

# Both Sides of the Present Labor Controversy

The attempted overthrow of organized labor in the city of Omaha by an organization called the Business Men's association, while not involving nearly as many persons as some previous struggles that have taken place in the industrial world, still has been quite costly, not only on account of the loss of time of hundreds of men, but further on account of the stagnation of business in Omaha for months. The unique character of the controversy, the desperate, wily and cruel methods adopted to not only crush the unions and punish the participants and their sympathizers and deprive the members of the means of supporting themselves, forms a highly interesting chapter in the progress of modern commercialism. The beginning of this conflict may be said to have commenced about March 16, when the hod carriers made a demand for 2 1/2 cents per hour raise in wages. I am informed that quite a number of jobs paid the scale and the men were gradually getting work under the new conditions, when the supply of building material, except lumber, was shut off to men employing union labor. This continued for weeks, or until the Bricklayers' union untied the role of strike breakers by going to work, June 15.

This action on the part of the material men resulted in an almost complete suspension of all union work in the city. It was a new method of lockout and boycott combined, enforcing idleness upon the men and almost complete paralyzation of the building industry. The bricklayers, hod carriers, carpenters, plumbers, plasterers and electricians were federated in a body known as a Building Trades council, organized for mutual assistance. The plasterers had made a demand upon their employers, but had, I am told, withdrawn such demand, to later renege it upon the advent of the lockout. The carpenters had made a demand for a minimum scale of wages of 50 cents per hour, an increase of 10 cents over the previous year, to cover in part the increased cost of living. The demand was made some time in January and was to go into effect May 1, thus giving the employers four months' time in which to apply the scale to all new estimates. The contractors did not reply until about the middle of April, and then submitted a counter proposition with terms substantially as follows:

First—A sliding scale of wages ranging from 35 cents to 50 cents per hour.

Second—Eight hours per week hours Saturday.

Third—Time and a half for overtime.

Fourth—Each trade to settle its own disputes without the intervention of other trades.

Fifth—The employers to be federated in a body known as a Business Men's association, organized for mutual assistance. Never in the world's history was there a more despotic boycott than that now used to prevent our men from honestly earning their bread by working for themselves.

The purpose of this boycott is in my opinion, just as much to destroy the small contractor and business man as to build up a business men's and contractors' monopoly, as it is to starve our members into submission until they give up their organization and become slaves of the combine.

Much has been said during the controversy about the Business Men's association wanting to protect his interests. I notice, however, they seldom raise his wages, only when they can use him in time of strikes and usually his wages are reduced when he has pulled their chestnuts out of the fire.

## Two Papers on Strike Questions—One by National Organizer Sidney J. Kent Speaking for the Carpenters of Omaha—The Other Condensed from an Article Contributed to the New York Independent by President John S. Stevens of the National Association of Builders.

and the strike is broken. It is because the nonunion man has a negative force that the bricks love him so well, because he pulls down rather than builds up. Not many years ago women pulled the cars instead of mules in the coal mines of Great Britain. Did the nonunion man raise his hand to rescue them? No. He was too busy looking after self. Did the business man rescue them? No, indeed. He put them there because there was money in it. The physical, moral or spiritual welfare of men, women and children cut but a sorry figure when weighed alongside of profits by business men's associations, and they love the nonunion man because he can be used as a tool to stifle the ambitions of the worker who seeks by association to be something more than a hewer of wood or drawer of water. The trade union is the only true friend of the nonunion man. We took 50,000 of them into our organization last year. We raised their wages, helped to educate their children and made them broader and better citizens. What did the Business Men's association do for them?

"Papa," said small Tommy, "does mamma love you more than she does me?" "Of course not, Tommy," replied the father. "Well, I think she ought to," rejoined the small philosopher, "cause there is so much more of you to love."

"What a beautiful mamma you've got," said Governor Richard Yates of Illinois to the little daughter of his host.

"Yes, when there's a party," replied the golden-haired one as she settled in his lap and listened to his watch tick.

"Mamma, has Mr. Brown's eyes got feet?" asked little Elmer.

"Certainly not, dear," replied the mother. "But why did you ask?"

"Cause I heard sister say Mr. Brown's eyes followed her all around the room at the party last night," replied Elmer.

The late Rev. Hyatt Smith of Brooklyn used to tell this story of his little daughter. While walking along the street one day the child, who had the happy faculty of looking on the sunny side of things, saw a wagonload of sheepskins.

"What are those things, papa?" she asked. "Sheepskins, my dear."

"But where are the sheep, papa?"

The father explained that the sheep had been killed for food. Looking after the wagon, with the tails of the sheepskins wagging as they dangled over the side, the child remarked:

"Well, papa, the sheep may be dead, but the tails seem to be having a good time."

When Appendicitis Pays.

"I don't understand how E. H. Harriman got up about two weeks after his operation for appendicitis," said one of a group at the club, "when it took me six weeks to get on my feet."

"Oh, well, your time was not so valuable," etc., from the crowd. Meanwhile the doctor in the group had been silent.

"You heard, of course, what they found?" he ventured. General interest.

"Why, the appendix was full of undigested securities, and all they had to do was to cut the coupons off."—New York Times.

## As Viewed by Employers

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"Oh, what's the use?" said my host, with a half humorous smile, which, as I thought, seemed to take no account of the seriousness of the situation.

"Well, our union ain't satisfied with some of the conditions on your work. We are going to call out our men."

I did not hear more of the conversation, but I noticed, on returning to Philadelphia, that there was no report of any strike on his work. Asking him about it a few days afterward, he smiled even more broadly than when he received the call of the "business agent," who was the uninvited guest.

"You didn't hear all the conversation that day," he said. "He added, after his threat of a strike: 'But \$100 will settle it.' No, I didn't have a strike. That \$100 in his pocket was cheaper than a strike would have been."

The time came at last when timorous assent to the demands of blackmailers in the guise of walking delegates could no longer serve even as a palliative of labor's exactions. Union of labor could be effectively encountered only by union of employers. The great, grim struggle so long impending had become a set battle.

"Labor's unrest," of which we hear so much today, is not an unrest at all; it is a mere expression of two unjust phases of the labor question. One is the walking delegate, the other is the intoxication of power felt by trades unions, an intoxication which, in the building trades at least, has reached its climax.

Labor has never been better paid in the history of the human family than it is in the United States today; yet there has rarely been such "unrest." The two facts must be taken together if we desire any just estimate of the situation. We have labor threatened with starvation in the midst of unexampled plenty, while capital is without earnings, lying idle by the tens of millions, afraid to go into operations controlled by trades unions. Such are the most obvious results of the "unrest" that exists in the time of the greatest prosperity.

The weapons which labor is wielding are themselves undergoing a change. Most men have a quiet, often unacknowledged, sympathy for the workingman who is making a fair fight for better conditions by means of the old-fashioned, fair and square strike has become obsolete. In its place we have something else—the so-called "sympathetic strike." If Jones strike against Smith in Georgia, Brown and Robinson must have quarrels in New York or San Francisco. That is the logic of the sympathetic strike. The attitude of the building trades is best expressed by a cartoon in a recent number of a well known comic paper, where an employer calls up his workmen and shows them the words, written on a placard:

"The sympathetic lockout is as logical as the sympathetic strike."

"The sympathetic strike is our only effective weapon," say its advocates. The statement is itself an abandonment of the justification. It is merely an extenuation, an ostensible excuse—not an appeal to the right. The men admit, however, that if employers were organized as thoroughly as they, the workers would be powerless. The admission is impressive; it is now being acted upon.

Chicago builders, two years ago, recognized the danger involved in the sympathetic strike, and, by joining hands, suppressed formidable revolts and progressed the abrogation of some highly mischievous and unjust rules. The lesson appears to have been lost upon workmen elsewhere. Demands acceded to grew by what they fed upon; no rate of pay, no principle of business management, appeared ever to bring settled conditions. In 1888, the second year of the Master Builders' National association, that body took its first step looking to the formation of permanently organized bodies whose object should be conciliation. Everything that could be done to secure some fixed principle or method of dealing with labor has since been tried.

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## FRATILE OF THE YOUNGSTERS.

workman, to refuse to work with any man obnoxious to them. The union is opposed to the sliding scale of wages scheme because experience shows them that the scale always slides downward. They stand ever ready to accept arbitration, providing it is not of the lion and lamb kind, when they are expected to be the lamb. They welcome an apprentice system, and were the contractors left free to deal with them without the interference of outside parties a settlement could have been effected long ago.

SIDNEY J. KENT, National Organizer Amalgamated Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners.

# Orchard & Wilhem

## June Rug and Carpet Selling

will be interesting here for it's the last month of the spring season, and we propose crowding it full of quick carpet selling—we propose unloading the major portion of this stock. We are well aware that it's the price that interests and we are meeting you on this, then it's the best—the superior qualities, that you secure here and that's a feature it's well to keep in mind.

### TURKISH BATH MATS.

2x22	30c	Grass matting rugs	36x72	\$1.50			
2x42	\$1.25	18x36	60c	Carpet sizes in Imperial quality Smyrna rugs, the best American made rugs.			
Blues, greens and reds to match your tile	36x72	30x30	\$1.00				
Japanese cotton wash rugs, Blues, greens and pinks, very suitable for chamber or bath mats.	6x9	36x72	\$1.00				
2x2 feet	\$2.50	18x36	75c	Fibre carpet rugs.			
2x4 feet	\$4.25	28x54	\$1.25	18x36	\$1.00		
2x8 feet	\$8.75	36x72	\$2.00	36x72	\$1.50		
4-6x4	\$5.75	48x72	\$3.00	48x72	\$2.50		
1x1 feet	\$8.00	6x9	\$1.00	6x9	\$1.50		
Kashmer large rugs warranted fast colors.	9x12	\$2.50	9x12	\$2.00	8-3x10-6	\$2.50	
9x12	\$2.50	36x72	\$4.00	36x72	\$3.50	9x12	\$2.75
9x10-6	\$11.00	36x72	\$4.25	36x72	\$3.75	9x12	\$3.00

### AXMINSTER RUGS.

Smith's Axminster	18x28	\$2.50	Bigelow Axminster	18x28	\$3.00	
8-3x10-6	\$2.50	36x72	\$4.25	36x72	\$4.50	
Sanford Axminster	8-3x10-6	\$3.00	8-3x10-6	\$3.00	Electra Axminster	\$4.00
8-3x10-6 (no seams)	\$7.50	18x36	\$1.25	18x36	\$1.25	
9x12	\$7.50	36x72	\$4.25	36x72	\$4.25	
Reed's Axminster	8-3x10-6	\$2.50	36x72	\$4.25	36x72	\$4.25
8-3x10-6	\$2.50	36x72	\$4.25	36x72	\$4.25	
9x12	\$2.50	36x72	\$4.25	36x72	\$4.25	

### WILTON RUGS.

English Wilton	18x28	\$3.50	9x12	\$5.00				
18x28	\$3.50	18x28	\$3.50	Ventnor Wilton	18x28	\$3.00		
36x72	\$2.00	36x72	\$2.00	36x72	\$2.00	36x72	\$2.50	
French Wilton	27x54	\$5.75	36x72	\$4.00	36x72	\$4.00	36x72	\$4.00
36x72	\$4.00	36x72	\$4.00	36x72	\$4.00	36x72	\$4.00	
8-3x10-6	\$4.00	8-3x10-6	\$4.00	8-3x10-6	\$4.00	8-3x10-6	\$4.00	

### RUGS MADE FROM REMNANTS OF CARPETS.

8-3x11-0 Extra Axminster	\$3.50	8-3x12-0 Axminster	\$2.00
8-3x12-0 Wilton Velvet	\$2.50	8-3x12-0 Body Brussels	\$2.50
8-3x12-0 Axminster	\$2.50	9x11-0 Body Brussels	\$1.50
8-3x10-0 Body Brussels	\$3.00	9x10-4 Brussels	\$1.50
8-3x11-2 Wilton Velvet	\$3.00	9x11 Brussels	\$1.50
8-3x10-7 Extra Axminster	\$3.00	10-6x11 Brussels	\$1.50
8-3x10-6 Savonarre Axminster	\$2.50	10-6x11-4 Brussels	\$2.00
8-3x12-6 Axminster	\$2.00	8-3x10-6 Brussels	\$1.00
8-3x13-3 Brussels	\$3.00	10-6x12-8 Brussels	\$1.00
8-3x12-6 Axminster	\$3.00	10-6x12-8 Moquette	\$4.00

### Body Brussels Rugs

8-3x10-6	\$3.00	8-3x10-6	\$3.00
6x9 feet	\$3.00	6x9 feet	\$3.00
9x12 feet	\$3.50	9x12 feet	\$3.50
9x15 feet	\$3.50	9x15 feet	\$3.50
10-6x12	\$3.50	10-6x12	\$3.50
10-6x13-6	\$4.00	10-6x13-6	\$4.00
10-6x18	\$4.00	10-6x18	\$4.00

### INGRAIN CARPET

Warranted by us to be equal to any wool ingrain made. Made of long fibre wool filling and extra heavy twisted cotton warp. 6c a yard.

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MAKES PURE BLOOD

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## HARRY E. MOORES,

General Agent, Pass. Dept., Omaha, Nebraska.