

who are likely to use their new power recklessly and destructively. The danger is that these rash spirits will often rule in the workingman's assemblies. This danger is not indeed remote; the thing is continually taking place. The most destructive strike that has lately occurred in the coal regions was forced by the ignorant and brutal majority of the miners, against the strenuous counsel of their cooler and wiser leaders. After months of idleness, and the loss to the operators and the miners of millions of dollars, the men went back to work for ten cents less per ton than they were offered when the strike began; and when, after working for a few months at this reduced wage, they complained of its insufficiency, and submitted their complaint to arbitration, the referee, ex-Senator Thurman, granted them, to their great satisfaction, the precise compensation which they refused a year before. The wisdom of the leaders who could not lead, and the folly of the followers who would not follow, must by this time have become evident in all that section. Such rash and ill-considered movements often occur in the trades-unions. It is not an unheard-of thing that an employer who has kept his wheels running at a loss for months solely for the sake of furnishing his men with a livelihood will be rewarded by a strike as soon as business brightens up a little, and long before his shrunken capital is restored. By such a procedure good-will in the breasts of employers is cruelly put to death, and many a kind-hearted man who had studied the welfare of his employees has been turned into a cynic.

The labor-unions will do well to remember that this warfare that they are waging concerns not merely themselves and their employers, but the whole community. The comfort, the safety, the welfare of the entire population are seriously affected by those violent interruptions of the industrial order which they are able to bring about. Such a strike as that which recently occurred upon a great railway system in the South-west paralyzes the industry and the trade of the whole section, and entails inconvenience and loss, if not positive suffering, upon hundreds of thousands of households that are in no wise implicated in the quarrel. This great middle class is ready to endure not a little discomfort and annoyance in the interest of justice and humanity. If the workingmen have a real grievance, and if there is a fair chance of their getting their wrongs righted by their united resistance, the popular sympathy will sustain them, and millions who are not of their class will cheerfully bear their burdens with them. But this sympathy may easily be over-taxed. The outside millions who are so directly affected by every industrial insurrection will be apt to make sharp inquisition into the causes of these uprisings, and they will not patiently endure all this inconvenience in support of demands that are whimsical or unjust. It is a large assumption that the laborers of a single corporation make, when they lay an embargo upon the traffic of a whole State or of several States in order to enforce their claims. After a few experiences of this sort the popular judgment will array itself solidly against the organized bands of labor, as common nuisances and public enemies. The labor-unions ought not to have any such reputation; if they do not desire it, let them beware that they do not deserve it.

Two Kinds of Boycotting.

Most persons who mix much with other people have found a large number who regard the process commonly known as "boycotting" as a powerful but legitimate engine of organized labor. The social analogies which are cited in support of its legitimacy are familiar to every one. It is an open secret that many of our sects habitually boycott tradesmen who are not of their creed. The boycotting of one class of society by another or by all others is about as old as the organization of society into classes. However un-Christian or immoral these cases of boycotting may be or may become, it is practically impossible to frame a legal indictment against them, to specify any workable method by which organized society can get a hold upon them and put a stop to them. It is therefore argued, and often very plausibly argued, that boycotting, since it is a thing which society cannot reach, is a thing to which society must yield; that he who is intractably dull to the moral arguments against boycotting is under no further or legal obligations to refrain from using it to any extent.

That the analogies indicated may not carry a force to which they are not fairly entitled, it may be well to distinguish clearly between two very different kinds of boycotting, for which the names direct and indirect boycotting might be employed. The former, direct boycotting, consists in the exercise by the boycotter of his right of choice of the persons, firms, or corporations with which he shall deal. The reasons which induce him to choose one and reject others may be unfounded, or even distinctly immoral; but the exercise of the right of choice is an act with which society would find it hard to interfere without the implication of almost intolerable evils. Society has therefore let this variety of boycotting alone. The latter, for which the name of indirect boycotting is suggested, consists in the effort by the boycotter to prevent other people from exercising their right of choice of the persons, firms, or corporations with which they shall deal.

When a labor or other organization decides not to purchase a particular kind of stoves, it is exercising its right of choice between makers; and, whether the antecedent reasons be good or bad, society can hardly reach the overt act of direct boycotting. When a labor or other organization goes further, and threatens or attempts to boycott all who sell or buy the stoves in question, it denies to third parties the very right of choice on which it insists for itself. If society cannot reach and suppress this form, indirect boycotting, then the neutral third parties are denied the equal protection of the laws; and class government, in its most odious form, takes the place of the equal rights on which our system of society has been based.

As soon as the distinction is clearly apprehended, it must be evident that every precedent which has been offered in defense of the new system of boycotting, evolved during the past eighteen months, is altogether irrelevant. The precedents offered are all cases of direct boycotting, which society has tolerated, not because it approved them, but because it would have cost more to suppress them than the suppression would have been worth. The system which it is sought to establish on these precedents is a quite different one,

one which society cannot tolerate without surrendering its own reason for existence.

To establish the proposition that society and government must suppress the new form of boycotting, or abandon the functions of society as we have known them, it is only necessary to consider the essential nature of indirect boycotting. In the first place, its nature is to spread. Let the case be that a newspaper is boycotted. Under the old system, the results are limited; certain persons no longer buy the newspaper or advertise in it, and that is all. Under the new system, it becomes necessary to boycott all the news-stands which deal in the newspaper; then all the hotels which give privileges to recalcitrant news-stands; then all those who patronize such hotels, or who deal with their lodgers; and so on *ad infinitum*. Once grant the principle of the indirect boycott, and no limitation is possible except the number of the boycotters. Any social struggle, once begun, must be more or less general.

In the second place, there is no longer any neutrality possible for uninterested or peaceably disposed third classes. They must take part with the boycotted, by dealing with him, or with the boycotters, by refusing to deal with the boycotted. The boycotter thus becomes the intestine enemy of society and its peace. The closest analogy is the case of the first Napoleon in the international society of Europe during the early years of this century. His consistent policy was that of the indirect boycott. As he could not reach England, he held every people an enemy unless it took part with him against England. In the end, the organized international society of Europe was really compelled to boycott him. The analogy will be complete in our case when capital organizes and makes use of the indirect boycott as organized labor is doing. The lot of the uninterested individual citizen will then be an unenviable one.

In the third place, the organization which succeeds in maintaining this right of indirect boycotting must necessarily grow enormously by simple accretion. A small class can make even an indirect boycott cover but a small territory. It is naturally impelled to join a larger organization, through which it can reach a wider jurisdiction. This impulse is universal; and the sudden and startling increase of the Knights of Labor organization is the result. The larger it grows, the stronger is the impelling force to join it. The greater also is its power over the social organism; and it tends to become a power within the state greater than the state itself. If this were all, it might be worth while to consider the question whether it would not be better that the Knights of Labor should assume the responsibilities as well as the powers of government, and make other classes contented subjects, if they can no longer be equal American citizens.

But the case cannot stop here. The organization which now wields the great power of the indirect boycott is unknown to the law. There is nothing to give it a monopoly of the power, or to prevent new and ambitious men from forming other organizations in competition with it. Not a month of the year 1886 has passed without an attempt to form such a rival organization; and the time must come when the attempt shall be successful. The new organization, however "subsidiary" or friendly at first to the original organization, must come into collision with it at last. Even

a total surrender to the indirect boycott would not save society from the effects of it at the hands of rival labor organizations. The war is one in which neutrality is impossible, and even surrender is useless.

The indirect boycott, then, is a private wrong, in that it strikes at the right of private security, which the state is bound to maintain for the individual citizen. Its plainest aspect is when it is threatened or employed for the purpose of extorting money, under the guise of fines or otherwise. The act is a conspiracy which law would not tolerate in any person not a representative of a labor organization. Other individuals are not allowed to collect their debts or to enforce their contracts in that fashion. It is also a public wrong, for it strikes at the functions and existence of the state itself. The plainest aspects of this point are in two recent propositions. One is the proposed organization of the policemen of our cities into branches of the Knights of Labor. The guardians of the public peace would then owe allegiance not to the state, but to the *imperium in imperio*. The other is the proposed boycotting of the militia of a State, of individuals who do not leave the militia organizations, and of individuals who refuse to boycott members of the militia. This rises beyond conspiracy into the field of treason. But it is the logical result of an admission of the principle of indirect boycotting.

The inevitable tendency to social disintegration is already shown by the increasing disposition to make use of the boycott as a remedy for the real or imaginary grievances of all sorts of combinations and classes of individuals. The tendency is increased by the practical license which the organization of the Knights of Labor allows to its branches. If a branch of the order makes use of the boycott, in the shape of a causeless strike against an uninterested third party or otherwise, the boycott continues until it is removed by the branch which applied it, or until the boycotted party accepts the mediation of the managing committee of the whole order. The order is a federation whose principle is one of large local sovereignty. In these local boycotts, the branches are thus the "wicked partners," who take the responsibility of the act; the managing committee is the factor whose "moderation" recommends the system to those who do not perceive its real nature. Let us understand the thing clearly, its nature, and its results. The new system, in any of its forms of combination to injure the business or assail the rights of uninterested third parties, is one which the state must deal with or die; its refusal to exercise its essential function of the protection of the individual would be merely a relegation of that function to new combinations of the assailed individuals. By making the alternative one of social peace or social warfare, labor succeeds only in forcing into consideration a question before which even its claims to recognition and substantial justice must retire for the time.

The single question which is pressed upon the American people is whether they will permit a power to be exercised by one class of American citizens which must deprive other classes of their rights, or compel them to organize similarly in self-defense and overthrow social order in the inevitable conflict. The only admissible answer to the question would seem to be the decision of the state to adhere to its fundamental principle, to deal with individuals only, and to re-

sist combinations whose object is to usurp or to nullify the state's functions of punishing or protecting the individual citizen.

Who are the Guiltier?

THE scandalous revelations recently made with regard to the Board of Aldermen of the city of New York have simply been a bringing to the surface of facts long known to all familiar with the so-called "politics" of the chief city of the Union. The direct alliance of the criminal classes with parts of the city government has been effectively disclosed; but it is probably true that much in other departments of our local government, that has hitherto remained merely a well-founded suspicion, will continue to remain such, and that the full details of official misdoing are not likely soon to see the light of day.

The rascality of the New York aldermen has lately been the chief topic of local discussion,—this and the alleged shameless bribery of these officials by conscienceless speculators. And yet this side of the ques-

tion of municipal morals seems to us much less discouraging and alarming than the certain knowledge of the fact that there is an endless chain leading from the parlors and offices of many among the better classes of the community, down to the very criminals who have been "running the politics" of our crowded wards, and occupying offices of trust in the city government—a chain that binds them all together in a common guilt. We ask whether there should not be more pity, as there is certainly more excuse, for the rascallions who, nursed in poverty and infamy, end by energetic devotion to the double profession of burglary and politics, than for the respectable, often "pious" and "charitable" members of society, who reluctantly but surely consent to the bribing of aldermen and state legislators in the interests of corporations of which they are trustees or managers.

If all the men in the city and State of New York who call themselves moral would cease to-morrow to be parties in or connivers at any sort of municipal or legislative iniquity, the rascals would soon be driven into a corner and beaten to the ground.

OPEN LETTERS.

Christian Union.

A REPLY TO DR. CROSBY BY PROFESSOR HOPKINS.

NO fact could be more encouraging to the friends of a reasonable improvement in the conduct of worship in non-liturgical churches than the discussion on Christian Union now going on in the columns of THE CENTURY. It is but a very few years since such a discussion would have been inappropriate and almost unintelligible; for although as far back as 1867 the General Assembly thought it necessary to sound a note of alarm against "liturgical tendencies," yet it was only the feeble beginning of a movement in that direction. Those beginnings have by this time developed into a stream of sentiment which calls upon the foremost champions of the church's inertia to gird on their armor and descend into the battle. This is just as agreeable to the party of the movement as it was to the church of the second and third centuries to have Philostratus, Celsus, and the other defenders of the lost pagan cause break their contemptuous silence and throw themselves, pen in hand, across the track of the beneficent revolution. In all efforts looking to the improvement of society, whether in civil or religious matters, it is a sign of the beginning of the end when the obstructionists show serious alarm and begin to look about them in every quarter for help. The change already made is a sufficient foreshadowing of the coming event. In the Presbyterian Church certainly, and I believe also in the Congregational body, more progress has been effected within the last ten years in the direction of decorum and beauty of worship than during the previous half-century.

It is only three or four years since a certain preacher thought it necessary to consume his whole hour before the General Assembly in blowing a note of alarm

against the progress of "formalism" in the church; "formalism," in his dictionary, meaning such very dangerous proceedings as the responsive reading of the Scriptures in public worship, the oral repetition of the Lord's Prayer, or other similar usages of the earliest Christian Church. Now let Dr. Crosby go, on any Sunday, into any one of a considerably large number of Presbyterian churches extending from New York city to Buffalo, and he will observe a service which must grieve him to the soul. To say nothing of increased worship by means of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (that is to say, a good deal more liturgical service in rhyme, to which no objection seems ever to be felt by the most violent anti-liturgical alarmist), he would find both the features mentioned above in common use, and, in some of those congregations, the regular reading of the Ten Commandments, with responses by the choir; and worse still, perhaps, he would find that darling feature in the service, the *long prayer*, broken up into several parts, with singing or reading between.

These changes in the time-honored ritual of the Presbyterian Church have come about gradually and silently, and because of a general conviction that some improvement was demanded by the changed conditions of society since the middle of the century; and they are not going to stop just here or now. A few years ago the General Assembly, in its incomprehensible wisdom, refused to permit the responsive reading of the Psalter in worship; to what effect? The practice prevails in ten congregations now to one then; or where it does not prevail in the church, it does in the Sunday-school; and the children are thus being trained up to love a service of prayer as well as of praise in which they can join their own voices. Reforms which the spirit of an age demands are not checked by fulmina-