

WHAT UNCLE SAM IS DOING FOR LABOR

QUONE line of accomplishment in which the United States government has gone ahead mightily in recent years is in the help that has been rendered to the cause of labor. Moreover the aid that has been given to the working classes of the country has not by any means been confined to those conspicuous services with which the public is familiar, such as the settlement of the anthracite coal strike, the enforcement of the eight-hour day on government work and the establishment of labor's own branch of public service—the department of commerce and labor.

Uncle Sam stands ready, of course, to step into the breach wherever occasion demands in an effort to secure a "square deal" and living wages for the toiling masses but even when there are no clouds on the horizon of the relations between capital and labor this paternal government is busily engaged with the problem of promoting the welfare of those who labor with hands or brain. A number of different branches of the government are contributing to this policy but in the main the work devolves upon the bureau of labor at Washington, which is, in effect, the labor division of the department of commerce and labor.

Newspaper readers hear of the bureau of labor when its head, the commissioner of labor, steps in and attempts to arbitrate some strike or threatened strike, as for instance the recent difficulties of the telegraphers of the country, but there is not one citizen in a thousand who has any idea of the scope of the everyday work of the bureau in acquiring and diffusing useful information on subjects connected with labor in the most general and most comprehensive sense of that word.

Is Doing Good Work.

By means of an energetic "field force" and a capable corps of experts in the home office at Washington this branch of the government is continually investigating in all parts of the country such subjects as the relations of capital and labor, the hours of labor, the earnings of laboring men and women, and other similarly fruitful topics. What is more, this public institution is continually striving to promote the material, social, intellectual and moral prosperity of the workers. Of course these government scouts in the labor field cannot work in a rut. Indeed the force is so versatile that the individual workers so versatile that when a serious dispute arises between employers and employes or there is a controversy such as that some time ago regarding conditions in the meat packing industry all other work at the bureau can be dropped and all hands concentrate their attention upon the causes and facts of the crisis of the moment.

The late Senator Hoar of Massachusetts is perhaps entitled to be considered the father of the movement to have Uncle Sam systematically aid the cause of labor. It was in 1871 that Mr. Hoar, then a member of the United States house of representatives, introduced a bill providing for the appointment of a commission to study the subject of wages and hours of labor and the division of profits between labor and capital in the United States. The bill did not pass but the ball had been started rolling and finally after much agitation congress in 1884 made provision for a bureau of labor as a part of the interior department. When the department of commerce and labor was organized in 1903 the bureau of labor was taken under its wing as one of its principal branches.

Powers of Commissioner.

Congress has conferred pretty broad powers upon the commissioner of labor. He can undertake at his discretion any investigation which in his judgment relates to the welfare of the working people of the country and he can employ in this quest for information all the means at his disposal and the corps of statistical experts, special agents, clerks, etc., carried on the payroll of the bureau of labor. Uncle Sam's labor commissioner may, if he choose, simply make a report to congress once a year on his investigations but of late years special reports have been issued monthly or even oftener, and on a number of occasions the president has called upon the commissioner of labor to make special inquiry in some field and communicate his findings as quickly as possible.

The bureau of labor is in reality a great "intelligence office" that pours out information through four different channels. The first of these is made up of the results of original investigations conducted by the bureau or its agents and experts. Secondly the labor bureau gives the whole country a

digest of state labor reports, thus bringing to the attention of the general public many matters relating to conditions in the different states of the union that might not otherwise become matters of common knowledge.

Has Wide Scope.

Thirdly, this bureau of labor information reviews exhaustively for the benefit of its millions of American clients the labor and statistical documents of all foreign countries and when anything is discovered that has a bearing on labor interests in Yankeeedom it is promptly brought to the attention of the people concerned. Fourthly, the bureau fulfills its function as public servitor by publishing and sending broadcast all new laws that are passed affecting the interests of the working people. No matter whether a law be passed by the national congress or by the legislature in some one of our two score states it is no sooner on the statute books than the labor bureau sends the tidings to the toilers who will be affected. Finally there is a similar system for the distribution of news relative to court decisions interpreting labor laws or other happenings affecting the relations of employer and employe.

Most interesting and most important of the undertakings of the bureau of labor are the special investigations conducted by its own experts. These have covered a very wide range of subjects. It is, of course, impossible to enumerate them at length but just to convey an idea of the fields that have been explored there may be cited such subjects as industrial communities at home and abroad; co-operative distribution; railway relief departments; the padrone system; conditions of negro workers; building and loan associations; the inspection of factories and workshops; the trade-union label; protection of workmen in their employment; child labor in the United States; wages and cost of living, etc.

Deals Only in Facts.

In the earlier years of the work people did not, in many instances, take kindly to the idea of having their private affairs probed for the benefit of the public, but latterly this spirit has largely disappeared. Nowadays if the special agents of the bureau of labor are refused information by one manufacturer they usually have no difficulty in discovering some other establishment where the needed data may be obtained. The government labor experts have won confidence by never allowing the names of parties furnishing facts to be given in its reports, although, to be sure, they take every possible means to verify all the information gathered. The bureau will have nothing to do with estimates or hearsay statements about labor conditions. It never makes any statements unless it has positive facts to back them up.

At the outset the government labor experts thought that they could carry on their investigations largely by mail, but it was soon found that few people would respond satisfactorily to queries thus transmitted and so the bureau of labor had to organize a corps of special agents who are continually "on the wing" securing information at first hand and recording it on carefully prepared schedules. The policy of the bureau of labor in looking into labor conditions and the problems of life affecting the working people is seldom if ever to argue a point. It simply secures all the facts in the case and then lets the intelligent labor man decide what is best for him from the information set out for his benefit. The bureau of labor is particularly fortunate in its directing heads. The commissioner of labor, Dr. Charles P. Neill, formerly one of the faculty of the Catholic university at Washington, is a man who has a wonderful faculty for clear-sighted investigation and the chief clerk of the bureau, Mr. G. W. W. Hanger, has been fitted by long experience for work in behalf of the cause of labor.

Employment Bureau.

Uncle Sam has also inaugurated another aid to labor in the form of the largest employment bureau in the world. This is an adjunct of the bureau of immigration, and is in charge of Terence V. Powderly, at one time a recognized leader of union labor throughout the country. It is the function of this new bureau to inquire as to the facts about the reported demand for labor in all parts of the country. Mr. Powderly has opened correspondence with responsible officers in every state in the union concerning the need for labor and the opportunities for employment in each state and when any workman desires to make a change of location all he has to do is to inquire of Uncle Sam as to the prospects in any section in which he would like to find employment.

A Song of Labor

A dream is on the people,
A light, not flame light, falls
Upon great broken faces,
These ruined human walls,
And at the master's moment
Beyond, the soul breaks sod,
And angels in the heart's core
Sing gloriously of God.

In deeds that make men brothers,
In acts that give us soul,
Those destinies are hidden
That sweep us to the goal,
But we, as gods, are dreamers,
And we, as angels, dream,
We little apes with visions
That are not what we seem!

O heart of Man, what glories
Have never come to pass,
The dream that never wakened,
The love that never was—
The good, the great, the labor—
O save the ways half-trod
Our lives flow on corrupted
Into the life of God.

If, gazing on dead faces,
Our grief is too, too wild,
If hearts of tender mothers
Are broken on a child,
O what might be that anguish
In God, who sees unfurled
Man's evils, for His creature
Is child of all the world!

O draggled souls, O demons,
O human sharks and snakes,
Free fight of savage devils,
O beast that in us wakes,
We, drunk with teaming power,
Have shaken the firm earth
Until her heart is rotten
And lost to love and mirth.

But One has seen our wildness
And over us is shed
Dreams, that lead forth our labor
Ghosts, that divulge our dead,
A pity, that is saving,
The tears that make us pure,
And love, that in great hours
To God shall make us sure.

Yes, what shall bring the morning
Of dreams that rush in deed,
The Workshop thronged with Workmen
Handling the living need?
O sweat of brow scarce-purposed
In a never dreamed-of quest!
O hearts that never tire!
O hands that never rest!

Trade Agreement

THE greatest thing accomplished by trade and labor unions since the first Labor day, in my opinion, is the settled conviction that the toilers of our country can best conserve their industrial interests by the application of well regulated trade unionism.

The great trade associations of our country have been to the commerce of North America, through the application of the trade agreement with its pacific purposes, what the Declaration of Independence was to the body politic in these United States. It also provides for the logical settlement by conference or arbitration of disputes which heretofore were only settled by the cold-blooded logic of force. The discipline and effectiveness of trade unionism, and, as a result, the operation of the collective bargain or trade agreement, is the greatest thing accomplished by trade associations since the first Labor day.

What is the next step for the unions? The next step for those who have not already taken it is to make thorough preparation and arrangement for the full introduction of the eight-hour work-day in all industrial and agricultural pursuits. Given more leisure from the drudgery of toil, the working man or woman will seek and secure opportunity for the mental betterment which will make them happier men and women, better citizens, more clever, prompt and alert producers; it will cause them to look for better conditions of life "l of which are ennobling and will lead to the supremacy of the nation which gives the best opportunities along this line.—James Duncanson, Secretary-Treasurer of the Granite Cutters' International Association of America.

Greater Equity
THE eight-hour day is the greatest achievement of unionism, but the original intention was not that men should make over-time, but that more men should be employed.

In the making of contracts for construction work on buildings, etc., employers figuring on the cost of labor usually consider the wage question as the most important. The strong unions numerically generally succeed in obtaining about as high wages as they demand. This does not leave a large amount of money to be distributed in wages by the sub-contractors on the job, who have to figure pretty closely in order to come out ahead financially. The result is that the smaller and weaker unions cannot obtain as high wages as their fellow-workers in the larger unions, who were provided for first.

In my opinion, one of the most important things to be accomplished by the labor unions is to establish a more equitable distribution of wages to all workmen employed on contract work, with due consideration to the contractor.—Jeremiah J. Donovan, President Boston Building Trades Council.

Work of Education

WE know that the greater productivity of American labor is largely due to its superior education. When that labor is still further advanced by the higher education of its best type we may see young men preferring the good wage and good opportunity of a useful industrial employment to the shabby gentility of a briefcase lawyer, a doctor without a case, or a clergyman without a call.—Exchange.

THIRTY MINERS SUFFOCATED

DISASTER IN A COAL MINE NEAR HAILEYVILLE, OKLA.

A Barrel of Oil Ignited and Flames Spread to the Air Shaft and Hoisting Apparatus.

McAlester, Okla. — More than 30 miners were suffocated Wednesday in Hailey-Ola coal mine No. 1, near Haileyville, 14 miles east of McAlester, when fire destroyed the hoisting shaft and shut off air from the men below.

Twenty-five dead bodies were removed from the mine last night, following a three hours' battle with the flames. It is believed that six or eight more will be brought out. Twenty-five mules were suffocated and some of their bodies were burned.

After the miners had gone down in the cage a fire broke out, occasioned by the ignition of a barrel of oil which a miner was trying to divide. The flames spread to the hoisting shaft, and all communication with the top was cut off. The first indication the people at the surface had of the trouble was the flames and smoke coming out of the top of the shaft. Hundreds of miners rushed to the scene and tried to get into the air shaft, but this was impossible for several hours, as flames and smoke were coming up that way with such force as to drive them back.

The mine is owned by Dr. D. M. Halley, James Elliott and a number of Chicago and St. Louis capitalists, among whom are several directors of the Rock Island-Frisco road. The property loss may reach \$50,000. The mine is one of the most valuable in the southwest.

TO SWING VOTES TO BRYAN.

Labor Federation's Officers and Chairman Mack Lay Plans.

Washington, D. C. — Union labor's equation in the Democratic national campaign and the plans that have been formulated by officers of the American Federation of Labor to swing the labor vote to William J. Bryan were subject matters of a series of conferences Wednesday night between National Chairman Norman E. Mack and Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, Secretary Morrison of the federation, and President McConnell of the Machinists' union.

Chairman Mack announced before his departure for New York at midnight that he had approved the plans devised by Mr. Gompers and his associates to aid in Mr. Bryan's election and that within a few days he would announce the chairmen of the various labor bureaus which will be established in several of the larger cities and conducted under the general direction of the national committee and the American Federation of Labor.

"The Democratic national committee will receive the co-operation of the American Federation of Labor in every way," said Mr. Mack, "and Mr. Gompers submitted to me the plans which have been formulated to effect an active campaign in the labor world in the interest of Democracy. These plans I regard as highly satisfactory and they will be adopted. The plans provide for the establishment of labor bureaus in several labor centers, with a central labor bureau in Chicago at the Democratic headquarters. The national committee will appoint only members of the American Federation of Labor as heads of these bureaus and Mr. Gompers has given me a list of names of those who would be regarded as acceptable to the federation."

INFANTRY WINS THE TROPHY.

First Honors in National Rifle Team Match Go to Men of the Army.

Camp Perry, O. — The national rifle team match for the national trophy authorized by congress and \$300 was won Wednesday by the United States infantry team, which scored 3,224. The navy, which made a strong fight on the 1,000-yard targets, was second with 3,210, and gets the Hilton trophy and \$200. The cavalry, which scored 3,180, takes the bronze Soldier of Marathon and \$150. The marine corps with 3,117 took fourth rank and gets \$100. The rifle-men from Wisconsin beat all the national guard teams with 3,070 and get \$75.

Massachusetts came in sixth with 3,056 and takes \$50. The naval academy was seventh at 3,035, Pennsylvania eighth at 3,033, the District of Columbia ninth at 3,025, and Washington took tenth place with an even 3,000, Illinois' 2,998 won her eleventh place and Iowa's 2,994 twelfth.

With the national team match ended, the rifle-men were allowed only a brief rest and were then rushed to the skirmish field for the first stage of the national individual match. In this contest 668 were started, a record breaking field.

Cigarettes are Put Under a Ban.
Little Rock, Ark. — F. B. Easley, the superintendent of the Arkansas division of the Rock Island railroad, has issued a bulletin notifying all employes that cigarette smoking will not be permitted and that the violators will be discharged.

Ellis Accepts Offer of New Job.
Washington, D. C. — Wade H. Ellis, now attorney general of Ohio, has been tendered by the president and has accepted the position of assistant to Attorney General Bonaparte.

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Did you ever stop to think how your advertising can be made a source of profit to you, and how its value can be measured in dollars and cents. If you have not, you are throwing money away.

Advertising is a modern business necessity, but must be conducted on business principles. If you are not satisfied with your advertising you should set aside a certain amount of money to be spent annually, and then carefully note the effect it has in increasing your volume of business; whether a 10, 20 or 30 per cent increase. If you watch this gain from year to year you will become intensely interested in your advertising, and how you can make it enlarge your business.

If you try this method we believe you will not want to let a single issue of this paper go to press without something from your store.

We will be pleased to have you call on us, and we will take pleasure in explaining our annual contract for so many inches, and how it can be used in whatever amount that seems necessary to you.

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