

LEWIS M. HEAD.

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Industrial combination has introduced a condition which is liable to somewhat alter the relations which have hitherto existed between employer and employed. The symposium to be published by THE CONSERVATIVE, will, no doubt, cover this field to some extent.

The purpose of this article is not to outline opportunities in journalism, but is an inquiry into the effect of industrial combination upon the employment of labor in general.

It will be granted as a basic principle that the two classes, employer and employer, will continue as such. It will also be granted that the proportion of employed men to the number of employers will remain, substantially the same. It has been frequently asserted that great concentration of industry will deprive many men of certain classes of employment. This may, possibly, be true, but, not underestimating the energy of American character, we must conclude that the men so deprived of employment, will be either reemployed or engage in business upon their own responsibility. This increases the number of employers, while the ranks of the employed will be augmented by former employers in industries merged into the larger combination, who will be retained in a great many instances by the new company upon a salary basis.

Admitting that there will be a *change* in the proportion, it will not be a material one.

It is also a patent fact that the opportunities for engaging, independently, in commercial life are diminished in the same ratio as the smaller industries are combined in the larger. The conclusion, then, may be stated, that the opportunity or chance for the young man, or any other man, to obtain a foothold in an independent capacity is unfavorable. We may continue the conclusion by asserting that the opportunity to obtain employment, with remunerative compensation, unusually favorable conditions and propitious occasion for quick recognition is widening with every added combination.

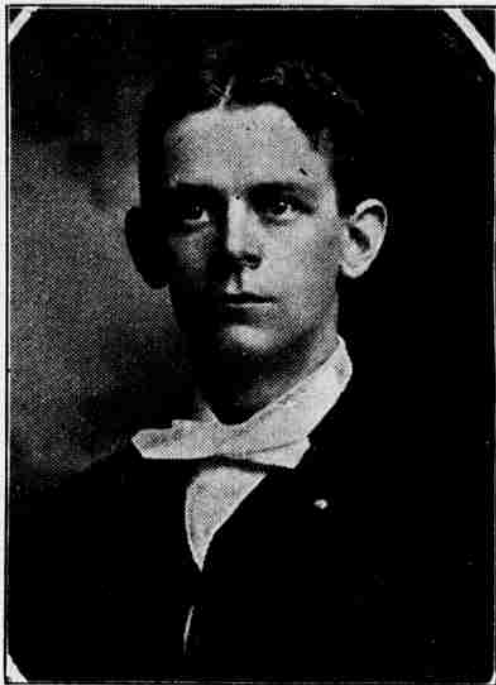
The question of the relationship of combination to employment is practically reduced to a question of the opportunity of obtaining employment and adequate compensation therefor.

The writer has often heard it said that a multitude of positions, some paying as much as \$50,000 per year, are vacant because of the woeful lack of experience in the right kind of men. This is not unreasonable. A properly qualified man, in a position in which he could either save his employer \$100,000 or earn for him a like amount, is a good investment at \$50,000. Business men, corporations or any other commercial organizations are justified in their investment of large sums of money in effi-

cient assistance. Efficiency, quality and competency are the component elements of the employment question today. The problem may be further reduced, then, to one of qualification.

Labor of all kind might properly be classified, first, as those whose service is compensated upon the basis of a day, such as mechanics, carpenters, bricklayers, plumbers and we might even include some, who are paid by the month, such as locomotive engineers and skilled men of like character. Second, there is a class, clerical in its nature, employed by the week or month. Lastly, the class whose services are estimated at an annual rate. These divisions, of course, are general, as the frequency of pay-day cannot furnish a definite basis for a division of labor. Nevertheless, these classifications serve my purpose.

For the first class, employment is nearly always available. In some instances it is permanent, but, generally, it is



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temporary, owing largely to the changing commercial conditions which so readily affect it and also, the varied and heterogeneous class of people which composes it. The question of opportunity is better called the question of vigilance, when applied to this first class.

The clerical division, just named, is a stepping stone to higher usefulness. It is the test of qualification. Given, a man whose ability to keep books for a small manufactory, is unusual and marked, whose detailed expense account is comprehensive and vital, whose cost account includes every item of labor and material, in such compactness and application to the products, manufactured, that profit-figuring is merely a matter of subtraction, whose work is neat, rapid and accurate, he may develop into a local or travelling auditor of the combine; he may be given authority over the accounting department of the new company.

In the same manner, may the stenog-

rapher become private secretary; the correspondent, travelling sales-manager; the travelling man, local superintendent, and the local superintendent, resident-manager.

Employment is easily obtained by the ordinary man in this class. A plain writer, neat in appearance, clean in morals, and punctual, may always find a clerical position.

But, alas, how true it is, that this sifting process finds so much chaff and so little grain. How meagre the ordinary devotion of a clerk to his routine duty. Complaints against industrial and social conditions are numerous. The cry of the demagogue is echoed among the clerks of lower ability. They measure the condition of the times by their own inability to pay their bills and save their money. They shift, dissatisfied, from place to place, restless, disconsolate and miserable.

But, there remains the small percentage whose best endeavors they, themselves, consider none too good. Their horizon enlarges with their aspiration, and their "zeal is rewarded according to their ability."

Then, the third class; the man with power; the commander of his own resources and the resourceful executive of his own commands. This is the man "who has charge of something." Men of this character are few; while the vacancies, demanding them, are many.

To this young man, properly qualified, whose conserving ability has commercial value, the opportunities are plentiful, remunerative and waiting.

The present relations existing between the employer and employed may possibly be influential in breaking down individuality, commercially speaking, only, but, with due respect to those who believe commercialism is not moral, this same relation is developing a wonderful nation of industrial activity.

Nebraska City, Aug., 9, 1901.

GRENVILLE M. DODGE.

Chairman of The Board — Colorado and Southern Railway.

Yours of July 10th. I find on my table on my return to the city. It would be impossible for me to find time to prepare an article upon what the "young man's chances are in connection with railroads." If I were to do anything of that kind I would have to give it a good deal of thought, and I am really not in the mood for such work, as I am endeavoring to take a rest for the summer. There is no question, however, but that the young man's chances are far better now than they have been before, and that is especially the case in connection with railroads. Thanking you for your letter, I am, Yours very truly,

GRENVILLE M. DODGE.

No. 1 Broadway, New York City, July 23, 1901.