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DOUBLE WAGES

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Towards the end of last year, Lord Weir delivered an address before the Glasgow, Scotland, Chamber of Commerce, which outlined the present difficulties of industry, and pointed the way along which Lord Weir considers progress must be made in order to bring salvation to British industry. Naturally Lord Weir is against fundamental change of the present system. He declared that the substitutes for the present method of conducting industry showed an ignorance in their authors of the ordinary technical facts of industry, a total disregard of human nature and a regimentation of humanity that provides no elasticity for the great qualities of invention, instinct and judgment which have characterized the leaders and creators of the wonderful civilization in which we live today, and the policy to be adopted must be to support, defend and improve the present system.

As the gravest of the problems under the control of the people of Great Britain Lord Weir gave the lowered output and poor industrial performance and the fact that it is becoming poorer every day. This he attributed to the restrictions in the hours of labor, which he placed at 12 per cent in reduction of turnover, or the equivalent output of 700,000 workers. To this he added strikes of which there had been 280 since the armistice involving three and a half million workers.

To increase production he declared there were only four ways: first by speeding up the worker and having him produce more each hour he works, this result to be obtained by paying the worker according to his output; second lengthening the workday; third, increasing the number of workers; and fourth, a perfecting of the methods, processes and organizations, thereby eliminating waste of effort.

To bring about these results, Lord Weir advocated seven principles to be put into force: (1) Fixed wages for twelve months; (2) universal unemployment insurance; (3) freeing industry from taxation; (4) forcing the trade unions to accept piecework payment; (5) the open shop; (6) forcing longer hours upon the workers; (7) abandonment by the government of social reforms for improving the condition of the people.

This speech, from a leading magnate of Great Britain shows that the mind of the capitalist runs in the same channel in monarchic Britain and in republican America. This speech might have been given, so far as its conclusions are concerned save for the advocacy of unemployment insurance by Atterbury of the Pennsylvania Railway or Armour of the Beef Trust.

There is the obvious question to be asked Lord Weir, why should hours be lengthened, and the workers already at work speeded up, if the market cannot absorb the goods already produced?

There are millions of workers unemployed or employed on part time in Great Britain. They cannot be employed because there is no market for what they would produce. There is no market because these unemployed or part-time employed people have no wages or insufficient wages with which to purchase. Lord Weir states we must support, defend and improve this wonderful system. In truth it is a wonderful system that keeps millions of workers from work, and furnishes a Lord to advocate as a remedy, that the workers at work should be speeded up and work longer hours in the face of thousands of thousands of workless men who would like an opportunity to produce. But we will not deal with this side of the question as it is clear to everybody.

Lord Weir points out four ways industry can be improved. These are harder work, longer hours, more employees, improved processes. But when he comes to his practical suggestions, his seven remedies, it is noticed he forgets all about the last two of his four

ways, namely more workers and improved processes. He can only think of harder work and more of it for those already employed, and reducing those employed on social ameliorative works introduced by the government by having the powers that govern refuse to continue to carry on such works. That is the way a lot of capitalists think on economics. They start something they cannot finish.

Let us take up the question where the noble Lord left off thinking and see if we cannot really arrive at a conclusion. Let us take up his last two ways of improving production, within the present system, and see if we can not find a way out.

To provide work for all.

The remedy we suggest, and which we offer to the employers of labor, is that they should take steps, with proper safeguards as to output, to gradually increase wages until within six months they are double the present standard in purchasing power. Let them cease to try to reduce wages and to speed up the workers on less pay, for by so doing the employers are flooding the market with increased commodities, and are cutting off the purchasing power of the public.

As the cost of living falls, let the wages be maintained at the present level until the cost of living has fallen fifty per cent. When that has happened, fifty cents will purchase what \$1 did at the high level of prices, and so the purchasing power of wages will be doubled.

If this method were adopted, in cooperation with the working class, there would be a tremendous moral advancement for humanity. Labor would see that capital was willing to do its fair share in improving the lot of the working class, and labor would respond to the trust and co-operation placed in it. At present labor has learned by bitter experience that capital is exacting, that if inventions come reducing the cost of production, capital wishes to absorb all the benefits, leaving labor in its old conditions. Wherefore labor has learned to rely upon itself in its unions and its massed strength to get what it wants.

So strong has labor grown that capital is growing fearful of labor's might. Yet capital in the person of Lord Weir can think of no better suggestion of improving the relations of capital and labor than to make the workers work harder and longer.

Of course the objection will be raised at once that to double wages would be impossible. It will be urged that doubled wages add such a burden to industry that industry would not be able to carry the weight, and production would cease.

It has been said of old that where there is no vision the people perish. The people of Britain, of America, of Canada are perishing because of lack of vision in their leaders. We believe it was Sir Philip Gibbs who declared that the outstanding fact of Europe is the lack of leaders with vision. It is the same with industry.

It is because our leaders of industry are mostly self-made men that they do not realize the potentiality of the system of production they are operating. Each one of them should read the first volume of Marx's "Critique of Capital," in order to understand what they are doing. Let them read it, reflect and understand. Knowing that book, they will know the laws under which they are doing business. Knowing those laws, they will be able to apply them in the interests of the people and therefore in their own interests.

The doubling of wages would not cause industry to stagnate, but would create a tremendous burst of activity in industry such as the world has never seen. Henry Ford has applied this principle and has prospered tremendously.

Those who say that wages cannot be doubled, evidently believe in the old idea that the price of an article is made up of cost of raw material and wages plus ad-

ditions for rent and interest and profit, and if wages are doubled, this doubled wage bill is added on to the selling price, making everybody just where they were before. This is not what happens. It is too long to explain here in full, but those who are interested can read Marx's Value, Price and Profit, a small pamphlet which will not take long to read, but which will take some time to digest.

Profits come from the circulation of commodities. If commodities do not sell, profits are not made. Therefore it should be the aim of employers of labor to study how a market can be made for their output.

The market can be made by increasing the purchasing power of the people. The purchasing power of the people can be increased by doubling wages. With doubled wages, more workers can be employed to supply the demand. These workers at work will have wages to spend, increasing the market for goods.

Moreover, the workers with doubled wages, will want to live in better houses. The slums of the cities will have to be torn down. Not only the slums, but the working class quarters of the cities will have to be rebuilt or abandoned for better houses which the workers will demand to be built for them. There will be a tremendous building boom which will give employment to thousands and thousands of people.

With commodities selling rapidly, with great demand for buildings and plumbing and commodities of all kinds, owing to the increased purchasing power of the workers, there will be work for all, and profits for the capitalists of which they little dream. And the cost of living need not go up to pay the workers their increased wages.

Profits depend, not so much on the profit on a single article sold, as on the volume disposed of. Thus if three times as many articles are sold and the profit on each article is only one half of the former profit, nevertheless the profits are fifty per cent greater. For \$1 profit on one article is only \$1, but fifty cents profit on each of three articles is \$1.50. So with doubled wages, quadrupled output, and profits cut to 25 per cent of the former rate of profit, the capitalists would be as well off as before. If the capitalists will only realize this, they can make industry hum, employ everyone offering, and double the living standard of their workers without themselves suffering any diminution of revenues.

Inventions and New Processes

By doubling wages therefore, we apply Lord Weir's third method of increasing production by increasing the number of those at work. There remains the fourth method, which the capitalists do not like to have talked about. This is a perfecting of methods, processes and organizations to eliminate waste.

The capitalists keep this side of industry dark. If the wage bill of a plant is \$1,000,000 a year, and a process is discovered whereby the labor upon the product is cut in half, and the article is sold at the same price as formerly, it follows that with a wage bill of \$1,000,000 a doubled output can be put on the market. If the profits were formerly \$500,000, this would allow a capitalization of \$10,000,000 at five per cent. With doubled output, the profits at the old average would be \$500,000 more or \$1,000,000. But with the new process the wage bill remains the same, so the saving of \$1,000,000 in the wage bill is added to profits to make \$2,000,000 which at five per cent will allow a capitalization of \$40,000,000. Thus the owners of capital desire the savings effected by new processes, methods and organizations to go to capital instead of being divided with labor. For this reason this side of the subject is not stressed.

Wages can be doubled, without expense to present capital, for the doubling of the wages would give an incentive to find out methods of reducing the labor cost. New inventions, new amalgamations, new processes would come into being far more rapidly.

The following are a few of the new inventions and processes which have been recently announced.

G. O. Calvert, of the Metropolitan Laboratories, Twickenham England, has announced he has discovered a process of making synthetic alcohol for motors at an enormously reduced cost over the present system. A chemist of Barcelona Spain has announced he has perfected a process of making artificial rubber at one-twentieth the cost of natural rubber. A new electrical process to smelt the magnetic ores of British Columbia is being investigated. Popular Mechanics states that expe-

periments with saw grass which grows luxuriantly in Florida swamps show that it can be substituted for spruce wood in making pulp and paper at a lower cost. Other discoveries are being continually announced.

In farming, a new method of extracting phosphoric acid from phosphate rock, reducing the cost of artificial fertilizer has been announced. In Alberta the farmers are raising sunflowers for ensilage for cattle.

In Great Britain it is planned to produce 500,000 electrical horsepower by a dam across the mouth of the Severn and the utilization of the tides.

In Nova Scotia, airplanes are being used to take pictures from the air for town planning purposes. Airplanes are also being used to photograph mountains and partially explored regions for geographical purposes.

So important are inventions considered in reducing labor costs that Germany for years maintained many scientists who were paid to do nothing else but to discover new methods and processes in industry. It is planned to centralize Britain's research work in chemistry at a cost of millions of dollars. Canada has appointed an Advisory Council of Scientific Research at Ottawa. The Duke of Comaught, at Toronto, last November, declared that if scientific research could be applied to Canada's wealth, our developed wealth in ten years would be nearer a hundred billion dollars than twenty billion dollars as at present.

In organization, the Montreal Building industry is planning to put up a ten story building to house the building industry so the waste of time in going from office building to office building may be eliminated and quick joint action got. The forty charity organizations of Montreal are planning to house themselves in one building. In the Kingston, Ont., district a dozen ministers are freed for work elsewhere by the uniting of religious congregations. Federal and provincial Departments of Agriculture are co-operating to cut out the duplication and overlapping that formerly resulted in doing the same work twice.

These are but a few of the hundreds of examples of inventions, processes and organizations that are coming about to reduce the labor cost of production. There are many more that would be introduced if wages were doubled.

For all the above reasons, wages could be doubled in purchasing power, and this doubling of wages would result in a tremendous demand for commodities, would bring unparalleled prosperity, would raise the standard of living, would wipe out congested city habitations, and would give the capitalists larger revenues for their own enjoyment.

Will the capitalists have the vision, the unity and the patriotism to apply this solution?

Les grandes vertus sont des billets de banque dont on ne trouve jamais la monnaie. — Arsène Houssaye.

Aimer à lire, c'est faire un échange des heures d'ennui que l'on doit avoir en sa vie, contre des heures délicieuses. — Montesquieu.

Que signifient les désirs et les espérances de temps plus heureux? Nous rendrons le temps meilleur si nous savons agir, le travail n'a pas besoin de soulagement, celui qui vit d'espérance court risque de mourir de faim. — Franklin.

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Sous le contrôle du Gouvernement de la Province de Québec.

8-10 rue Saint-Jacques
Tél.: Dépt. des Femmes: Main 2133
Tél.: Dépt. des Hommes: Main 2241

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LE SERVICE EST ABSOLUMENT

N'ACHETEZ que des PRODUITS portant l'ETIQUETTE de l'Union

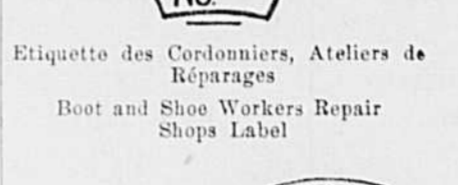
Etiquette de la Fédération Américaine du Travail
American Federation of Labor Label



Etiquette des Travailleurs en Tabac
Tobacco Workers' Label



Etiquette Bleue des Cigariers
Cigarmakers' Blue Label



Etiquette des Cordonniers, Ateliers de Réparages
Boot and Shoe Workers Repair Shops Label



Etiquette des Peintres-Décorateurs
Painters and Decorators' Label



Etiquette des Travailleurs en Vêtements
United Garment Workers' Label



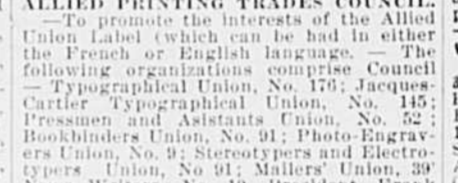
Etiquette des Boulangers
Bakers' Label



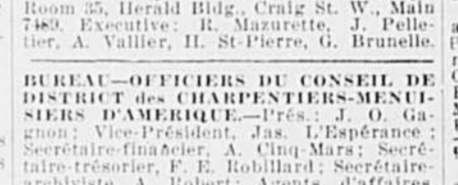
Etiquette des Ferblantiers-Couvreurs
Sheet Metal Workers' Label



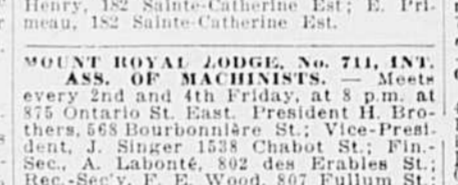
Etiquette des Barbiens
Barbers' Union Label



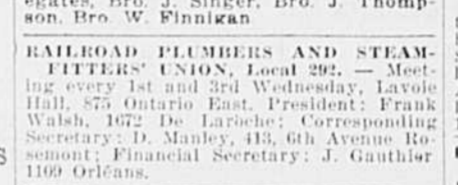
Etiquette des Tailleurs-Couturiers
Custom Tailors' Label



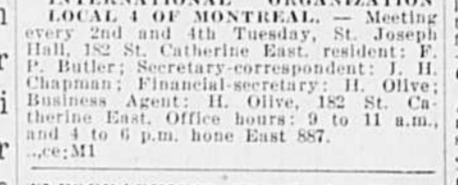
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Musicians' Protective Association Label



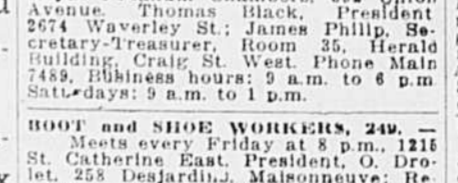
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Carpenters and Joiners' Union Label



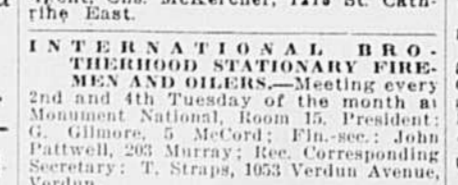
Etiquette des Tailleurs
Tailors' Union Label



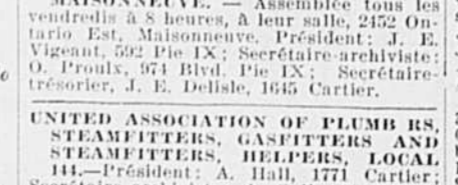
Etiquette des Tailleurs-Couturiers
Custom Tailors' Label



Etiquette des Tailleurs-Couturiers
Custom Tailors' Label



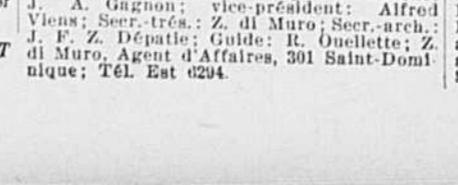
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Etiquette des Tailleurs-Couturiers
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Etiquette des Tailleurs-Couturiers
Custom Tailors' Label



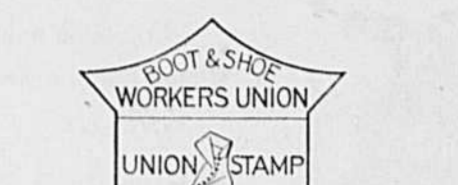
Etiquette des Tailleurs-Couturiers
Custom Tailors' Label



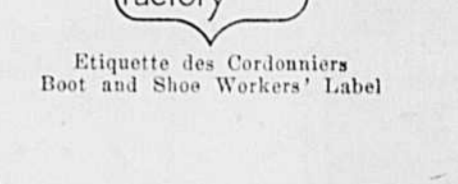
Etiquette de la Fédération Américaine du Travail
American Federation of Labor Label



Etiquette des Cigariers
Cigarmakers' Blue Label



Etiquette des Cordonniers
Boot and Shoe Workers' Label



Etiquette des Cordonniers, Ateliers de Réparages
Boot and Shoe Workers Repair Shops Label



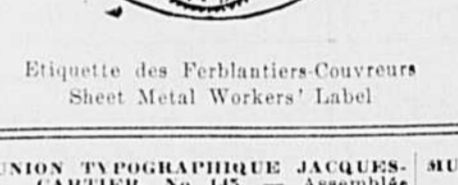
Etiquette des Peintres-Décorateurs
Painters and Decorators' Label



Etiquette des Travailleurs en Vêtements
United Garment Workers' Label



Etiquette des Boulangers
Bakers' Label



Etiquette des Ferblantiers-Couvreurs
Sheet Metal Workers' Label



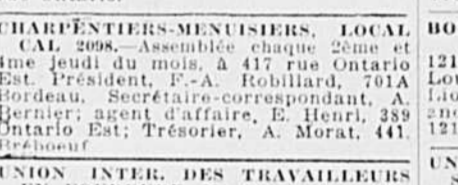
Etiquette des Barbiens
Barbers' Union Label



Etiquette des Tailleurs-Couturiers
Custom Tailors' Label



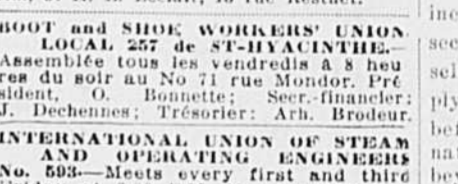
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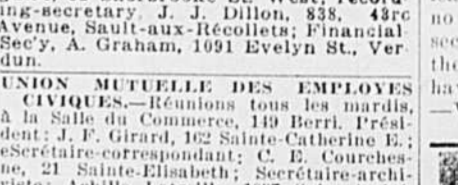
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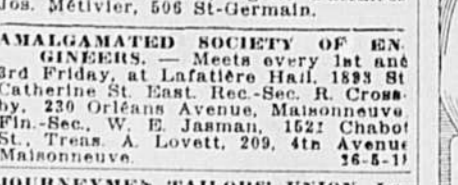
Etiquette des Tailleurs-Couturiers
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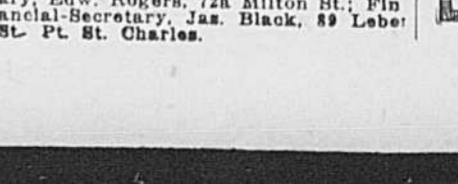
Etiquette des Tailleurs-Couturiers
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Custom Tailors' Label

BUY ONLY PRODUCTS BEARING THE UNION LABEL

Etiquette de la Fédération Américaine du Travail
American Federation of Labor Label



Etiquette des Travailleurs en Tabac
Tobacco Workers' Label



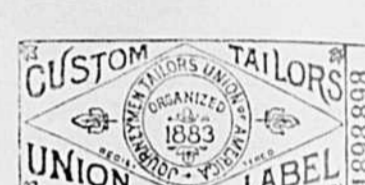
Etiquette Bleue des Cigariers
Cigarmakers' Blue Label



Etiquette des Cordonniers, Ateliers de Réparages
Boot and Shoe Workers Repair Shops Label



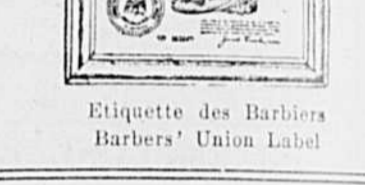
Etiquette des Peintres-Décorateurs
Painters and Decorators' Label



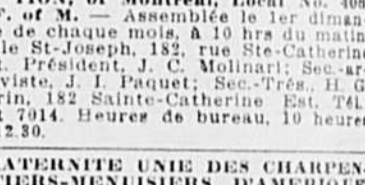
Etiquette des Travailleurs en Vêtements
United Garment Workers' Label



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Bakers' Label



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Sheet Metal Workers' Label



Etiquette des Barbiens
Barbers' Union Label



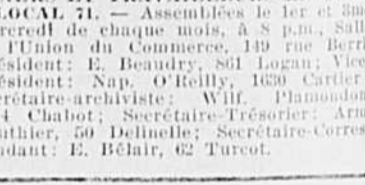
Etiquette des Tailleurs-Couturiers
Custom Tailors' Label



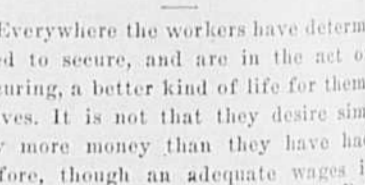
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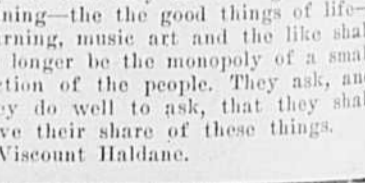
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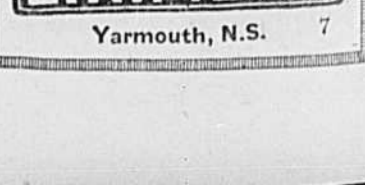
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