

THE REVOLT OF LABOR

According to a prominent labor leader, who refuses to divulge his name, the steel barons have finally arrived at the conclusion that they cannot longer safely keep their vast army of workers in their present unorganized and abject conditions. They fear a wild, spontaneous and costly uprising, that will, in addition to its other havoc, produce a militant revolutionary union in the steel industry. To forestall this, the story goes, they propose to allow their employes to organize now. They say they will grant this union an eight-hour day, and generally enter into contractual relations with it; provided it shows itself capable of having its contracts recognized and accepted by the mass of steel workers. All that is wanting to put this scheme into immediate operation, according to said labor leader, is the appearance of some brilliant man among the steel workers with ability and prestige enough to launch the new union. The barons are bemoaning the want of such a Messiah. Sounds fishy.

As a result of the many recent I. W. W. strikes throughout the textile industry, the textile employers are being forced to organize. At a recent banquet in Boston of cotton manufacturers, many speakers bemoaned the lack of solidarity among them. One speaker said: "Those of us in the South are too indifferent and too contented if labor troubles appear in the North, so long as they remain there, and vice versa. And those of Rhode Island are too glad if Lawrence is getting it, and not themselves. Massachusetts, in turn, has a thrill of satisfaction when her troubles are over and Rhode Island is in difficulty, and so on." The sense of the meeting was that the manufacturers would have to stop cutting each others' throats and present a solid front to the rebellious workers. Thus the I. W. W. is at least organizing the textile employers, whatever its success with the textile workers may be.

The railroad trainmen and conductors have been refused arbitration by 54 Eastern railroads. After the conventions of both organizations, or about June 15, a strike vote will be taken. If the arbitration-swindled engineers and firemen would make common cause with the brakemen, conductors and shopmen, instead of being forced to plead for the niggardly sops of arbitration, they would present such an array of power that they could well refuse to arbitrate with the railroads. They could turn the tables on the arrogant railroads and force them to do the begging. But, alas, from all indications it will be some time before they have learned this simple lesson of solidarity. The harsh schoolmaster, experience, must give still a few more of his stern lessons.

A more or less mysterious court of appeals, whose exact function or location in the jungle of the law is not quite clear to the writer, has just found Gompers, Mitchell and Morrison guilty of contempt of court. It seems rather unkind to thus single out these three gentlemen from among the many millions of Americans who have nothing but contempt for our courts. Gompers was given a stop-over ticket for thirty days, while Mitchell and Morrison were each fined \$500. An appeal is to be taken to the Supreme Court. Ye gods! When will this Wandering Jew of a case be ended? It has already been hanging fire since Moses was a little girl.

To "slough off" the growing sentiment among Chicago garment workers for unionism, the Wholesale Clothiers' Association and the National Tailors' Association have "voluntarily" granted their workers a 52-hour week. The workers, now almost entirely recovered from their great defeat of a couple of years ago, are rapidly organizing in spite of these sops.

The Pullman conductors are organizing. As soon as there is a considerable body of them united they hope to affiliate with either the O. R. C. or the B. of R. T. Of all the slaves in the railroad service but few stand in greater need of organization than the Pullman employes. Success to them in their efforts.

The A. F. of L., through its union label department, is gathering information relative to the adoption of a universal label for all the trades unions. Nuff sed.

WM. Z. FOSTER.