

The Labor World

Vol. I.

DULUTH, MINN., MAY 23, 1896.

No. 4.

The Labor-Saving Machine.

R. S. LAMPTON.

I had a job, said a workingman,
And got a dollar a day;
Then came a labor-saving machine
And took my job away.
Only a working man, I know,
"Only a workingman," they said;
But still I begged for another job
To give my children bread.

I told my wife I'd lost my job;
She said, "Who's come between
You and the boss?" I told her 'twas
A labor-saving machine.
Only the wife of a workingman—
Who cares for the tears she shed
When I told her I had lost my job
And that she must beg for bread?

I gathered my children about my knee,
Mary and Rob and Jean—
Poor babes could they not understand
The labor-saving machine?
Only the child of a workingman—
O mercy! my brain is wild,
For the labor machine has come between
The workingman, wife and child!

I said good-bye to my darkened home,
The scene was black despair;
The children sang a Sunday-school song,
And Mary offered a prayer.
Only the home of a workingman,
Dark and dismal and damp;
The labor machine has got my job,
And, brothers, I'm a tramp!

The Automaton.

R. M. GOODWIN.

The indifference or apathy of laboring people is the greatest drawback or obstacle the reform movement has to overcome. The man or woman who is indifferent to the present industrial condition or causes that has produced their enslavement is a mere automaton, a cog in the industrial machine, and can be controlled or used by every demagogue or money king who cares to put him in motion.

These are the people who do not patronize the labor papers or reform books which embody the ideas of those who are trying to solve the economic and political questions of the day and make this country a better one in which to live.

The average negro of the South, during slavery days, cared only to fill his belly and sit in the sun or dance on the levee.

As we advance intellectually our ambitions are stimulated accordingly. The person who is contented to be the slave, or hired man, of another, is a person who possesses a weak mind.

The negro of slavery days did not have intelligence or mental energy enough to organize or to obtain concert of action. He did not know his rights, nor did he agitate against wrong. He clung to the mercies of his master, just as the wage slave is doing today. The wage slave will not see emancipation until he begins to read and think, standing erect and co-operating with his fellowman.

The man who says that capital always controlled and always will is a mentally degenerate ass.

Blood will circulate in or strengthen that part of the body that is exercised most. The person that uses all their energy in physical development, or manual labor, must necessarily possess a weak and inactive mind.

Put a book on political economy in the hand of the average wage slave and he will not read ten pages before his mind has become tired. Is it any wonder that he can be made to believe that high or low tariff will make him rich?

My fellow wage slaves, if you wish to see an end to this damnable wage system that is prostituting our wives, sisters and sweethearts and degenerating our children in their struggle for an existence; if you wish to see crime decreased and brutality and intemperance checked, read reform books and papers. Organize and join hands all along the line.

The man who loves thinking disdains to become the victim of appetite. I commenced, about five years ago, to read and think and I could not stop now if I wanted to.

When the Irish people asked Daniel O'Connell what they should do to become free he replied: "Agitate." "And then what shall we do?" was asked, and he replied, "Continue to agitate."

It is agitation and education or stagnation and degradation,

brothers and sisters; take your choice. A man or woman is not a good citizen until their mind rebels against this industrial slough we are wallowing in. Mere discussion is not enough; condemning the rich and cursing the monopolist will not solve the problem. The monopolist is a result, not a cause. The selfishness and greed of the working people is the cause as well as indifference and apathy.

To ourselves we must look for the remedy. As Wendell Phillips said, no reform ever came from the top, from the bottom must we look for the remedy of existing evils.

Let us amate the automaton. Let us put life in the jumping jack by showing them how to read and think. Are you doing your full part? Are you doing all you can to help on the emancipation of the wage slave?

The Non-Union Tool.

The cartoon presented on our cover page in this issue is a fair illustration of the condition of the capitalist combine in regard to organized labor. The eastern manufacturer, who has so long fed at the over full manger of protection, the railroads owned and controlled by these same grasping, greedy, coupon cutters and legislature bribers, are using every effort, fair or foul, to crush honest labor to dire poverty and disorganize unionism among the toiling masses, and he finds a ready tool in the non-unionist to help carry out his hellish scheming. The non-union man who will take the place of a union man during a strike or trouble of any kind is being used as a mere tool in the hands of the capitalist. He saws off the branch that supports him, but with his master, at whose feet he is found groveling, he will drop into the abyss of oblivion, while the sturdy oak—union labor—will ever stand branching out, producing more fruit and greater wealth for the benefit of all.