

The Labor World.

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FIVE CENTS.

THE BLUE LABEL.

The History of the Well Known Blue Label.

An Excellent Paper Read Before the Label League.

F. H. Lonnberry, at the label league meeting Monday evening, discussed the origin of the union label in an entertaining manner. He said:

The union label appears to be wholly of American origin and it is not used to any extent in any country other than our own except in Canada, which latter country, for purposes of organization on trades union lines is practically in control of American trades unions, although English trade unionists are now beginning to take up the matter of introducing union labels, with some show of success.

The origin of the label can be traced back as far as 1874, when American cigarmakers first began to feel the effects of competition of Chinese coolie labor. This was the period when Chinese were coming to the Pacific coast in thousands and engaging in nearly all occupations pursued by the whites.

It appears that a greater number of the Chinese found employment in the manufacture of cigars than in any other line of trade, with the result that white labor began to feel the effects of its cheap competitors, who appeared to be content so long as they were able to secure the customary bowl of rice. This competition with white labor soon led up the agitation against Chinese immigration and also resulted in the introduction of the union label, the cigarmakers adopting a label, which was white in color, to denote that the cigars upon which it was placed were made by white labor.

It was thus against the competition of low-class, unorganized labor that the weapon of the label was first directed. Its appeal to the smoker was couched in the following language: "Buy no cigars except from box marked with the trade union label, thus you help maintain the white as against the coolie standard of life and work."

In 1875 St. Louis cigarmakers introduced a red label, during a strike against reduction of wages, the object of this label being to inform the purchaser that cigars bearing it were made by workmen who received the union scale of wages.

In 1880, at the Chicago convention, a dispute arose between the delegates from St. Louis and those of the Pacific coast as to the color of the label, which resulted in a compromise choice, as one of the eastern delegates put it, "of the other color on the flag." From this beginning has sprung the present blue label, which is known throughout the length and breadth of the land as a certificate of clean conditions, eight-hours work, and fair compensation to the worker. The blue label still stands on guard warning the innocent purchaser against the product of the prison, the tenement house and Chinese coolie workshop.

The benefit resulting from the adoption of the label has built up what is today the wealthiest trades union in

America, the cigarmakers' international union, an organization which has expended nearly \$4,000,000 in strike, sick, funeral, traveling and out-of-work benefits since its formation.

The rules under which cigar labels are issued have been adopted by the international union, and a violation of them entails a fine upon the local union.

Labels cannot be used in factories which pay less than \$6 per thousand, nor on any cigar which sells for less than \$20.00 per thousand. This law does not, however, prevent the local union from establishing a higher rate than \$20.00. Manufacturers employing no hands are required to be members of the international union for one year before being allowed to use the label. Employers violating rules under which labels are granted, are required to deposit \$50.00 as a guarantee that the rules will be adhered to before they can again use it. A second violation will forfeit its use for a period of six months. The use of more than one label on each box is prohibited, as is also the right to use the words "blue label" as the name of a brand. Local unions are allowed \$1.00 per year for each member, to be used in agitation and advertising the label.

The success of the cigarmakers' label has resulted in the adoption of various devices by other organizations the hatters introducing their buff colored label in 1885.

This label is placed in all hats which are made under union conditions. The hatters, like the cigarmakers, are put to great expense and trouble through the counterfeiting of their label. Notwithstanding this, nearly 3,500,000 union labels are used by the hatters every year, and the number is constantly increasing. The magnitude of these figures will be realized when the fact that 95,000,000 labels are estimated to have been used since the adoption of the device by the united hatters.

The label first made its appearance in the clothing trade when the K. of L. was in the height of its now departed glory. At that time the clothing label was in the form of a tag which was tied to the garment by a thread.

The present garment workers' label has been in use but seven years, having been adopted in 1891 and is fast becoming a powerful factor in the clothing business. This label, and that of the custom tailors, is of linen and is attached to the garment by machine stitching, being found on the inside pocket of coats, on the underside of the back strap of vests, and on the waistband lining of trousers. Garment workers also furnish a paper label for use on cheap pants and overalls.

The garment workers' union is one of the few organizations which make a charge to the manufacturer for the use of the label, the cost being one-third of a cent for each label, the idea being to compensate the union for cost of printing. There are many members of the garment workers who advocate the free use of labels in the clothing trade, and it is not improbable that the system of charging for its use will soon be done away with.

In this connection it has been observed that unions which grant free use of labels are invariably more successful in having the label adopted by

manufacturers, and this seems to be the best plan, as the manufacturer has certainly done all that can be required of him when he recognizes the union and conducts his establishment under union rules.

From 1891 the label has been introduced by printers, bakers, wood workers, harness makers, iron molders, broom makers, cooperers, photographers, brewers, egg inspectors, shoe makers, tailors, mattress makers, horseshoers, flour mill employes, brush makers, tack makers, bicycle workers, buffers and platers, distillers, tobacco workers, brick makers and many others.

Labels are also coming into use in the form of display cards, working cards and badges, unions which have adopted this form of a label being the barbers, laundry workers, waiters and cooks, butchers, bartenders, porters, shoe makers, draymen and retail clerks. The agents and clerks display a union button, as do also union laundry drivers. It is said that in some places coal carts display a union card to denote that union drivers are employed.

Of the labels which have come into use since 1891 those of the printing trades and tobacco workers have had the greatest success.

Printers have been successful in having ordinances passed in about 30 cities requiring that the union label be placed on all city printing, among them being Chicago, Boston, San Francisco, Louisville, Los Angeles and Kansas City. State of Montana also has a label law. Unlike the other influential trades unions the printers have no international rules governing labels and rules are left entirely in the hands of local unions, or in cities where there are unions of pressmen, printers, bookbinders, etc., the rules are framed by what is known as allied printing trades councils. Oftentimes the unions comprising these councils are unable to agree upon rules satisfactory to all unions, and upon the whole the most satisfactory results are obtained when label laws are made by the national union.

The most phenomenal success in the introduction of a union label has been achieved by the tobacco workers, this organization having introduced its label about eighteen months ago, with two factories using its label. Since that time over ninety-six million labels have been issued, and 30 factories are now using the label on their product. This label was brought into use through the warfare which the tobacco trust has waged on the union, and has been fought tooth and nail since its introduction not only by the trust, which will not employ union men under any consideration, but also by many independent factories, these factories fearing the influence which the label would wield in forcing them to pay a living wage to their employees.

Following the growth and use of union labels, has come legislation protecting the trade marks or labels of the various unions. Label laws have been enacted in a number of the states of the union, and it is not out of place here to say that the law of Minnesota is considered to give the best protection to the interest of the workers. It is estimated that the cost of prosecuting users of counter-

feit union labels amounts to \$8,000 per annum.

During the past few years the label has become such a factor and such a powerful weapon for defense, that union label leagues are being formed in all the principal cities of the country. The object of such leagues being the dissemination of advertising matter pertaining to the label and also the agitation of the use of all union labels and to encourage the patronage of firms which are known to manufacture or handle union labeled goods. We have such a league here and the work which it has accomplished certainly speaks well for the league, and proves that money spent in advertising the labels is not wasted. Many label leagues also publish official papers devoted to furthering the cause which is so near to the heart of all believers in the efficacy of the union label.

As I have devoted my time so far to a description of and growth of the American system of union labels, a few words in regard to the benefits to be derived from their use may not be out of place.

In the first place, in these days of sharp competition and of strikes and lockouts, the consistent union man is ever on the lookout to avoid the purchase of what trades unionists term unfair goods. How to do this would be indeed a perplexing problem were it not for the fact that union labels have provided for just such contingencies. There is positively no other way for the purchaser to identify a union-made article except through the trade made of the union. Likewise, the label also stands a protection to consumer and to the general public, inasmuch as it is a certificate that the article which is adorned by a union label is not the product of sweat-shop, prison or Chinese coolie labor, and as the unions strengthen, the label becomes more and more a guarantee of improved conditions.

In time the label will become of still greater significance for, when it reaches its ideal form, it will also be a guarantee that the goods upon which it is placed are of superior material. This, however, may come slowly, but it is coming, as may be evidenced by the tailors' union label, the international union having set a minimum quality and price for clothing upon which a journeyman may place the union label.

One thing is certain and that is that union labels are daily becoming of greater force and as the trades unionists begin to realize their value in protecting each other from the encroachments of cheap, non-union labor, and the great benefits derived in averting threatened wage reductions, the label grows in strength that much more.

FINANCE AND TRADE.

Paris dressmakers, in interviews, deplore the loss of American trade.

Senator Davis has spoken in favor of the United States buying out the Nicaragua canal company and completing the canal.

Reports from a dozen or more counties in North Texas wheat belt are that fully one-half the wheat crop has been destroyed by the tornado.

Seventy-five leading women of St. Joseph, Mo., have decided to boycott French goods on account of the hostility of that country toward the United States.

Twenty-seven thousand tons of coal were shipped from Sydney to San Francisco last month and arrangements have been made for the delivery of 160,000 tons during the present month.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

Interesting Items About the War With Spain.

San Diego harbor is being mined. Privatizing is again threatened by Spain.

The war fever is said to be abating in Spain.

The Oregon arrived at Barbadoes Friday last.

General Fitzhugh Lee has left Richmond for Tampa.

Another Spanish vessel has been captured near San Juan.

Secretary Long assures the public that the Oregon is safe.

Spaniards are fortifying Ceuta, Morocco, opposite Gibraltar.

A satisfactory review of troops was held at Chickamanga Monday.

Chances favor the disposal of the war revenue bill by the senate this week.

It is intended to isolate General Blanco by cutting the various cables.

The battleship Alabama was successfully launched at Cramp's shipyards.

It is reported that one expedition of American troops has sailed for Cuba.

A British cabinet minister believes that the war will last two or three years.

The Twelfth and Fourteenth Minnesota regiments are encamped at Chickamanga.

Within the military district of Tampa there is now a force of 25,000 regulars and volunteers.

The American squadron at Santiago was fired upon by the forts, but did not return the fire.

The United States treasury department proposes to collect the Philippine customs revenue.

Algernon Sartoris, General Grant's grandson, has been appointed a lieutenant of engineers.

The Spanish fleet, it is regarded certain, has left Santiago and will go to Martinique to coal.

The United States steamer Monterey has been ordered to Manila to reinforce the Asiatic squadron.

The Spanish merchants in Havana refuse to sell Cuban food and they are in danger of starvation.

Fifteen thousand of the best men obtainable will be sent to the Philippines, including 4,000 regulars.

Spanish bishops at Manila and Hongkong have issued pastorals urging that no quarter be given Americans.

Colonels Van Duzee and Bobleter of Minnesota have been appointed brigade commanders by General Brooke.

Colonel Grigsby's cowboys, composing a portion of Roosevelt's regiment, are now in camp at Chattanooga.

Over 10,000 troops, mostly volunteers, are encamped at the Presidio, awaiting orders to sail for the Philippines.

The cruiser Charleston, with ammunition for Admiral Dewey's fleet, has sailed from Mare Island for Manila.

The navy department is said to be moving cautiously, with a view to making the next battle the last of the war.

The governor general admits that 8 soldiers were killed and 84 wounded during the bombardment of San Juan.

Commodore Watson has sailed with fleet No. 3 to work in harmony with Admiral Sampson and Commodore Schley.

The state department emphatically denies the report that Italy or any other nation has made a protest against the blockade.

It is believed that Admiral Cervera's elusive campaign will soon terminate helplessly, owing to the impossibility of his getting coal.

The Spanish government, it is announced, will send warships to join Cervera provided the latter succeeds in getting into Havana.

The Spanish reserve squadron, it is stated, has been ordered to clear for the Philippines. Another report is that it will reinforce Cervera.

The president has ordered the formidable double-turreted monitor Monterey to sail from San Francisco to join Admiral Dewey's fleet at Manila.

The Spanish steamer P. de Satrustegui, which arrived at Aden on May 4, bound from Barcelona for Manila, has been ordered to return to Suez.

One soldier was killed and two fatally injured in a collision near Chattanooga between a passenger train and the special carrying a St. Louis regiment.

Spaniards in Havana have been sending out dynamite-laden hulks resembling torpedo boats, hoping American ships would ram them in the darkness.

The torpedo boat destroyer Yankton and torpedo boat KeKee have been placed in commission at the navy yard at Portsmouth, N. H. The vessels will be sent to Key West.

A Madrid dispatch says the belief is prevalent in all circles that the government is in possession of important news from Cuba. Its character has not been made public.

Two hundred and five members of the Illinois naval reserve will be sent to the gulf coast. It is said they will be given a chance to serve with Admiral Sampson's fleet.

The San Francisco Examiner states that the coast defense vessel Monterey, just ordered to the Philippines, will be towed all the way to Manila, probably by some big steam collier.

The house has passed the senate bill providing for the payment of volunteers from their enrollment, and authorizing the secretary of war to pay troops embarking for Manila one month in advance.

French naval experts think Cervera has outwitted the Americans, being able to hold our squadrons at Santiago while Spain's reserve fleet comes to this side of the Atlantic instead of going to Manila.

One hundred and four thousand volunteers have been mustered into the army. It is expected from now until the remainder of the 125,000 men called for have been mustered the work will proceed slowly.

Newport (R. I.) citizens have inaugurated a movement for the purpose of having the citizens of Rhode Island build and equip the fastest torpedo boat destroyer afloat and present it to the government.

J. Lorimer Worden, a member of the New York Stock Exchange, has joined Roosevelt's "rough riders" at San Antonio. He is a grandson of Admiral Worden, who commanded the Monitor in her memorable fight with the Merrimac.

Hon. Thomas W. Palmer, ex-minister to Spain, in an interview said he did not consider Spain's navy at all formidable. Mr. Palmer said he thought Admiral Cervera's squadron was no match for either of the squadrons commanded by Sampson or Schley.

Papers received at New York from Porto Rico contain reports that Dewey had been badly whipped at Manila. Editorially the papers indulge in a lot of bombast. They declare that when Spain beats us McKinley will be made to black the boots of the Spanish general.

Wet Weather Clothing...

It's our good fortune to be in a position to offer you some remarkable opportunities in Mackintosh Coats—Mackintoshes that are not only rain proof, but stylish in appearance, having none of the ugly looks of many waterproof garments.

- Men's Mackintoshes with deep capes, made of wide wale black serge, a remarkable good quality and good style coat, worth \$5.00, our price..... **\$3.50**
- Men's Box Coat Mackintoshes, double breasted, in new covert cloths, lined in fancy plaids and checks, worth \$7.00, sale price..... **\$5.00**
- Men's Box Coat Mackintoshes, double breasted, of all wool tricot cloth, velvet collar, cemented seams, extra length, worth \$10.00, sale price..... **\$8.00**
- Boys' Black and Blue Serge Mackintoshes, with deep capes, worth \$4.00, sale price..... **\$2.95**

- Boys' Rubber Coats..... **\$1.50, \$2.00, \$2.50**
- Men's Rubber Coats..... **\$2.00, \$2.50, \$3.00**
- Men's and Boys' Rubbers, Rubber Boots, Rubber Leggins, Rubber Blankets, and Oil Clothing of all kinds.
- Umbrellas. 75c, 98c, \$1.50, \$1.75, \$2.00, \$2.50, \$3.00, \$3.50, \$4.00 and \$5.00.

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