

WORKERS' SMALL SHARE.**Statistics Disprove Prosperity for the Plain People.**

The cost of foods to the average poor family of America, says the San Francisco Examiner, has increased 16 per cent since 1896.

This statement is based upon the figures contained in the eighteenth annual report of the Bureau of Labor for the year 1903, which was published last week.

This increase is confined to food alone, and does not include the tremendous increase in rent which has burdened dwellers in our large cities during the past few years.

The data were made up from information gathered from 25,440 families. These families consist of an average of 5 1-3 persons. The income of these families averages \$827.19 a year. The expenditures, average \$768.54 per year.

The disbursements were, in percentages: Food, 42.54; payments on mortgages, taxes, property, life insurance, religion, charity, amusements, intoxicating liquors, sickness and death, 14.51. Miscellaneous purposes not reported, such as pocket money and small presents, amounted to 3.87. Rent, 12.95; clothing, 14.04; fuel and lighting, 5.25; furniture and utensils, 3.42; tobacco, 1.42.

Outside of food expenses no computation was made by the government, but with the exception of rent and tobacco the government expert is of the opinion that they vary very little from 1896.

In 1896 the average cost of food per family was \$296.76. Last year it was \$344.61.

In estimating the bearing of this increase of 16 per cent in the cost of food on the working population of the country, many things must be taken into consideration.

Few workmen, and none whatever engaged in manufacturing work, are employed steadily, but all must eat steadily, dress steadily, and live in houses steadily. From this it will be seen that while the increase of the percentage of expenditure is going on all of the time, the increase of earnings which has been granted in some trades goes on only part of the time. We think it would be just to say that a 16 per cent increase in the price of food would require at least a 20 per cent increase in wages to put the workman in the same position that he previously occupied.

It is very unfortunate that the government expert was unable to secure accurate figures of the increase of cost of wearing apparel, household furniture and rent.

In a recent investigation held for the purpose of arbitrating the question of street car men's wages in San Francisco it was shown that rents for such houses as were occupied by by men earning a thousand dollars a year had increased 20 per cent. Cross-examination failed to shake this testimony, which in every case was backed up by the production of the rent receipts. Similar proof was offered in recent investigations in Chicago and Denver.

If any one imagines that rents in Greater New York have not been raised, let him seek a comfortable dwelling within fifty minutes' ride of the business part of the city and he will soon learn his error.

Owing to combinations among manufacturers and dealers all such commodities as coal and coal oil have increased, not 20 per cent, but nearer 40 per cent.

In view of these facts the workman may well ask what has become of his share of the great prosperity of the country. He may have received a 15 per cent increase in wages, but

he has had to pay 16 per cent more for his food, and 20 per cent more for his rent and coal.

Prosperity, instead of helping him, has crowded him between the upper millstone of the trusts and the neither millstones of high prices for food products, brought about by high prices for farm products, caused by foreign demand.

Where does the prosperity for the plain people come in?

INSURES PEACE.**Thorough Organization of Labor Protects Employers.**

P. H. McCarthy, president of the San Francisco Building Trades Council, also president of the State Building Trades Council of California, a member and former president of Union No. 22, the largest union of carpenters in the world, whose membership is almost 1900, and which has been in existence for 22 years, is spending considerable time in Los Angeles, perfecting the reorganization of the Building Trades Council of that city. Mr. McCarthy is considered one of the best executive officers and organizers in the trades union movement, and the splendid success of the building trades in the Golden Gate City is due largely to his sagacity and untiring labors.

While in the southern part of the state he gave an interview to the Los Angeles Examiner, as follows:

"I intend to bring about a condition of affairs with reference to the Building Trades Council of this city which will result in its having complete control of the building industry of the city, the same as we now have in San Francisco, and in every city in the state except San Diego.

"Our intention is to put a Council there that will affiliate with the State Building Trades Council. Then we will have a complete chain of Councils affiliated with the state organization so that it will be utterly impossible to bring about a strike or lockout in any of the cities that will in any way seriously hamper the men. If the employers of any city are desirous of a fight, preferring periods of depression to those of prosperity, the State Council can immediately accommodate them by withdrawing their forces and placing them in other cities through the state, until the members of the Alliance Employers' Association, or whatever it may be called, come to a just sense of their duty and join with labor union people, bending their energies toward building up municipalities instead of tearing them down.

"The Building Trades Council in dealing with its employers is always mindful of the fact that the employers must be protected against loss as well as the employees, and the Council, when contemplating a change in its working rules, whether it be a reduction in the number of hours or increase in wages, gives notice of at least 90 days and in some instances as high as six months, so that the employer may prepare his business in order to meet the contemplated change without any loss to him, all the old work figured to be completed on the old basis or old schedule, so

that every contractor or business man should court rather than oppose organizations of this kind.

"The Building Trades Council of California does not conduct its business the same as the Councils in the Eastern states, in that it is impossible to bring about a strike if the employer does half way right. The individual unions cannot strike as they do in the large cities of the East almost every day, for the reason that the Council as a whole has complete control; hence petty strikes are unknown in the affairs of the Council."

Against Sweatshops.

Cardinal Gibbons in his last regular monthly sermon at high mass at the cathedral, Baltimore, Md., condemned "sweatshops" and appealed to his hearers to discriminate in making purchases in favor of employers who treat their employees with justice and charity.

"My purpose, dear brethren," said Cardinal Gibbons, "is not to commend to you indiscriminate charity, but my aim is to set before you a special class of persons that you may help to improve their condition, to redress their grievances and enable them to earn by their industry and honesty a comfortable livelihood.

"To come to the point, there is a class of persons in large cities who are employed by proprietors of clothing establishments. Some of these workers are employed in their stores, others make garments in their own homes and bring them to the establishments. Many of these workers, men and women, are compelled to toil in sweatshops which are contracted in space and poorly lighted and ventilated. They are overworked and underpaid.

"After a careful investigation I have discovered that after laboring

for six days at ten or twelve hours a day their weekly compensation amounts to \$6 or \$8. And with this pittance they have to pay for house rent, food and clothing and other expenses incident to family life.

"You can encourage and co-operate with that excellent society existing here and elsewhere, called the Consumers' League. It is composed of ladies zealous in works of charity and has already accomplished a great deal in improving the condition of these oppressed toilers and of establishing happier and juster relations between them and their employers."

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**Bargains in Clothing and Shoes.**

Men's suits and overcoats, worth \$12.50, \$15 and \$20, some broken lines, to clean them out at \$6, \$7.50 and \$10. Ladies', men's and children's shoes, worth \$2.50, \$3.50 and \$4, to clean them out at \$1.25, \$2 and \$2.50. Boys' suits, worth \$3.50 and \$5, to clean them out at \$1.50 and \$2.50. Men's underwear, worth 75c and \$1, to clean them out at 37½c and 50c per garment. Wool hose, worth 25c, to clean them out at 10c per pair. Men's hats, worth \$2.50 and \$3.50, to clean them out at \$1.75 and \$2. John Dellar, corner First and Yamhill streets.

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