

advised the Oklahomans to vote against the democratic constitution his advice was freely interpreted as a reminder that the republican national administration had the power to unmake the constitution.

But these influences were of no avail. Oklahoma and Indian Territory, ambitious for statehood, wanted to insure for the new commonwealth popular government in its best sense. To this end they entrusted the work of making a constitution to the democratic party and the democratic party proved itself faithful to the trust.

The fidelity shown by the democratic constitutional convention and the purpose displayed by the democratic candidates for office have been recognized and rewarded by a victory so complete that it must give encouragement to all men who participate in politics in the hope of deriving from government "the greatest good to the greatest number."



THE SPIRIT OF BROTHERHOOD

There should be no such thing as a labor question; that there is such a question is a reflection upon mankind. As far as history carries us back into the past, however, there has been a labor question and it has too often seemed to vary in its gravity in proportion to the advancement of the country. We say "seemed" because, as a matter of fact, the industrial controversies among the advanced nations are due to the growing strength and independence of the wage earners rather than to any retrograde movement. While in the United States the condition of the laboring man is not what it ought to be when compared with the importance of the position which he occupies, while he suffers from evils which should be corrected and is deserving of more consideration than he receives at the hands of the government, still it is only fair to say that, generally speaking, he is more intelligent, more influential and better supplied with the necessaries and comforts of life than he has ever been before.

Compared with the laborer of other countries his superiority is still more marked. It is only a few centuries ago that the wage earner was entirely ignorant of history, geography, science and literature. It did not relieve his condition to know that nearly all of the community shared the disability. While the printing press and the public school have brought an immeasurable advance to the workmen of Europe and are bringing improvement to the laboring classes of the Orient, our country is approached by but a few of the nations and equaled by none in the reward that it offers to the man who earns his bread in the sweat of his face.

The fact that laborers have flocked to the United States from all the countries of Europe is proof that in the old world, as well as in the United States, the advantages offered here are appreciated. The Chinese, by coming temporarily, admit our possession of greater industrial opportunities; but the Europeans, by casting in their lot with us, give stronger proof. It is one thing to travel into other lands for commercial reasons or for the purpose of exploitation, and quite another thing to make a change of citizenship and commit one's self and posterity to the keeping of another people and government. Those who come to us, therefore, to become citizens and to identify themselves with the destiny of the nation, pay us the highest possible compliment, and the great bulk of those who come—almost all, in fact—come to enter the ranks of labor or to settle upon farms. There is additional significance in the fact that no American-born laborer and few naturalized laborers go to other countries to become permanent residents.

Many causes have contributed to the steady upward progress of the laborer, among which may be mentioned education, labor-saving machinery, trade organizations, cheapened transportation and the growth of the idea of brotherhood.

Education has increased the efficiency of the laborer, and, therefore, his earning power; it has enlarged his capabilities, and, therefore, his independence. The man whose mental discipline is such that he can easily adjust himself to any occupation which offers an opening has a great advantage over one who has nothing but muscle to offer. Those who have dealt with the Oriental laborer comment upon his lack of initiative. He does what he is told to do and does it as he is directed; but if anything happens in the absence of the overseer the laborer is lost, for he does not know how to meet an emergency or

to devise a new method on the spur of the moment.

Education also enables a man to present with intelligence his claims for proper treatment. In any group of men who have a grievance clearly and forcibly naturally become the leaders, and so an improvement in the average condition of the man follows closely upon his intellectual improvement.

Education furnishes the companionship of books and tends to raise the standard of social intercourse. No matter how favorable the influences of government or the social environment may be, much depends upon the habits of the individual; and education, by supplying a higher form of enjoyment, lessens the conviviality that wastes time and money as well as impairs the strength. Intelligence and morals are not inseparable companions, but one is apt to promote the other—it would be a reflection on the dispensations of Providence to doubt that the proper development of the body, the mind or the heart would, for any natural reason, retard the development of the others. The thing to be desired is the harmonious development of the threefold man, and the performance of our duty in respect to the care of one part of our being throws light upon our duty in respect to the care of the other parts.

The labor-saving machine has often been spoken of as if it were an enemy of the laboring man. The error arises from confusing the temporary with the permanent effect. What would we think of one who would argue against the economic advantage of education on the ground that the child is withdrawn from remunerative work while it is in school? The very obvious answer would be that the training acquired in school would constitute an investment far greater, even measured by dollars and cents, than the child could possibly make with the money earned during the school period. Nearly everybody in our country understands today that there is a pecuniary advantage in education which far surpasses any pecuniary advantage which could arise from the labor of children during the years from six to fourteen. So universal is this opinion that schools are provided at public expense and attendance is, in many places, made compulsory. Some communities furnish the text-books at public expense, other communities furnish conveyance to and from school, and there is no doubt that public sentiment would support the proposition to furnish board and clothing to any whose parents were too poor to supply them. In fact, this is already done in the case of the blind, the deaf and orphans.

Another illustration may be cited. While a child can earn money in a factory or in a mine, and while the parents may, in some cases, need the earnings of the child for the support of the family, still public sentiment supports measures making it absolutely unlawful for the children to be employed. The anti-child labor laws all rest upon the theory that the future advantage of education to the child and to the country more than offsets any temporary advantage that could come to the child, the home or the country from employment that would deny to the child the opportunity to attend school.

So with labor-saving machinery. If there is any suffering or injustice caused by new inventions it is more than counterbalanced by the gain that ultimately comes to society from the improved method.

It is possible that society should in some way assume a part of the burden where the transition from the old state to the new bears with especial severity upon a few or upon a class, but modern society encourages, and will still continue to encourage, the cheapening processes.

The labor-saving machine ought really to be the labor-multiplying machine, for the actual effect of an important invention is to increase the total amount of labor employed, rather than to decrease it. While in a particular case the cost is reduced, the invention itself creates new demands for labor by enlarging the field of human effort.

One of the earliest labor-saving inventions was the sail. The first man who raised a sail for the propelling of his canoe doubtless caused consternation among the oarsmen, for would not the strong arm of Boreas displace the puny arm of man? It might seem so to one who took a short-sighted view of the subject, but it is safe to say that more men have found employment on ships than could have made a living paddling canoes. The sail brought into use a larger ship than the oar could propel and made

international commerce possible. Steam has, in like manner, supplanted the sailing vessel to a considerable extent, but only still further to augment commerce and knit the world more closely together.

What an interesting study the evolution of the land vehicle presents! Each change has displaced some simpler carriage with a more perfect one and the result is that more people ride than ever before and more people are employed making the carriages and wagons of various kinds. The electric car has superseded the mule car, and the interurban line is rapidly obliterating the boundary line which separates the city from the country, but the demand for labor has increased.

The railroad brought quite a loss to those who freighted across the desert and interfered to a very considerable extent with the river steamers, but it multiplied the number of persons engaged in transporting merchandise. It is safe to say that because of the commerce brought into being by the railroads many times as many men are engaged in hauling freight and passengers to and from the depots as would have been employed in teaming if we had no railroads, not to speak of the men employed on the railroads and the men employed in wholesale and retail houses that could not exist without the railroads.

One more illustration. The printing press was ruinous to the copyists, but what a small proportion the copyists would, today, bear to the number employed in typesetting, presswork and bookbinding, without considering the number employed in collecting material for newspapers and books and the number engaged in distributing them. If we attempt to measure the influence for good exerted by the printing press or to estimate the condition of the world today if copying were still done by hand, we can form some idea of the advantage of the labor-saving machine.

Machinery has not only multiplied the demand for labor, but it has raised the grade of labor by calling the mind to the assistance of the hand. The men who manage the ships command higher wages than the oarsman; the engineers and conductors draw higher salaries than the teamsters on the plains and the rates of a typographical union are better than the wages of the copyist.

All enlightened governments encourage invention today, giving to the originator of an idea a monopoly for a limited period. While he thus secures compensation for his service to society the public at large enjoys the greatest benefit, for, in a little while, the improved machine is working for all.



OUR EXPERT STATISTICIANS

The government statistician, whose duty it is to give us figures every now and then to prove that wages are increasing faster than living expenses, has been at it again. By carefully averaging things up he has demonstrated beyond a peradventure that wages have advanced at a more rapid rate than the cost of living. It was so easy, too. Having demonstrated to his own satisfaction that wages have advanced about ten per cent, he proceeds to show that while meat prices have advanced some fifteen per cent the price of nutmegs—or maybe it is pepper—has decreased about thirty-five per cent. Now meat and nutmegs—or it may be meat and pepper—are necessities, and the easiest thing in the world is to show by their average prices that the necessities of life have actually decreased something like twenty-five per cent. We may not be exactly accurate in these figures, but the expert government statistician shows a healthy decrease in living expense and a healthy increase in wages. That is to say, he shows it by the figures. Every wage earner and every housewife in the land knows better, however.



WELCOME, OKLAHOMA

The Commoner extends to Oklahoma hearty congratulations upon the decisive vote cast in favor of the constitution and immediate statehood, and it also congratulates the state upon the election of the democratic ticket. The new state enters the sisterhood of states fully prepared for the responsibilities which she assumes. Her constitution—the best in the union—was framed by democrats and her government is placed in the hands of democrats. She starts upon her career under favorable conditions. Now let the president bow to the will of the people expressed at the polls, and say the word that makes Oklahoma a state. Welcome Oklahoma!