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EDITORIAL

POLITICAL TIGHT-ROPEERS.

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THE Pennsylvania Railroad Tunnel franchise passed the Board of Aldermen. Of course it passed. Not that it was necessarily a corrupt affair which our politicians could not muffle. Not that. It was no corrupter than any other large industrial and progressive capitalist move which needs political aid. Corruption in such cases is like the grease to make the wheels move. Moreover, there was as much corruption set in motion against it, as for it. And it passed, as pass it had to. This aspect of the franchise, tho' of much interest, can not be fully treated—as yet. As yet the accurate details of the corrupt greasing and anti-greasing are not known. When known they will furnish a brilliant light by which to study the morals that capitalism breeds and needs to progress.

But while examination of this feature of the Tunnel franchise must be postponed, there is one that can be treated now. All its facts are in Court. It is the tight-rope dancer's quality of the capitalist politicians on the question of Labor.

The Aldermen who favored, as well as those who opposed, the franchise did so out of "love for Labor." Those who opposed it, claimed it was against their conscience to vote for a franchise that did not contain the 8-hour day clause; those who favored the franchise declared their unalterable devotion to the 8-hour day, but they did not like to render it and them ridiculous by insisting on the insertion of a clause that the Courts had pronounced unconstitutional. And thus they wrangled and balanced themselves. The attitude plus the record of the President of the Borough, Jacob Cantor, typifies the whole set.

This Cantor wanted the 8-hour day clause in; as it was not in, he voted against the franchise. This same Cantor, as a member of the New York Legislature, voted in 1892 for the 10-hour day law for railway employees. And this identical Cantor, the ink on that law

not yet being dry, stood by and applauded his Democratic Governor Flower for sending the militia of the whole State into Buffalo to help the railroad magnates violate that very law against the switchmen on strike to enforce it. Are any more facts needed?

The pity of it all is that large numbers of workingmen, lieutenantated by men hired by the capitalist class, consent to have their backs and necks used as the tight rope for these despicable politicians to do their stunts on.

Throw them off!

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
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