

THE REAL VALUE OF UNIONS

By Robert Hunter.

Let him who questions the value of unionism pause to consider for a moment just one thing that unionism has accomplished.

It is well known that in the early days of the present factory system the day's work extended usually to fourteen or sixteen hours.

This long day existed for all workers—the skilled and the unskilled, the children as well as the men and women.

The workers had not yet learned to organize, and as individuals they were utterly helpless to effect a change in the hours of their labor or in the scale of their wages.

There were, of course, no laws to protect them, and so they lived entirely at the mercy of their employers.

The normal conditions that existed little more than half a century ago in England and elsewhere throughout the world of the factory system are equalled today only in certain plague spots.

When one reads the stories of the misery and oppression, the long hours and low wages of those days, one wonders how the workers managed to live at all.

How much the condition of the workers generally has been improved it is by no means easy to say, but we do know that the condition of the workers has vastly improved wherever they have learned to value unity.

In those trades where the men have known enough to fight for their rights and to stand together there has arisen what some seiffers like to call an "aristocracy of labor."

And if in certain trades there are indeed aristocrats of labor, it is simply because they have had intelligence enough to fight together, to pay dues to one organization and to battle always with unity and solidarity.

And what they have done all other workers can do.

The "aristocrats" hold no patent on their method of action, and by acting in the same manner all other toilers can win all the "aristocrats" have won.

Now it is difficult to ascertain just how much union workers have benefited by higher wages.

In that matter there is always the question as to the increased cost of living which makes difficult any comparison of wages here and abroad or of wages now with those of forty years ago.

The best one can do is to compare wages and hours today in one trade that is organized with the wages and hours in another trade that is unorganized.

This has been well done by the department of labor at Washington, and the figures gathered by that department show beyond dispute the enormous benefits that have come to labor as a result of organization.

Consider for one moment the following facts:

We all know that the workers in the iron and steel trade are poorly organized, and we find that the hours of labor in this trade are from sixty to seventy-two per week.

The hot blast men in all parts of the country work about eighty-four hours per week.

On the other hand, we all know that the stone and granite cutters are well organized.

When we look up the figures of their hours we find that they work about forty-eight hours per week.

The bricklayers, the carpenters, the hod carriers, the painters, the paper-hangers and the plumbers are highly organized trades; and when we inquire into the hours worked by these men we find that they rarely average more than fifty hours per week.

These workers then are the aristocrats of labor simply because they are well united in their trade, are loyal to their organization, pay their dues and fight a common battle.

It would be difficult to find an argument in support of unionism so potent as this one.

To find one set of workers like the stonecutters working forty-eight hours per week and another set of workers in the iron and steel trade working eighty hours per week should alone be enough to convince every toiler in this wide land of the value of unionism.

But this is not all. The hot blast men who work an average of eighty-four hours per week obtain only about 16 cents per hour for their labor.

The stonecutters who work on an average of forty-eight hours per week receive an average of 40 cents per hour.

In other words, the stonecutter working about half the time of the hot blast men receive at the end of the week much larger wages.

To look at it in another way. A hot blast man during his life sells to his boss an amount of labor about equal to that sold by two stonecutters during their lives.

The hot blast worker gives in one life what one stonecutter would need two lives to give, and he gives the labor of two lives for less money than

a stonecutter receives for the labor of his one life.

Think of this and then consider how tragic it is that one must actually persuade workmen to believe in industrial unity.

It is almost impossible to believe that any class of workers should be blind to the value of unionism or loth to suffer almost anything to achieve it.

And what astounding evidence of working class stupidity it would be if the workers of this country should without a fight allow their unions to be crushed and their right of organization taken away by the capitalist legislature and courts.

The value of unity is so clear, the gains for those who have united are so evident and the necessity of organization for all workers is so great that it would seem that men if they have intelligence to fight for anything they would surely fight for this.

HOW SINGLE TAX WORKS.

One effect of taxing land values and exempting improvements is seen in Vancouver, B. C. where since this policy has been put in effect the Canadian Pacific has agreed to let the city regulate all wharf charges on a new line of cement quays over 6,000 feet long where formerly nothing but mud flats lay idle. There will be no wharfage robberies and cinches in Vancouver. Portland, wake up!—Portland Labor Press.

DOUGHERTY MADE GOOD.

There are those who believe that a state labor bureau should be run wholly in the interests of employers and carefully ignoring the interests of labor.—Wageworker.

And there are some in Oklahoma who feel that way yet none of them had the nerve to sacrifice themselves on the democrat ticket against Charley Dougherty. He was the only state officer in the primary election who had no opposition.—Oklahoma Labor Unit.

CALLED HIS BLUFF.

Offered Criticizing Preacher Job As Chief of Police.

Because he delivered a sermon from his pulpit denouncing the city officials for not enforcing the law and expressing the fervid hope that he could be chief of police for a while, Rev. J. J. Lacey, a Methodist minister of Greeley, Colo., has "had his bluff called."

The city council last Saturday offered him a job as policeman, with a fine chance to become chief of police.

In offering the job, the council asks the preacher:

"Can you distinguish between a woman who is bad and one who is just giddy?"

"Can you tell the difference between a poker game and plain cribbage?"

"Can you tell when a man is drunk enough to be sent to jail, and when he is only hilarious enough to be sent home?"

"Can you distinguish between young couples, innocently spooning in the park, and those who should be arrested?"

"Will you walk your beat from 6 in the evening until 7 the next morning?"

If the minister qualifies the council makes this offer: "After a year, if you have demonstrated your ability to detect criminals, catch bootleggers and keep your own skirts from the muck, the council will come to you with open arms and ask you to take the job of city marshal. For years the council has been looking for a man to fill that position who has the personal reputation of a Joseph, the patience of a Job, the wisdom of a Solomon and the courage of a lion."

WHICH IS THE WORST?

Western Woman Asks Two Embarrassing Questions.

Can the worst that has ever happened in the prize ring compare with short-weighting the government, which is the people?

How about the "big" man who pounces upon a little child—a thousand little children—and puts them to work in a factory that destroys their bodies and their souls?

Or, what of the "big merchant" who, by the club of hunger, compels his women employees to labor long hours on semi-starvation wages?—Mrs. LaReine Helen Baker, Spokane, Wash.

The strike of hodcarriers at San Francisco was settled on August 3 upon the understanding that all hodcarriers who are not attending bricklayers and plasterers shall work only eight hours a day instead of eight hours and a half and that they shall be paid for a full day, receiving the same as the other hodcarriers who work the extra time.

The San Francisco Labor Council has approved the proposition to create the office of female factory inspector, suggested by the Woman's Union Label League.



AUGUSTUS H. HYERS, HAVELOCK
Machinists' Union—Postmaster

THE MACHINISTS' UNION

A Little History of One of the Livest of Local Organizations.

Machinists Lodge No. 269 of Lincoln and Havelock was permanently organized during the winter of 1904. At that time most of the railway members kept their membership under the hat. Later the railroad managers realized that the organization was not antagonistic, but was formed for mutual protection and benefit, and then the railroad boys came out into the open. The contract employees were in the majority at first, but later the railroad members became most numerous. Today the membership is over a hundred and still growing. Meetings are held twice a month, alternating between Lincoln and Havelock. About 75 per cent reside in Havelock, the rest in Lincoln.

No. 269 is a "live bunch." It is always helping others as well as taking care of its own. A little bit about some of the charter members may be of interest:

C. H. Lingle, for years the local's efficient secretary, has just completed an entirely new automobile for a Lincoln company. John Curran has been recording secretary ever since the hills were holes in the ground. Every time he is re-elected he declines, then the boys compel him to hang on. H. F. Moore is another old-timer, although he has traveled around quite a bit. Still he hangs on to his 269 card. In 1908 Ralph Lash quit the machinists' trade for good, and went into the market gardening business. Just as he was about to harvest a bumper crop along came that disastrous July flood and away went the crop down Salt Creek. Then Ralph came back to the trade. John Malstead is the president at this time, and is the comedian of the lodge. He has made so good that he is now serving his third term. Peter Koll, the secretary, has opened a garage in Havelock and expects to be able to use a few machinists in due time. Frank Boehme is the keeper of the funds. Personally he is a philanthropist, but when it comes to expending the lodge funds he gets so excited he mixes two or three languages. "Red" Eckland is the business agent and he is on the job all the time. The lodge affiliates with the Central Labor Union at Lincoln and with the State Federation of Labor. By the way, Nels Stonestrom, now with the U. P. at Omaha, helped organize No. 269. So did N. C. Broker, who is working at the Lincoln round house.

It's always a pleasure to meet this live bunch or any of its members, and the Wageworker is under many obligations to all of them.

FLIGHT OF WORKING GIRL.

Mrs. Robbins Compares the Conditions in East and West.

The condition of the working girl in the west is much better than that of her sister in the east, so said Mrs. Raymond Robbins, president of the Woman's National Trades Union league, who has an intimate knowledge of the subject on which she speaks, through her long study of industrial problems and a broad sympathy for her less fortunate sisters.

"Few of the girls in the west start to work at the ages of 12 and 13 years, as they do here," she said.

"We have our labor problems,

but none like you have. The girl workers of your city belong to the second and third generation—a generation of which the mothers have been ground down by machine labor. In the west the sapping process has not got beyond the first generation. In consequence the women workers of the west have more vitality.

"If immigration to this country should be shut off suddenly," she continued, "it would only be a short time before we would feel our great physical loss. The strong peasant women come over here and transmit her strength to her children and that is why our girl workers have more vitality than yours, for it is in the west that the peasantry of Europe settles. But I believe we are at the turn of the tide. I think better times are coming for our women workers. The question is whether the intelligent women of our country will join with us to make the tide rise higher and hurry on the better day."

Mrs. Robbins said of the wealthy women who trade in the shops:

"They are stupid. I don't mean naturally stupid. They are surrounded by a high wall over which they cannot look and to the top of which they cannot climb. It is these women we want to teach. It isn't that they have a lack of sympathy or that they wouldn't help if they knew, for I think they would."

Mrs. Robbins said that in Europe more was done for the girl workers than in this country. In several foreign countries, she declared, the hours of labor were properly apportioned so that there were eleven hours of rest between working days and greater attention was paid to such matters as sanitation.

The average wage of the woman worker is \$270 a year," she said, "and you must remember that average means below, as well as above. In the textile industry something like two-thirds of the workers are getting \$6 a week. Deduct room rent and the price of meals from \$6 a week and what have you left?"

"Is it not very difficult for a girl to lead an honest life under such conditions?" Mrs. Robbins was asked.

"Yes, and the marvel is that so many thousands of them are good honest women, as I know they are," replied Mrs. Robbins.

"Why, I have known girls to live on nothing but rye bread and olive oil in order to scrape together enough money to buy a new hat or a new dress."

"What is the remedy for such a condition of affairs?"

"One remedy is trades unionism. Organize the women and teach to think and act. Another is the ballot. I am an ardent suffragist. Everybody is who ever tried to do anything for women workers."

Another general clothing strike is under way in New York City. Fifteen thousand tailors, of whom 6000 are women, quit work in 300 factories on August 4, demanding a fifty-three hour week and an increase in wages. About 15,000 more are expected to quit work.

The wages of thousands of paper mill workers in New Hampshire, New York State, Vermont, Maine and Massachusetts were advanced an average of 5 per cent on August 2 by the International Paper Company.

FLORIDA IS CALLING

The Southern Colonization Company, the largest Real Estate firm in the United States, has just completed arrangements to place upon the market a very large tract of prairie land in the South-Central part of Florida. The reason why this land has not been placed under cultivation long ago, is because, heretofore, this large tract has been so far from market, which made it impossible to deliver the crops at a profit, but now the Company itself is building a railroad right down through this tract of land, which will at once place the products of this soil in touch with the markets of the world.

This land is located where we have an ideal climate, on the Kissimmee Prairies, where our lands are located. The highest temperature ever recorded is 98 degrees and it seldom ever gets below 40 degrees above zero. The rainfall averages about 50 inches a year and the water supply is excellent, as good water may be obtained at a depth of 15 to 30 feet and Artesian wells are successful at 100 to 500 feet.

The soil consists of a sandy loam and is underlaid with a clay sub-soil.

Any kind of fruit and vegetables can be raised in this part of Florida that can be raised anywhere, even in California, on cheaper land and without irrigation, and besides that, we are nearer the market which makes it very profitable to the grower. It is an easy matter to raise as much when profitably cultivated on 10 acres of this ground, than is often grown elsewhere on 160 acre farm. We can show many orange groves within a few miles of our land that cannot be bought for \$1000 an acre. Our lands will do as well.

The following is what a man says about truck farming in our part of Florida:

"Kissimmee, Florida.
Dec. 3d, 08.

Dear Sir:
In January 1908 I purchased two acres of land near Kissimmee for \$100. During the Spring and

Summer I worked and cleared the lands, fenced same and put up a small barn at an additional cost of \$200. Up to October, 1908, I had sold about \$500 worth of vegetables. At present I have: 35,000 celery plants, 2,000 strawberry plants, 10,000 lettuce plants, 8,000 cabbage plants, 30,000 Bermuda onion plants and three-fourths acre of sweet potatoes.

This crop is looking fine. Could not be better. Estimating this crop at prices obtainable in Kissimmee, its value is \$3,500.

Yours truly,
D. ROTUNDO."

What do you think of this kind of a return? You do not need a large farm to have an independent living in this part of Florida.

Our next Excursion will be Tuesday, September 20th, at which time the Company will start a private car from Lincoln, which they will carry to their lands and return for the benefit of their customers.

Our lands are sold from \$15 to \$25 per acre and on easy terms. We will sell all the way from 10 acres to all a man can pay for, but we will not load a man up with more than what is profitable for him. Our 10 acre tracts we will sell for \$25 per acre, on terms as follows: \$1.00 per acre down and \$1.00 per acre each month until the same has been paid for. We will sell 20 acre tracts on the same terms. Our large tracts we will sell with one-third down and we will make easy terms on the balance.

Call on us before the above date and get more information and get some literature on the subject. Do not let this opportunity pass, it may never call again. Take it now while it is within your reach. We have many things to tell you, but space will not permit, therefore, we invite you to call at our office.

Southern Colonization Company.
Rooms 1 and 2, No. 140 South 13th Street.
Frank E. Schaaf, Local Manager.
James R. McCann, District Manager.

Buy your ticket; then come to our office — and we will check your baggage straight from your residence to destination, avoiding any waiting at depot. Cabs on call at any time, night or day. Leave your checks and have your baggage delivered to any part of the city.

Ensign Omnibus and Transfer Co.

Bell Phone 303 . . . Auto Phone 2303
Office 221 South 11th LINCOLN, NEB.

J. T. CLARK
Residence Phone—Bell F-1228

HENRY LEVI
Residence Phones—Bell 279, Auto 6313

CLARK & LEVI CO.

INCORPORATED
Office Phones—Bell 1363; Auto 2634

Plumbing, Electrical Work, Gas, Steam Fitting

1505 O St., LINCOLN, NEB.

Also all kinds of houses for sale or rent. We have houses to sell on easy payments. Call and see us.
HENRY LEVI, Manager of the Real Estate business.
J. T. CLARK, Mgr. Plumbing and Electrical Work.

C. A. TUCKER--Jeweler

S. S. SHEEN--Optician

Your Patronage Solicited

1123 O Street Yellow Front