

# Labor Celebrates Today

## This That They Call Organization of Labor is the Universal Vital Problem of Today---Carlyle

WORKERS of Coos Bay, led by their brothers of craft organizations today making merry and celebrating the progress made during the twelve months past, toward the goal they are striving—the realization of their ideal of frankness and of the mock brotherhood which has fettered the civilization of the world and when utility is the true aristocrat of the world and when utility is a pride instead of a half-felt shame.

states and the District of Columbia, observe this day as a wide observance giving the celebration almost a "national" character. 'Tis one day when all people, rich and poor, give honor to the men and women who spend their lives and their energies in useful toil.

There are now seven craft organizations—or unions, and more than three hundred members in all. Success has been a matter of quite recent months, although there have been made during a course of fifteen or twenty years ago the realization of the workers to a realization of co-operation. The earliest efforts by the longshoremens, whose number to the time of mechanical hoisting and electrical cranes for the discharges, was far greater than today.

years ago a Central Labor Council of the North Bend longshoremen, and the longshoremen of Marshfield, failed of permanency. The longshoremen of North Bend still remain of the old organization. In 1910 a labor leader was sent to induce individual workers, and what was called the Union. This body, as its presence in its infancy, and six months later there were no locals alive among them. For about two years to resuscitate unionism on the coast, and the spring of 1913, the leader organized their local, one of the strongest in the state, and the bartenders were organized, followed by the painters and decorators. These three new unions with the longshoremen, formed the present Coos Bay Council, in the early winter of last year. Since that time local unions have become affiliated with the central council, and waiters, carpenters and plumbers, making a total of ten unions, and all affiliated into the one directing unit of the Council.

not alone in the State of Oregon—nor the world—but all over the world is the cause of Labor progressing so inconceivably rapid, bringing changes that have not been seen since the dawn of civilization and better citizenship—because it is only when it has achieved strength, become clean and free, that it represents the great class of citizens who are struggling toward gaining for all the workers—organized—of the world, better conditions of living, better homes, better schools, more cheerful firesides, less illiteracy, less insanity, less homelessness. There have been born amid birth pangs of animosity, misunderstanding, and trade unionism has suffered from the reform inaugurated by the faith and teachings of Nazareth, but some day organized labor will be able to say men will use the same effort in trying to undo the movement as they now use in trying to misrepresent it. Some day the cry of narrow-minded men will be, and organized labor will come into its own at a time when the world will gladly accept the conditions through sane and conservative effort among the employers of the country.

labor movement began shortly before the disaster of May 3, 1886, when a small bomb at Haymarket Square, shattered the hopes of a half million workers. It clouded the issue toward which one of the greatest spread social and industrial agitations of the world had been leading. That was neither the beginning nor the end. In fact, the beginning, as far as we have any knowledge, was with Moses, the great leader of the people in the fatherhood of God and the unity of the great emancipator, who, 1500 years before the birth of Christ, led the children of Israel from the oppression of the Egyptian Pharaoh, under conditions so unbearable that the people rebelled from conditions so unbearable that they fled into a new country.

the "serving men" of the London cord-wainers in making a permanent fraternity" in reference to the workers of the trade, and nine years later the

saddlers' "serving men" announced they had a fraternity "time-out-of-mind," though the masters declared it was not more than thirteen years old, and that its object was to raise wages. In 1415 a law was passed forbidding the "serving-men and journeymen" in London to dwell apart from their masters, "as they hold assemblies and have formed a kind of association." The masters and the nobility of the nation had always looked upon the toilers as a sort of chattel property belonging to them, and, of course, held sufficient influence with the lawmakers to control legislation in their favor. On the other hand the workers had for so many centuries accepted these conditions and toiled on—14, 15 and even 18 hours a day—caring for little else than to serve their masters, that the next fifty years saw only isolated attempts at separate associations of workers.

### THE CRY OF TOIL

We have fed you all for a thousand years,  
And you hail us still unfed;  
Though there's never a dollar of your wealth,  
But marks the workers dead.  
We have yielded our best to give you rest,  
And you lie on a crimson wool,  
For if blood be the price of all your wealth,  
Good God, we ha' paid it in full!  
There's never a mine blown skyward now  
But we're buried alive for you;  
There's never a wreck drifting shoreward now  
But we are its ghastly crew.  
Go, reckon our dead by the forges red  
And the factories where we spin—  
If blood be the price of your cursed wealth,  
Good God, we ha' paid it in!  
For that was our doom, you know,  
From the day when you chained us in your fields  
To the strike of a week ago.  
You ha' eaten our lives and our babies and wives,  
And we're told it's your legal share;  
But if blood be the price of your lawful wealth,  
Good God, we ha' bought it fair!  
—Rudyard Kipling.

About the beginning of the next century, however, the masters were aroused to find many "friendly societies" and other organizations of journeymen being formed. Moreover, the trouble was not confined to London, and in 1538 we find the Bishop of Ely reporting to Cromwell that "twenty-one journeymen shoemakers have assembled on a hill without the town and sent three of their number to summon all the master shoemakers to meet them in order to insist upon an advance in wages, threatening that 'there shall be none come into town to serve for that wages within a twelve month and a day, but we will have an harme or legge of hym except they woll take an othe as we have doon.'

Prior to 1700 no continuous association of wage earners existed for maintaining or improving the conditions of employment. The journeymen tailors formed what might be classed the first possible forerunner of the trades union, by organizing a trade society about 1710 to 1720. Between that time and the close of the century a number of other societies of tradesmen were instituted, only to be exterminated by the passage of the famous "General Combination Act" in 1799, which forbade combinations of wage earners in the United Kingdom.

Through the efforts of Francis Place, a member of the common Council, a broad-minded man, who sympathized extended to the toiling masses, though he himself was a man of some wealth, this unjust Act was repealed in the early part of the nineteenth century and organizations of labor began once more to thrive throughout the Kingdom. The traditional history of the trades union movement represents the period prior to 1810 as one of unmitigated persecution and continuous repression. Such unions as claimed an existence before that date possessed a romantic legend of its early days. The midnight meeting of patriots in the corner of the field, the buried box of records, the secret oath, the long terms of imprisonment of the leaders, formed the basis of many an interesting anecdote told later as the organizations gained strength throughout the land.

Even as late 1834 six Dorchester labor leaders were convicted for the mere act of administering an oath and sentenced to seven years' imprisonment, which action stirred the toilers to still greater demands for justice and the right to associate themselves together for protection. Early in 1829 the fact became evident that solidarity among the whole body of wage earners was essential against the combination of employers, and, following a disastrous six-months strike at Hyde, near Manchester, the Spinners' Societies of England, Scotland and Ireland were invited to send delegates to a conference to be held at Ramsey, in the Isle of Man, in the month of December, 1829. As a result of this conference a "Grand General Union of the United Kingdom" was established. During a decade the successful of the larger labor body fluctuated until in 1838 the "Grand Consolidated Trade Union," the real forerunner of trades unionism, was formed. Today the British Trades Union Congress, organized in 1868, and which correspondent to the American Federation of Labor in America, is the national head or Federation of all the unions of the British Isles. The British Trades Union League is the federation of the women's unions and has affiliated with it about 350,000 women trades unionists.

The birth of trades unionism in America occurred in the year 1803 when we find the New York Society of Journeymen Shipwrights was incorporated April 3. The House Carpenters of New York City soon followed, as did also a society of Journeymen Tailors, both of which were organized and incorporated in the year 1806. The aims of these unions at this early date were the shortening of the daily labor time and an increase in wages.

Workingmen in other trades soon began to realize the benefits of organization and many new unions were formed, not only in New York City, but in Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore and several others of the larger cities. Then came the idea of a union of unions—the first form of federation in the United States—and in August, 1833, a "General Trades Union" was formed in New York, binding together in one federation all the local unions of the city. December 2, 1833, occurred what had been advertised in one of the daily papers of New York as a procession of the "General Trades Union," taking part in which were the following local unions: Typographical Union, Journeymen House Carpenters, Book Binders, Leather Dressers, Coopers, Carvers and Golders, Bakers, Cabinet Makers, Cordwainers, Tailors, Silk Hatters, Stone Cutters, Tin Plate and Sheet Iron Workers, Type Founders, Hat Finishers, Willow Basket Makers, Chair Makers and Gilders, Sail Makers and Block and Pump Makers. The parade was an imposing one. An address was delivered by Ely Moore, who, during Jackson's administration, became the first Labor Representative in Congress.

From about 1850 to the close of the Civil War was a period of autonomous trade organizations on a National basis while little energy was spent devising or perfecting federations of any kind. The International Typographical Union was organized in 1850, the National Trade Association of Hat Finishers in 1854, the Iron Molders' Union of North America in 1859, the Machinists, Blacksmiths, Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and scores of others from 1860 to 1866. Trades unions in 1873, like everything else that depended upon industrial activity for support, went to the wall in the great financial panic of that year, and wages fell rapidly, and for several years the success of organization was despaired of, but in 1878 there began a healthy growth of local unions and even National organizations. In 1881 a call was sent out inviting delegates to a convention at Pittsburgh. This convention was the foundation of the American Federation of Labor.

The history of labor has been a long and bitter one, and not until the last decade has there been evidence that it would not continue to remain indefinitely the problem of civilization. Now, however, the silver lining has begun to peep forth from behind the dark clouds

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