

INCREASED PRODUCTION THE RESULT OF SHORTER HOURS.

The theory that the reduction of hours of labor adds to the cost of production is fallacious and cannot be maintained. Attention is called to the fact that the nations which are both the wealthiest and the strongest in the markets of the world were those in which the hours of labor were the shortest, such as the United States and Great Britain; contrarywise, the countries that are both poorest and weakest in the markets of the world are those in which the longest hours of labor prevail.

The theory that we cannot maintain our industrial supremacy in the world's markets by working less hours than other nations, has its counterpart in the reasons often advanced by the members of labor organizations who insist that the reason why they desire a shorter workday is because it will curtail production.

If this were really true, the reduction of the hours of labor would at best be a doubtful expedient, says Organized Labor. It would mean that less wealth always follows shorter hours, and the less the wealth the smaller the wage—not actually in dollars and cents, perhaps, but certainly in a reduced product, which constitutes labor's share.

Now, the fact is that the opposite is true. An increased production always follows shorter hours. This result, of course, does not follow at once; but as soon as the shorter workday is established two forces are immediately set in motion, each of which tends toward an increased production and the cheapening of the commodity.

First, "Necessity is the mother of invention," and the great pressure felt in the industrial world by the sudden arrest of the volume of production and its increased cost as a consequence of the reduction of time, stimulates a thousand minds to overcome the difficulty by labor-saving inventions and devices.

Associated with this activity in the inventive world, greater managerial capacities are also brought into play, and the labor forces are organized and directed with greater efficiency and economy.

It is the universal testimony of all observant minds who have had the benefit of international travel that the people of the United States use the greatest number of inventions and labor-saving devices of any people on earth; and this is why that, though their wages are higher, the product which is created by their hands and brains is the cheapest in the world.

Let me illustrate:

The traveler in China, who pays from one to three cents per day to a number of coolies to tote him several hundreds of miles across the desert, pays an extravagant price for the transit, as compared with the man who boards a limited train in New York City for San Francisco, which is operated by an engineer, fireman, conductor and brakeman, whose salaries range from \$75 to \$150 per month. Aside from the greater economy in dollars and cents, the traveler makes his trip by our means of transportation in four days, during which he has the telephone and telegraph at his service, enabling him to keep in touch with his business interests, giving orders as to the smallest details. In China it would require 150 days for him to make the same distance. The business man whose time is often worth hundreds of dollars a day, would find himself wasting a fortune traveling in China, because of the loss of time alone, and be unable to keep in communication with either his business or his friends.

The other force developed by reduced hours is the great impetus given to the intellectual and artistic life of the worker, in consequence of the added leisure. The old adage that "the devil finds mischief for idle hands to

do," finds its counterpart in "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy."

If man is to rise in the social scale and be something more than a mere animal, limited to his physical wants and passions, he must have opportunity for improvement. True, some may waste that opportunity and become degenerates; but there is no proposition more clearly demonstrated in social science than that man in the aggregate rises in the scale of intellectual life in proportion to his opportunities.

It is for this reason that the short hour movement is the most revolutionary and far-reaching in its consequences of any reform that the trade union can concern itself with. Not revolutionary from the standpoint of physical force, but in its unerring certainty of elevating the wageworker from the plane of mere animal life to that of intellectual power, moral dignity and social worth.

Considering mere physical needs, the savage will consume as much food and require as much clothing, quality not considered, for raiment, as the civilized man. It is therefore not in the mere physical wants that the civilized man surpasses the savage, but in the realm of mind and soul, that man's power to consume the products of civilized life finds the largest sweep. The nation in which the workers have the largest amount of leisure, giving opportunity for intellectual development, must of necessity be a people who are the wealthiest in all that constitutes the highest state of civilized life.

Certain it is that the progress in machinery cannot continue, unless the masses develop a proportionate capacity to consume the products resulting from our complex industrial life.

Every invention is essentially democratic in its character. It will do for the many more than it will do for the few. Our street-car lines, telegraphs, telephones and railroads could not exist were they only patronized by the few. If the foregoing reasoning is correct, then I am warranted in making the following deductions:

First—The reduction of the hours of labor results in increasing the compensation of the workers.

Second—That this increase in wages again influences the development of more machinery, and so these two forces acting and reacting upon each other, constantly tend towards the greater production and diffusion of wealth, and an increased leisure for the masses.

It is the number of needs that the wage class as a whole must satisfy, that constitutes the attraction that determines the proportionate part of wealth produced, which shall constitute their wage. Every enlargement, therefore, of their intellectual and artistic tastes, adds to this attraction and elevates their standard of life. It is for this reason I deprecate the action of organized labor, so frequently indulged in during the century, of striking against the introduction of labor-saving machinery. Over and over again have the organized forces of labor sought, like Mother Partington, to sweep back the onswelling tide of mechanical inventions; and over and over again has this same tide swept aside their puny efforts.

The 19th century is distinguished from all others in the multiplication of its labor-saving inventions, and no power can arrest its progress.

In sculpture, we are still drawing our chief inspiration from the ancient Greeks.

In poetry, it is questionable whether we have yet reached the flights of Homer. In the realm of pure reason and philosophical discussion, we have certainly not surpassed the ancients, and it is doubtful whether modern times has produced a man equal to Plato.

In architecture, there is nothing original about us, however advantageously we may modify. But while the ancients could chisel an image from marble that still fascinates the connoisseur of art, and do all of the other

things I have mentioned, they could not make either a good wheelbarrow or a good wagon wheel.

It is in the realm of mechanics that modern civilization offers such a wonderful contrast to preceding ones. Unfortunately, these improvements, under present economic conditions, are largely monopolized by the privileged few, and the blessings which it is intended they should confer upon mankind have not yet been realized. Under present maladjustments, they constitute both the hope and despair of the world. But while students, agitators and doctrinaires of new social systems are seeking to convert the world in favor of sweeping revolutionary changes, the trade union movement, as such, while inviting and encouraging the most radical thinkers in its midst, must pursue a course of practical amelioration, and do today and tomorrow that for which it can interest conservatives and radicals alike.

No school of economic thought is either so radical or conservative that it can not conscientiously aid in securing the reduction of the hours of labor. This reform, then, offers the widest field upon which to combine our efforts and weld together in one harmonious whole the most diverse minds in industrial reform.

In a democratic country like ours, with its institutions resting upon the sovereignty of the individual, and where the enlightenment or ignorance of its citizens determines its weal or woe, it is of the greatest importance that there should be a thorough diffusion of knowledge, without which democracy cannot flourish.

At no period in our history have such momentous problems confronted the republic. Civilization itself is approaching a crisis. Shall this crisis witness the new birth and the better day, or shall it be the grave in which will be buried the achievements of the past?

At no time has the trade union movement been charged with a more sacred responsibility.

THE DUTY OF UNION MEN.

The real work of labor organizations, the work that will be lasting in its influence and beneficial to mankind, is not found in the police function of protecting the immediate rights of the laborer, but in the education which association develops. When the great body of workingmen know the economic law by which they are controlled; when they understand that the ills which they bear are the results of conditions within their control, rather than the perverseness of individual employers; when they understand that they are responsible for injustice, for want, crime and wretchedness, and that it is only because they have not learned the lesson and applied the remedies that the necessity for labor organizations has arisen, there will be a better condition of the race and the work of labor organization will have been accomplished. As a means to this end, men should be taught to be brave, self-reliant and helpful to their fellow-laborers, and to mankind in general; they should be taught that a man has only partly fulfilled his duty when he has informed himself; that he owes the duty of informing his neighbor, and of using his influence, his voice and his vote, in the working out of the problem of government in their relation to the economic welfare of the people.—Benjamin Dean, in Jamestown Union Labor Advocate.

Usually when an employer agrees to arbitrate differences with employees, he insists that he alone shall fix the terms of arbitration. Such was the case in the street-car strike at Terre Haute, until it was finally shown that the matter could not be settled without the consent that some good union man should be allowed to act upon the board in behalf of the men.

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