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LABOR AND INDUSTRY

SOME ITEMS OF INTEREST TO UNION WORKMEN.

Increase in Work and Wages, While Hours Were Reduced—Significant Facts Shown by Official Reports of Organizations and State Authorities.

I'm Saddest When I Sing.
You think I have a merry heart,
Because my songs are gay;
But, oh! they all were taught to me
By friends now far away;
The bird retains his silver note,
Though bondage chains his wing;
His song is not a happy one,
I'm saddest when I sing!

I heard them first in that sweet home
I never more shall see,
And now each song of joy has got
A plaintive turn for me!
Alas! 'tis vain in winter time
To mock the songs of spring,
Each note recalls some wretched leaf,
I'm saddest when I sing!

Of all the friends I used to love,
My heart remains alone,
Its faithful voice still seems to be
An echo of my own;
My tears, when I bend over it,
Will fall upon its strings,
Yet those who hear me little think
I'm saddest when I sing! —Bayly.

The Past Year.

The year 1898 is destined to figure as conspicuously and gloriously in industrial as in military American annals. Industrially, as politically, it marks the birth and general recognition of policies that demand the earth for their development and relations with all its peoples for their symmetrical culmination. These policies are in no sense novel inspirations, conceived by change and born by accident. They are the offspring of the American idea and American force. They were generated when the foundations of this government were laid, and have silently and slowly matured until in due course of nature they were brought forth, and now stand separate and distinct facts that cannot be explained away but must be reckoned with. Eighteen hundred and ninety-eight is memorable as the year of their birth; is glorious because the time of their advent and world-wide recognition.

The close of 1893 finds the United States a farm and workshop upon whose products the nations of two hemispheres rely for many of the necessities and luxuries of life. Our exports of domestic merchandise amount to over \$1,200,000,000 for the year. The United Kingdom is a close second with like exports to the value of less than \$1,140,000,000. "There is no third," one may say, as every other country is hopelessly in the rear as compared with these two giants. Our European markets are constantly and rapidly enlarging. The Carnegie company and the Illinois Steel company have opened extensive offices in London and are making inroads upon the British preserves. The Carnegie company has contracted to deliver 30,000 tons of plates for the Coolgardie road, Australia, and the company was unable to undertake the contract for 30,000 tons more.

Missouri Labor Report.

Advance sheets of the twentieth annual report of the Missouri Bureau of Labor Statistics, Arthur Rozelle, commissioner, are at hand, and contain some very valuable data, recommendations and conclusions.

Of the recommendations made in the report may be mentioned the factory inspection law, which only applies to cities of 5,000 or more inhabitants, where inspectors shall be appointed whose duty it shall be to make frequent inspections of all factories employing ten or more persons. Under the present law no penalty is fixed for failure to appoint such officer, and even if appointed, should he fail to report no penalty is provided. The recommendations are that the law be amended to cover all cities and towns of the state and provide adequate penalties. Another relates to the anti-trust law, to prevent "truck" and "company" stores and the use of chips, checks, orders and other devices, in payment for wages, timber and other productions. That the powers and duties of the board of arbitration should be so amended as to make the decisions of the board final and binding upon both parties to the dispute. Urging the necessity of providing means for securing complete and exact information relative to agricultural labor. On child labor Mr. Rozelle says:

"The question of child labor is one of the greatest importance to the state, and one which requires the best thought of lawmakers as well as philanthropists in its solution. At this time, when machinery is so largely taking the place of labor and men are being thrown out of employment, it is evident that the hours of toil must be shortened and the number of children employed in factories, workshops and stores limited by statutory enactments relating to age, education, physical ability, etc. Owing to the difficulty of securing reliable information and the many conflicting theories and opinions upon this question, if the governor of the state were empowered to appoint a commission of three or more persons to visit every city in the state where

child labor is employed to any considerable extent and make a complete investigation into such employment and report the same, together with proper recommendations tending to check the evils growing out of the system, great good might be accomplished."

Calls attention to the unlawful practice of operators of coal mines in not weighing coal before screened, as certain operators require their miners to sign a contract before commencing work in which they agree to have their coal weighed after it is screened.

In the summary of manufacture, exclusive of the eight prison factories, the 863 plants whose reports are in tabular form show an increase of \$13,509,578 over the amount reported last year.

The average number of males employed during each month of 1897 was 39,320; females 11,457; total, 50,777. The total amount of wages paid in 1897 was \$21,710,355. The average daily wages paid to skilled male help, \$2.23; unskilled male help, \$1.21; skilled female help, \$1.31; unskilled female help, 75 cents. Soap manufacturers paid the highest average wages to skilled male help, \$2.86 per day, and creameries the lowest, \$1.54. Cigar manufacturers paid the highest average daily wages to skilled female help, \$1.95, and soapmakers to the lowest, 55 cents.

The report concludes with the statement that, actuated by the desire to benefit labor organizations of the state, an effort has been made by the department to secure data giving the true condition of the organized wage-workers of the state. To this end the blanks were prepared and copies forwarded to the secretaries of all organizations whose addresses could be secured. Two hundred and ninety-seven blanks were sent to organizations in all parts of the state, but up to the time of preparation of the report but 45 have been returned, these in an incomplete state. The reports received, summarized, are as follows:

Total number of organizations reporting, 45; number reporting increase in wages since organization, 22; number reporting decrease in wages since organization, 2; number reporting stationary wages since organization, 11; number making no report regarding wages, 10; number reporting reduction of hours since organization, 22; number reporting no change of hours since organization, 10; organized trades working ten hours per day, 8; organized trades working nine hours per day, 5; organized trades working eight hours per day, 17; organized trades working twelve hours per day, 3; organized trades making no returns regarding hours, 2; total number of members in organizations reporting, 5,668; total number members out of work in organizations reporting, 651; organizations failing to report number unemployed, 22.

Above table shows two important things: That organized workers have been uniformly maintaining or advancing wages and decreasing hours.

Pennsylvania Labor Report.

The ninth annual report of the factory inspector of Pennsylvania, James Campbell, chief, for the year ending Oct. 30, 1898, shows a marked increase in the work. The report states that 18,228 inspections were made; also 4,000 official visits, 4,333 orders were issued, and 13,183 compliances to time report were issued.

Of 408,975 employees in mills, factories, etc., 392,260 were reported as native born, 45,633 as naturalized and 45,086 as aliens.

In the sweatshops, out of 12,924 employees 2,862 were native-born, 1,801 were naturalized and 8,761 were aliens.

Of the 2,566 family workers 709 were native-born, 169 naturalized and 1,667 were aliens. Of the 12,051 factories, sweatshops and bakeries inspected 1,007 pay monthly, 1,992 semi-monthly, 9,052 weekly.

In all there were 1,754 accidents reported—73 were fatal, 327 serious. This increase is due, says the report, to the fact that a number of foundries, machine shops, iron and steel works were not amenable to the factory laws prior to the year.

The reports made during the last year demonstrate beyond question that the factory laws, as amended by the last general assembly, have proved beneficial and justified their enactment. The sanitary conditions in mills, shops, factories, etc., have been improved; dangerous machinery has been more properly guarded, suitable seats have been provided for working women, and 146 children who could neither read nor write the English language have been removed from the workshops and placed in the public schools.

One of the recommendations by the chief inspector is that "the laws regulating the manufacture of clothing, etc., enacted by the last general assembly, would be an ideal one if the department had the power to confiscate goods made in unlawful and unhealthy places and dispose of them in such a manner as would best protect the public health. I would recommend that such authority be given the department. It requires energetic and unceasing efforts of the department officials in this line of work to prevent violations of the law."

IT HAS RUINED CHILL.

GOLD STANDARD'S DIRE WORK DOWN THERE.

The Roadside Are Thick with Forlorn Tramps—Once Prosperous Under Bimetallic Conditions—As Viewed by a Distinguished Chilian.

(Valparaiso, Chili, Letter.)

The views that I shall express regarding the financial affairs of my country are based upon my own experience as a merchant, and a careful and extensive study of the subject as treated by leading writers of various nationalities. Chili has gained nothing by her silly adoption of the gold standard, with no gold money to fill the place of a circulating medium. On the contrary, her losses have been heavy from the beginning of the gold era, and we are going rapidly from bad to worse. The depressed condition of our trade is such that we are no longer visited by the numerous commercial travelers who formerly came from England, from Germany and from the United States. We cannot buy their wares and improved machinery, and consequently we lose the benefit of the exchange of products, which we formerly enjoyed. Compared with the prosperity of former times, when the silver of our mines was freely exchanged for the articles that we needed from other countries, our business seems to be almost at a standstill. Meanwhile the debts of our people are increasing, with apparently no hope for future relief. Chili cannot pay her debts except by going further into debt, and she continues to sell the silver she produces in London for less than 50 cents rather than open her mints to silver and coin it into dollars, which would lay the foundation of improvement in local home prices, as is the case in Mexico today and has been for a quarter of a century past. We are enriching England at our own expense, and our rulers are not wise enough to see the point. It is not difficult to understand why England should be a gold standard country. Her position was clearly stated by Mr. Gladstone some time before his death. I quote what he said:

"I am almost afraid to estimate the total amount of the property which the United Kingdom holds beyond the limits of the United Kingdom; but of this I am well convinced, that it is not to be counted by tens or hundreds of millions (of pounds) an extremely low and inadequate estimate. Two thousand millions or even more might very likely be nearer the mark. I think, under these circumstances, it is rather a serious matter to ask this country whether we are going to perform this supreme act of self-sacrifice (the establishment of bimetallicism). I have a profound admiration for cosmopolitan principles. I can go a great length, in moderation, in recommending their recognition or establishment; but if there are these two thousand millions, or fifteen hundred millions of money, which we have got abroad, it is a very serious matter as between this country and other countries. We have nothing to pay to them. We are not debtors to any. We should get no comfort or consolation out of the substitution of an inferior material, of a cheaper money, which we should get for less and part with for more. We should get no consolation, but the consolation throughout the world would be great. And this splendid spirit of philanthropy, which we cannot too highly praise, because I have no doubt all this is foreseen, would result in our making a present of fifty or one hundred millions to the world. It would, no doubt, be gratefully accepted by the world, but I rather think the gratitude for your benevolence would be mixed with very grave misgivings as to your wisdom."

This is the language of the money lender; but why should those who are in debt yield up all they possess for the benefit of the comparatively few who flourish upon the accumulations of interest? Has the debtor no rights which the creditor should respect? Shall all the world pay tribute to England because she is the world's banker—and because she owns many gold mines and none that produce silver? England is wise, but what shall we say for those nations that willingly yield themselves victims to her greed! Among the silver producing nations Mexico has proved herself to be the wisest. She is now the only really prosperous country in the world, and this prosperity is due to the wisdom and patriotism of her rulers. All her silver is coined into dollars and kept at home to enrich her own people, in place of being sold abroad for less than 50 cents. Strange that other silver producing nations cannot see this simple business principle as Mexico sees it. Even a child can understand that it is better for him to keep the orange that his mother gives him than to divide it with the big boy across the street. But our rulers have not even the wisdom of children. Mexico's silver benefits her in a double sense. In addition to enriching her own people, it serves a better purpose than a protective tariff, in establishing and sustaining home industries. England is a heavy sufferer by the prosperity of

Mexico, for Mexico now manufactures the very goods that she formerly imported from England. English capital also flows into Mexico by the hundreds of millions, because it can be more profitably employed there than at home. The same natural conditions are operating against the United States; but your people are wise and shrewd, and as they produce nearly two-thirds of all the silver in the world, it is not reasonable to suppose that they will much longer submit to the conditions which destroy one-half the value of one of their most important products, especially when the restoration of that product to its natural position would so vastly improve all other industries. Besides, you have the example of Mexico right at your own doors. In Argentina we see conditions similar to those in Mexico, except that her prosperity rests on the uncertain basis of paper instead of the solid foundation of silver. The paper money of Argentina has tended to stimulate production, in which there is danger. Aided by the gold premium, Argentina agricultural produce is mainly sold to gold-using nations, and the gold obtained can be turned into paper money at the rate, at present, of 2½ paper dollars for each gold dollar, and as the paper dollar can buy as much of everything, or nearly so, as metallic money, the benefit to that country is very considerable, so long of course as the gold premium lasts—at the probable expense of overproduction. It is the gold premium that enables Argentina to compete with English and American farmers, tending as it does to lower the prices of your home grown food. But this advantage cannot continue forever; over-production may some day make her a compulsory seller. The greatest misfortune that can befall agriculture in Argentina will be the fall of the gold premium to par, when she would be on all fours as a seller with wheat and cattle growers in competing nations. It is yet to be seen how Germany, Russia, Austria and Japan will bear themselves under their experimental changes in currency from silver to gold. Their power to issue fresh gold loans seems to be exhausted, and their tendency is rather to lose than to get more gold. There are signs of weakness in the position, and doubts are growing as to their ability to keep and to hold their gold accumulations. It will be interesting to watch the course they will pursue in the possible event of the failure of their gold aspirations. The Fates may possibly drive them back to silver. Both Russia and Japan are now on their knees, begging for loans which it seems they are not able to get. Perhaps in the near future all the nations will come back to their senses, and readopt the system of bimetallicism which the experience of all ages has proved to be better for the people—though not so good (perhaps) for the money lenders. With much respect I subscribe myself, Joseph Romero.—Mississippi Valley Democrat and Journal of Agriculture.

BANK CREDITS COMPEL PANICS

The extreme danger to our business interests of this arbitrary and irresponsible power, lodged in a few private corporations, is apparent. It is said, however, in its defense, that the danger is apparent only—not real; that the banks do not desire panics; that they all suffer severely, and many of them are ruined thereby.

All this may be conceded, but the fact remains that the system of expanded bank credits in the end compels the controlling banks to periodically bring on a monetary panic as their only means to save themselves from ruin. On Sept. 30, 1892, the aggregate of debts due from all the banks in the country to their depositors was \$4,677,000,000.

Of this amount the sum of \$3,008,000,000 was subject to check and payable on demand, while the amount of cash on hand was only \$586,000,000, or more than \$5 of demand obligations to \$1 of money with which to meet them; and if the savings deposits of \$1,712,000,000, subject to payment on conditions (usually short notice), be added, amounting to more than \$8 of debt to \$1 in money.

Under this condition of ever-increasing debts, due from the banks to their depositors, caused by the ever-expanding system of fictitious bank credits, combined with a relatively stationary or diminishing supply of money with which to meet them, it is plain that the time must come when any unusual demand for money due to any foreign or domestic disturbance in business will burst this widely expanded bubble of credit, and banks and people alike go down together in a common ruin. This is even true of the most conservative banks, which are compelled to follow the lead of the speculative banks, as will hereafter appear. W. H. CLAGGETT.

"Say, Weary, I ain't seen you lookin' so well for a dog's age. What you been doin'?" "How?" "Fillin' up!" "Readin' these here Christmas mornin'."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

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