

HOW LABOR HAS MADE PROGRESS IN A SHORT TWO HUNDRED YEARS

Organized labor, in its present form, had no existence prior to the eighteenth century, although previous to that time there were uprisings among workingmen in protest against unjust economic conditions. In ancient times there were a number of uprisings among the great mass of toilers, but most of the workers were slaves. Long lists of so-called labor unions are given in ancient documents, and stories are told of rebellions and social wars which, in almost every case, turned out disastrously to the strikers, who were crucified by the thousands. It is said that Crassus and Pompey alone crucified over 6,000 workingmen on the Appian Way "as examples of the awful blood-wreaking to be expected from Roman military justice." Twenty thousands were similarly massacred at Enna and Tauromanion. The organization of labor under these conditions was manifestly impossible, and this situation prevailed for many centuries. Spasmodic efforts were made from time to time during these years to form some kind of an organization among the toiler, but records of these movements are unsatisfactory and very meagre. Occasionally the curtain lifts enough to give us a glimpse into the lives of the working people as they were related to the matter of co-operation and union, but, on the whole, few writers care to speak with positiveness on this question. In the fourteenth century incipient "trades unions" were formed by workingmen, which strongly resembled those of the present day. In 1387 the servingmen of the London cordwainers rebelled against the "overseers of the trade," and later the servingmen of the saddlers and the tailors took similar action. In 1538 it was reported to Cromwell that twenty-one journeymen shoemakers of Wisbeck had assembled on a hill without the town, and sent three of their number to summon all the master shoe-makers to meet them in order to insist upon an advance in their wages, threatening that "there shall none come into the town to serve for that wages within a twelve-month and a day, but we will have an harme or a leg of hym, except they will take an othe as we have done."

In 1741 there appeared an essay in which it was remarked that the wool-combers had "for a number of years past erected themselves into a sort of a corporation (though without a charter.) Their first pretence was to take care of their poor brethren that should fall sick or be out of work; and this was done by meeting once or twice a week, and each of them contributing twopence or threepence towards the box to make a bank, and when they became a little formidable they gave laws to their masters, and also to themselves - viz: that no man should comb wool under two shillings per dozen; that no master should employ any comber that was not of their club; if he did, they agreed one and all not to work for him; and if he employed twenty, they all of them turned out, and oftentimes were not satisfied with that, but would abuse the honest man that would labour, and in a riotous manner beat him, break his comb-pots, and destroy his working tools. They further support one another, in so much that they become one Society throughout the kingdom."

GROWTH OF TEMPERANCE SENTIMENT IN THE RANKS OF ORGANIZED LABOR

REV. CHARLES STELZLE

St. Louis, Mo., Nov. 22.—Will organized labor declare for or against the saloon? That is what is troubling some of the delegates who are attending the convention of the American Federation of Labor here. There is a strong undercurrent of feeling on the subject, although nothing has been said, thus far, on the floor of the convention with reference to it. But everybody knows that it would require the barest mention of the temperance question to precipitate one of the hottest fights in the history of organized labor in this country.

The crafts represented in the convention are definitely lined up on the proposition. Not only the brewery workers and the

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