

World-Wide Labor Movement

Interesting Items From Trade Union Papers and Exchanges, at Home and Abroad.

Columbus, O., painters organized 200 strong.

Another large brewery in Philadelphia has been unionized.

Cotton workers in the City of Mexico have struck for higher wages.

Street railways of Cape Town, South Africa, employ 350 men. The cars are all made in America.

The Tanners' Union, of Seattle, has asked an increase in wages, to go into effect next month. Most of the contractors have already agreed to the raise.

A trust has been recently organized embracing the manufacturers of fire engines and fire engine apparatus in the United States.

More than 50,000 men have been "laid off" by employing corporations within the last two weeks with threats that if Bryan is elected they cannot return to work.

It is proposed to make street railway strikes impossible in Chicago by inserting a clause in all railway franchises providing for compulsory arbitration.

International Oil Workers' Union, organized eighteen months ago, has now a membership of 1,800. It has just concluded its second convention in Findlay, O.

Whenever things get so far wrong as to attract their notice, the people, if well informed, may be relied upon to set them to rights.—Thomas Jefferson.

While Kansas is proposing to send 1,000,000 bushels of corn to feed the Hindoos, the Hindoos are sending 40,000,000 bushels of wheat to England to feed the Englishmen.

Organized labor of the Pacific coast is responding nobly to the call for financial aid for the locked-out mill men of San Francisco. Nearly \$6,000 has already been contributed by the 'Frisco unions.

At McKeesport, Pa., several hundred men were struck by prosperity in the shape of a machine that welds couplings. A laborer feeds material at one end and the finished couplings drop out at the other.

The United States court has ordered the sale of the Blackwell Durham Tobacco Company's plant at Charlotte, N. C., for not less than \$4,000,000. It is expected that the American Tobacco Company will be the purchaser.

There will come a time, and it is nearly at hand, when there will be but one issue before the American people—labor—and the party who will carry that banner, no matter under what name, will carry the people.—Union Guide.

The Waitresses' Union, of Seattle, have adopted a button to be worn by all members in good standing while on duty, and have asked that all union men refuse to be served meals by any waiter or waitress not having a union button.

The Ohio Convict Labor Commission has taken up its investigation at Toledo. Other cities of the state will also be visited. Organized labor is much interested in the problem of how to regulate the labor of convicts in penal institutions, and the report of the commission is impatiently awaited.

During September molders' unions were chartered in Greensboro, N. C.; Sherbrooke, Can.; Peru, Ind.; West Newton, Pa.; Crestine and Ironton, O.; St. John and Moncton, N. B.—Molders of Silver Creek, N. Y., received an increase of 25 cents per day.

The American Type Foundry trust, which has the largest plant in Chicago, has laid off half its force and placed the remainder on half-time. General Manager Marder told the men if McKinley is elected he would restore the full force, not otherwise.

Women bookkeepers of Chicago propose to form a union for the purpose of securing the eight-hour day. Wages do not enter into the question, but only the desire to shorten the hours, which are now frequently from seven to eight in the morning until ten at night, without any allowance for overtime.

An inventor in Germany claims to have discovered a process whereby he can make flour from wood, and the bread made from this flour is said to be wholesome and palatable. Put the biscuit trust on to this. They can grind up those 50-cent boxes and pass them out as bread.

T. J. Elderkin, an official of the Seamen's Union, will offer a resolution at the coming convention of the American Federation of Labor calling upon Congress not only to extend the Chinese exclusion act, but to so amend it that it will be impossible for Chinamen to enter this country under any circumstances.

The convention of the National Association of Bridge and Structural Iron Workers of America decided to make a movement at the most opportune time to secure a general observance of the eight-hour workday law, it also decided to extend their union to Europe and South Africa. There were fifteen large cities represented in the convention.

The yearly report of Typographical Union No. 6 (Big Six), of New York city, the largest local trade union organization in the world, gives its gross receipts as \$185,801.25, and places the total expenditures at \$186,801.22. One hundred and three thousand dollars was paid out in benefits in the Sun strike, and \$76,401.51 was received for dues and assessments. The organization now has nearly 6,000 members.

George J. Thompson, an officer of the Cigarmakers' International Union, in testimony given before the United States Industrial Commission, declares that during the last twenty years the union has paid in benefits \$4,328,845. During the last period of industrial depression the "out-of-work" benefits paid averaged \$175,000 a year. The union pays a strike benefit, and "out-of-work" benefit, a traveling benefit, a sick benefit and death benefit. It does not allow officers of local unions to order strikes, or even a local union itself.

The practice of blacklisting employees by the railway companies has become almost universal. A letter written by the manager of the Illinois Central to other railway managers contains this statement: "The under-noted men of transportation department have been discharged, or have left the service under circumstances rendering it undesirable for them to be re-employed by this company, and if they apply to you, you are requested to deny them employment without first conforming to general rule No. 636." Then follows twenty names of men to be placed on the blacklist.

The business man who wants the trade of the workingmen, should say so by advertising in The Labor Press.

EMPLOYMENT FOR THE UNEMPLOYED.

An act "to give employment to the unemployed," now widely known as the Dague tramp bill, passed both houses of the California legislature in 1897. It was rendered inoperative by reason of the neglect of the governor to append his signature to the same in the time required by the constitution. It will be introduced again at the next session and doubtless will become a law, as it receives generally the support of the press of the state of all political parties. It is the intention of the author and others to have the bill introduced into the legislature of every state in the Union, says the Machinist.

The chief provisions of the bill are: Each county shall be divided into road districts, to be identical with supervisorial districts, and labor put upon the highways shall be under the control of the supervisors (or commissioners), one of whom may be roadmaster of his district. Any adult person, upon showing to the satisfaction of the roadmaster or of the board of supervisors that he is homeless and without means of support and in immediate need of food, clothing and lodging, shall be employed by said officers to labor on the public highway or on the county farm under the direction of the roadmaster or superintendent of said farm, for which service he shall be lodged, given three meals per day, and receive at the end of each week not less than 35 cents per day of eight hours' labor for each day's service. But the board of supervisors may, at its discretion, provide for a greater wage than 35 cents if, in its wisdom, justice to said unemployed and to the county justifies such increase. The same unemployed shall be designated as the "honorable unemployed," and they shall be at liberty at any time to terminate said engagement to labor by giving the roadmaster one day's notice of such intention.

If any able-bodied man refuses this offer and persists in begging and chooses to be a vagrant and is convicted of vagrancy, then the sentence of the court shall be that said vagrant shall labor on the highway or county farm 90 days, instead of being confined in jail in idling or sent adrift as a "floater." At the end of his 90 days' service he shall be paid 10 cents per day in cash for each day on which he may have performed labor. He can, however, remove his disgrace and accomplish his discharge by signifying his desire to join the class of the honorable unemployed. Thus, it may be seen, there is an incentive to every "tramp" and other unemployed men to become an industrious citizen.

No man under the operation of this law would have any excuse for begging or going unhoused or hungry, for he would have the legal right to be employed and to be paid for his labor all that the condition of the county treasury might allow. Under this law the state will have large sums of money now paid to justices of the peace and constables as costs. Moreover, our public highways would be improved greatly, and men would more than earn their "keeping" by labor on the county farm.

A WELL ORGANIZED TOWN.

A correspondent for the American Federationist has this to say of Tampa, Florida:

"The chief of police is an ex-president of the cigarmakers' union, and has the entire support of the mayor. Several trade unionists are members of the city council. A resolution, requiring city printing to be given to union shops, has been passed and the police force has been put on an 8-hour day. There is no end to the strength of organized labor in Tampa. All we have to do is to tell a dealer not to handle any more of such and such an article, and it is settled. Tampa is the best organized city in the South."

HOURS OF LABOR IN PRUSSIA.

A short report to the department of state made by Hon. Richard Guenther, United States consul-general at Frankfurt-on-the-Main, Germany, shows the substance of the new rules and regulations concerning the hours of labor and of rest of railway employees which were recently promulgated by the minister of public works of Prussia. A copy of the report is reproduced below:

The minister of public works of Prussia has made new rules and regulations concerning the hours of labor and of rest of railroad employees. If the duties require unremitting exertion and strict attention, the daily average of the hours of labor of station agents, assistant station agents, telegraphers, switching foremen, overseers of stopping places and switchmen shall not exceed eight hours, and the duration of a single task shall not exceed ten hours. The daily work of railway guards shall not exceed 14 hours. They can, however, be extended to 16 hours on branch lines with little traffic.

The daily hours of labor of the train employees shall, on the average, per month, not exceed 11 hours daily; a single task shall not be over 16 hours. Long hours shall only be required if they are succeeded by proportionately long terms of rest. The rest shall be taken at home and, as far as possible, shall be during the night. The daily hours of work for the locomotive employees, taken by the average per month, shall not exceed ten hours and shall under no circumstances exceed 11 consecutive hours. The same provisions as to rest apply to them as to the train employees.

If the work of the switchmen requires uninterrupted hard work, the average per day shall not exceed eight hours.

Every person steadily employed in the train service shall have at least two days of rest per month. The period of rest of the train and locomotive employees at their respective homes shall not be less than ten consecutive hours.—Exchange.

FLOODS OF ORIENTAL SCUM.

"From the report made to the State Labor Commissioner, the Great Northern Railway Company employed 1058 section men at \$1.33 1-3 per day in the year 1897—making a total yearly payment of \$440,128.10—every dollar of which was spent in this country, and nearly all of it in the communities in which the men dwelt.

"These men have all been replaced by Japanese laborers at \$1.10 per day, and there are now 2500 Japanese at work on sections and the reconstruction of the Great Northern in the State of Washington.

"In 1897 the O. R. & N. Company employed 320 white men on sections at \$1.25. These have been replaced by Japanese and the number increased on account of extra construction work," says the Freeman's Labor Journal.

"In 1898-9 the S. & I. R. R. Co. employed 100 white men at \$1.40 per day. They have been replaced by Japanese at \$1.10 per day and the number increased on account of new work.

"Four years ago no Japanese were employed at the Port Blakely mills. Today more than two hundred Japanese have taken the place of white labor there—and other mills are following the examples set by Port Blakely.

"Japs are being employed in round houses as wipers, and at terminals as cleaners of passenger, Pullman and dining cars, and a number are used as mechanical helpers in the machine shops.

"Japs have practically driven the small white restaurant people out of the lower part of Seattle, and are being employed in almost every public place in the city."

We will soon get a deluge of them in Portland, and unless the Chinese exclusion act is re-enacted, we will have untold thousands of these human locusts swarming over us.