

UNION LABEL TRADES DEPARTMENT

Triumphant and Peaceful Progress of Union Label Now Systematized for Greater Results in the Nation

The following letter was read at the meeting of the Portland Central Labor Council. It is self-explanatory.

To the Officers and Delegates of the Central Labor Union, greeting: The last convention of the Union Label Trades Department, held in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, just preceding the convention of the American Federation of Labor, discussed, among various other subjects, the advisability and necessity of further extending and increasing the sale of union-labeled products.

This subject was one that received considerable attention at the hands of the delegates to that convention, they believing that this important work should be carried on effectively and with a greater persistence in the future than has obtained for several years past.

It was the unanimous opinion of the delegates that the effective work in the promotion of the sale of union-labeled products must be brought about to a large degree, by and through the delegates to the various central bodies.

It was realized to some extent, at least, that oftentimes the question of the furthering of the sale of union-labeled products had not received the attention that this important subject is entitled to because of the fact of so many other matters taking up the attention of the delegates.

It was the undivided opinion of the delegates to the last convention of the Union Label Trades Department that results that would be both beneficial and lasting to the organizations affiliated with this department that issue labels, store cards and buttons, would be best conserved by the organizing of local departments in connection with various central labor unions, where three or more labor organizations are affiliated, and where these local departments have the endorsement of the central labor union.

In the organization of these local departments no organization shall be entitled to be represented therein unless they are first represented in the central labor union, where such local departments may exist, and it is understood that the organization of these local departments is also understood that the advisability of forming these local departments in connection with the central bodies shall rest entirely upon the judgment of those interested. If a central labor union believes that the best interests can be served by continuing their present system of the label committee, then it is within their province to do so, but on the other hand if it is believed that better results can be accomplished through these departments, then it is urged that steps be taken immediately to organize these local label departments wherever possible.

Wherever these local label departments are organized the only cost, so far as the Union Label Trades Department is concerned, will be the cost of the certificate of affiliation, the amount of which is \$1, which covers the expense of printing, engraving and mailing. The other requirements of local departments are that they submit to the office of this department a report at least quarterly as to the work accomplished, the offering of suggestions as to the work to be performed in their particular locality in the interests of any particular label, store card or button, and any such information as they may deem of interest.

By instruction of the last convention data is to be procured relative to various commodities now bearing the union label and such others that may bear the union label in the future, and where it can be obtained. We often find that when merchants are asked for goods of a specific character bearing the union label that not only are they unable to supply the kind of goods desired, but also lack the knowledge as to where these particular kind of goods can be obtained, and it can be truthfully said that in many instances a number of our members and friends are unable to supply the information, and hence it becomes almost an impossibility to obtain the union label commodities that they desire.

This department is now collecting just such information as this, and after it has been obtained it is the purpose to have this data printed and supplied to the officers and members of the various local departments and local label committees, so that they may be able at all times to be in possession of the data and ready to supply information to those who are friendly to our movement.

It is the intention to keep this data as nearly perfect as it is possible to do, and to distribute it not only in the direction above mentioned, but to liberally distribute it to the officers and members of the Farmers' International Union, the American Society of Equity and the Women's Union League and Trades Union Auxiliary.

In the formation of these local departments the great advantage that can be gained by all in

for itself and invites others to buy their stone here. Build the courthouse with stone from Indiana and you will knock Oregon stone and those in the market for this stone will hesitate and with fairness argue that if Oregon stone is not good enough for Oregon people, how can the people of Oregon expect others to buy this material. In this, those who let the contract, are unconscious knockers; they fail to realize the importance of the transaction and its reflections.

How proud these unconscious knockers will be to show the new courthouse to visitors and tell them that Indiana furnished the stone, because Oregon stone wasn't good enough. And that the people of Multnomah county paid for the new courthouse, but were not consulted. If they had been there would be another story to write and one that would give greater pleasure.

CONSERVATION

OF NATURAL RESOURCES OF THE NATION

Now that the trusts, syndicates, railroads and speculators have grabbed, stolen and gobbled up the natural resources of the nation, the time has come when the people must take action. The efforts in this direction are catalogued by the Free Library of Portland and the student of movements for the betterment of the people can find much for reflection in the following reading:

American Society of Mechanical Engineers—Transactions, 1908, v. 30, p. 15-16, Conservation of the Waters and Woods by W. J. McGee, p. 16-19, Conservation of the Nation's Fuel Supply, by W. F. McGee, p. 20-23, Conservation of Steam Flow, Water Power and Navigation, by G. F. Swain, p. 577-587, Conservation Idea as Applied to the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, by M. L. Holman.

Conference of Proceedings of Governors, Washington, D. C., May 13-15, 1908; ed under the direction of Newton C. Blanchard and others; by W. J. McGee, 1909.

National Conservation Commission—Report of the National Conservation Commission and Chronological History of the Conservation Movement, 1909, Bul. 4.

Oregon Conservation Commission—Report to the Governor, November, 1908.

Oregon's Heritage of Natural Resources; Shall They Be Conserved for the People? by J. N. Teal, 1909.

What Conservation Means to the Nation's Progress and Prosperity, by D. A. Willey. (See Putnam's for December, 1909, v. 7, p. 259-270.)

WEALTH IN AGRICULTURE.

According to the thirteenth annual report of the Secretary of Agriculture the value of the farm products of the United States for this year is \$5,750,000,000 and it represents a gain of \$869,000,000 over the year preceding.

Scientific farming, coupled with the rapid increase in the acreage of cultivated land and the breaking up of the old ranges and huge wheat farms into smaller holdings have served during the past 11 years to just about double the annual value of farm products, the increase being from \$4,171,000,000 to the present figure. The total value for these 11 years reaches the enormous sum of \$70,000,000,000.

In looking through the details of this report, it is shown that the corn crop takes the lead in value, with a total of \$1,720,000,000; and this, the secretary tells us, nearly equals the value of the clothing and personal adornments of the 76,000,000 people enumerated by the census of 1900. Equal in value to the gold and silver coin and bullion of the United States, "It has grown up from the soil and out of the air in 120 days—\$15,000,000 a day for one crop!" Second in value is the cotton crop, the lint and seed of which are worth about \$500,000,000 to the farmer. Then follows wheat, whose crop this year is worth about \$725,000,000 at the farm. The hay crop represents \$655,000,000; oats, \$499,000,000; potatoes, \$212,000,000, and tobacco nearly \$100,000,000.

Stanfield is trying to be a railroad center. It has built the first half of a mile of an electric road to connect it with the North Bank on the other side of the Columbia river. The O. R. & N. gives it as good service as it does any other community of its size, but the promoters of the town know that land values are created by increased transportation facilities.

Governor Coma of Alabama is one of the largest employers of child labor in the United States, and an ardent enemy of organized labor. That he is a rabid prohibitionist has nothing to do with his attitude on these questions, but probably he is politically dead since the defeat of his ironclad prohibition amendment.

The employment agents are operating in such a manner in Portland as to justly excite the condemnation of the entire state; but they seem to have powerful friends when most needed. The state should establish a dozen free employment agents in leading cities and forbid an employment agent operating for a charge.

In anticipation of free delivery of mail Klamath Falls is to number streets and put up signs. The owners of land in Klamath will find it a great advertising fact to offer free delivery of mail and named and numbered streets to intending investors.

DISCOMFORTS IN EUROPE

POOR RAILWAY ACCOMMODATIONS AND TIPPING MAKE TRAVELER'S LIFE MISERABLE

(Copyright, 1909, by R. S. Riddale, for Samuel Gompers.)

By Samuel Gompers.

(Continued from last week.)

One outcome of running a hotel on the tipping system developed to the point of bam-boozling or worrying the guests out of petty extras at every turn is that every year there is an emigration of European travelers to America to get places in hotels taken hold of by European managers who, depending upon their servants to work the system at its worst for the guests, can make a business pay both manager and landlord where an American manager paying wages would fail. While shopkeepers have been forced to adopt the one-price system, the drift in the hotel business has been always from a permanent agency for the tourist to a temporary one for the traveler. Travel is certainly in some sort of partnership with the hotels for which they sell coupon tickets. Those on the inside of hotel business in Europe know that these hotels are patronized largely by Americans, spendthrifts on their trip, staying a few days at a time and usually speaking English only, and therefore disinclined to hunt up stopping places for themselves. Hence, at such hotels there is a harvest for everybody, a situation which eventually leads to bad food, bad cooking, bad service, and a hold-up at every turn of the guest.

In going over the possible methods in a change for the better in this sorry business, my waiter friend said that first of all he believed that a big trade union must be formed of hotel help. Tipping must give way to fair wages. The public could give its share of assistance. He recommended that guests at either hotels or restaurants should follow these rules, notes of which were taken on the spot: "Patronize whenever possible the hotel and eating houses where tips are forbidden; there are such places in England and on the continent. Refuse importunities for tips either by words or hanging around; where there has been no service. Where, for your own comfort, you feel constrained to tip give the bare minimum. Whenever possible, do not tip at all." He added, and I felt that he had me also in mind, "Some easy-natured people believe they tip the nearest itching palm to them because of their sympathy with the poor. Reflection should teach them that there can sometimes be real charity without demonstration. Church people, might with this purpose give through their own congregational agencies. In London, the American traveler wishing to do the best with his withheld tip-appropriations, might send it to the Westminster Children's Aid Society; in Rome, to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals; in Berlin, to the semi-public lodging houses. But of course, if the tipper gives not from motives of good-heartedness, but mere vanity, all advice is thrown away on him. The hotel keeper will continue growing rich on him and despising him. Other folks in Europe may have good reason to tell him, what a plain-spoken Swiss citizen told me: 'You Americans, with your dirty dollars, are ruining my country.'"

It is true that through organization the workers may be a factor in reforming the worst abuse in the European business of catering to the traveler as he eats and sleeps. I do not see how any human agency is ever going to improve this condition as he actually travels. The European railway system must certainly be reformed by every American as in almost every respect an example of how not to do it, except that it gets you somehow to your destination. One of the very least of its drawbacks is the general birthery of guards or conductors above mentioned. The system started wrong, has gone on keeping wrong.

The ordinary continental European passenger car reminds Americans of one of Barnum's menagerie vans and is half dozen compartments are like dog kennels, the first and second-class slightly varied by differences in upholstery and the third usually having only bare boards. To get in or out of a car, except in the larger stations, is a steep, slippery climb. The bad air in a compartment, at night especially, when the Europeans close all the windows tight, gives an American an experience somewhat like being confined in summer in a freight boxcar in the Chicago stockyards. Barely enough cars are made up in a train at a main station to carry away the travelers who have bought tickets; another car or two often being added at the last moment to accommodate the crowd clamoring for places. At the big stations the porters, knowing all the tricks, take care of their patrons by pushing brutally ahead and reserving seats by putting hand-baggage on them. The American, puzzled by divisions of the train into classes and the cars into compartments for smokers, non-smokers and women alone, usually gets left, to take one of the poorest places or to stand. Repeatedly, in Germany, Austria, Italy and France, I looked on in amazement at a trainload of excited passengers filling up from the crowds of the station platform and asked myself if I was in a civilized country. After the start, wrangling over seats and rack room for hand-baggage was a common occurrence. All but hand baggage costing extra, the

size of the ordinary bag in Europe is double that carried in America, and the sight of two large racks in a compartment charged up to the roof with valises, suit cases, band boxes, rugs and parcels, puts the American tourist in a state of fear lest things fall and crash on his head. It was to be noticed that military officers had valises that were really trunks, carried into the compartments and, against the law, placed on the floor between the two benches. At night there is but one dim light to a compartment so reading ordinarily is not possible. No drinking water is to be had. The baggage check is unknown in any country in which I traveled in Europe. No announcement is made of the station the train is approaching. Our party paid \$12 for extra baggage from Paris to Amsterdam, though we had not much baggage. The stings of the various railroad mosquitoes were so numerous that throughout our long journeys we were smarting from their bites, listening to the tales of other travelers as they described their bites, new and old.

The much-talked-of low fares of European railroads apply to slow third-class travel without baggage and without the petty charges and tips squeezed out of the passengers. First-class tickets are just about double our express rates, day coach. Fast trains of any kind are infrequent.

One of the nuisances of European travel is customs examinations. I have passed three in one day. The traveler is halted on leaving the station in the cities of some countries and questioned about the contents of his hand baggage as the European city itself in many instances has its own tax on incoming goods from any other city in the same country. Customs officers have at midnight suddenly entered the sleeping compartments of the passengers, including my own on the train in which I was traveling, not stopping to knock even at the ladies' rooms. The European sleeping car, by the way, has its berths run crosswise and not lengthwise and has board partitions between the compartments. The dancing of the train on the tracks, like that of a springless wagon on cobblestones, of itself would prevent sleep, and when to this the total lack of ventilation is added, the night becomes one of horror. On my final trip to Italy my companion and myself suddenly entered the sleeping compartments of the passengers, including my own on the train in which I was traveling, not stopping to knock even at the ladies' rooms. The European sleeping car, by the way, has its berths run crosswise and not lengthwise and has board partitions between the compartments. The dancing of the train on the tracks, like that of a springless wagon on cobblestones, of itself would prevent sleep, and when to this the total lack of ventilation is added, the night becomes one of horror. On my final trip to Italy my companion and myself suddenly entered the sleeping compartments of the passengers, including my own on the train in which I was traveling, not stopping to knock even at the ladies' rooms.

When the topic of railroads is up, the European always has one group card to play against the American's safety. When asked for particulars, he refers to the incontestable fact that the European newspapers frequently contain dispatches describing railway accidents in America. If my readers will pardon a slight digression at this point, I may say that much of the news from America printed in the European press is a reflection of the demand existing in those circles which wish the people of the United States to be represented as crude, vulgar, ridiculous and bloodthirsty. The big railway accident is consequently presented in its horrors on every possible occasion. When the investigator of the subject really gets down to the statistics, the United States does not make so bad a showing in all particulars on this question. I take this passage from a current railroad authority: "Last year 318 of the American companies, operating 124,650 miles, killed no passengers in a train accident. That mileage is greater than the combined mileage of England, France, Germany, Austria, Hungary and Italy. The passenger mileage of these roads exceeds by a billion the enormous British passenger mileage. Their freight mileage exceeds all Europe with Japan, Argentina and Australia added." Most of the accidents in America take place on the poorer half of the railroads. It is indeed terrible to read that 10,000 deaths in a single year have occurred on the 230,000 miles of American railroads through accidents. But it is quite equanimous shocking to read that on the 23,000 miles of railways in England there were killed in ten years nearly 5,000 persons and more than 30,000 injured. In traveling on the main lines in America one is just as safe as on any European railway, while as to the decencies, as to cleanliness, freedom from annoyances, the enjoyment of conveniences, the comforts, the American train is inconceivably the superior. The great wrong, alas, the crimes committed by our railroads is not to the passengers, but to the immense numbers of employees injured, maimed and killed.

Washington, D. C., Dec. 31, 1909.

When the great 15,000 horse power electric plant is finished on the McKenzie river 35 miles east of Eugene, a score of towns will be supplied with light and power. The changes that will come about will be far-reaching throughout this section, and the population that will be attracted will make some neglected and half-cultivated farms attain the valuations that similar developments have given southern California land.

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