

meeting should be essentially an affiliation of scientific societies, but they should when convenient confine their special programs to the mornings, leaving the afternoons to the sections of the association, two or three of which should arrange for each afternoon programs of general interest to scientific men, uniting in many cases the common fields of several sciences. This convocation week meeting must be held in a large city and its work must be largely technical. But there appears to be ample room for smaller and less formal meetings in the summer, held in a university town or summer resort, where those who liked—and many teachers and others whose work in science is somewhat that of the amateur would appreciate the opportunity—could come together. Out-of-door life and scientific excursions would there be possible, pleasant and profitable.

A full discussion of the whole problem of scientific organization would be opportune and useful at the present time. This journal will be glad to give space to those who are willing to express their views on the subject, and we hope that it will be discussed from different standpoints.

*SOME RECENT PHASES OF THE LABOR PROBLEM.**

OLD PROBLEMS, BUT NEW CONDITIONS.

IN the rapid development of modern industry old problems are ever assuming new and perplexing phases, but intrinsically new ones rarely develop. Each age is quick to imagine that its difficulties exceed those which were conquered by its predecessors, and to fancy the latter as free

from the obstacles in overcoming which the courage and genius of its own leaders are subjected to their supremest tests. But this is the superficial view only. Just as the principle upon which the most complex mechanism performs its marvelously specialized functions is to be found in the crudest labor-saving devices of the earliest dawn of culture, so the most primitive industrial organization, when subjected to minute scrutiny, is sure to present traces of those elements of friction, which, one after another in different stages of progress, become the particular and absorbing problems of generations to which each in turn seems the sole serious impediment to the realization of perfect conditions.

The labor problem is no exception. It is the struggle between different factors in production over the relative shares of each, and its origin lies deep in fundamental conditions which have existed as long as men have known the wisdom of saving labor by the use of tools and of conserving productive resources by the device of private property. It will persist, in one or another of its protean forms, until by some unlooked-for alchemy man learns to satisfy all human wants without requiring from any individual more labor or abstinence than he will voluntarily undertake. In every historic era this unceasing struggle has left indelible traces upon the record of man's progress, and rarely has it yielded the place of primary importance in the minds of men to anything less compelling than religious zeal.

A PERSISTENT INQUIRY.

How shall the comfort of satisfied economic wants be divided between those who contemporaneously endure the physical discomforts of toil and those who control the other factors in production? This is the everlasting question which, in various forms, has been asked and answered, re-

* Address by the vice-president and chairman of Section I, Economics and Social Science, St. Louis meeting, December, 1903.

asked and answered again in unending repetition while humanity has struggled from the crudest forms of industrial organization, through slavery and serfdom, up to the wages system. It is asked to-day, when the share of the poorest who labors with his hands is sufficient to purchase comforts which a few centuries ago were beyond the reach of kings, and although the agencies which capital has established seek daily in the uttermost limits of the earth and among the most distant islands of the sea to bring thence and lay cheaply at the feet of labor every product that can satisfy or please, the final answer is not yet. Indeed, in this most fortunate land, where sturdy manhood has found nature in her most generous mood and industry and genius have won an abundant and increasing harvest, there is at this hour of highest prosperity a reverberating discontent which seems to some to menace much that has been gained.

The organized demand for a better answer to this persistent questioning than labor has ever yet received appeals strongly to the sympathies of those who love their fellowmen, and, as long as it is kept within reasonable bounds by a due sense of the responsibilities of strength and the rights of others, will have the aid and approval of the right-minded. But sympathy may go where sanction must be denied, and in every step of its perpetual struggle for what it rightly or wrongly conceives to be the interests of labor, and the means of attaining a higher standard of comfort and culture, the demands of organized labor must be subjected to intelligent scrutiny, and the probable consequences of granting them must be calmly and minutely examined.

CONDITIONS OF THE PROBLEM OF DISTRIBUTION.

Let us enumerate a few of the funda-

mental conditions of this struggle over distribution. Capital is the great labor-saving contrivance and the mother of all labor-saving devices. Withdraw that which exists, and, with the most grinding toil, the earth could not be made to support a tithe of its present population. Stop its further accumulation, and industrial progress would cease until presently it should give place to retrogression. Remove the incentive to abstinence, and saving and accumulation would stop, while the gradual consumption of existing capital, not offset by replacement, would inaugurate a movement toward barbarism. Reduce the incentive, and the pace of progress will be proportionately slackened. But capital is not only the handmaiden of labor; it is the accumulated product of labor. Wherever it exists, it is conclusive evidence of previous effort and abstinence. Labor, alone, can pluck the ripened fruit; it can not increase the product by cultivation, for it can not subsist during the period of growth. Labor can wade in the stream and catch a few fish with its naked hands, but it can not spread the net to gather food for a multitude unless capital provides for its immediate necessities while the fabric is being constructed. Labor can carry an armful of coal or a stick of lumber, but the locomotive which hauls its train of fifty cars, each containing one hundred thousand pounds of coal or lumber, is capital. But the instruments of husbandry, the net, the locomotive, have no direct or final utility of their own. Of themselves, they neither feed, nor clothe, nor house the body of man, nor minister to his higher needs. They will not be brought into being, unless, for the effort expended in their creation, their producers are guaranteed a fitting recompense. This recompense must be a share in the products obtained through their agency and the economic name for this share is 'interest.'

Interest, including in that term compensation for the risk assumed, is all that capital, as such, ever obtains from production; it is the least which it will accept. It is high when the supply of capital is small in proportion to the demand for it, and low when the condition is reversed. Profit is not for capital; it is the wages of the usually arduous labor of determining the direction of industrial investments or the differential reward of exceptional economic foresight or technical skill. Those who reap profits are differentiated from those who receive wages by the fact that profits are dependent upon success (possibly it is better to consider that in the case of failure there are really negative profits), while wages constitute a preferred claim, the payment of which is usually arranged for in advance.

THE LIMIT OF WAGES.

Here, then, are the conditions of the problem. Labor must have its wages at all times and under all conditions. In the long run directing efficiency must have its profits and capital must have its interest. Wages may often absorb portions of the shares of the other claimants, but unless these are eventually satisfied, the efficiency of industry will be impaired and capital will cease to accumulate, either because the owners of wealth prefer to consume it or because they hoard it rather than permit its use as capital on unsatisfactory terms. Thus is the limit of wages fixed. The efforts of organized workingmen to secure higher wages deserve approval so long as they do not threaten industrial efficiency through a reduction of interest or profits below the minimum limits respectively fixed by marginal capitalists and *entrepreneurs*. Demands that exceed these limits would, if granted, produce results which could only react unfavorably upon those who made them. The increase and

progressive diffusion of industrial intelligence tend to reduce the amounts which can be effectively demanded by those whose service to society lies in determining the character and organization of productive efforts, and the rapid accumulation of capital tends to reduce the general rate of interest. Consequently, wage-earners can reasonably anticipate an increasing share of the value annually produced, and if, under favorable conditions, they fail to receive it they may justly demand a change in the proportion which they are accorded.

WHY WORKMEN ORGANIZE.

The instinct which impels workingmen to organize rather than to deal separately with their employers is precisely the same as that which at other points of economic contact has universally led to efforts to mitigate the consequences of competition by the simple device of combination. The single workman, dealing with an employer of many workmen engaged to render similar service, is at exactly the same sort of disadvantage which confronts the small manufacturer who has to sell in a market to which a multitude of competing producers have access on equal terms. There is nothing strange in the fact that the characteristic movement of the great industrial revolution which has been in progress since the invention of the spinning jenny and the power loom has left its impress upon labor as well as upon capital. If labor had not organized, it would have been a sadly belated factor in the industry of the opening years of the twentieth century. Just as capital must continue to compete with capital, so labor will compete with labor as long as capitalistic production and the wages system endure, but on either side folly could go no further than to seek the perpetuation of the crude, cut-throat competition which seeks the immediate exter-

mination of the rival at whatever cost to the survivor. Such competition is crude in its methods; it is destructive in its consequences, and it is not, to-day, a means of attaining the highest degree of economic efficiency. Both capital and labor are amply justified in uniting to mitigate this kind of competition. It is to be observed, in passing, that the capitalistic combination, when fully justifiable, is the means of economies in operation and management which lower the cost of production, and in the face of actual or potential competition are always finally expressed in reduced prices. The labor combination has so far almost always lacked this justification, and the leaders must systematically seek it or their organizations must continue to find their entire economic basis in the mitigation of the evils of unrestrained and destructive competition.

THE EMPLOYERS' SIDE.

Enlightened employers do not expect or desire to obtain profits by securing the greatest aggregate of labor, measured in hours or effort, at the lowest cost. The American manufacturer has seen the greatest productive efficiency coincide with the highest wages, and he knows that the countries where workmen receive the lowest real wages are unable to compete in the markets of the world with those whose labor is better paid. He is able to estimate somewhat accurately the superiority of intelligent, well-fed, well-clothed, well-housed and contented workmen over those who do not enjoy similar advantages. He knows that every machine in his factory works better in the hands of those whose standard of living requires a high degree of comfort. Yet in the economic philosophy of American employers there is no place, and there should be none, for gratuities. High wages, liberal wages, are preferred not from any impulse of gener-

osity, which would be out of place and destructive of its own purposes, but because, dollar for dollar, the return from high wages exceeds that from low wages. When this is not the case, it means that the point of over-payment has been reached. The excess of the wages received by the overpaid group, in such an instance, over the normal amount, is a burden which must be borne by the other industries and the other workmen of the same community. Each workman must give in labor a fair equivalent for what he receives in wages, or some other workman will receive less than he gives. The employer who, for the sake of continued peace during a period of high profits or for any other reason, aids in establishing such a condition, strikes a blow at industrial welfare which in the end will fall most severely upon the wage earners. It is not claimed that the practices of individual employers invariably attain to these standards. Narrow selfishness and unenlightened greed sway their proportions of the members of every industry and every grade in every industry. Employers have dealt grudgingly and even cruelly with workmen in far too many instances and always to their own injury. Yet the conditions which make for fair dealing are so compelling, even if we omit the paramount condition created by the force of public sentiment, and they are so easily read, that it is not too much to say that, in the main, American employers desire to deal fairly, and do deal fairly with the men whose names are upon their pay-rolls.

HOW IT LOOKS TO UNIONISTS.

The economic philosophy of general acceptance among the members of labor organizations is not so easily grasped. Indeed, there is reason to believe that, except for a few generalizations of the broadest character, there is no economic creed to

which American trade unionists as a class adhere. Among their leaders, there is every shade of belief from the strong individualism of John Mitchell to the socialism of Eugene Debs. Even in the principles to which the various unions of the American Federation of Labor adhere, there is no uniformity, for we find organizations, like the United Mine Workers, which desire a monopoly of all labor engaged in certain kinds of production and move toward it by waging destructive warfare upon existing unions of more modest ambitions, side by side with others which admit only the journeymen workers of single highly specialized trades. Theoretical agreement is probably confined to the propositions that the share of labor in the products of current industry should steadily increase at the expense of the share of capital, and that this can be accomplished by the enforcement of collective bargaining. It is less surprising that the first proposition should be pressed by some to the extreme of denying the validity of the claim of capital to even the smallest share in the benefits following production than it is gratifying that the socialists, whose philosophical system rests upon this view, have made so little progress in their efforts to turn the labor movement into an organized demand for the socialization of all industry.

DIVERGENT UNION METHODS.

Even in the current practices of unionism there is little uniformity. At their best, as exemplified in the recent history of some of the brotherhoods of railway employees, these practices tend to increase the dignity of labor and to simplify the relations between employers of large bodies of labor and the workingmen composing the latter. On the other hand, there have been instances in every great city and in most industries in which organized labor has been

made the means of denying to American citizens some of the most fundamental rights of industrial liberty; of intolerable interference with public order, and of oppression, falling with equal injustice upon representatives of capital and of labor. What more significant contrast could there be than that offered by American unionism; one day paying tribute at the grave of P. M. Arthur, the conservative leader of a conservative organization, and, on another, parading under the leadership of a creature under conviction for using his position in a labor union as a means of blackmail and the grotesque figure of the man whose infamous name has become a synonym for the unspeakable vileness of the lowest period in the political degradation of the chief city of this country. Yet how short the interval between the funeral of the late Grand Chief of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and the Labor Day parade led by Parks and Devery.

CONDUCT THE TEST.

I do not bring these facts to your recollection without a purpose. They are submitted as conclusive evidence of the gulf which separates the best organizations from the worst. Between these extremes are undoubtedly to be found representatives of nearly every intermediate degree. In fact, the same organization will not infrequently appear, within a short period, to be guided by utterly divergent ethical and economic principles. Such a lack of stability is of course unfortunate, but it is attributable to a cause that operates in all voluntary associations, and at times even in the state itself; absence of interest on the part of those whose influence, if exerted at all, would usually fall on the conservative side. The conclusion to be drawn from these facts is an important one. They establish the principle that every labor organization and every demand of a labor organization must

be treated, and ought to be treated, according to its independent merit. It is impossible to generalize far beyond the right of workmen to organize, a right which no sane student of industrial affairs and no intelligent employer of labor ever now disputes. Workmen have the right to organize and to do so on such terms and for such lawful purposes as seem good to them, but employers have an equal right to refuse to deal with organizations whose purposes or methods would lead to a loss in efficiency and to reject particular overtures whose acceptance would have that effect. Employers who earnestly desire to accord to a movement, the persistence of which against great opposition and in spite of enormous obstacles of internal origin, establishes the economic soundness of its central principle, will always strain a point in favor of dealing with labor organizations. Indeed, no employer ought to decide to refuse to consider an offer to make a collective bargain on the part of his employees except on the most convincing grounds and with the greatest reluctance. To destroy one labor organization is but to prepare the way for another, and the elimination of one set of labor leaders will never be more than the signal for others to enter upon the scene. Nor are the new organizations and the new leaders always to be preferred to the old.

FAIR TREATMENT FOR FAIR EMPLOYERS.

The character of a labor organization is to be measured by its acts and by the principles to which it adheres. The most common tests of character relate to the treatment of non-union men, restriction of output and the strike. Before any of these, but not detracting from their importance, I should put the attitude of the organization toward the fair employer. What objection can be raised to the declaration that neither a fair workman nor a just organization will enter into an agreement which

may compel unfair treatment of a fair employer. Yet this principle, so obviously just, is openly and constantly violated by organized labor. Before the recent Anthracite Coal Strike Commission, witness after witness among those called on behalf of the striking mine employees, testified that prior to the great strike of 1902, he had no grievance against his employer, the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company. This great company enjoyed an unimpeachable record for fairness to its employees, and among them there existed no doubt that should unintentional wrong occur it could readily be brought to the attention of its mining superintendent and would be promptly and completely remedied. The man who holds this position, John Vieth, has spent more than half a century in the anthracite mines, beginning as a day laborer. He knows the mines and the miners as probably no other man has ever known or can ever know them; his sympathies are broad; his manner, frank; his honesty, rugged; his fidelity to the industry and every man in it, impartial and unbreakable. The Reading company reduced the price of powder a full decade before its competitors; it established the sliding scale of wages; it never owned a company store; it long ago established an employees' insurance fund, and it pays its miners on the simple per-car and per-linear-yard systems. Yet the organizers, who were sent to the anthracite fields from Illinois in the early part of 1900, were able to induce the employees of the Reading to pledge themselves to an agreement binding them to desert their fair and generous employers whenever the miners in the northern and western anthracite regions should feel sufficiently dissatisfied with the wages or conditions in their fields to demand a general strike. This is precisely what happened in May, 1902. The satisfied employees of the Schuylkill region had no

desire to strike, but because the men of the other regions desired to do so, they consented to attack the prosperity of the company which had brought prosperity to them, and, with no grievance of their own, to strike a severe blow against American industrial stability. This action is typical of hundreds of instances in which the most generous fairness on the part of individual employers has failed to protect them against sharing the penalty of real or fancied unfairness on the part of the owners of other establishments with which they had no connection. In fact, with few exceptions, it is the current practice of American unionism to refuse any special protection to the employer who distinguishes himself from his competitors by the liberal treatment of his employees while, in a spectacular manner and with unbending spirit, visiting the sins of those who displease them alike upon the just and the unjust. Such a practice is destructive of the legitimate ends to be gained by organization. It places the generous employer at a greater disadvantage than that resulting from the ordinary competition of his rivals, and utterly destroys the business advantage that ought to go with righteous methods.

The principle which requires the fair treatment of fair employers must be established as a part of the creed of unionism before the latter can become a genuine means of industrial and social betterment. This would require the revision of some very prominent features of the methods now current among labor organizations; it would abolish the sympathetic strike and also the general strike which, in recent instances that all will recall, has frequently paralyzed the industry of entire sections. It would leave labor controversies to be settled by the parties directly concerned and would pretty effectually deprive both of the equally fickle support and opposition

of public sentiment based on mere personal inconvenience and annoyance.

TREATMENT OF NON-UNION MEN.

The attitude of many numerically strong labor organizations toward those workmen who refuse to join their ranks approaches closely to a denial of personal freedom in matters concerning which no liberty-loving individual can submit to dictation. No organization except government can, with the sanction of the intelligent and far-seeing, be permitted to demand allegiance. Yet many labor leaders declare that no workman has a moral right to remain aloof from their organizations, and compare those who dare to do so with those guilty of treason in its most repulsive forms. This doctrine has its natural consequence, during the stress of great strikes, in violence directed at the persons and property of those who give practical expression to their independence by retaining employment against the wishes of their fellows or by accepting positions abandoned by those on strike. It would be absurd to expect any other result. Idle men of somewhat limited culture, of violent passions and possessing a strong sense of the solidarity of their class, with abundant opportunities for the development of mob spirit, will always attempt to compel obedience to what they regard as the moral law when convinced that those who violate it are doing so to the positive injury of their class. Hence, when John Mitchell and other leaders in the great strike of 1902 proclaimed against violence, in the abstract, with one breath, and with the next compared the men who were at work to Benedict Arnold and to the tories of the Revolutionary period, they laid a foundation upon which it is not strange that other men, whose opportunities to acquire self-control had been more limited than their own, should erect a superstructure of

violent interference with the rights of others.

These leaders did not even verbally condemn the use of the boycott for the purpose of enforcing the new commandment: 'Without permission of the majority thou shalt not work.' It was invoked to drive the daughters and sisters of non-union men from employment as teachers in the public schools and in the factories, to prevent medical attendance upon the sick and to interfere with the interment of the dead. Its most common use was to deprive families of the necessities of life, and fathers who sought work for the sake of their little ones were sometimes compelled to see them suffer from hunger because no one dared to sell them food. From this expedient to dynamite how short the step. No one need be surprised that it was repeatedly taken.

THE VOICE OF AUTHORITY.

It still remains to be seen whether those who have been most prominent in inculcating this new doctrine of the depravity of refusing to join an organization and especially of insisting on the right to work on terms which are unsatisfactory to others will learn wisdom from the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission and the President of the United States. To appreciate the contrast between their teachings and those of the great, extra-legal labor commission and the President who created it, it is necessary to compare certain expressions of Mr. Gompers and Mr. Mitchell with the later official utterances of the commission and the President.

Mr. Gompers is the author of the following:

* * * The individual workman who attempts to make a bargain with the directors, or the representatives of such a directorate, simply places himself in the position of a helpless, rudderless craft on a tempestuous ocean. If he did but himself a wrong we might pity him and concede not only his legal but his moral right. But for the workman

who toils for wages and expects to end his days in the wage-earning class, as conditions seem to point, it will be a necessity, his bounden duty to himself, to his family, to his fellowmen and to those who are to come after him to join in the union.

Mr. Mitchell's expression is, perhaps, still more forcible. He said of the non-union man who works during a strike that:

He is looked upon, and I think justly, in the same light that Benedict Arnold was looked upon, or any traitor. He is a man that fails to stand for the movement that the people stand for, and, after all, the majority of the workers in any particular community reflect the public sentiment of that community. It is the movement of the people of that community, and if a man wants to desert his fellow workers and wants to prevent them from accomplishing good ends, then he is justly looked upon with disfavor by those who are right, because his working does not affect himself alone. If it only affected himself, it would be a different proposition, but the fact that he works helps to defeat the objects of the men who go on strike.

And then, answering the inquiry whether the 'lives of the wives and children' of the men he had thus condemned ought 'to be made unendurable,' Mr. Mitchell declared:

I think those wives and children had better ask their fathers.

Both of the foregoing declarations constituted part of the record before the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission when it unanimously adopted a report containing the following:

The non-union man assumes the whole responsibility which results from his being such, but his right and privilege of being a non-union man are sanctioned in law and morals. The rights and privileges of non-union men are as sacred to them as the rights and privileges of unionists. The contention that a majority of the employees in an industry, by voluntarily associating themselves in a union, acquire authority over those who do not so associate themselves is untenable. * * * It should be remembered that the trade union * * * is subordinate to the laws of the land and can not make rules or regulations in contradiction thereof. Yet it at times seeks to set itself up as a separate and distinct governing agency, to control those who have refused to join its ranks and to consent

to its government, and to deny to them the personal liberties which are guaranteed to every citizen by the constitution and laws of the land.

Finally, exercising the authority voluntarily accorded to it under the terms of the submission, the commission established the wise and salutary rule:

That no person shall be refused employment, or in any way discriminated against, on account of membership or non-membership in any labor organization; and that there shall be no discrimination against or interference with any employee who is not a member of any labor organization by members of such organizations.

It is very highly to the credit of organized labor that among the seven members of the tribunal which, without a dissenting voice, enunciated this fundamental principle of fairness toward all labor, sat the distinguished chief of the Brotherhood of Railway Conductors, probably the ablest of the living labor leaders of America, Edgar E. Clark. The last paragraph quoted has received especial presidential approval, having been quoted in full in President Roosevelt's letter of July 13 last to the Secretary of Commerce and Labor, in which it is followed by these words:

I heartily approved of this award and judgment of the commission appointed by me, which itself included a member of a labor union. This commission was dealing with labor organizations working for private employers. It is of course, mere elementary decency to require that all the government departments shall be handled in accordance with the principle thus clearly and fearlessly enunciated.

Thus in decreeing that every productive establishment of the federal government should be an 'open shop,' in which there should be no discrimination among American citizens on account of race or creed or membership or non-membership in any legitimate organization, the President in the plainest terms gave the weight of his endorsement to the sound doctrine that the discrimination thus forbidden in the workshops of the government ought not, any-

where, to be permitted. The freedom of American workmen could not survive the general abandonment of the 'open shop.' It is infringed whenever there is any discrimination such as can no longer exist in the government shops. Workmen who have faith in their own abilities, who treasure the liberties won for them by their predecessors here, who realize the spirit and the beauty of the Golden Rule, will not seek to debar others from the right to work on account of a disagreement as to the propriety of the terms and conditions on which work can be obtained. The 'union label' is one of the milder measures for compelling men to join organizations against whose principles or practices they wish to protest by remaining aloof from them. He who refuses to purchase goods not having this label is attacking the independence of some fellow-citizen. The employer who weakly assents to its use becomes a participant in a conspiracy against those workmen who dissent from the principles or methods of those who control the organizations in their fields. It is not pleasant to condemn a device which does afford some guarantee that the goods to which it is attached are not produced under oppressive conditions, but while giving partial protection against this danger the 'union label' threatens one of the most fundamental and sacred rights of every individual. Divest it of its proscription of the non-union man and its power for good will win for it deserved welcome from all right-thinking men.

RESTRICTION OF OUTPUT.

There would be little utility in discussing the restriction of individual output in its theoretical aspects. That the practice is unsound in economics is recognized by all students and even by those leaders of labor organizations who are unable to deny that it is followed, more or less extensively, by the members of their organizations.

This general condemnation of the practice makes it extremely difficult to determine its extent, but no one doubts that in one way or another it is a characteristic of most unions. It can not, however, be said to have originated with them. Whenever two men work side by side, for an employer, there is a decided tendency to limit the labor of both by the capacity of the less skillful and energetic. As the number of workmen increases the tendency in this direction is inevitably strengthened, and while there may be some increase, through example and emulation, in the labor of those who would do the least if working alone, the net result is always expressed in an average that is much nearer the capacity of the least capable than that of the most efficient. All this will happen in any establishment without the aid of a labor union. What, then, is the consequence, in this connection, of organization? Usually its first effect is that the restriction which was formerly tacit and somewhat irregularly enforced is reduced to a set of definite regulations that are systematically enforced. It may not become greater in amount, although it is not unlikely that it will. There is some evidence, however, that the improved economic perception on the part of labor leaders is causing the older organizations to abandon their efforts in this direction. Yet the recent growth of the unions in numbers and power, and the reluctance of employers to resist their aggression in this particular, during a period of such tremendous general prosperity that nearly every productive establishment was taxed to its utmost capacity, have undoubtedly led to an extension of the practice of restriction which must be checked. The unit of production per employee per hour has suffered a very considerable decrease in almost all American industries during the last six or seven years, and this diminution of effectiveness

has placed a more severe burden upon industry than the enhanced wages by which it has been accompanied. The record of the United Mine Workers in the Anthracite region is probably an extreme one, but it can be more advantageously studied than any other on account of the elaborate investigation prosecuted last year. The testimony taken by the Strike Commission contained instances of probably every conceivable method by which the output of a body of workmen can be kept down to the level fixed by the least able and industrious. Those who dared to rebel against rules restricting their earnings were subjected to the ill-will and the systematic oppression of their less intelligent and energetic comrades, until they either became less efficient or were driven from the mines. It is necessary to be patient with folly that springs from ignorance, but there is little excuse for leaders who, knowing the truth, do not use all their tremendous influence to spread an intelligent understanding of the simple economic principles which would at once destroy this most vicious of self-limiting practices.

STRIKES.

That recourse to the strike should ever be necessary is wholly deplorable, but the condition of men whom the laws deprived of the use of this industrial weapon of last resort would be indeed pitiable. Freemen must have the right to work and the right not to work, and they may not be impelled to choose the former by any command more imperative than that springing from their own desire to enjoy the fruits of exertion. The whole fabric of industry and commerce rests on bargains toward which there is no compulsion stronger than this. Between the buyer and seller of commodities there are successive offers and counter-offers until a point acceptable to both, but less satisfactory to either than his orig-

inal demand, has become the point of contract. The corporation and the 'trust' do away with a great deal of dickering between individuals, and in a precisely similar way the labor organization attempts to substitute a single collective bargain for a multitude of individual bargains. If, however, the corporation and the trust are unreasonable in their demands, every one now knows that the potential competition of smaller concerns, which always exist, is speedily actualized and the productive organizations that have shown their commercial incompetence to bargain reasonably with buyers are destroyed. So it should be with labor organizations. Those organizations which are reasonable in their demands will usually establish their right to survive by remaining at peace with the employers; those whose frequent strikes and repeated complaints of the alleged tyranny of employers prove their inability to bargain are usually inefficient in their efforts to promote the interests of their members and ought to pass out of existence. Yet the decision as to the terms which they will accept must always be left with the workmen, organized or unorganized. The right to strike ought to be used rarely and reluctantly; its use should always throw the burden of justifying its course at the bar of public sentiment jointly upon the employed and the employer; it can never be necessary except by reason of the grievous fault of one party or the other: yet it may be necessary and the greatest protection against its becoming so, save that which lies in the development and spread of a broad and intelligent spirit of humanity, lies in its exceedingly careful preservation. Generally speaking, however, the union which strikes on small provocation and frequently is to be classed among those which are undesirable, and the credit of any labor organization ought to be in inverse proportion to

the frequency of its resort to this extreme method of enforcing its demands.

As somewhat justifying the assumption that every strike is evidence of lack of capacity somewhere, and perhaps indicating where the blame more frequently resides, I would call your attention to the very large number of strikes which always attend the transition from a period of great industrial prosperity to one of relative depression. The interpretation of this phenomenon is very simple. From almost the beginning of a period of prosperity the leaders of organized workmen perceive that their position is one of growing strength. The demand for products is a demand for labor, and as the one is expressed in rising prices the other is naturally translated into rising wages. Organizations formulate their demands, make them, and they are granted. New demands and new concessions follow in an alternation which becomes more rapid as prosperity appears more intense, the willingness of employers to grant even seemingly extravagant demands as to wages or conditions being based on a confidence in the continuance of heavy demand and high prices which often amounts almost to intoxication. While this process has been going on the effect of high wages and reduced efficiency is being transferred to the consumers, always with some addition to make up for the exactions of those in charge of production. Naturally, this can not continue forever. Sooner or later there is a consumers' 'strike.' That is, high prices ultimately reduce the effective demand, orders come less freely, the bubble is about to burst. Employers rather promptly perceive the situation more or less clearly; labor too frequently does not. More wages or less work, or both, are again demanded, and, as this time the employers see that the cost of acquiescence can not be shifted or realize that a curtailment of pro-

duction must soon occur, the demands are refused. The strike which, if the workmen are ill-advised, follows, marks the turning point from prosperity to depression.

The other typical strike is a protest against a reduction in wages when the decline in commercial activity is in progress, or before the change to perceptibly better conditions has arrived. Such strikes are less frequent but much more likely to be creditable to the judgment of the strikers. Employers rarely refuse reasonable demands while industry is prosperous and the labor market empty or nearly so; some of them do attempt oppressive reductions in wages or unjust modifications in conditions when the times are dull and the labor market glutted with the unemployed. This is not to say that radical reductions in wages may not be necessary; they are very apt to be after such a period of unprecedented activity in every line of industry as that which is but just closed or closing, but it should be recognized that when due allowance for the changed conditions has been made everywhere there may be some employers who will endeavor to take advantage of the situation and to deal unjustly with their workmen. May the number of such employers be few and the resistance of their employees wise, fearless and effective.

OTHER TESTS.

The character of any labor organization is further to be tested by its principles and practices in reference to labor-saving machinery, profit sharing, pensions, insurance funds, home ownership by its members, admission of applicants for membership, apprentices, the boycott, the manner in which it conducts itself toward other unions, and its rules and general policy. The verdict of intelligence concerning most of these matters is so clear that discussion would hardly be warranted. A wise policy will prevent any labor union from discour-

aging the introduction of improved machinery, from refusing to accept or opposing fairly formulated efforts of employers to obtain greater loyalty from employees, from counseling against the ownership of homes, from upholding the boycott, from preventing the industrial education of intelligent youth, and from permitting controversies with other unions to interrupt work or occasion inconvenience to blameless employers. That particular organizations have grievously erred in these matters is, perhaps, much better known than that some have stood steadfastly for sound principles.

These defects in the current beliefs and practices of some prominent labor organizations have been pointed out in no spirit of intolerance. The evils are widespread and serious; they must be plainly pointed out and bravely overcome; but they are not necessary accompaniments of such organizations. In fact, as to most of them the history of several highly successful unions can be cited to show that among organizations composed of the most intelligent workmen they are likely to be eliminated. It is even more true that the much less pardonable practices which involve blackmailing employers and combinations with unscrupulous representatives of capital to rob consumers and destroy competitors are merely temporary consequences of an early recognition of strength which is not restrained by a sobering consciousness of responsibility or by ability to perceive the consequences of such injustice.

VALUE IN ORGANIZATION.

The conclusion is that while the labor problem must always persist, the organization of labor will continue and will increase its power to be of service, not only to workmen but also to society. The principle of organization will not only survive the defeat and destruction of those organi-

zations which obstinately adhere to vicious principles and practices, but the genuine progress of the labor movement will be substantially advanced every time such deserved defeat is administered.

ARBITRATION.

While this progress is being made toward the attainment of better things and substantial results are awaited, the public properly searches for a means of preventing or mitigating the annoyances and losses that spring from the interruption of production caused by labor conflicts. Until employers and employees learn such sweet reasonableness in bargaining together as to avoid strikes how shall their number and their evil consequences be reduced? Obviously the demand is for a temporary remedy for a difficulty which ought ultimately to disappear. With this fact kept carefully in view it is safe to consider the remedy of arbitration. This has actually but one form. To be arbitration at all it must be wholly voluntary. The term compulsory arbitration is self-contradictory, and however it may be disguised it really means the creation of a new type of court endowed with authority to make contracts relating to labor services. Arbitration—voluntary arbitration—is a term so grateful to the ear to which it comes as a substitute for the clash of bitter industrial struggles that it seems ungracious not to commend it without qualification. If men can not agree what can be better than to submit their differences to the settlement of a disinterested and impartial third party? *If men can not agree.* This qualification begs the entire question. Reasonable men can agree and unreasonable men must become reasonable or be replaced, in industrial affairs, by those who are. One way in which unreasonable men arrange for their own replacement is by getting themselves into situations out of which they can

not be extricated except through the assistance of others. The adjustments of industry are too delicate to endure, without injury to all concerned, the frequent interference of the disinterested. A strong personal interest is the element which is most effective in preventing irreparable mistakes. Arbitration may be the smaller of two evils, but no one should fail to recognize it as an evil. Aside from the fact that it leaves the determination of matters of primary industrial importance to persons who will neither gain nor lose by the success or failure of the industry, it is evil in its consequences, because, when there is reason to rely upon its being arranged for, that fact constitutes an incentive to making, and insisting upon, unreasonable demands. The easy-going policy which consents to the submission of questions vitally concerning the welfare of an enterprise to persons who have no stake in its success naturally leads to the easy-going method on the part of arbitrators which is expressed by 'splitting the difference' between the conflicting demands of both of the contending parties. This is the almost uniform result of arbitration. If you will turn to the decision and award of the recent Anthracite Coal Strike Commission you will find that that ablest and most impartial of arbitration boards was not able to avoid this nearly inevitable result. In its pages you will read the contradiction of every substantial averment of the striking mine workers. You will find that the wages of the employees of the anthracite operators did not, in April, 1902, compare unfavorably with those of bituminous miners or men in other employments of similar character. You will find that the conditions of life and the standard of living in the anthracite counties of Pennsylvania were not lower than in comparable regions. You will find that the basis of payment was not unfair to the workmen.

You will find the United Mine Workers described as a body too strongly influenced by bituminous coal interests to be a safe factor in the anthracite industry. You will find that boys voted at its meetings and gave a reckless tone to its management. You will find that the period of the great strike was one of lawlessness and violence, which the leaders of the organization could not or, at any rate, did not effectively check. So much the gentlemen of the commission gathered from unimpeached and unimpeachable testimony, and so much they clearly, concisely and fearlessly set down in the permanent record of their arduous and graciously accepted task. But after bravely announcing these facts in terms quite equivalent to declaring that the strike had no justification, the commission yielded, as any other arbitrators would have yielded and as nearly all arbitrators will yield in future controversies, to the impulse, commendable in itself, to deal generously with those who have relatively little and awarded a general advance in wages.

‘COMPULSORY ARBITRATION.’

The term compulsory arbitration in the literal sense of the words is a verbal absurdity, but it refers to a definite idea and one fairly understood by all. Those who favor it urge that when men will not reasonably agree on a contract relating to wages or other conditions of employment, and will not agree to let some third party make a contract for them, they ought to be compelled to adopt the latter course. The adherents of this view are very apt to begin their argument with the assertion that ‘there are three parties to every strike’—the strikers, the employer and the public. They quite understate the number; there are five. There is, of course, always the public or rather the consuming public. Then on the side of labor there are always

those, mistaken and misguided, perhaps, but American freemen after all, and entitled to that liberty under the law which has been described as ‘freedom to do as you please and take the consequences,’ who are willing to work on the terms rejected by the strikers; as well as those who have declined to work. On the side of capital, there may be supposed always to exist some one, over-sanguine, perhaps, but entitled to experiment as he would with his own, who would employ the strikers on their own terms; as well as the former employer. Compulsory arbitration shuts its eyes to both those willing to work for the rejected terms and those willing to become employers on the terms demanded. It sees only the old employers and the old employees, and would force them to continue the industry on terms very likely to be unsatisfactory to both. Manifestly, when this court of so-called arbitration has issued its decree containing the terms of a new labor contract, it must have some effective means for its enforcement. But by what process, consistent with freedom, is an employer to be compelled to pay wages that he believes must lead to bankruptcy, or employees to work on terms which they regard as so unjust that they prefer idleness to their acceptance? Such power is beyond the limits of governmental authority as they are established in the conditions essential to the preservation of human liberty. Men must be free to contract or not to contract, to work or to refuse to work, to remain in an employment or to leave it, to utilize their wealth as capital or to withhold it from the fields of production, to open their workshops or to close them, and there can be no limitation upon their rights in these particulars except as fixed by their own voluntary contracts, which does not dangerously reduce the liberties of the citizen. Public opinion may praise or condemn the manner in

which you or I exercise our legal rights and privileges, and in the face of it we may be driven to act otherwise than as we would. This pressure is legitimate, and when the public is not led astray by prejudice or wrongly instructed by demagogues the compulsion of its intelligent opinion often has salutary results. There can be no objection to this sort of compulsion, and if it leads to the arbitration of individual disputes, which would otherwise have caused prolonged and bitter strikes, it probably leads to the choice of the least evil of the available ways of escape from a condition too evil in itself not to result in some more or less permanent inconvenience. The difference between the compelling pressure of public opinion and the exercise of governmental authority is wide. If such authority is used by officers of a government to which power to compel arbitration has not been delegated, then that government has undertaken to over-ride its own laws, and regard for the law by the officers of government constitutes the whole difference between a despotic government and one which rests on the will of a free people. The humblest American citizen and the wealthiest American corporation are alike entitled to exercise every right which they possess under the laws which the people have made, and when any particle of the power or the prestige attaching to official position is used to curtail the liberty of either that of both is endangered. Public opinion may condemn a particular act which is not in violation of any law and, if unanimous and strong, it will usually be obeyed; but the hand of government must never be lifted to hasten the compliance. So long as the act is legal, government and the officers of government have no business with it. If the popular respect attaching to the most exalted office in the land has lately been made a means of compelling men to submit to arbitration the manner in

which they shall exercise the rights which no one denies are theirs, there has been a misuse of official position and a precedent has been established which, if followed, will sooner or later seriously impair the quality of American liberty. Compulsory arbitration has been rejected by organized labor, and when Americans generally comprehend what is meant by that term they will have none of it whether through statutory enactment or by the unauthorized action of even the highest officer of their government.

THE OUTLOOK.

But if voluntary arbitration is no more than a temporary and rather dangerous makeshift, and compulsory arbitration is utterly to be condemned, what can be done? The answer has been given—men must learn to bargain together reasonably. The remedy ought to appeal to us more because it is a process and not a panacea for all the ills of industrial conflict. That men can learn to settle their disputes over wages without outside aid, and that unions can make and keep collective bargains, has been abundantly proven during the recent industrial experience of the United States. All that is required is that there shall be more of this reasonableness and much less of its opposite. That this will come with the growth and spread of intelligence there need be no doubt. When workingmen and employers scrutinize more thoroughly the conditions by which their relations are fixed they will appreciate the wastefulness of friction and will know that reasonable dealing and the observance of the Golden Rule constitute the best of all policies. In attaining this state of higher intelligence organizations of employees and of employers will bear an important and useful part. Whatever evils may be discovered in the current practices of either class of organizations, however absurd the doctrines or crude the practices of some of them, no

matter even how ill-advised their leadership, the contact of man with man which they directly cause, must, in the long run, lead to higher principles and better methods. Satisfaction with the distribution of the results of productive effort as between wage earners and capitalists, we shall not see. Probably, if we did see it, we should wish for a condition which gave more occasion for effort and more justification for hope. But while complete satisfaction with the proportions received is neither likely to be attained nor properly to be considered as entirely desirable, the time when much of the present friction shall have disappeared is already very clearly foreshadowed.

H. T. NEWCOMB.

THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGES AND EXPERIMENT STATIONS.

THE seventeenth annual convention of this association, held in Washington, November 17-19, 1903, was one of the largest meetings in point of attendance which has ever been held. Something over 200 delegates and visitors were registered, and the representation was very general from different sections of the country.

As has been customary for several years past, the annual meeting of the official horticultural inspectors was held during the days of the convention in conjunction with the meetings of the section on entomology.

The convention as a whole was notable for its harmony and the expedition with which business was transacted, and was remarked by many of the delegates as a most satisfactory meeting.

The address of the president of the association, James K. Patterson, of Kentucky, dealt with the general topic of the origin and work of the colleges and universities represented by the association, and the influences

of these institutions upon the development of technical and industrial education.

One of the most important items of business was the consideration of the amendments to the constitution proposed at the Atlanta meeting. These amendments had been before the association for a year, and were adopted with practically no discussion. They provide for a reduction in the number of sections to two, one on college work and administration and the other on experiment station work, three members of the executive committee to be chosen by the first section and two by the latter. There is provision for each section to create such divisions as it may find desirable, but no such divisions have yet been made, and the report of the committee on the organization of the new section for station work recommended that for the present no such divisions be made. The section on horticulture and botany, however, expressed a desire to continue its meetings in the future, and appointed a committee to confer with the executive committee with reference to this matter.

The report of the bibliographer, A. C. True, called attention to the more important bibliographies which have appeared during the year, a list of 110 bibliographies with explanatory notes constituting the main part of the report. Special mention was made of the 'International Catalogue of Scientific Literature,' several parts of which have been noted in this journal. The incompleteness of this catalogue in regard to certain lines of work in agricultural science, notably that of the experiment stations, was a matter of much regret.

The standing committee on indexing agricultural literature called attention in its report to the index cards for the publications of the Department of Agriculture which are being prepared by the Department Library, and also to the cards for the accessions to this library. The latter are