workmen founded by Uriah S. Stephens in 1869. "In the general industrial depression of the early seventies, union after union was forced to disband. The system of low dues and slight benefits, now universally condemned as a trade-union policy, was then general, and hard times found the labor forces unprepared for the emergency. With industrial revival the labor world again moved towards organization. The experiences of the unions during the depression suggested the need of a strong inter-trade alliance supplementary to the local and national trade unions then existing, and the order of the Knights of Labor undertook to supply this need. This organization, the first successful national federation of labor in the United States, had its genesis in a local union or 'assembly' of garment cutters in Philadelphia in 1869. With increase in the number of local assemblies a desire arose for a body which should represent all the local unions in a certain district. Delegates were sent to a common meeting place and a 'district assembly,' designated thereafter as District Assembly No. 1, was organized to further the interests of the local assemblies under its jurisdiction. This plan proving successful, other district assemblies were formed whenever the number of local assemblies in a new field justified a federation." (Kirk, in Studies of American Trade Unionism, Pp. 353-354)

"Up to the beginning of the year 1878, the various branches of the Order had, by tacit consent, regarded District Assembly No. 1 as the head of authority," (McNeil: The Labor Movement, 405) and on August 22, 1877, it issued a call for a convention to be held at Reading, Pa., on January 1, 1878, "for the purpose of forming a Central Assembly---, creating a Central Resistance Fund, Bureau of Statistics, Providing Revenue for the Work of Organization, establishment of an Official Register ---etc." (Powderly, 238)

At this convention a "General Assembly was formed and a committee on constitution was appointed by Grand Master Workman Stephens, one of the committeemen being T.V. Powderly, Stephens' successor as Grand Master Workman, and under whom the Order reached its greatest extent. This committee drew up a constitution, and they began the preamble with a quotation from Burke: "When bad men combine, the good must associate, else they will fall, one by one, an unpitied sacrifice in a contemptible struggle." The preamble then continued as follows:

"The recent alarming development and aggression of aggregated wealth, which, unless checked, will invariable lead to the pauperization and hopeless degradation of the toiling masses, render it imperative, if we desire to enjoy the blessings of life, that a check should be placed upon its power and upon unjust accumulation, and a system adopted which will secure to the laborer the fruits of his toil; and as this much-desired object can only be accomplished by the thorough unification of labor, and the united efforts of those who obey the divine injunction that 'In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread,' we have formed the * * * * * with a view to securing the organization and direction, by co-operative effort, of the power of the industrial classes, and we submit to the world the object sought to be accomplished by our organization, calling upon all who believe in serving 'the greatest good to the greatest number' to aid and assist us:-(Originally there followed here fifteen planks to which others were added later on, until in 1895 the number reached twenty-three, and it is these latter ones which I am quoting below. The wording of the preamble was also changed slightly.) We declare to the world that our aims are:

I. To make individual and moral worth, not wealth, the true standard of individual and national greatness.

II. To secure to the workers the free enjoyment of the wealth they create; sufficient leisure in which to develop their intellectual, moral and social faculties; all of the benefits, recreations and pleasures of association; in a word, to enable them to share in the gains and honor of advancing civilization.

In order to secure these results, we demand at the hands of the law-making power of Municipality, State and Nation:

III. The establishment of the Initiative and Referendum in the making of all laws.

IV. The establishment of Bureaus of Labor Statistics, that we

may arrive at a correct knowledge of the educational, moral and financial condition of the laboring masses, and the establishment of free State Labor Bureaus.

V. The land, including all the natural sources of wealth, is the heritage of all the people, and should not be subject to speculative traffic. Occupancy and use should be the only title to the possession of land. The taxes upon land should be levied upon its full value for use, exclusive of improvements, and should be sufficient to take for the community all unearned increment.

VI. The abrogation of all laws that do not bear equally upon capitalists and laborers, and the removal of unjust technicalities, delays and discriminations in the administration of justice.

VII. The recognition, by incorporation, of orders and other associations organized by the workers to improve their condition and to protect their rights.

IX. The enactment of laws to compel corporations to pay their employees weekly in lawful money, for the labor of the preceding week, and giving mechanics and laborers a first lien upon the product of their labor to the extent of their full wages.

X. The abolition of the contract system on National, State and Municipal works.

XI. The enactment of laws providing for arbitration between employers and employed, and to enforce the decision of the arbitrators.

XII. The prohibition by law of the employment of children under fifteen years of age; the compulsory attendance at school for at least ten months in the year for all children between the ages of seven and fifteen years of age; the ~~comp~~ and the furnishing at the expense of the State of free text-books.

XIII. That a graduated tax on incomes and inheritances be levied.

XIV. To prohibit the hiring out of convict labor.

XV. The establishment of a national monetary system in which a circulating medium in necessary quantity shall issue directly to the people without the intervention of banks: that all the national issue shall be full legal tender in payment of all debts, public and private; and that the government shall not guarantee or recognize any private banks or create any banking corporations.

XVI. That interest-bearing bonds, bills of credit or notes shall never be issued by the government; but that when need arises, the emergency shall be met by issue of legal-tender, non-interest-bearing money.

XVII. That the importation of foreign labor under contract be prohibited.

XVIII. That, in connection with the post-office, the government shall provide facilities for deposits of savings of the people in small sums.

XIX. That the government shall obtain possessions, under the right of eminent domain, of all telegraphs, telephones and railroads, and that hereafter no charter or license be issued to any corporations for construction or operation of any means of transporting intelligence, passengers or freight.

And while making the foregoing demands upon the State and National Governments, we will endeavor to associate our own labors:

XX. To establish co-operative institutions, such as will tend to supersede the wage system, by the introduction of a co-operative industrial system.

XXI. To secure for both sexes equal rights.

XXII. To gain some of the benefits of labor-saving machinery by a gradual reduction of the hours of labor to eight per day.

XXIII. To persuade employers to agree to arbitrate differences which may arise between them and their employees, in order that the bonds of sympathy between them may be strengthened and that strikes may be rendered unnecessary. *

* (Constitution of the General Assembly-----of the Independent Order of the Knights of Labor, adopted at Columbus, Ohio, February 14, 1895. P., 3-6) #

The constitution adopted for the guidance of the local assemblies had the following preamble: (1895 revision)

"The Independent Order of Knights of Labor Assembly is not a mere trade union or beneficial society; it is more and higher. It gathers into one fold all branches of honorable toil, without regard to nationality, sex, creed, or color. It is not founded simply to protect one interest, or to discharge one duty, be it ever so great. It aims to assist members to better their condition--morally, socially and financially. It is a business firm, every member is an equal partner, as much so as a commercial house or a manufacturing establishment. All members are in duty bound to put in their equal share of time and money. The officers elected must not be expected to 'run it' and the rest of the partners do nothing. While acknowledging that it is sometimes necessary to enjoin an oppressor, strikes should be avoided whenever possible. Strikes at best afford only temporary relief, and members should be educated to depend upon thorough organization and political activity, and through the abolishment of the present system. Our mission can not be accomplished in a day or generation. Agitation, education and organization are all necessary. The first duty of members is to perfect organization and discipline. Among the higher duties that should be taught in every Local Assembly are man's inalienable inheritance and right to a share, for use, of the soil; that the right to life carries with it the right to the means of living; and that all statutes that obstruct or deny these rights are wrong, unjust and must give way. Every member who has the right to vote is a part of the government of the country and has a duty to perform, and the proper education necessary to intelligently exercise this right, free from corrupting influences, is another of the higher duties of a Local Assembly. In short, any action that will advance the cause of humanity, lighten the burden of toil or elevate the moral and social condition of mankind, whether incorporated in the Constitution or not, is the proper scope and field of operation of a Local Assembly." (Ibid Pp. 21-23)

A motto was also adopted for the seal of the Order. It was Solomon's: "That is the most perfect government in which an injury to one is the concern of all."

Stephens had been connected with the Masonic Order for many years and when he organized the Knights of Labor he was responsible for the drawing up of an elaborate mystic ritual and utter secrecy, even as to the name of the society. In all notices, communications, etc. of the organization, five asterisks, though they were called "stars," were used, thus * * * * *. This led to a good deal of suspicion and denunciation from various sources. Thus, in the words of Prof. Ely:

"The 'Noble Order of the Knights of Labor' was at first an organization the very existence of which was kept a secret. Its name was never mentioned, but it was indicated by five stars, thus * * * * *, and for several years it grew rapidly in this profound secrecy. Finally, however, rumor became rife about 'The Five Stars,' as it was called, and Philadelphians noticed with trepidation, that a few cabalistic chalkmarks in front of 'Independence Hall' would bring several thousand men together. Alarm spread, newspapers circulated absurd fictions in regard to its designs, in which accusations of communism and incendiarism were prominent, and Catholic and Protestant clergymen hastened to denounce the unknown monster. Finally it was decided the policy of extreme secrecy which had characterized the infancy of the order, and it came before the world with a statement of principles and repudiated all connection with violent and revolutionary associations. The pledge binding members not to divulge the affairs of the Knights was declared not binding with reference to the confessional, and thus the hostility of the Roman Catholic clergy was generally overcome." (Ely, Labor Movement in America, Pp. 79-80) One of the idle but terrifying reports which had been spread declared that the Grand Master Workman had promised to "vote a rifle and Gatling-gun to each member of the Order." (McNeill, 414)

Prejudice against the Order became really bad after 1878, when the newly elected national officers began an active campaign to increase the membership, albeit in secret. Powderly describes it thus: "While the organization was working secretly, yet the stir in organizing soon attracted attention, and the first move from the outside against the association came from the church. The events which preceded the erection of the gallows in Schuylkill County, Pa., were still fresh in the minds of residents of that place, and one of the first fields that opened up to the organizer was the middle coal region of Pennsylvania. Everything in the shape of a society, which was at all secret or new, was supposed to be the outcome of Molly Maguireism. It became necessary to allow the name of the Order to become known, but the name was no shield from persecution, misrepresentation, and misunderstanding, and soon a scathing denunciation of the association came from the altar of one of the churches in Schuylkill County. The members became alarmed; many left the Order at once; others withdrew temporarily, while others, knowing the justice of the principles, determined to make make an effort to have objectionable features, if any there

were removed.

"Grand Master Workman Stephens was written to, and after investigation a special session of the General Assembly called to take action on the matter of placing the aims and objects of the Order in a favorable light before the public. The request for this call came from the middle coal fields of Pennsylvania.

"The workingmen of that region were sincerely desirous of having the features of the society properly understood by everybody." (Powderly, 252-253) This was in 1878, and, after prolonged consideration and discussion, the "veil of secrecy" was discarded, in 1881. This removal of secrecy was one of the reasons for Stephens' declination to become Grand Master Workman again, and in his place was elected Terence V. Powderly, who favored removing secrecy, but in everything else was in accord with the sympathies of the founder.

ee-
"Terence V. Powderly was born in Carbondale, Luzerne County, Penn., Jan. 22, 1849, his parents being among the first settlers of that city. They were Irish, and he was one of nine children. He attended school six years, and, when thirteen years old, went to work as switch-tender for the Hudson & Delaware Canal Company. When seventeen years of age, he went into the machine-shop of the company, learning the trade of a machinist, and proving himself an intelligent, expert, and faithful worker. At nineteen, he removed to Scranton, where he secured a situation in the machine-shop of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad Company. Shortly after coming to Scranton, Mr. Powderly became a member of the Machinists and Blacksmiths' Union No. 2, the members of which, soon recognizing his abilities, elected him president, which position he held for two years, after which he was elected corresponding secretary, in which capacity he served, with the exception of one year, until 1880. During the panic of 1873, he, among others, was suspended from the employment of the railroad company for the supposed reason of his active connection with the Machinists and Blacksmiths' Union. He then removed to Galion, Ohio, where he worked but a short time, when he was again discharged. Mr. Powderly then obtained employment in Oil City, joining Machinists and Blacksmiths' Union No. 6, of that place, by which he was elected a delegate to a district convention of the unions of Pittsburgh, Meadville, Titusville, and Oil City, the convention being held at Franklin. He was again elected a delegate to represent the same unions at Louisville, where the convention of the Machinists and Blacksmiths' International Union was held in September, 1874. Soon after this, he became a member of the Industrial Brotherhood of the United States, and was commissioned deputy president of Western Pennsylvania. While acting in this capacity he organized several assemblies of the Industrial Brotherhood in the vicinity of Pittsburgh. Returning then to Scranton, he was employed by the Lackawanna Coal and Iron Company in putting up the machinery of their steel works. During the same year, Mr. Powderly joined the Knights of Labor, and, shortly after his connection with that Order, was elected secretary of the District Assembly to which his Local Assembly belonged.

After leaving the Lackawanna Coal and Iron Company, he was engaged by the Dickson Manufacturing Company in their Cliff Locomotive Works, and, soon after entering their employment, was promoted to the foremanship of one of the departments. Becoming interested in the Greenback-Labor Party, he took an active part in the campaign for Luzerne County, calling the County Convention. He travelled on foot from one end of the county to the other, distributing ballots and documents calculated to encourage the workers. The county of Luzerne is seventy-five miles in length; yet Powderly acted as secretary and chairman of the committee, doing his work on foot, having no money with which to pay railroad fare. During this campaign he contracted a severe cold from which he has never fully recovered. His eyesight also failed from over-exertion. As a recognition of his services, he secured the Greenback-Labor nomination for mayor of Scranton in ~~1876~~ 1877 and was elected by a majority of 531. He was re-elected in 1878 in which year he was nominated by acclamation for lieutenant-governor of Pennsylvania on the National Greenback-Labor ticket, but declined the nomination. He was a third time offered the nomination for mayor of Scranton, with every prospect of re-election, but, being now Grand Master Workman of the "Knights of Labor," he found the duties of the latter position too arduous to permit of his holding any other office, and so declined. In 1878, Mr. Powderly gave considerable attention to the study of law, and while mayor of Scranton obtained a very good legal training and habit. Since his induction into the Order of the Knights of Labor, Mr. Powderly has given it his entire attention and a vast amount of study. He found it a close, oath-bound body; but at the Detroit General Assembly, in 1881, he urged the abolition of oaths and the removal of the obligation of secrecy. This did away with the chief objection which the Catholic clergy had made to it, and strengthened the Order among the workers." (C.D. Wright, in Quart. Jour. of Econ., 1887, Ft. pp. 151-153)

(Powderly's connection with the Industrial Brotherhood is shown in the similarity of the K. of L. C. constitution, which he helped to draw up, and the constitution of the Brotherhood.)

Naturally the organization, as it grew, became very powerful. Although the General Assembly was ~~always~~ ~~opposed~~ ~~to~~ ~~strikes~~ ~~except~~ ~~as~~ ~~a~~ ~~last~~ ~~resort~~, the locals often took advantage of their strength ~~and~~ ~~supposed~~ ~~strength~~ and struck very often. Another means of protection for the worker was the boycott. The most famous example is, probably that of the Dueber Watch Case Company boycott. The latter had discharged all employees who were connected with the Knights, and refused to discuss the matter with any representatives of the Order. Thereupon a general boycott was declared and advertised in the Order's official organ, the Journal of United Labor. The members were told not only not to buy watches with Dueber cases, but they were told not to patronize jewelry stores which sold such watch cases. The boycott was effective and the Company soon reversed its former position and became friendly to the Knights.

The Order also used its influence to help the women who had to work for their living. In several instances, when the girls or women in a factory struck for higher wages, or more decent conditions, the Knights helped them financially and with the boycott. Women were taken into the locals and even separate locals for women were established. Naturally the women were grateful for this protection and could always be counted on as most loyal supporters. ~~Thus~~ It is therefore no wonder that the Order grew rapidly. In 1883, there were, in round numbers, 52,000 members. In 1884, there were 71,000. In 1885-111,000 and in 1886 the number jumped to over 700,000. The increase was so rapid that the General Assembly found it advisable to prohibit further admission of new members for a while. This great increase in 1886 was bad for the Order too. Many people joined just for the sake of protection and financial aid in a contemplated strike. Thus it came that the Knights came to be associated in the public mind with most of the strikes of 1886 which happened to be a year of an unusually great number of strikes. Many of these strikes were conducted by the Knights, though generally without the sanction of the General ~~Assembly~~, ^{Executive} and naturally most of them failed.

"In the early months of this turbulent year (1886) there were nearly five hundred labor disputes, most of them involving an advance in wages. An epidemic of strikes then spread over the country, many of them actually conducted by the Knights of Labor and all of them associated in the public mind with that ~~xxxxxxxx~~ order. One of the most important of these occurred on the Southwestern Railroad. In the preceding year, the Knights had increased their lodges in St. Louis from five to thirty, and these were under the domination of a coarse and ruthless district leader. When in February, 1886, a mechanic, working in the shops of the Texas and Pacific Railroad at Marshall, Texas, was discharged for cause and the road refused to reinstate him, a strike ensued which spread over the entire six thousand miles of the Gould system; and St. Louis became the center of the tumult. After nearly two months of violence, the outbreak ended in the complete collapse of the strikers. this result was doubly damaging to the Knights of Labor, for they had officially taken charge of the strike and were censured on the one hand for their conduct of the struggle and on the other for the defeat which they had sustained." (Orth, Armies of Labor, 82-83) Other sympathetic strikes also failed.

Things got to be so bad, that on March 13, 1886, Powderly, the Grand Master Workman, issued a secret circular to the assemblies. (The only place where I could find this circular was in an old clipping from the Philadelphia "Evening Item" of March 27, 1886, which gives it in full.) The circular declared, in part:

"An order was recently issued to ~~suspend~~ suspend organization of new Assemblies for forty days. It did not go out until a careful review of the field had been taken. Had I

not been convinced that it was absolutely necessary for the salvation of the Order, my vote would not be cast in favor of a cessation of work. One of the gravest emergencies that ever faced a human being is squarely before the head of this Order to-day.-- If the order is to perform its mission as intended by its founders and those who have worked with from the beginning, a radical change must be effected. It has always been, and is at the present time, my policy to advocate conciliation and arbitration in the settlement of disputes between employer and employee. The law of Knighthood demands at the hands of our members an adherence to this policy. Thousands of men who had become disgusted with the ruinous policy of the strike, as the only remedy for the ills we complain of, were drawn to us because we had proclaimed to mankind that we had discarded the strike until all else failed.

"Six months will not teach our principles and proper methods. Yet men are impressed with the idea that they can learn them in six weeks or six days, and before the groundwork for a proper education is laid we find our Assemblies on a strike or lock-out, and in too many cases the provocation comes from their own hasty and inconsiderate action. No matter what advantage we gain by the strike it is only medicating the symptoms; it does not perpetuate the system, and therefore fails in effecting a cure.--My policy must no longer be misunderstood. While I, as the chosen mouthpiece of the Order, am proclaiming to the world that the Knights of Labor do not advocate nor countenance strikes until every other means has failed, the wires from a thousand cities and towns are bearing the news of as many strikes by Knights of Labor, in which arbitration and conciliation were never hinted at. Not that alone, but they were in many cases scorned and rejected by our own members. In some cases these strikes were entered upon against the advice of the ~~General~~ General Executive ~~Committee~~ Board. It is claimed by our members that arbitration is one-sided. That may true of the past, but the voluntary concessions made to us within the past three months prove most conclusively that the just claims of labor will be listened to if we go forward in the way we started.----

"Five hundred assemblies were added to the roll in February, as many as were organized in the first eight years of the Order's existence. It is not within the bounds of human possibility to expect that all these new recruits can be properly trained before the assemblies are formed. To attempt to win concessions and gains with our present raw, undisciplined membership, would be like hurling an organized mob against a well-drilled regular army.

"Again, it is not fair to the older assemblies to bring in new members, pick up their quarrels as soon as organized, and have them expect pecuniary aid from those who helped build the Order for a noble purpose. It is not wise to give men and women a premium for joining us. ~~##~~

"We have built up a moral force that will command a hearing for us before any tribunal in the country. We must not

* Philadelphia Evening Star, March 27/1886

fritter away our strength and miss the golden opportunity to crown every effort with success by rushing into useless strikes. To the cardinal principles of the Order we must add another-- 'patience.' You have had patience for years, and had the Knights of Labor ~~not~~ appeared ~~on~~ the scene you would still be waiting.--

"Organizers who publish an account of their work, assemblies that publish an account of their strength, and members, whether public or private, who speak boastingly 'of our strength' to the world are very indiscreet. Mind your own business. Keep your own counsel.-----

"While I write, a despatch is handed me in which I read these words: 'They discharged our brother and we struck, for you know our motto is "an injury to one is the concern of all." '

"Yes, an injury to one is the concern of all. But it is not wise to injure all for the sake of one. It would have been far better to continue work and properly investigate the matter, bringing it before every known tribunal than to have struck. The thousands of men now earning nothing could have given ten cents apiece to support the brother for a few weeks much easier than to spend weeks and months in idleness, many of them never to be restored to their former positions. In this the injury to one was not repaired, and all concerned will be more or less injured."

This circular sums up the whole difficulty, it seems, and shows that the national officers were very much opposed to the policies generally adopted by the locals. In the first issue of the Journal of United Labor, the official organ of the Order, published in May, 1880, the following notices appeared:

"One of the most distressing questions which has plagued the officers of the G.A. (General Assembly) has been the epidemic of strikes which has seemed to pass like a wave over the land/ The right to strike is undoubted: the policy and wisdom of exercising the right are doubtful. When the grand aims of this Order are fulfilled, strikes will be impossible because unnecessary." (Vol. I, No., P. 8) And further,

"Our Order is above politics, and electioneering for any candidate in the Sanctuary must not be practiced. Our Order teaches MAN his duty by educating him on the great question of labor. Discuss labor in all its interests, but not the merits or demerits of any candidate.

"It is not compulsory to vote for a brother for any public office, but in choosing members for the Assembly choose none but men whom it would be an honor to vote for, for any position." (Ibid, P. 9)

This wise policy with regard to politics was also doomed to be lost sight of. In the words of Wm. Kirk:

"The structure of the Knights of Labor besides affording opportunity for the training of the individual in the study of social questions, was highly efficient for direct political action.-----With the advent of the Order, the belief that labor must carry its demands beyond the workshop, and cry--

stallize into the statute law definite reforms, received greater attention among workingmen than ever before. The constitution of 1879 (Art. 10, Sec. 1) laid down the principle of political activity in the following words: 'A district assembly or a local assembly under the General Assembly may take such political action as will tend to advance the interest of the Order or the cause of labor. But when political action is contemplated the regular business of the district assembly or the local assembly should be concluded, and the district assembly or local assembly regularly closed. Local assemblies may properly use their political power in all legislative elections, and it is left to the discretion of each local assembly to act with the party through which it can gain the most. An assembly shall not take political action unless three-fourths of the attending members are united in supporting such action. No member, however, shall be compelled to vote with the majority.' From 1880 to 1885 the intense interest manifested in political affairs produced a note of warning from headquarters: 'So surely as we run into politics we shall be disrupted.' Politicians, recognizing the political possibilities, joined the Order for the express purpose of converting it into a voting machine. In 1888, the Order was on the verge of taking active part in the national campaign, and escaped only through the conservatism of the general officers. In many localities, the secret but powerful membership of the Knights had elected labor candidates. So successfully had these municipal elections resulted that the rank and file became ambitious for larger victories. A party in which all reformers could find a place appeared - a fitting substitute for the two corrupt, boss-ridden political organizations. Active agitation in 1890 stimulated a wave of enthusiasm which aided materially in the formation in 1892 of the National People's Party, with 'land, transportation, and finance,' as the campaign cry. Pledged in this manner to political action, the Knights dissipated much of their energies in vain efforts to make industrial forces politically supreme, and internal dissensions resulted." (Studies, pp. 375-376)

Certain planks in the preamble to the Constitution of the Knights, and this desire for political activity and legislation for the industrial forces, accounts for the support which the laborers, and especially the Knights, gave to the farmers when they voiced their demands, and the great friendliness between the Order and the Farmers' Alliance.

Finally, we come to the connection between the Knights of Labor and the Anarchists. Although the national officers as well as most of the members of the Order were opposed to the Anarchists and their principles, it seemed to a great many, indeed the majority, of people, that they were one in aims and ideas. That this was not so can perhaps best be seen from the following words of Powderly:

"There were Anarchists in the Order.---They began a system of destructive tactics that well-nigh drove the Order out of existence. Their agents became members with the avowed pur-

pose of sowing the seeds of discord, and in many places assemblies lapsed rather than follow the lead of Anarchists.

"Not only have Anarchists of their own volition entered the Order for the purpose of tearing it down, but they have been hired by monopolists to become members for the purpose of giving an anarchistic turn to the doings of the assemblies, so that public opinion might be turned against the Order. This is no stretch of fancy, for a lawyer, an official of Utica, New York, while sitting by my side in a car coming from Washington in the early part of 1887, made this statement to me:

" 'We have succeeded in heading off your Order, Mr. Powderly. We do not fear it any longer, for its power is killed through the foolish actions of its members. You may preach to them to be guided by wise counsels, but we have paid Anarchists to become members of your assemblies that they might stir up the devil and bring discredit upon your whole movement.'

"That no misconstruction might be placed upon his language, I requested Mr. H—— to repeat his words. He did so, and I noted them down for future reference.---He stated that he was an attorney for a manufacturers' association.

"Through the actions of the Anarchists the Knights of Labor were well-nigh destroyed on the Pacific Coast. They lost no opportunity to introduce some new element of discord at every meeting, until the members who were not connected with the I.W.A. (Industrial Workers' Assoc.) withdrew in disgust, and severed all connection with the Knights of Labor. An ex-officer of one of the Anarchist groups made this statement to me over his own signature:

" 'I and many others know as a fact that it was the intention of the heads of the I.W.A. to capture the K. of L., as it was a powerful organization, ready-made to their hand, and would save them the labor in organizing if they could achieve their desire. Anyhow, it could be used as a recruiting ground for their purposes.' (Powderly, Pp. 539-541)

What served to confirm the suspicion of Anarchistic principles in the public mind, was the fact that, at the annual meeting of the General Assembly in 1886, at Richmond, the Knights passed two resolutions referring to the sentence imposed upon the seven convicted Anarchists in Chicago, namely,

"Resolved, That this general assemblage appeals for mercy for the seven men of Chicago who are condemned to be executed.

A "Resolved, That while asking for mercy for the condemned men we are not in sympathy with the actions of the anarchists nor with any attempts of individuals or associated bodies that teach or practice violent infractions of the law, believing that peaceful methods are the surest and best means of securing the necessary reforms."

That this was a decided blow to the Knights of Labor, and that the second resolution did not do much to remedy the evil effects produced by the first, is shown from some contemporary newspaper opinions:

Philadelphia Ledger, October 21, 1886:

"The Knights of Labor have not bettered their cause by appealing for mercy for the Chicago anarchists, notwithstanding their disclaimer of sympathy for the murderous work of the anarchists. Honest workingmen are even more interested than capitalists in having exemplary punishment dealt out to men who attempt to destroy the Government and bring about a reign of anarchy, paralyzing industry of all kinds."

Philadelphia Times, October 22, 1886:

"It was specially ill-advised for the highest tribunal of the Knights of Labor to make a formal plea for mercy to the lawless, cowardly and murderous anarchists. It will be plausibly construed as declaring a bond of sympathy between labor and vagabondism; between the law-abiding workingmen and the lawless idlers; between the sovereign citizen of home and country, and the alien destroyer of industry and government."

Philadelphia Telegraph, October 21, 1886:

"At least, this action of the Knights of Labor lets a flood of needed light upon the work of that organization."

(Public Opinion, Vol. 22, 2, P. 43)

Decline of Order:- We come now to the question, why, after the membership reached 702,924 in 1886, with a half-million dollar annual income for the Order, why did the Knights after that year steadily decline in membership and influence? There appear to be five reasons: 1. The complete failure of expensive sympathetic strikes and the great number of useless strikes entered into despite the fact that according to their "Principles" the Knights were to use strikes only as a measure of last resort; 2. The over-centralization of power in the hands of the General Assembly, which, according to the constitution, "has full and final jurisdiction, and is the highest tribunal of the Independent Order of the Knights of Labor. It also possesses the power and authority to make, amend or repeal the general laws and regulations of the Order, and to finally decide all controversies arising in the Order.---It may also tax the members of the Order for its maintenance." (Art. 1, Sec. 1) These extensive powers naturally left so little in the hands of local assemblies that the system never could be very popular; 3. The activity displayed in political affairs, just as the national officers had foretold; 4. The fact that there existed two distinct forms of organization within the Order, namely the mixed assembly made up from members of all trades, and the national trade assemblies, made up of members from individual trades only; 5. The stigma of anarchism and anarchistic principles and sympathies.

The following is a history of the "Knights of Labor Movement in Baltimore" which I found in one of the Johns Hopkins University Circulars, and which is probably typical of the history of the Order in other places as well:

"The knights of Labor Movement in Baltimore."

"From the formation of the first local assembly in Baltimore, May 1878, the Knights of Labor made steady, conservative progress here for eight years. In 1880, there being then five locals, a district assembly was formed with jurisdiction over all Maryland except the mining counties. The next year the existence of the Order was first publicly admitted. The Knights established in 1883 a Building League, in order to do work which could not be carried on secretly. This latter body afterwards developed into a branch of the American Federation of Labor.

"By January 1, 1886, there were sixteen local assemblies with a formal membership of 1940; but for all practical purposes membership numbers may be safely doubled, as the avoidance of the per capita tax must be taken into account. On January 1, 1887 there were one hundred and eleven locals and 13,052 members. The Demonstration Committee, however, reported over 25,000 bona fide Knights in the parade on Artisan's day (September 6), 1886.

✕ "This sudden growth was abnormal: men joined not for what the Order really was, but for what they thought it was. The preceding five years had seen hundreds of thousands of men entering labor unions. Strikes by unions had, however, generally failed; those by the Knights had often succeeded, and the failures had been overlooked. The idea spread that this secret society was a bonanza. The result was a demand for admittance which was unwisely and too freely granted.

"The great mass of new members were not in sympathy with the ideals of the Order. They regarded it as a great striking machine, and attempted to make it such. The trade idea became triumphant. Trade locals took the place of the old mixed locals, and withdrew from the District to join the trade districts. Members of mixed locals were compelled to join a local of their particular trade if established. The Printers' Assembly was even fined for initiating a baker.

"The work of education was interrupted. Yet the district assembly gave a lecture once a month, and maintained a school which all officers of local assemblies were obliged to attend. Later the work became more active. Every local was compelled to devote not less than one half-hour to the discussion of the Labor Question. The district assembly itself gave one hour each week to the consideration of economic problems. Discussion followed the reading of papers on such subjects as: 'The Condition of Workingwomen,' 'The Eight-Hour day,' 'Our Defects and How They can be Remedied,' 'Co-operation,' and 'Rights of Man and Effects of Machinery.'

"Political activity never ceased; and the Order appears to have exerted some influence. Among its more important activities was the securing of the introduction of bills into

the Maryland Legislature in favor of the Saturday half-holiday; and of woman's suffrage, and in opposition to appropriations for the militia, hiring out convict labor, employment of private police,

and government aid in collecting private debts. It seems certain that the Knights were largely instrumental in obtaining the adoption of the Australian ballot system. What was even more important than this form of influence, the Order threw its whole strength in elections to the candidate, Democratic or Republican, most favorable to labor interests.

"The Order supported for a while several enterprises, called 'co-operative,' in which both employers and employees were Knights, but not necessarily identical. Tin, cigar, cigarette, cooperage, furniture, collar and cuff, and shirt factories were established. These enterprises lasted but a short time. Very few strikes were endorsed by the Knights and these of small importance. Boycotting, on the other hand, was frequently employed.

"In 1887, while the growth of the Order was still rapid, a resolution which had been passed the previous year at the Richmond Convention, was put into force. By it, no local could remain in both the Knights of Labor and the national trade union. The Knights had made this condition possible by permitting their locals to organize on trade lines. When the resolution was enforced, many locals preferred to leave the Knights. The remainder slowly changed back into mixed locals. In 1887, the Order lost thirty-two locals and 9,377 members; forty locals in 1888, and ten locals in 1889. By January 1., 1890, but ten locals with 489 members remained, and the Order had lost its power."

(By R.T. Crane, In J. Hopkins Unic. Circular, Vol. 22, No. 162, April, 1903.)

The fate of the Knights was similar to this in all over the country, and although it is still in existence, it has been completely over-shadowed by the American Federation of Labor, whose history begins in the year 1881.