

AN IRRELIGIOUS MOVEMENT.

The leaders of the union labor movement during the past year have made an appeal to the sympathies of the church. With this end in view they designated the Sunday preceding Labor Day as "Labor Sunday" and requested that all clergymen preach sermons on labor topics. From headquarters of the American Federation of Labor in Washington there were sent to the clergymen of the country suggestions for these sermons. It is needless to say that in these "suggestions" sent out by the laborites there was no statement but would reflect credit upon the trade unions. All the objectionable features of unionism were eliminated and the charitable work of the movement was exaggerated until the gentlemen of the cloth, not already informed on the subject, and their parishioners who listened to the discourses on the "benevolent features of trade unionism" were led to believe that the union labor movement was really some sort of charitable organization. The fact is that the union labor movement as a whole has absolutely no use for the church or for religious people. The teachings of the church and the principles and practices of trade unionism are diametrically opposed, one to the other, and this scheme of the union leaders to establish friendly relations between the church and unions is simply an effort to get the church to indorse the laborite movement with a view to creating public sentiment in favor of the unions in the event of trouble.

Too many clergymen and religious folk have allowed themselves to be deceived by this latest campaign on the part of the unionites, and in the hope of bringing about industrial peace some of the churches have practically espoused the cause of the unions. To such we would say: be not deceived, the unions do not want peace. The unionites are only using the church to give a moral tone to the vicious fight they are making against law and order. They hope, with the church on their side, to sway public opinion to such an extent that it will enable them to successfully wage the fight against those who are struggling to emancipate the wage-earners and the employers of labor who have for so long a time been enslaved by the unions.

Quite recently in a neighboring city a clergyman from the pulpit openly indorsed the system of boycott and picketing carried on by a local union. This encouraged the union to pursue such vicious measures that it was but a short time until the firm was temporarily put out of business. The strange part of it was that the owner of the business was a member of a Christian church, closed his store on Sunday, and paid more than union wages to his employees, although he refused to recognize the union.

Such tactics on the part of representatives of the church can not help but widen the breach between labor unions and employers. There is no doubt but what the church could and should do much to hasten the dawn of industrial freedom. As we understand the church it is the duty of its representatives to condemn evil wherever it is found and to warn the people against the enemies of righteousness and justice. The church could do a noble work in exposing the sins of the unscrupulous union bosses and grafters whose only object is to stir up strife and dissension among the wage-earners. The church should advise the working people that the employers have rights which they are bound to respect. The church should advise the peaceful settlement of all industrial disputes. The church should preach the doctrine of forbearance to employers and employees alike and in this way, and only in this way, can the church be of any real service in advancing the cause of industrial equity.

We are pleased to see that certain denominations have recently taken a decided stand against the tactics of the laborite agitators who are advocating socialism as a solution of the industrial problem. The Catholic church in particular has warned wage-earners against anarchistic laborites who favor violence and we hope and trust that it will not be long before all the churches will awaken to their responsibilities and endeavor to instill in the minds of both employers and employees the principles and teachings exemplified in the life of Him whose mission on earth was one of peace and good will and fair play.