

COLORLED MEN IN PITTSBURG TO JOIN THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

Large Attendance At First Meeting in Labor Temple Last Sunday

About 350 members of the race responded to the call of the American Federation of Labor invitation to be present at a meeting at Labor Temple on last Sunday for the purpose of taking steps to become affiliated with that organization. The large gathering and the interest manifested certainly showed the colored man is always ready to grasp even at a straw at it were to join hands with his white brother in any good movement that has for its object the uplift of all people.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Flynn, whose sincerity in his desire to do the square thing by the colored brother, we have no reason to doubt.

Flynn Opens Doors to Colored Men.

He said the doors of the American Federation of Labor were opened to the colored men and that while in some parts of the country a feeling existed against admitting the colored men, the only way to break down the doors of those still opposing was to get colored men to join the American Federation in places where this feeling does not exist.

We cannot expect great things from the start, and it may take a year or two to bring a complete affiliation in all organizations with the colored race.

Irish Had Struggle Too.

He cited the hardships of his own race, the Irish, whom his mother said, used to be stoned. Now it was up to them to try to educate the colored man and white man to realize the brotherhood of man. You will find the colored brother now in many parts of the country in the counsels of labor organizations as delegates. At the last international convention held here at the Monongahela house, a colored man from Youngstown represented the brickmakers association of that city.

McCullough Lauds Black Man's Efforts

Mr. J. W. McCullough, an ex-president of the United Mine Workers, followed with a very forcible and impressive speech that showed that his heart was in the right place. He hit right from the shoulder and received much applause for his manly utterances. He spoke of the many wrongs that had been perpetrated upon the black man, told how they had been brought to this country as slaves. He said the laboring man was now in a wage system of slavery, but the condition of employment today should be this, if you have more knowledge than I, you will be employed and if I have more knowledge than you, I will be employed. The question that is asked today is what is the price? They do not ask whether it was made by a white man or black man. It is now a question of reaching down to help the other fellow up and as you rise you can help to elevate others of your race. He spoke of the great progress the colored race had made in its few years of freedom, and is taking its place along side of the white man in all walks of life. If what the race has accomplished in about 40 years is to be considered, you ought to be able to double what you have done within the next 20 years. In fact, there is no limit to the possibilities of the colored man. You will be respected according to what you do for yourself. He said the race has been too easily contented with work for low wages.

True, there are places where white men will not work with colored men, but these white men cannot but real-

ize sooner or later that they will be the losers, and will be brought to see the folly of their position. We all need to get on the same broad platform that knows no creed, color or nationality and raise the highest standard we can set for each other.

Geo. M. Robb Joins Heartily.

Mr. Geo. Robb followed with a short speech to the point. He said he was willing to take a chance and join the American Federation and that we as colored citizens, have always been loyal to every movement that the white man has put forward that had for its object the uplift of mankind. While we have been known as strike breakers, it has been because we could never heretofore be strike makers, but that we now feel that the Divine hand that carries the destiny of nations has put it into the hands of these men to have us become part of this great industrial body. The question is, Are we to now members, and is only a question be recognized and accepted the same protection as the white brother? And will your motto be 'I am my brothers keeper?' We don't want to be used at "cat's paws" to pull you out of the fire.

Mr. Flynn replied that it was a very difficult problem to get all the white people to think alone. The American Federation of Labor has been advocating for 20 years the same privilege to the colored man as to the white and in fact no organization can affiliate with the American Federation of Labor and exclude the colored man. There are quite a few craft at present in which the colored men are of time until unions will admit them. What we want to do today is to get you properly organized and if you have any particular trade to transfer you to your respective organization and if you are not have no particular trade you will become affiliated directly with the American Federation of Labor.

We want to see if your people are sincere and while we realize that it is going to take a year or two to get everything in good order and get the results deserved by all, you can start out today for the foundation of this organization.

Organization Effected.

Mr. N. W. Rickmond was elected temporary chairman, and a better selection could not have been made. After several declinations Mr. Thos. Wilson was elected temporary secretary. Mr. Flynn stated the charter would cost \$10 and membership fee should be at least 50 cents. Mr. Geo. Robb, the well known and popular proprietor of the Colonial hotel, whose heart is as big as his body, said he would defray the expense of the charter and present it free to the organization and when the temporary organization was effected his \$10 was forthcoming.

At this meeting a good number of names was enrolled for membership and about half of the men paid their 50 cents. There will be another meeting at the Labor Temple next Sunday at 2 p. m.

Every colored man who has any race pride and wants to do something for the advancement of his race along industrial lines should be present at that meeting. We cannot see how you have anything to lose and if the promoters of this movement are sincere in their efforts to play fair with the colored man, the race and the American Federation of Labor will both reap the benefit. It is certainly worth a fair trial.