

# A Business Man Defends Unionism

function of the labor union is to regulate its introduction so that it will cause as little distress and unemployment as possible. Their specific policy in achieving this result is to insist that the new machines be manned by unionists, not by new workers, and that the machine rates of wages be such as to give the worker some small share in the increased profits ordinarily secured by its introduction.

Seventh—Restriction of Output: This question is much discussed by unionists themselves and it cannot be said that there is any definite position taken by them. There are many instances where direct restriction of output is demanded by the unions. Indirectly by limiting apprentices, reduction of hours, penalizing for overtime, prohibition of piece work and leveling of wages, labor unions tend to reduce the output of the individual worker. In the past the instinctive impulse of the disinterested outsider has been to condemn the restriction of output in the belief that it penalizes the superior workman and levels natural differences of skill and efficiency. On the other hand the unionist believes that one workman can just as well underbid another by working harder as by accepting a lower wage. In industries where the piece price system obtains, the wage has always been governed by what the fast man can do, unless regulated by the union. In this connection it is well to quote what John Mitchell says on this subject: "The future of the trade unions of this country must rest upon an ever growing emphasis upon efficiency of work and sufficiency of remuneration, and the theory of the restriction of output must never become a fixed program and must never be adopted as a policy."

Eighth—Strikes: The right of union men to strike would not be questioned except from an economic standpoint were it not for the violence that is so often resorted to. The facts seem to be that as labor unions become stronger, strikes are not so common, and in England and the United States they are decreasing. In this country about one-half of the strikes are for higher wages or for maintaining the old wage. Twenty-five per cent are for reduction of hours, while recognition of the union, the open shop and sympathetic strikes are each causes in about five per cent. Violence on the part of union men is upheld by no one, least of

all by the labor leaders, but even under most peaceful conditions strikes are barbarous methods of settling industrial controversies. John Mitchell says: "It is a struggle of endurance, a question of might, not right; it is war carried into the industrial field, and like all war, attended by cruelty and suffering; it is a feudal conflict in which many besides the immediate contestants are grievously injured. Thus, from an ideal point of view, the necessity for even occasional strikes constitutes one of the strongest indictments against civilized society." The consistent policy of the trade unions is to systematize and commercialize the strike and boycott. They introduce, as soon as they become strong enough, a fixed and formal procedure which the locals must follow in declaring strikes and this tends strongly to prevent hasty and ill-advised action. The trade union makes for the regulation, not for the suppression of strikes. As the unions grow older and stronger it is very probable that strikes will be even more vigorously restricted, because it is the new and poorly organized unions which foment them. The Industrial Commission, summing up the testimony of the most prominent labor leaders on this subject, says: "While the most intelligent and conservative labor leaders freely recognize the expensiveness of strikes, and desire to supplant them as far as possible with peaceful methods of negotiation, they almost universally maintain that workingmen gain, in the long run, far more than they lose by the general policy of striking."

Ninth—Apprentices: Labor unions as a rule are not opposed to the apprentice system. The Webbs in their investigation of the English unions found only 1 per cent of them opposed to the apprentice. In the United States it is estimated that even a less proportion have anti-apprentice rules. The apprentice, as he was known a century ago, is not known to our factory system, with its labor saving machinery and division of labor. Too often the apprentice system degraded to child labor and so came under the ban. It is now believed better to educate the youth, give him industrial training in our schools, than to place him in factories and workshops at twelve and fourteen years of age. Unions which try to regulate apprentices generally allow one apprentice to every five, ten or fifteen workmen. It is easy to see that if the number of workmen is to be kept full there must be at least one appren-

tice to every five men. This allows for an everag e working life of fifteen or twenty years according as the term of apprenticeship is three or four years.

If the past is any warrant for the future, labor unions will not be abolished by any methods of legal suppression or by manufacturers' associations fighting them at every point. English law made membership in a labor union a penal offense, and in 1834 six workmen were transported for seven years for having combined in a union. Definite wages for all classes of labor were fixed by law, but even this did not stop the growth of unions, and today they have a standing in English law. It seems to me that the methods that have been most successful are those in which co-operation is the basis of the relation between the master and the workman.

It certainly seems that the interests of master and man are mutual and that by co-operation they work for the good of all. One of the early examples of combination was in the Birmingham, England, bedstead trade in 1890. The scheme, as it was formally worked out, centered around a joint wages board composed of representatives from an employers' association and representatives from a union of the operations in the industry. Prices for the whole industry were to be fixed by this board, and wages were to vary directly with prices, although not in the same proportion. The employers' association agreed to employ none but union workmen, and the operators' union agreed to work for no manufacturer who refused to abide by the official price list. It was an alliance for the maintenance of the standard wage and standard price.

In the United States we have one example where co-operation between employer and workman has worked smoothly for twenty years. There are other cases where individual concerns, such as the N. O. Nelson company of LeClaire, Ill., by a system of profit sharing avoid all trouble with their workmen and conduct a profitable business. The store manufacturing industry, with few exceptions, has been free from strikes since 1886. In brief, the system worked out by this trade is as follows: The Stove Moulders' Union comprises nearly all the workmen in the stove foundries in this country, and the Stove Manufacturers' Defense association has as members nearly all the owners of factories. A committee of six men composed of three manufacturers and three unionists have absolute control of all questions between the men and their employ-

ers. The wages are the same for all foundries, and every manufacturer knows that his competitor is paying exactly the same as he for building a stove.

The individual manufacturer and the local unions agree to abide by the decisions of the national board. If any question arises at a foundry that cannot be settled by the contending parties, this national committee is notified and they visit the place and decide the question. The wages to be paid are fixed at regular meetings of the manufacturers and workmen where both have equal representation. These wage agreements last for stated periods and are not matters of discussion between an individual employer and his men.

This system presents many good points, chief, perhaps, of which is that an unprincipled employer cannot grind his workmen down. The competition of the manufacturer is not to see who can employ labor the cheapest and get the most work for the least pay. It does not make much difference whether we pay our common labor \$6.00 a week or \$13.50 a week, provided all our competitors pay exactly the same wage. Associations organized as outlined naturally lead to agreements as to selling price, and I believe this is a good plan as far as wages for workmen and fair conditions for labor must mean a fair selling price for the product. Competition in price too often means competition in the standard of living for the producers. From present conditions it seems probable that collective bargaining will become supreme in the negotiations between national associations of employers and employees. The victory is almost won when employers are induced to lay aside their determination to deal with individuals only, acknowledge the right and necessity of organization among their workmen, and join with the representatives of their employes in a friendly, informal discussion of differences.

No stoppage of work must be permitted pending the decision of a dispute. Our railroads and public service corporations must be operated even if compulsory arbitration is necessary. In England we find the associations on each side posting a forfeit of \$2,500 to guarantee the fulfillment of wage agreements.

The industrial strife in this country is fast becoming intolerable to the general public, and important measures making towards peace will undoubtedly be taken in the near future. To help from our opinions let us look at laws in other countries. We have already noticed

the insurance benefits of Germany, where every worker is assured of maintenance during old age, sickness or disability. France has her "Councils of Experts," created by Napoleon in 1806, composed of an equal number of employers and workmen. These councils have certain authority in settling labor disputes in their districts. They hold weekly meetings, and the proceedings are informal. Either employer or employe may bring a case before them. They have no control over future terms of employment. They settle disputes about existing contracts and where the amount involved is under \$40 their decision is final.

The celebrated Conciliation and Arbitration act of New Zealand is well worth a moment's time. The colony is divided into eight districts and each has a board of conciliation, and over all a final court of arbitration, composed of one man from a labor union, one from an employers' association and one justice of the supreme court. Employes wishing to bring a dispute before the court must form a union and register under the act. Seven men can form a union. The hearing of the board is informal. No lawyer is allowed to plead, except by unanimous consent of all parties. All labor disputes go before the board and generally a compromise is effected. If this is impossible an award is made and is final unless an appeal is taken to the upper court. As soon as an application for the settlement of a dispute has been made and until the award is granted or pending an appeal, anything in the nature of a strike or lockout is illegal. A violation of this is punished with a fine of from \$250 to \$2,500 upon employer or union. If the union has no funds to pay a fine, the individual members may be fined up to \$50. Under this system strikes and lockouts are prevented and after twelve years of trial it is conceded to be reasonably successful. West Australia and New South Wales have substantially copied the law.

In closing, I wish to say that I believe the labor unions of the future must insist upon higher standards for their members. To be a member of a union must be an honor, and holding a union card be a guarantee that the individual is sober, industrious, faithful and a first-class workman. The unions must so insist upon high standards of efficiency, that a union man will be chosen before all others. Carlyle says:

"This that they call organization of labor is the universal vital problem of the world." References: Labor Problems, Adams and Sumner, Organized Labor, John Mitchell.

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### THE CARPENTERS.

Preparing to Begin the New Year With Redoubled Enthusiasm.

The committee on open meeting, social and entertainment reported that they had arranged for the Central Labor Union hall, 1024 O street, Tuesday evening, January 2. There will be a public installation, music and refreshments, and smoking after 10 p. m. Invitations will be limited to all members of Union 1055, non-union carpenters and the press. Each member is asked to contribute either a cake, salad or fruits. The committee promises us the best social and entertainment that the Carpenters' Union has ever had.

Bro. George Quick, on behalf of the delegates to the C. L. U., reported that body as showing signs of waking up. He stated that the last meeting was a most enthusiastic one. A committee had been rounding up the unions that had not been sending delegates, and the committee had met with such encouragement as foreboded an awakening all along the line.

Next time you come to the hall look for the sign, "Carpenters' Hall."

The committee on badges was ordered to procure 100 badges for sale to the members at 50 cents each. Each member should provide himself with one of these badges so that when called upon to pay our last respects to a deceased brother or to take part in a parade we shall all bear the emblem of our order.

A sad and unusual condition exists in the family of Bro. A. Edgar Hawkins. The parents of his wife are both lying at the point of death. Bro. Hawkins himself had been invalided for several weeks with blood poisoning in one of his hands. The sympathy of Union 1055 is extended to Bro. Hawkins and his family.

It was reported at Tuesday's meeting that Bro. Cash Scott, one of our members working at the Lincoln Mill and living at 859 North Twenty-first street, was dangerously ill with pneumonia. Bro. B. E. Ingraham, living at 2172 South Fourteenth street, is also very ill with heart trouble. These cases of sickness should bring home to our members the thought of how important it is to keep paid up. We had a death not long ago and the member's family lost \$200 because the brother was not in good standing. Do not wait for the business agent to send you notice or come and collect your dues. Come to the meeting and give the union your active support.

One application voted on at last meeting and one member admitted on clearance from Denver.

Letters were received from G. R. Miller, Gilman, Ia., and A. E. Napier, Schuyler, Neb., enclosing dues and sending regards to the boys.

Attention was again called to the fact that the work on A. M. Davis' house was done by non-union men working nine hours. Members should remember this when buying furniture, carpets or wall paper. Every true union man will patronize his friends.

James Crabtree, ex-union carpenter, now city engineer, when poor and struggling fell from a scaffold and broke his leg. His fellow union men, as poor as he, came to his rescue and gave their time and money to build his home. Would non-union men have done this? No, indeed! And yet Crabtree in his prosperity forgot his friends who had helped him in adversity and gave his work to the non-

union man. There is no trait in human nature so mean as ingratitude.

The compliments of Union 1055 are hereby tendered to Will M. Maupin, editor and publisher of The Wagerworker, the best, most intelligent, up-to-date and original labor paper in the United States. We wish him and his family a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year. And by the way, Union 1055 extends this wish to each and every member.

We are on the threshold of a new year and we want to ask every member: Brother, what have you done for the cause of unionism the past year? Have you been true to your pledges? Have you defended unionism against the assaults of its enemies? Have you tried to win converts to its teaching? In a word, have you been a true, loyal union man? What a splendid memory if you can answer, "I have done my part." In standing for shorter hours you have stood for the home. Your wife has had shorter hours. You have had more time for the companionship of your wife and your children. You have had some time to beautify your home, to realize you are a man and not a mere beast of burden. You have given your brother craftsman a chance to get a meal as well as yourself. In a word, you have learned the valuable lesson, the lesson taught by the Carpenter of Nazareth, "I am my brother's keeper." You are a hero, my brother; perhaps unconsciously. Many a factory slave living a life of shame because of starvation wages and re deemed because the union label has lifted her up by giving her decent and living wages, blesses you. Every gaunt, pale and starved child giving its life's blood upon the altar of commercial greed (and there are thousands in the United States today) has its hope of salvation centered in your strong arm. You are fighting for the weak, for justice, for humanity—in a cause upon whose success depends the very life of our civilization. In this season of "Good will to men" let us renew our pledge to the cause of labor, and begin the new year with a determination that we will first of all make Union 1055 stronger and better than ever before by attending the meetings, getting new members, paying our dues, and buying nothing but union made goods where obtainable. If all do this we can certainly feel proud of the record a year hence.

### CAPITAL AUXILIARY.

Christmas Social a Success in Every Way Save Attendance.

The Christmas social given by Capital Auxiliary No. 11 was a success in every way save the point of attendance. There were only five printers present, but the usual number of loyal women, together with a numerous host of little ones, came out and helped to make it a most enjoyable occasion. Potato and peanut races furnished a lot of amusement for the crowd, and then the Christmas pie was cut and a lot of presents that were hilariously received were handed out. The eccentricities of the various recipients were happily hit off by the presents. One of the most amusing contests was the one wherein the gentlemen present were each given two soda crackers to eat, the first one to finish and whistle winning. H. W. Smith won, but forgot to whistle.

Wednesday afternoon's meeting of the Auxiliary was the final one of the year, and the last to be held in the

## THE CHRISTMAS AFTERMATH.

There are always some things left over from the Christmas stock, and rather than carry them we will offer them at wonderfully reduced prices.

Suspenders	Neckwear
Mufflers	Handkerchiefs
Fancy Vests	Stylish Shirts
Collars	Cuffs
Cuff and Collar Boxes	

We have also on hand a fine assortment of slippers, furs, etc., and the prices we now make for this "Aftermath Sale" are so low that the bargains are unsurpassed. It is not yet too late to make a useful Christmas present, and we have them in plenty.

### Bargains in Suits and O'Coats

We are still headquarters for suits and overcoats for men and boys who want good clothing, not a maker's name, for their money. Our \$5 suits and overcoats are worth double. For \$15 we give a suit or overcoat that others ask \$20 and \$25 for.

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hall. The ladies have been meeting in Bohanan's hall for the past twelve months, but the attendance has not been as satisfactory as it was in the old days when the meetings were held at the homes of the members. Beginning with the new year the old regime will be resumed, and it is hoped that a new interest in the work of the organization will be aroused.

Mrs. Will Norton was elected president for the ensuing term and Mrs. Will Bustard was elected secretary.

### THE BARBERS.

All Quiet in a Union That is Full of Good Union Hustlers.

The local Barbers' Union is sailing along on pleasant seas, work is plenty and no trouble in sight or anticipated. The meeting this week was characterized by unusual good humor and the meeting was thoroughly enjoyed.

It took the barbers of Lincoln a long time to secure an organization that would stick. Several organizations were effected, but sooner or later they "winked out," owing to negligence and other causes. But when the present organization was effected there was a change. The boys aroused themselves to an active interest, and it has not been allowed to cool off. The meetings are always well attended, the dues are promptly paid and when two or more barbers meet there is sure to be something said about organization. The Barbers' Union of Lincoln is entitled to a front rank among the live, useful organizations of the city.

## HOLIDAY EXCURSION RATES

To accommodate holiday travelers a rate of one fare and one-third for the round trip to many points on the Union Pacific and its connecting lines has been placed in effect by the

## UNION PACIFIC

Dates of Sale, Dec. 22, 23, 24, 25, 30, 31, 1905, and Jan. 1, 1906, with final return limit Jan. 4, 1906.

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