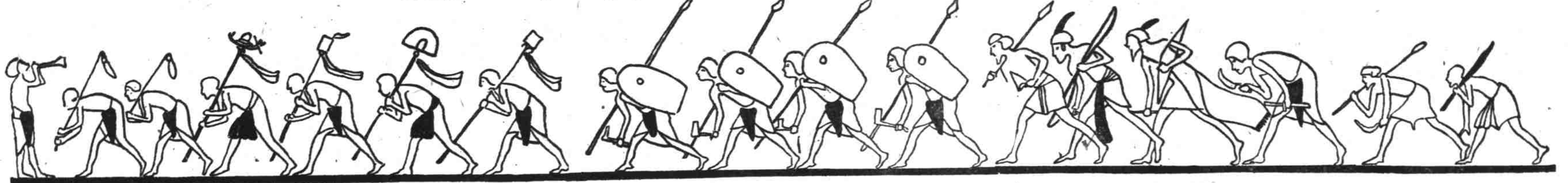


A Bugler Mustering a Company of Soldiers at Mahu's Command—From the Wall of His Tomb.



How Egypt's Police Chief Settled The Labor Troubles 3,000 Years Ago

The Newly Discovered Tomb of Mahu, Who Handled the First Recorded Strike, Refused to Call Out the Militia, Arbitrated with the Pharaoh, and Proudly Had His Records Carved in Pictures in His Burial Chamber

THE labor troubles that we have with us so constantly nowadays are nothing new in the history of mankind. Egypt was afflicted with them thirty centuries ago in much the same way that we are to-day.

The ancient Egyptians seem to have had their labor unions, their strikes, their wage scales, their lockouts and many other exact counterparts of the conflict between capital and labor as we now know it. In fact, it is quite possible that among the mummified bodies which are slumbering away eternally along the banks of the Nile are those of the first walking delegates and the first "scabs" the world ever knew as well as those of the first employers to make a determined fight for the "open shop." And some day the patient archaeologists may discover among the inscriptions of an old tomb or temple a copy of the first union card issued by some workman's local of 3,000 years ago to some toiler on the pyramids or some laborer in Pharaoh's vast wheat fields.

This newest proof that Solomon was everlastingly right when he declared that "there is nothing new under the sun" is the result of recent excavations at El Amarna, which are now described by the Egypt Exploration Fund in six great volumes.

Digging in the ruins of this long dead city reveal not only that Egypt had labor troubles much like our own, but that at one time they culminated in what was undoubtedly the most remarkable strike in the history of the workingman's struggle for higher wages, shorter hours and better living conditions.

This strike resulted in an overwhelming victory for labor. But, curiously enough, this triumph was not due to the intelligence of the labor leaders or the determination of the men they led, great as they were. Labor in Egypt could not have escaped from the abominable slavery in which it was held had it not been for the courageous support given its cause by the nation's Chief of Police, an official appointment from Pharaoh himself.

Mahu was the name of this official and some day union labor will erect a statue to his memory. He was the first public man in history to champion the cause of labor against capital. And he championed it in a vigorous, two-fisted way that would win him the solid labor vote if he could return to earth and run for office in the United States today.

So proud was Mahu of what he did for labor's cause that he had the walls of his tomb inscribed with a complete record of all that took place.

When the workmen of Egypt laid down their tools and went on strike in an effort to obtain better working and living conditions the wealthy employers expected Mahu to put a speedy end to the rioting of the clamorous mobs that raged along the Nile. If his regular force was not sufficient to send the workers back to their jobs with a few broken heads, they relied on his calling out the police reserves and the militia.

But to their surprise Mahu did nothing of the kind. He would not interfere with the violent forms of picketing which these ancient union forces employed to win their non-union fellows to their side. He positively refused to allow an arrow to be fired or a spear raised against the angry strikers—not even when they actually had the boldness to menace Pharaoh's palace.

And Mahu did even more than this. When he saw the situation deadlocked with no sign of capital yielding he went straight to Pharaoh and pleaded the cause of labor as it had seldom, if ever, been pleaded before. Pharaoh was so impressed with the logic and eloquence displayed by the chief that he promptly granted all the reforms which the masses of the people were demanding.

Just why it was that Mahu espoused labor's cause so warmly, students of Egyptian history do not yet know. Perhaps it was because he had been a workingman

himself before he joined the police force and could not forget the hard conditions under which he had to live. At any rate, he could have hardly proved himself a better friend of labor if he had held a dozen union cards.

Was there ever another strike like this, either before or since? Certainly it has no parallel in modern times. A man in Mahu's position was one whom the common people of that day might well have counted among their bitterest enemies. For him to plead the cause of labor as he did was as surprising as it would be for John D. Rockefeller to join hands with Samuel Gompers in securing an eight-hour day and a closed shop in every industry.

The conditions in Egypt which led up to this amazing strike were so terrible that modern minds can hardly comprehend them. For generations the priests and the Pharaohs had kept the masses in abject slavery. The serfs of Russia, downtrodden as they were, were infinitely better off than the unhappy people of ancient Egypt. They could not call their souls their own, and not only that—they were not even permitted to know that they had souls.

All the wonderful learning of the time was jealously guarded by the priests for the sole profit and edification of the nobility and moneyed classes. The great masses of the people were supposed to exist solely for the purpose of performing the most arduous labor, fighting whenever a war was declared, and starving and suffering in other ways at all times.

It was impossible for such conditions to last forever. They soon became so intolerable that there began to spring up throughout Egypt men who had the wisdom to foresee the end toward which economic conditions were inevitably tending and who had the courage to proclaim to the people what they foresaw. These men, who stirred the people by what they foretold at the risk of their lives, corresponded to the prophets of Palestine. In our own day they would be called radicals or progressives by their friends and dangerous agitators by their enemies.

One of the most notable of these prophets was Apouli, who lived some fifteen centuries before the Christian era. He served the Egyptian people in much the same way that Jeremiah served the Jews in the time of their oppression of the poor and forgetfulness of God.

An old papyrus containing some of his prophecies has been unearthed from the sands of Egypt, and reading it one cannot wonder that the people were aroused by what he had to say. It is filled with the direst forebodings of evil days to come. Apouli predicted that society would be one day overturned, that the nation would be

brought to the point of despair, that even family ties would be in danger.

Here is a translation of one of his prophecies recently made by learned Egyptologists:

"The fields will be no longer cultivated. Each man will say: 'What is the use of it?'"



Mahu, the Chief of Police, Receiving the Labor Delegation—Another of the Incidents Portrayed in His Tomb. Above Is a Portrait of the Ancient Chief of Police That Decorated the Wall Above His Sarcophagus

Do we not know what is going to happen to our land?

"People of lowly rank will become the possessors of all the valuables, so that he who lacked the wherewithal to procure himself a pair of sandals will be the owner of granaries full of grain."

"Terrible epidemics will break out, which will attack all classes alike. The plague will lay hold. There will be bloodshed everywhere."

"The rich will lament, the poor will rejoice, and all the cities will say: 'Let us drive out the powerful from among us.' The expulsion will not take place without resistance, and civil war will desolate."

This inspired man saw much more of the fate of the wealthy, predicting the time when the poor would "hang gold, lapis-lazuli, carnelian, malachite round the necks of their own wives, while princesses will be thrown into the streets and nobly born women will exclaim: 'If only we had something to eat!'"

And after all the horrors the prophet pro-



The Building of the Pyramids—the Painting by Richter. In the Erection of These Colossal Structures Vast Hordes of Men Were Used and Labor Troubles Were Frequent. The Biblical Incident of Moses and the Egyptian Taskmaster Was in Reality a Strike Against Tyranny.

And everything came true just as Apouli had foretold. In the ruins of El Amarna there have been found records of the great uprising of the labor classes which was surprisingly turned into a complete victory through the aid of Mahu, the Egyptian chief of police. The great "Shepherd of all men who has no evil in his heart" was the pacifist Pharaoh, Iknaton, under whom Mahu served and who inaugurated the reforms which the latter urged with such eloquence and force. It was he who set aside the ancient gods with all the abuses perpetrated in their name and established

far the most interesting thing laid bare in the famous ruin mound of El Amarna. Its pictorial records give a fascinating glimpse of the stirring life the sturdy old chief led and his many notable achievements.

One picture shows Mahu receiving delegations of striking workmen who are handing him copies of their demands. Another shows him conferring with strike breakers who by continuing to work are "endangering their fellows' brave fight for freedom."

In still another picture we see Mahu with the warriors of his force ranged behind him. He is lifting his hands in salutation and saying: "Thou makest great by thy troops; thou, the ruler of Aten, thou shalt live forever."

In his interest in labor's cause Mahu never forgot his loyalty to Egypt. While willing to encourage the native Egyptians in striking for their rights, he was most stern in repressing any efforts on the part of aliens to stir up revolution.

One of the most remarkable pictures in his burial place shows him bringing three handcuffed foreigners before the king. Pharaoh praises him for his vigilance, exclaiming: "As Aten (the Sun) endureth! As the Ruler endureth!"

Some scholars maintain that Mahu was not such an unselfish champion of labor, but was forced into that position by circumstances entirely beyond his control. He knew perfectly well, they say, that the soldiers under him, being serfs themselves, would not attack their own people.

There seems, however, much stronger evidence to show that Mahu was a man far enough ahead of his times to sympathize thoroughly with the aspirations of the working classes for better living conditions.

Iknaton, the Pharaoh whom Mahu served, was one of the wisest and most beneficent rulers Egypt ever had. And it is certain that he was greatly aided in putting his reforms into effect by having had for chief of police in his capital city a man so courageous, intelligent and humane as Mahu.



Another Scene from the Strike, Showing Protesting Laborers, Whom Mahu Refused to Disperse by Means of His Soldiers, Outside the Palace Walls.

claims the coming of a ruler who "is the shepherd of all men, who has no evil in his heart, and when his flock goes astray spends the day in seeking it."

the worship of the Sun Disk as the reflection of the glory of the One God. The tomb of Mahu, the best chief of police Egypt's capital city ever had, is by