

# The Labor World

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## Money—Its Relation to Labor.

GEORGE C. FINDLEY.

Labor is not satisfied with its wages. It receives too little for its services—too little money, too little consideration pertaining to its employment, too little of the rights and privileges due the workers as useful members of the body politic, too small a share of the blessings of civilization and the good things of life to which it has itself given shape from the rough material of bountiful nature. Labor, in short, is undervalued. This is the labor question: Wages are too low.

Prices, economists agree, are determined by supply and demand. Supply, however, in such connection, is more than the available store of the product seeking a market. If one trades wheat for potatoes the terms of the exchange are affected by the scarcity or abundance of the potatoes no less than by the scant or bountiful supply of wheat. Supply includes, therefore, the available store seeking a market, not only of the thing given in exchange, but of that also which is received. So, also, of demand—the terms of the exchange are affected by the demand for both products, for potatoes no less than for wheat.

This principle holds good in all exchanges, whether of product for product, product for money, or labor for either product or money. The supply and demand for each article determines its relative value, and the relative value of each article is measured against the relative value of that for which it is exchanged, and the result of the comparison, called by economists "the ratio of supply and demand," we translate into commercial language as "the price."

The complex nature of supply and demand is readily understood when product

is swapped for product. We readily see that when the price of a bushel of wheat is two bushels of potatoes, that the price of a bushel of potatoes is one-half bushel of wheat. Do we as readily see that when the price of a day's labor is

work. Do we equally understand that when the *dollars* become scarcer the pressure is just as strong to compel us to give more hours labor for the dollar?

The value of all labor now, as well as all its products, is measured against money. Equally with the supply of products, therefore, the supply of money affects prices. Wages are the price of labor. Does not the labor question, traced to its source, in all its modification then become the money question?

A scarcity of money reduces wages, along with the price of products, as would an over-supply of labor; and a more liberal supply of money raises wages, along with products, as would a scarcity of labor.

Do I need other reasons for urging workingmen to consider the money question the one to them most important?

Is it denied that wages are low? It cannot be denied that products are down to bankrupt prices; and if in a few crafts wages have been maintained it has been by organization—that alone; and even in such crafts it has been at the expense of production. Either wages have been lowered, production curtailed or labor saving machinery introduced. Labor in either case is idle; idle workingmen make poor customers. The wrong to labor reacts upon society, and in the business world, where supercilious egotism and sycophantic fawning on self-assumed prophets of "feenauce" brought the trouble on the country, barring the bankrupt sales, stagnation reigns.

Low prices, we have seen, result from two entirely different causes: First, the abundance of the article to

be exchanged; second, the scarcity of that for which the exchange is made. Thus it will be seen that too much labor, if such were possible, would have the



GEORGE CARUTHERS FINDLEY

Was born in western Pennsylvania in 1860, and in 1873 became a resident of Kansas. After a few years experience as farmer lad and cow boy he graduated into a country pedagogue, and in 1880 began life as a printer's devil. In the resulting admixture of agriculture, pedagogy and printer's devilry the devilry has always come to the top. He joined the typographical union in 1883 at Los Vegas, N. M., and spent the next three years at college, the practice of the typographic art being relegated to vacations and such odd hours as could be stolen from the witchery of books. In the summer of 1886, finding himself in Chicago, busted and short of grub, he returned to Kansas, bought a newspaper, and in the fullness of time, having mastered the art of subsisting on zephyrs, iced or roasted, became an aggressive Populist editor. In 1891 he resumed active membership in the I. T. U., locating the next year in Duluth. He has been for 18 months secretary-treasurer of No 136, and will soon complete his third term as one of its delegates to the Trades Assembly. "Born" a republican, he never voted that ticket (nor a democratic either), and unless he lapses into imbecility there's no danger he ever will. He believes political reforms can only be had through political methods, and that organized labor can enact any of its demands into law the moment its members acquire the courage of their convictions. Mr. Findley took active part in the early development of the People's party; was one of the original members of the Kansas Reform Press Association, and secretary of the union labor state convention of Kansas in 1888. Since coming to Duluth he has taken little active part in politics, but was recently elected president of the Central Populist club of this city.