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Labor Troubles

Since the armistic the country has had more labor troubles than ever before. The community demands that these be settled by arbitration. The result of these arbitrations, however, is often not satisfactory. If each party chooses an arbitrator and the two select a third, the entire responsibility is placed on one man. Too many mistakes are made. The collective wisdom of a greater body of men is needed, more representative of the whole community.

The first sympathy of the community is apt to go to the workers, as the under dog, and as people struggling under the heaviest burdens and the closest margin of subsistence. The utmost care should be given that they get absolute justice, and that they are fairly paid for they produce.

But where large bodies of worker's absolutely controlling the production or distribution of some necessity of life, are organized into monopolistic unions, they may cease to become the under dog. They may exercise a tyrannical and brutal power. They may gain higher wages than other workers entitled to equal pay, who are compelled thus to contribute to the pay of this favored class.

If the railroad workers for instance, attempt to tie up transportation and stop all business and movement of the necessities of life, the community should not allow itself to be bluffed. It must see to it that the transportation of the country is maintained. If the present body of railroad workers will not submit to fair arbitrations, and give a reasonable time for settlement of these disputes, it is time to find some other group of men who will.

It is a time to keep calm and appeal to people's reason rather than their passion. The mass of the working people can be appealed to in that way. The extremists on both sides should retire and let tolerant people settle these difficulties.

There have been a number of investors and farmers from other states here during this week looking after land deals and as a consequence a number of them will be made soon. This part of the state never saw as many people who were anxious to get farms in this country as now. People from other states are just beginning to realize that they can raise more in Missouri for the money invested than in the other states.

Food Prices Increase

Since 1913 the cost of food has advanced 83 per cent, records in the bureau of labor statistics reveal. During that period articles which have advanced more than 100 per cent are:

Sugar, 100 per cent
Pork chops and hams 103 per cent.

Bacon, 107 per cent.
Corn meal, 125 per cent.
Flour, 127 per cent.
Lard, 154 per cent.

During the past the average increase has been 14 per cent.

Onions, 123 per cent.
Prunes, 53 per cent.
Coffee, 41 per cent.
Potatoes, 31 per cent.
Cheese, 28 per cent.
Eggs, 28 per cent.
Butter, 24 per cent.
Lard, 23 per cent.
Sugar, 16 per cent.
Milk, 15 per cent.
Flour, 12 per cent.

Since December 1915, there has been an increase of from 120 to 125 per cent in the cost of wearing apparel, 45 per cent in fuel and lights, 125 per cent in furniture and furnishings, and 65 per cent in miscellaneous articles.

Labor Day

A parade held in New York in 1882 by the Knights of Labor was the first step toward the establishment of a legal holiday later to be known as Labor Day. Following a resolution passed in 1884 by the same organization to hold all celebrations on that day, working men all over the United States began to demand that it be made a legal holiday. Colorado passed the first law to that effect in 1887, and her example was closely followed by New York, New Jersey and Massachusetts. At present the first Monday in September, which this year falls on the first day of the month, is celebrated in all the states, the District of Columbia, Porto Rico, Hawaii, and Alaska as a legal holiday. It is usually marked by parades and labor meetings and demonstrations.

Two Spots

No one in the country towns has to lie awake fearing lest a railroad strike tie up the food supply.

The city boarders are warned not to wander out into the fields too far, as the hydraulic ram might get after them.

The people who were too busy to mow their weeds before they went to seed this fall, will be the same ones who will have to mow all next summer to keep their places looking decent.

Mexican Situation

It is now more than five years since the President of the United States found it necessary to send a ship load of troops to Vera Cruz to impress the Mexican government that the people of this nation resented the manner in which Mexican soldiers and others in that country were trifling with the lives, property and dignity of citizens of the United States. Perhaps that incident did impress that government to some extent. The social, political and military condition of Mexico has improved somewhat, but that there still remains large room for improvement, is evident to all who have followed the events in connection with the history of that country.

American experts who have made a survey of the resources of Mexico agree that in point of natural resources—in gold, silver, iron, zinc, lumber, fruit, soil, vegetation, climate, etc.—she is as rich as Inca, which means that had the colonists of thirty Europeans landed at Vera Cruz instead of where they did, Mexican history would have read like a veritable fairy tale; that instead of plunder, kidnapping, murder and revolution in government being the chief diversion, industry, commerce, art, education and religion would have characterized the Mexican people and the center of modern civilization doubtlessly would now have been firmly established in the land of the Aztecs.

As it is, however, the Mexican situation furnishes a problem to herself and to the United States, socially, politically and economically, far more complex than perhaps has been presented before the peace conference by any of the bleeding peoples of Europe. She has enjoyed the privilege of self-determination, but seems to have sorely abused that franchise. If she has ideals of government she has been slow to manifest them. If she has expressed them it has been through the trumpets of revolutionists.

No one knows whether she is the sinner or the victim of sin. She has been slow to express regret when her unruly element snuffs out the lives of American citizens and still slower to make competent amends—while never to the present hour has she reached a point where anything resembling a guarantee of safety has been seriously undertaken by the government known as the Carranza regime.

In some things Mexico reminds one of Germany three years ago, when her war leaders thought they had performed their duty if they posted notices here and there warning American citizens to keep out of the water because it was not fine and the kaiser's submarines were apt to kill anyone who happened to get near enough to get struck by a torpedo. Mexico seems to feel that she has discharged her sacred obligation to humanity and the United States when she tells our state department that murderous bandits inhabit many sections of her territory and that Americans will do well to look a little out down there; and despite the curt note from the state department demanding that Carranza guarantee to safeguard the lives and property of American citizens in Mexico, no assurance of such guarantee has been forthcoming, but instead her brigands kidnap and hold for ransom two American army officers. Will there not come the time when patience will cease to be a virtue.—Moberly Monitor.

Having gone thus far in tinkering with the cost of living, the authorities may proceed with confidence. They haven't raised the cost of living this week much more than it would have risen anyway.

In other words, the railway employees wish things to go on mainly as they are going now, with the gross receipts divided among the wage earners and the public paying the deficits.

It's the Firemen Now

It is getting so that the week is tame unless some branch of a railroad union steps forward and demands increase in pay, shorter hours and a lot of other things. Now it is the firemen. They want \$6.50 per day in passenger service, \$7.20 in freight, extra time for more than 100 miles of run, and the overtime computed on a basis that means time and a half or more. They also want mechanical stokers where the locomotives are big and they want to be relieved of the duty of cleaning engines. Incidentally they want passes on the railroads, of course.

There is one thing cheering about this demand. Usually labor unions are against the introduction or the extension of any character of labor saving device. The mechanical stoker is a pronounced labor saver. The chief job of a fireman where one is used, is to trim the fire. If the mechanism works properly the fireman has less to do on a trip than a chauffeur has in handling an automobile. The "stoker" pulverizes the coal, sprays it about the firebox and if the drafts are all right there should be no trouble. Usually there is none.

The task of the fireman has been made comparatively easy by the mechanical stoker. That is good. But it is not good that the fireman should put himself on a financial pedestal because his work is made easy. The ukase that the fireman shall not take any part in cleaning a locomotive is disgusting. The unions are riding for a fall when they carry their intolerance to such a degree.

An employer, whether he be head of a great railroad or the owner of a tiny store, engages a worker to work, to work helpfully and honestly. The present purpose of the unions seems to be to divide labor into as many sections as possible and to have the groups in each section never do anything outside of their own narrow specified tasks, regardless of results.

Today an engineer wants a roundhouse man to go over the locomotive, oil it, clean it, get it in proper trim and then bring it down the yard and hitch it to the train. The engineer considers his work as beginning only when the train starts.

When the "run" is finished, or rather, when the train arrives at point of destination the engineer wants a yardman or roundhouse man to take charge of the locomotive. It is not the province, apparently, of the engineer to bother himself further than to bring the train to the end of the route.

The goal of the "worker" today seems to be to do the least possible work and get the largest possible pay regardless of who is hurt. The old pride of service is gone. The spirit of satisfaction in doing a thing well is no longer manifest.

Such a course does not point to progress or success.

Capital used to merit its reputation for selfishness and callous disregard of right.

But Labor is outdoing it in some ways.

Agriculture by Films

Within a few years, motion pictures will be one of the principal means for education. They will be used largely in schools. Already they are being applied to teach scientific agriculture.

Farming is an art in which very close attention to detail is required for success. Some of these details are too minute to be shown in films. Yet the difference between good stock and scrubs, between fields properly treated and those wrongly handled, could be made very clear. The Farmers' Club of the future will have its moving picture machine, and correct methods will be shown at every cross roads school house.

Some Hen, This

Gus Rhodes a farmer near West Salem, Wis., claims to have a hen that lays from one to six egg daily and which on one special occasion laid sixteen eggs in one day. Not only does Mr. Rhodes make this extraordinary claim for his White Rock hen, but he backs it up with the affidavit of J. H. Benson, a La-Crosse poultry fancier who says he saw the hen lay thirteen of the sixteen eggs in one sitting of four hours without stopping to eat, drink or cackle. She is a bit cranky about where she deposits these eggs as she is entitled to be when her wonderful performance is considered, and will lay only in the barn.

We wonder what would happen if this hen were excluded from the barn on a day when she wanted to lay a dozen or more eggs. She would probably burst, making a wonderful omelet with bits of chicken in it.

Also we wonder if Mr. Rhodes has crossed his breed of hens with a codfish, which generally lays a few million, more or less, eggs in one season. We have often considered the possibilities of crossing the ordinary barn yard variety of hen with the English sparrow, the most persistent laying of the bird family to see what the resulting fowl would do in the egg-laying contest.

Preparations are now under way for the holding of a nation-wide toy exhibit at the Art Institute in St. Louis sometime in December, 1919. The exhibit is to be under the direction and auspices of the Art Alliance of America and the Art Institute of Chicago and is designed to stimulate the manufacturers and designers of toys to meet the better needs and desires of American children.

The reconstruction of the canal extending from Hanchow to Peking in China, has been placed in the hands of American engineers. The waterway is twenty-five hundred years old, the oldest in the world.

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