

PROBLEMS FACING STRICKEN WORLD

Shall Chaos or Reconstruction in Europe Follow the Great World War?

PRIMARY CAUSE OF UNREST

With the Passing of "Small Business" Went the Feeling of Community Interest, Which Meant So Much.

Article VIII.

By FRANK CONERFORD.

Not many years ago something happened which changed the relations between employer and employee. That happening has had a marked effect upon industrial discontent. Something was lost out of the relation between the owner and the men who worked for him. The human element, the personal touch, between the boss and the workers stopped. With its passing unrest grew with great vigor. It was a new kind of unrest, too. It was a lasting, determined, resolute discontent. This came to pass in the day that small business entered the twilight.

In the day of the small plant, business was owned and run by a man, or a number of men, doing business as a partnership. These men lived in the community in which their men lived. They worked with their men. In the front of the plant was the office of the Boss. He was on the job. He wasn't a hired boss, either—he was the real boss—the owner. The sign under which the business was run bore his name. He identified him with the business. The Boss had his home in the city in which the plant was located. His children went to the public school, frequently to the same school to which the children of his workmen went. If he was a church-going man—and generally he was—he and his family went to religious services on Sunday to the same church that many of his men and their families attended. The men who worked for him knew him, at least to the extent of recognizing him when they saw him. He knew many of them, and recognized them with a nod or "Good morning," when he saw them on the street. Few people realized how much this meant to harmonious relations in the industrial world. When working men had a grievance, or thought they had, they took it directly to the Boss. He talked it over with them. He was reasonable and fair. If the complaint was well founded it was given consideration, a remedy was found. The working man was satisfied. He had had his say. He was treated as a human being by a human being. He felt he was part of the business—so did the Boss.

Regulated by Public Opinion.

In the day of small business, the owner of a factory or plant who paid his men an unliving wage was a marked man in the community. Public opinion chastised him for his selfishness and inhumanity. The people said he was a swine, a slave driver, and held him in contempt. They contrasted his good clothes, the style of his family and his fine mansion, with the rags his working men wore, the hovels in which they lived. He was pointed out, hated, despised. The thought of the community was that it would be better for him and his to give up some of their excess luxury and give the men living wages. The disgrace fell not only upon his head, but it followed his wife and children. When they went to church they were looked upon as hypocrites, for all the people knew that every day in the week he was insulting the Christ he pretended to worship on the Sabbath. Few men are so thick-skinned as not to feel the lash of public opinion. It isn't easy to bear the hate of one's neighbors. It is natural for men to want the good opinion of their fellows. In the day of small business, public opinion held a lash over the inhuman and greedy, kept hirers of men human, but in the progress of the world the small employer was doomed to go.

The partnership passed off the stage, and with it the personal touch between employer and employees. The corporation, a soulless body, was born of the law. It absorbed small plants and small businesses. It collected under a single roof thousands of men. The corporation, the combination, the trust, had come. This new order of doing business on a large scale was efficient—economical. It eliminated waste and duplication. It was a great, smooth-running machine. It represented progress in doing the world's work.

The corporation name did not disclose the owner of Big Business. It was an impersonal, inhuman thing. Frequently the stockholders did not live in the cities where the plants were located. The real owners were unknown to employees and public. Many of the large shareholders had never seen the plant. The men who worked in the plants had never seen the men for whom they worked. The man actually running the business was only an employee. He was paid a large salary and it was made plain to him when he was hired that his salary and his job depended on his ability to make profits. The corporation was organized for millions of dollars. The manager was expected to make dividends. The larger the dividend checks, the higher he was rated. His issue of job and salary

were measured by this definition of success. To make profits it is necessary to keep down the cost of production. The principal item in the cost of production is the labor charge, the wages of the men. The employer manager set himself to his task. One object, one thought, was always before him—keep down wages. He drilled this idea into his staff, his superintendents, his foremen. The first commandment of Big Business to him was "make dividends or quit."

Evil in Over-Capitalization.

Frequently these large industrial corporations were greatly overcapitalized. A corporation representing an actual investment of \$100,000,000 was organized for \$500,000,000. It didn't take a financier to see that \$400,000,000 of its capitalization was wind, water, fake—a lie. The law that gave the corporation a right to exist forgot to keep it under control. The stock was sold, shares representing fiction as well as those representing value. The Captain of Industry spoke of the \$400,000,000 of overcapitalization as a "melon." The law should have written it down larceny. The selling of this stock was nothing more or less than obtaining money under false pretenses. When a working man obtained bread under false pretenses he was sent to jail. When honest men cried out against this grand larceny they were called muckrakers, agitators, and charged with provoking unrest, disturbing business. If this did not silence them, paid publicity told the world that the stock was held by widows and orphans; that the attacks upon it were efforts to rob them.

The state, the law, the government, had given dollars the right to organize. A corporation is a union of dollars, exactly as a labor union is an organization of men. The men organized as a matter of self-defense. They knew the individual no longer had a chance to register his complaint with the owner and that as an individual the worker was utterly meaningless in such a large scheme. When he complained he was told, "Take things as they are, stop whining; if you don't like your job, quit. There are thousands of men waiting to step into your shoes."

One of the first things the corporation did was to deny to men the right the law gave it—the right to organize. In defiance of their attitude the men did organize and forged the strike as a weapon with which to fight for their rights. The law had not kept pace with the times. It failed to furnish protection. It failed to provide a reasonable control over these powerful big combinations. The men asked for the privilege of collective bargaining. It was a simple request, a just one; its meaning is clear. The men wanted the right to appoint a committee to represent them and discuss with the men who hired them the terms of employment. The directors, generally men who never saw the plant, telegraphed the employee boss, the manager, a direction to refuse the demand for collective bargaining. There was only one reply the men could make. They made it. It was force—the strike. The last twenty-five years have been filled with strikes, which created waste and caused hate, which grew out of the refusal of Big Business to concede to men a right the law conferred on it, the right to organize.

Capitalistic Duplicity.

When the cost of living forced men to ask for an increase in wages they were often met with the answer, "We can't afford it." The men could not afford to work longer for the wages they were getting, because they were unable to make both ends meet. The pay envelope was not large enough. The men pointed to the fact that the answer given by capital was not true. To show their good faith the capitalists told the general public, "We are only making 3 per cent on our capital; men who loan money get 5 per cent." They did not tell the people they were receiving 3 per cent on \$500,000,000, while the real capital invested was only \$100,000,000. The sweat of men was being used to pay dividends on \$400,000,000. If the dividends earned were distributed over the capital actually invested, \$100,000,000, the profits would have been shown in their true light. The reasonableness of the demand of the men would have been disclosed. It was a case of crooked capitalization, lying to protect its ill-gotten gains. Big Business needs ethics—Captains of Industry need ideals.

Let me repeat, the law left the men helpless. They had only one course—Fight, Strike! Strikes cause great public inconvenience. The people smarting under hardships condemn and blame the strikers. Strikes have another effect that is even worse. They harden hate into a concrete class feeling. Strikes are responsible for the attitude of mind of many working men today who say, "I will do as little work as possible for the money I get." It is a vicious circle of hate. Co-operation is made impossible, confidence is destroyed, trust killed; the chasm between employer and employee is widened and deepened. A final consequence of these physical and psychological effects is the tendency towards riot. The strike is a training school. It develops hate. It creates lawlessness, idleness, hunger, hate, irritation, disregard of law which, when combined and concentrated, make revolutions.

The seed of unrest is planted.

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Common Duty Before All.
It should be the sublime duty of all, without thought of partisanship, to help in building up the new world, where labor shall have its just reward, and indolence alone shall suffer want.—Rt. Hon. David Lloyd George.

LIBRARY NOTES

In accordance with the plan recently adopted by the Library Board, the newest fiction, listed below, will be loaned for 2 cents a day. When the earnings of each book amount to the initial cost, that book will be placed on the "Seven Day" shelf and circulated free of charge.

- Anderson Crow, Detective—G. B. McCutcheon.
- Barbara of Baltimore—K. H. Taylor.
- Basil Everman—Elsie Singmaster.
- The Box with the Broken Seals—E. P. Oppenheim.
- Blacksheep! Blacksheep!—Meredith Nicholson.
- (Christopher Laird—Sidney McCall.
- The Cresting Wave—E. B. Morris.
- The Fortieth Door—M. H. Bradley.
- The Gold Girl—J. B. Hendryx.
- The Gorgeous Girl—Nalbro Bartley.
- The Great Accident—B. A. Ames.
- Harvest—Mrs. Humphrey Ward.
- Ladyfingers—Jackson Gregory.
- The Man with Three Names—Harold MacGrath.
- Mary Marie—E. H. Porter.
- The Matrix—M. L. Davies.
- The Mystery of the Silver Dagger—Randall Parrish.
- Outside Inn—E. M. Kelley.
- The Portygee—J. C. Lincoln.
- The Ramblin' Kid—E. W. Bowman.
- Raspberry Jam—Carolyn Wells.
- The Red Lady—K. N. Burt.
- The Second Latkeney—C. N. & A. M. Williamson.
- September—Frank Swinnerton.
- The Servant of Reality—Phyllis Botome.
- Swatty—E. P. Butler.
- The Tempering—C. N. Buck.
- Tharon of Lost Valley—V. E. Roe.
- Wanted: A Husband—S. A. Adams.
- The War Romans of the Salvation Army—Evangeline Booth & Grace L. Hill.

GRAIN CARS WERE "PLUGGED"

Unscrupulous Shippers Detected in Practice of Placing Inferior Corn on Bottom.

Heavy loading of grain, due to shortage of cars, offers a temptation to the unscrupulous shipper to "plug" his load by placing inferior grain on the bottom of the load to escape detection, according to reports received by the bureau of markets, United States department of agriculture. When the car is heavily loaded it is sometimes difficult for grain inspectors to reach the bottom of the car with the ordinary grain trier.

Federal grain supervision officers report a few recent discoveries of this practice. In one case a car of corn which the inspector had graded No. 2 mixed was found to have about 1 1/2 feet of musty, heat-damaged corn on the bottom of the car. The supervision grade was No. 6 mixed on account of musty odor, 2.2 per cent heat damage and 11 per cent total damaged.

In another instance about 1 1/2 feet of very musty wheat was found on the bottom of a car of wheat which otherwise graded No. 1, free from smut.

While this practice is by no means common, inspectors have been warned to be careful to get representative samples and to be especially particular when sampling heavily loaded cars.

MRS. MARIE MOEHRING

Mrs. Marie Moehring, nee Marquardt mother of the late John Zell, died at the home of her daughter in law 147 N. Main street Saturday, May 29th, at the age of 84 years, 7 months and 12 days. Funeral services were held Monday at the Zell home the Rev. Wm Grotefeld officiating. Interment was made in the West side cemetery.

Mrs. Moehring left to mourn her loss one son, twelve grandchildren, three great grandchildren and many relatives and friends.

Wanted Full Information.
Johnnie's father was ill in a distant city and Johnnie asked his mother who was taking care of him. She replied: "Oh, he has two nurses." After much thought, he said: "Are they mans?"



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St. John's Writings.
There is satisfactory evidence that St. John, the beloved brother of James and son of Zebedee, was the author of the Gospel, Epistles and Revelations ascribed to him. The Revelations were written during his exile on the island of Patmos; the Gospel and Epistles after his return under amnesty to Ephesus, where he was superior of the churches.

Like to Read the Ads.
American advertisements in magazines and newspapers are the favorite reading matter of the residents of the Red sea region. The people find them far more interesting than the stories and articles, and all the magazines that reach the American consulate at Aden are eagerly borrowed.

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