

WALKING DELEGATES

WORK A NECESSITY OF, AND
A CREDIT TO ORGANIZED
LABOR.

"Walking delegates" is a term that has often been employed by the opponents of organized labor and applied as an epithet to those men who have been directly employed as servants or agents of the unions in carrying out the wishes of the members as expressed by vote. A large portion of the employing class have so little understood the labor question as to charge the labor disturbance to the "mischief making" work of walking delegates. Such an opinion does little credit to the intelligence either of employers or workers, as a very brief analysis will show. A union is a combination of workers with labor to sell by a collective bargain. They choose a so-called "walking delegate" to act as their salesman. The employers are their customers. If the salesman of labor continually stirs up trouble with the customers of labor, labor will discharge the salesman and put a new man on the job as certainly as the man of commerce will discharge a salesman who creates trouble with his customers. If the employers would give the workers credit for sense enough to do as aforesaid, it might pave the way for the employers to go a step further in the comparison.

If an employer finds that by reason of an advance in raw material he is unable to sell his goods at the old price, and that he must notify his customers that he can no longer sell at the old price, but must have an advance or refuse to sell, he must choose by notifying them by letter or by a salesman—a "walking delegate."

In what essential does this transaction differ from the worker, who, because of the rapid advance in the price of his raw material, viz.: the necessities of life—finds it necessary, through his salesman, to notify his customers that he cannot longer sell at the old price, but must have an advance or refuse to sell?

In these times of extremely high prices for the necessities of life the needs of the workers are sorely pressing, and it would be greatly conducive of a friendly harmonious relations between employers and workers if the employers would cease this ignorant or wilful misunderstanding of the needs and aims of the workers, their unions and their salesmen, and recognize the fact that each labor disturbance is based upon dissatisfaction of the workers themselves with their wages or the conditions of employment.

To err is human, and it is quite possible that the workers may make a mistake, even as the business man may make a mistake, but the worker is not more likely to make the same mistake twice than is the business man.

The struggle of the worker for better wages with which to give his children a better living, a better education, a higher respect for the laws and institutions of their country tends to raise the standard of citizenship of the rising generation and it is entitled to the respect of all persons who believe that human progress is to be measured by the improved conditions surrounding human beings, and not by mere dollar marks.

Ethically, as well as legally, the worker has the same right to associate and advise with his fellows as has the employer, and there seems to be little difference between the merging of several hundred workers in a union to sell all their labor from one office and stop competition, and the merging of several employers into one company for the purpose of selling their goods from one office and to stop competition.

The more we analyze and compose, the more we find that all men are made of common clay, and we are forced to the conclusion that regardless of the roughness or polish of men or methods, like causes produce

like actions in all human beings, no matter what their station in life.

This article is neither an apology nor a defense of the workers and their unions and agents, for they need none. It is an attack upon the offensive "holier-than-thou" superiority affected by some employers and it seeks to establish its points by comparison. Attention is here called to a few of the criticisms made upon the workers and their unions by these employers of narrow vision.

It is said that the workers are ignorant. Yet a large part of the successful employers came from the ranks of the workers, and in their daily association with them gained the intelligence or ability which permitted them to rise higher in industrial life.

It is said that the unions are composed of foreigners. Are there no foreigners among employers? Who brought the foreigners here, who wants unrestricted immigration? The employer, who takes the immigrant after he arrives, raises him to our standard of living and makes a man of him? The unions.

It is said that the unions are destructive of individual liberty. Unions are open to all workers, regardless of race, color or creed, provided only that the applicant subscribes to the doctrine of the collective bargain principle of labor selling as against unrestricted competition between workers. How much liberty does the worker enjoy where the employer's will is absolute?

Who established the company doctor, the company tenement and the company store? The employers. Did any union ever seek to compel its members to spend their wages in a particular store? Never.

It is said that unions restrict apprentices. Why should an experienced workman with a family be thrown out of employment simply because the employer can fill his place with an apprentice at less wages?

If this policy is not checked how long will be the standard of wages? Must the employer alone be the judge?

It is said that unions restrict production. Well, what of it? Restriction is necessary. If the employer could keep moving the level of production up another notch at his will he would kill his employees in a very few years, intentionally or unintentionally, if matters not. If unions have harmfully restricted output, how does it happen we are the largest producers of any nation on earth? Have we not gone the pace? Isn't the death rate from industrial causes and from nervous diseases rising? Aren't our insane asylums overflowing? How much faster can we go and live?

It is said that unions support "walking delegates." The salesmen of labor compare favorably with the salesmen of commerce—the employers' "walking delegates." The principle is the same.

Attention is here drawn to the fact that employers have other walking delegates whose purpose is distinctly warlike and destructive of industrial peace. Their Parrys, Posts and Van Leves travel from one end of the country to the other preaching a misrepresentation of class hate, a wonderful contribution to the cause of industrial peace. If a labor measure is introduced in Congress, Mr. Blank, president of the National Association of Manufacturing Trouble, will write all the employers and tell them what grave peril they are in unless they immediately join his association and pay their dues. No labor leader can hope to equal these communications in invective and eloquent appeal for the sines of war.

Their "Information Bureaus" advise them that they are on the inside at union meetings where conspiracies against their business are being hatched, and that in order to preserve their business against these secret attacks they can keep them posted with bogus information at so much per.

Their strike breaking agencies are ready at all times to liberate them



Scene from "Girl of the Streets," at Empire Theatre

from the throes of unionism by furnishing them sewer scum strike breakers at so much per head. In the late teamsters' strike in Boston the master teamsters spent barrels of money in importing men through a strike breaking agency, and are now being sued by the agency for a large sum. Moral: "Those who dance must pay the fiddler." In this strike, after many weeks' strife and the expenditure of much treasure and some human life, the union scale is conceded, also the right to wear the union button.

Their detective agencies stand ready to send men into unions to win positions of influence, to plan and execute lawless acts involving the destruction of life and property, in an attempt to fasten guilt upon a member or members and to destroy a union or unions.

The history of the Haywood case, just tried at Boise, Idaho, is replete with instances of this kind of detective work performed at the instance and under the pay of mine owners.

All of these groups of mischief-making "walking delegates" of capital contribute their share of discord to the industrial strife of the present day, and are a menace to the future relations between employer and employee, so long as the employer will shut his eyes to the underlying causes of labor's unrest, and by seeking foreign allies to overcome the effects make himself a neasy prey to the vultures.

In spite of these vultures and their mistaken support, the union movement goes ahead uncrushed and uncrushable, growing stronger year by year, having a record of achievement both proud and honorable.

No labor union ever said an employer could not join an association of employers, nor cause an organization of employers to be driven out of town, or to be killed. Employers have done this in many instances.

No labor union ever advertised to sell commercial secrets of employers.

No labor union ever conspired to murder their comrades or associates for the purpose of fixing the guilt on employers. Read the record of the Mine Owners' Association in the Haywood case referred to above.

United we are, and aggressive at times we must be, but we are proud of our unsullied banner.

We are proud to know that in spite of our rabid enemies the number of employers whom we can respect and who respect us is steadily growing.

With all these we can settle our grievances in a rational manner and at less expense than with those who choose to fight over some abstract Parryism.

"War is hell." War is also costly, and this item of cost we expect will eventually eliminate the false issues and eventually emancipate the remaining employers from the thrall of the "walking delegates" of capital.—James Symonds, in Shoe Workers' Journal.

UNIONS DEFEAT TYPOTHETA.

Justice McCall, in the New York Supreme Court, denied the application of C. Lawrence Fell, president of the United Typotheta of America, for the continuance of an ex parte injunction restraining the International Printing Pressmen and Assistants' Union of North America, and other allied printers, unions, from refusing to carry out an agreement made last January with the Typotheta.

Justice McCall said he had serious doubts as to the binding force of the contract.



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