

THE LABOR WORLD

Published Every Saturday.
 Established in 1896 by Sabrie G. Akin.
 Business Office:
 626-627 Manhattan Bldg., Duluth, Minn.
 Zenith Phone 65.
 SUBSCRIPTIONS:
 One Year, in advance..... \$1.00
 Six months, in advance..... .50
 Three months, in advance..... .25
 Single Copies, 5 Cents.
 Advertising Rates Made Known on Application.
 Entered at the Postoffice at Duluth, Minn., as second class matter.
 WILLIAM E. McEWEN, Publisher.
 HARRY H. TURNER, Editor.



FRONTIER STRESS MAKES WOMEN EAGER WORKERS

A news dispatch from Indiana says that scarcity of farm labor has caused the farmers' wives there to turn out to the help of their husbands that the harvest might be saved. They have driven the binders and in other ways taken a man's place.

Tut, tut! That's nothing.

More than nine-tenths of the hay crop of St. Louis county has within the past week or two been garnered by the women and children of northeastern Minnesota.

They just had to do it or lose the hay. And the hay is the winter's mainstay of the cow and the cow is the mainstay of the average settler's family.

The men were busy working—most of them miles from their families earning enough to keep the wolf from the door until such time as the little farm can be put upon a self-sustaining basis. So it was up to the women, and the hay, light crop though it was, was safely harvested.

So the women of Indiana who rode rings around their husbands' crops last week sitting on soft cushioned mowers and binders have nothing on the settler's wives of St. Louis county who swung scythe and rake in a valiant effort to hold the wolf at bay.

It's just a matter of environment that's all—as the monkey said when he found he had climbed into the lion's cage.

MANY EMPLOYEES HELP ALONG LABOR'S CAUSE

We have a grateful word to offer certain classes of big employers in this country, says Samuel Gompers in the American Federationist. It is uttered because of the two methods they are now actively employing in promoting trade unionism.

The first of these methods is that followed by the Philadelphia Traction company—a course of brutal hostility to the organization of its employees, involving opposition to fair wages, hours, and conditions, with the immediate effect that the men are compelled to fight in self-defense, the final result being conditions much improved over what they were, with the union still the chief factor.

The second method is that by which the employer "voluntarily" gives the employed better terms for the purpose of forestalling "union interference." The latter in the long run is the more peaceable and least costly way of building up unionism permanently. That the case for certain union success has been made out with regard to the first method, recent events have furnished the needed evidence.

The thought upon which this second method is based, that of giving employees approximately union terms while forbidding them to organize, has been making its way among the employing class for some time, and especially during the last year. It finds expression, adequate and unmistakable, in the following paragraph from the New York Music Trade Review:

"The most effective and prac-

tical answer employers can make to the arguments of the unions in favor of the closed shop is the payment of higher wages, and the establishment of better shop conditions than the unions have been able to secure for their members. Granting that the unions have benefited their members, and that they have helped to establish standards in many trades that have been of advantage to non-union workers, it is going far beyond the bounds of truth to say that only by the closed shop can fair conditions be maintained. The employers who have formed associations in certain of the metal trades in late years have done nothing greater and nothing more effectually exposing the fallacy of many union claims than to pay higher wages, and in other particulars to give employees a larger return than the union secures under collective bargaining. The average efficiency in a capably managed open shop being naturally higher than in a closed shop makes possible a better return both to the workman and the proprietor. No other development in the factory labor situation in recent years is more important than this which far-seeing and broad-minded employers have done so much to forward."

In the early part of last month the National Association of Employing Lithographers decided at their annual convention in New York to "grant" the eight-hour

Labor Unions Are Alright, But—

"If the trade union movement had no leaders it would be a good thing," is the utterance of nearly every employer of labor. They profess much interest for the unions, but greatly deplore the fact that there are so many men who take active interest and who they claim, are the real cause of all industrial troubles through ill advising the rank and file.

The statements are made for effect and for the purpose of conveying a wrong impression to the public regarding the movement.

An organization to be successful must have leaders, whether it be a fraternal order, a business association, a club, or a labor union, and that without leaders no organization can possibly exist.

As a rule, there are only a few men who take a real active interest in any organization. The executive officers are generally looked upon as the moving spirits and the rank and file, while having a final voice in all important transactions, are satisfied to let the officers do the work, while they reap the benefits.

What the employers really object to is the union's business agents. "If they were only out of the way," they say, "the labor movement would be one of the greatest on earth. They are the root of all evil and are the real cause of all the industrial disturbances in the civilized world."

Unfair and unscrupulous employers look upon them as monsters. They imagine, or at least profess to believe, that they are devils in sheep's clothing, and while they hate them, they admire them for their bravery and devotion to their constituents' interests.

We hardly believe that the employer fully realizes the position of

day to their employees. This association represented that wing of the employers in the lithographing industry which four years ago succeeded in establishing the "open shop." In explaining through the press why the eight-hour day was now granted, the secretary of the association said:

"We have found a way to keep unionism out of our trade. The decision which has just been taken by the association is not entirely philanthropic, as might seem to the outsider. It is as much a question of policy as of generosity. The employers are doing for their men the very things the labor union would use force to obtain."

"As much" policy as generosity? The gracious secretary was candid in not claiming that only generosity entered into this action of anti-union employers. But if there was policy at all, where did it come in? Their own men, unorganized, were powerless, the employers' association asserts. There need be no policy employed toward the helpless from whom there can be no danger. But there was the union, always close at hand. Some day the men might grow restive and flock in a body into the union's membership, to cast their fortune in defense of all with the others of their craft.

TESTED BY FIRE

"The real struggle is not between the two old parties, as now constituted. It is between the People and Privilege; and that contest is really between these contending forces within each of the old parties. There the struggle will go on until one or the other is free. Intelligent and patriotic citizens will therefore vote for the man rather than for the party. . . . In this struggle, Privilege is bi-partisan; it knows no party, but knows how to use and control both. And so those men, known as insurgents in the Republican Congress, who have been through the furnace test against Cannonism and Aldrichism, are the only men who have really qualified to represent the people in their struggle against privilege."—Judge Ben Lindsey in La Follette's.

IMMIGRATION BLAMED FOR MINE CASUALTIES

Employment of inexperienced immigrants in the coal mines of this country is suggested as the probable cause of many serious accidents, in a report of the immigration commission which was presented to congress by Senator Dillingham, chairman. The report deals with the economic condition of about 98,000 soft coal miners, one-fourth of all employed in that industry in this country.

More than two thousand households were visited in tabulating the information for the inquiry. It was found that 10 per cent of the families lived in homes of two rooms, while the great majority of miners' families, have four. More than 70 per cent of all the miners included in the report earn

the business agent in time of industrial disputes.

The business agent, as a rule, knows better than anyone else, the many trials and tribulations experienced in times of strikes. He realizes that much of the responsibility of a strike rests upon his shoulders; that if he is unsuccessful in accomplishing what his union has set out to do that he is liable to lose the confidence of the membership, and because of these and many other reasons he will adopt every means possible to settle a grievance without the necessity of calling a strike.

Statistics recently published show that nearly 75 per cent of the labor disputes in 1909 were settled without strikes. How these disputes were settled the report does not state, but it can be said without any hesitancy that this great work was accomplished by the business agents and the officers of the unions affected, who are looked upon by unfair employers as undesirable labor leaders. The unions realize now, more than ever, the necessity of keeping business agents in the field to look after their interests. What a few years ago was thought only possible for large unions to sustain, is now the rule in the smaller unions, and much good is being derived through keeping the movement in a condition that is most satisfactory to the members.

Business agents, or so-called "leaders," may be, in the estimation of unfair employers, undesirable, but enough has been gained by the rank and file of the membership, through increased wages and improved conditions, to satisfy the most skeptical that they are a fixture in the union, and that they will remain as such, regardless of whether they are undesirable to some people or not.

more than \$2 a day, but during the year covered by the investigations only about 7 per cent of the men worked full time and more than 50 per cent of them lost three months. The average earnings of the heads of the 2,000 or more families investigated was found to be \$37.50 a month.

Of the 68,000 men, 54,000 were foreign born, and nearly 40 per cent had been in this country less than five years.

About 80 per cent of the foreign-born miners can read and write. Illiteracy runs highest among the Russians. Among the foreign-born miners more than 60 per cent can speak English. About 20 per cent of the families own their homes. The rest live in company shacks. The highest percentage of the naturalization among them is found in the miners from Sweden, who also lead in literacy and ability to speak English.

PROHIBITION POLICY DOESN'T BOOST WAGES

It will probably be conceded that the average rate of wages paid to wage earners is the best index of the prosperity of a state or country.

Those who favor a prohibition policy never lose an opportunity to point to the state of Kansas,

and to talk about the prosperity that has resulted from prohibition.

Bulletin No. 93, issued by the Department of Commerce and Labor, contains a table showing the average weekly earnings of wage earners in the different states. Kansas is listed with what is known as the "Western North Central" division. We quote the figures as given for these states:

Western North Central	Average Weekly Earnings
Minnesota	\$11.01
Iowa	9.67
Missouri	10.39
North Dakota	11.81
South Dakota	11.69
Nebraska	10.89
Kansas	10.58

These figures fail to substantiate the arguments of the prohibitionists, says the Minneapolis Labor Review.

From the table above given it appears that the average weekly earnings of all wage earners is lower in Kansas than any other state in this division, except Missouri and Iowa (prohibition.) The figures prove that it is not safe to trust too much to the statements made by these orators. It is easy to make claims but the figures of the federal census convince us that prohibition wherever it has been tried has resulted in nothing that tends to benefit the wage earner, either morally or financially. Lower wages, "blind tigers," and a general disregard for law are not the things that tend to elevate our people.

Sixty convicts working on the state road near Bellingham, Washington, went on strike for an eight-hour day and came out victors in their demand for the shorter workday. When men who wear the garb of criminals and are deprived of their liberty can win an eight-hour day, the so-called sovereign citizen, enjoying what there is left of American freedom, should feel no reluctance in consigning the long workday to the scrap heap.

SWAMP EVILS UNDER AVALANCHE OF GOOD

From time to time social reformers organize societies for the extermination of other societies which have for their object the securing of better conditions for the workers.

Now it is perfectly legitimate for the objectors to disagree with the exponents of particular social theories or special programs. Those who form the society to be exterminated no doubt have the same right to their personal convictions, especially in this country. On general principles, it is a mighty poor policy to organize any society upon a merely negative basis.

It is far better to work constructively. In any event, if a group of persons is opposed to the program of a particular organization, the best way to make that organization non-effective is either to eliminate the causes which give occasion to the formation of the organization, or to advocate a program or a system which will more effectively bring about the conditions which are to be desired.

The best way to destroy the evils in any situation is to pour in so much of the good that there will be no room for the bad. A vacuum is always abhorrent. Men do not ordinarily become enthusiastic on negatives. They desire the positive note and the constructive policy.—Rev. Chas. Stelzle.

THEIR UNION DOESN'T RAISE MEMBERS' WAGES

A current report of the bureau of the census, relative to the salaries of ministers, says that the average annual salary of the American preacher is \$663. That's about \$1.86 per day.

Of course, there are many preachers in big cities who get fancy salaries—\$10,000 a year or more. Hence, to bring the average down to \$663 a year there must necessarily be a legion of preachers who get less than \$1.80 a day.

And a whole raft of 'em are not worth even that.

The man who always does what he wants is seldom wanted for what he does.

GREAT REDUCTION SALE

On Men's Women's and Boys' Clothing, Hats and Shoes, Furnishing Goods, Trunks and Bags, Furniture, Stoves, Rugs, Carpets, Linoleum, Lace Curtains, Draperies, reduced in price from

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 8 East Superior Street

Every man is the builder of his own fortune, and he needs plenty of sand.

When a man hitches his wagon to a star he is going to be up in the air a whole lot.

Living in the future would be all right if we didn't have to pay rent in the present.

One of the reasons why women enjoy talking so much is that they have so little to say.

ONLY A FABLE.

Many thousand years ago, on the desert, three lived a tribe that crawled in the dust. All its members, men, women and children—crawled along on their hands and knees, eyes fixed and the dust and the mire. And no one had ever dared to look up. For the tribe believed that above the sky loomed a Terrible Something—something intended to crush them—and that if a man looked up, then he would instantly die.

One day a very old man, crawling along in search of food, suddenly fell exhausted at full length upon the ground. His eyes for a moment were turned to the sky. In his eyes flashed a look of amazement and joy. With a shout he staggered to his feet.

"Brothers!" he cried. "Look up! Here is no terrible thing! Here is only—"

But his speech was stopped. For his neighbors, in blind terror at his boldness, their eyes still fixed upon the dust, reached up and pulled the old man down—and choked him till he died. And so the tribe crawled on. But one man, who was young and filled with fierce revolt at the thought of the long, weary life ahead, a life in the mire and dust—he thought to himself of the old man's cry. It was with him while he toiled all day, it rang in his ears in the night.

At last, one dawning morning, he suddenly leaped to his feet. He threw up his head, gave one glad look, burst into a peal of laughter.

His laughter was cut off. He too was dragged down by frenzied hands. He, too, was choked to death.

But his laughter—and the old man's cry—began now to work on the minds of others.

Two men, by sidelong looks and whispers, resolved to spring up together. This they did. Before they could be dragged into the dust a third man had risen, then a fourth. And soon a score of young men were upon their feet shouting:

"Brothers, look up! Here is nothing terrible! Here is only a bright blue sky—and a flashing sun—and air to breathe!"

And from that day onward the tribe walked erect—like men.

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