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## Great Labor Chieftain Passes

### Death Came Quietly at San Antonio, Texas

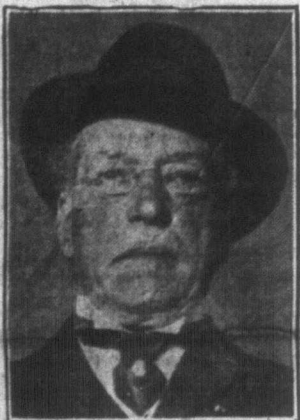
San Antonio, Texas.—Samuel Gompers, veteran president of the American Federation of Labor, died here at 4.05, December 13.

Two hours before he passed away, Gompers said: "Nurse, this is the end," he said in a low voice. Then he added firmly: "God bless our American institutions, may they grow better day by day."

Gompers was taken ill in Mexico City, Mexico, and was rushed to the United States when he insisted that if he was to die he wanted to die "at home." He arrived here December 12, and although his condition was critical, physicians were hopeful that he would recover.

He took a turn for the worse during the night, however, and death resulted December 13.

According to Dr. W. S. Cockrell, his physician, who accompanied him here from Mexico City, Gompers' death was due to a condition which had been acute for about a year and a half and which was aggravated by



SAMUEL GOMPERS  
PRESIDENT A.F.O.F.L.

the high altitude of the Mexican capital where the Labor leader had gone to attend the Pan-American Labor conference.

#### "The Chief is Gone"

On Saturday morning at 4.10, Chester I. Wright, press representative of the American Federation of Labor, came out of the sick room and said to newspapermen gathered in the hall:

"Boys, the chief is gone."

Falling heart action caused by the gruelling trip from Mexico City, brought on Gompers' death, Wright said.

Between 3.45 o'clock and 4 o'clock Gompers grasped the hand of one of his associates, asking for his wife in a faint voice.

"Please send for my wife, I know I am dying," he begged.

It was within ten minutes after he spoke these words that he died, according to Wright.

After Gompers' death was announced men with iron grey hair, in wrinkled business suits, stood in front of his door and cried—unashamed.

These men, every one of them leaders in the Labor world—spoke hardly a word. They were too moved by the death of their chief to talk.

#### Born in London Slum

Samuel Gompers, the controlling spirit of organized Labor in the United States, was born in the slum quarter of London, January 27, 1850. He came to America at the age of 13 and was a naturalized American citizen when he reached 21.

He was an apprentice in the cigar trade when he crossed the ocean and continued in the tobacco work, being made president of the International Cigar Makers' Union shortly after joining, from which office he never was removed.

When the American Federation of Labor was organized in 1881, he was offered the presidency, but declined.

After serving a year as vice-president, he assumed full command until 1891, when for a year he yielded to John McBride, representing the coal miners. He again was elected to the office, which incumbency he held until his death. The position at first paid no salary, but allowed him expenses. However, in 1886, when the Federation was reorganized, Gompers was given \$10,000 salary yearly.

#### Settled Many Strikes

Gompers was credited with settling more strikes than any other Labor man in history. He served on many civic and national committees. During the world war he served as chairman of the Labor committee of the council of national defense and kept the Labor forces behind the government.

Gompers was married to Sophie Julian, an English girl who came to this country about the same time he did. She died in March, 1920. Gompers was remarried on April 14, 1921, to Gertrude Neuscheler.

Samuel Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labor for over 40 years, died at San Antonio, Texas, on Saturday, December 13th, after a long journey from Mexico City where he had been attending a Labor convention.

#### Dean of Labor Leaders

Samuel Gompers, "dean of American labor leaders," one of the founders of the American Federation of Labor, which he saw grow from a coterie of small locals to a national organization with a membership of more than 2,000,000 spent several of the later years of his life in fighting autocracy abroad and radicalism in organized labor at home.

In a career filled with persistent and vigorous efforts from his 15th year "to improve the conditions of workers," Mr. Gompers became a unique figure in American public life. By the force of his eloquence and patriotism he won over the solid support of the American Association of Labor for the United States Government when it entered the war.

The conflict ended, he went to Paris where he helped to organize the International Labor Congress. Five of its tenets were incorporated in the Peace Treaty. They were: 1. Labor is not a commodity; 2. An international 8-hour day; 3. A standard and adequate living wage; 4. Equal pay for men and women for equal work; and 5. Prohibition of child labor.

Outspoken in his views on public questions, Mr. Gompers made many bitter critics as well as staunch supporters. He charged German labor with having helped precipitate the world struggle, blamed prohibition for causing "unrest" on the United States, urged a labor union of the two Americas, denounced a United States senatorial investigation of Mexico as "Prussianism," supported the League of Nations, endorsed De Valera and "recognized" the Irish Republic, assailed the open shop platform of the United States Chamber of Commerce, demanded that Asiatics be kept out of the United States, pleaded for the release of all political and war-time prisoners including Debs, opposed the establishment by the Washington administration of a Department of Welfare, praised President Harding's world disarmament efforts, and approved America's plan to aid famine-stricken Russia.

Gompers was the personal friend of five American Presidents—McKinley, Roosevelt, Taft, Wilson and Harding. He was often called into consultation with them. Settlement of a number of industrial disputes that threatened to or did reach national proportions was attributed to his wise leadership; his conservatism and the trust reposed in him by the rank and file of American labor. He was a staunch advocate for democracy.

The world-wide unrest which followed the conclusion of the Great War did not spare American industry. Bolshevism early lifted its head. Explaining its menace, he said: "There has always been a radical element in the labor movement that has tried to destroy the very forces which have protected it all these years. It is this element which makes it so hard for organized labor to make its demands effective. These American Bolsheviki have earned for labor countless enemies and have represented us in an unfavorable light." Six months after these words were spoken, of more than 300 strikes in various parts

of the United States, it was reported that only 52 were "authorized by the American Federation of Labor."

In his long administration of the American Federation of Labor, Mr. Gompers was constantly called upon to avert threatened schisms in the organization, and to bring together factional elements which developed from time to time. By his efforts compromise after compromise was effected, and the unity of the federation was maintained. Throughout he was a staunch advocate of the "trade union" system of labor organization as opposed to the "industrial union" system, and his efforts and those of his followers developed the American labor movement along the lines of the former plan. He was constantly called upon by unions affiliated with the federation to act as arbitrator and mediator in labor disputes, and he probably settled by his individual efforts more strikes than any other man in labor history.

#### Was Born in London

Samuel Gompers was born in London, England, January 27, 1850. His father was a cigarmaker and Samuel was the eldest of eight children. His mother was a woman of excellent education and through her influence he was led to study. Notwithstanding the fact that at the age of ten he began to help his father support the family. He went to school after his sixth to his tenth year and was then apprenticed to a shoemaker. This trade was not to his liking, however, and he learned the trade of his father and while working as a cigarmaker attended evening school for four years.

He came to the United States when he was thirteen years old and worked as a cigarmaker in New York City.

## Agricultural Immigration in Canada

### What Possibilities Exist for the British Farm Worker in Canada

During the whole eighteenth century, the total movement of population from Europe to the New World was less than that which took place in a single year at the end of the nineteenth century. In the opening years of the twentieth century, this movement swelled into a flood, the like of which the world had never seen before. To this ceaseless flow, the population of Great Britain guided by tradition and desire, contributed in particular to the Dominion of Canada. To them Canada appeared as a land of many possibilities and few doles. That this is true has been borne out by the successful home building of so many old countrymen in Canada who have established families the second generation of which is essentially Canadian. A great many of these British immigrants settled in the farming districts of the older provinces and in later years the drift was to the farming districts of the West.

At the present time it may be well to spend some thought on what are the conditions of success for farm workers immigrating from the British Isles to Canada. Now the success of a newcomer is conditioned amongst other things by the possibilities of the district in which he settles, the reception he gets from those already settled there and the attitude the newcomer takes towards his new environment. Usually the newcomer has to unlearn some old things as well as to learn many new things for it is not as though an unhabited country was being for the first time peopled. The land immediately awaiting occupation is the twenty million odd acres of vacant land which is within twenty miles of a railway. This land is privately owned and mingled with land under cultivation.



Greetings:

"THE CANADIAN LABOR PRESS" EXTENDS TO ALL ITS READERS, BEST WISHES FOR A HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR

"The Canadian Labor Press" realizes that whilst labor conditions in Canada have not been as good in 1924 as they might have been, we feel optimistic about the coming year and believe that 1925 will see a material change in the unemployment situation and a general revival of trade in general, making for better conditions amongst every working man.

Let us therefore look ahead to the year 1925 in a spirit of optimism and good will which is half the battle toward restoring good times again.

In 1864 he first became identified with the labor movement when he helped organize the Cigarmakers' International Union. He served as secretary and president of the union for six years, and under his management it became a large and successful organization. He also edited the local paper of the Cigarmakers' Union, the Picket, during that time. It was in connection with this work that he became interested in a national association of trade unions that would preserve the autonomy of the local organizations. Under his leadership the Cigarmakers' Union fought the Knights of Labor on this principle. He served as president of the New York State Federation of Labor for two years, and in 1881 founded the national federation, serving as its president for the first five years without compensation.

Several opportunities to enter public office were declined by Mr. Gompers at different times in his career. He refused to run for the State Senate in New York, although offered both Republican and Democratic nominations. He declined a Republican nomination for Congress. Governor Hill of New York offered him a place on the State Board of Arbitration and President McKinley tendered him an appointment on the Industrial Commission, but he declined both. He was active in the agitation for a treaty between the United States and Great Britain which would provide for the arbitration of all disputes.

In 1895 he served as a delegate to the national conference held at Saratoga, N.Y., to discuss ways and

It may be asked, at the present time will Canadian farming pay, and the answer is, undoubtedly, yes, for not only is the immediate opportunity present to develop rich soil, but can anyone doubt that if a rich oil field is struck in Alberta or the capital forthcoming to develop a pottery industry from Western clays, the consequent increase in urban population, would react with instant favor on the farmer. These and many other natural resources in the other provinces must undoubtedly come within the next decade. Hence agriculture must become more intensive and the number of farmers increase.

There is every evidence to show that an old countryman taking up farming in Canada does receive a favorable reception in the district wherein he settles and it is true that a great many of the best farmers in Canada have not been reared on a farm, but born and brought up in the cities of the British Isles. That this is recognized in Canadian public life the Ontario Unemployment Commission in 1915 pointed out in its report wherein it stated that the number of farmers and agricultural laborers in Great Britain is not excessive, but it should be feasible to utilize other elements of the population in the development of our natural resources. In the opinion of many who studied the situation at first hand it will be found practicable to train dwellers in British cities, towns, etc., for successful careers on the land. The experiences of Australia agrees with this as for example, at the sittings of the 1923 Royal Commission on Dominion natural resources, a number of witnesses made statements such as this: "My experience is that the town lad will learn his work quicker than the country lad will, if he wants to go on the land; he is smarter, practically all the lads that come to us are from the cities. In Lancashire, I met an enormous number of young fellows who could drive a horse or a couple of horses, and who were a bit handy, and had a bit of go in them."

Western Canada is typical of this, for example, among the best farmers in North Battleford were a Scottish family who had farmed all their lives; a Yorkshire shoemaker, a London Busman, the Assistant Manager of an Old Country co-operative store, a miner from the North of England and an electrician from the south. Here and there of course, there are some failures, but these types go to prove that the old countryman with average intelligence can make good in Canadian farming and the Canadian Labor Press feels that Horace Greeley's famous advice to the American youth, "Young man go West," should be paraphrased in modern times to read: "Mr. British Workingman, Canada is your land of Opportunity."

## Canadian Labor Press Sends Staff Representative to Great Britain



JAMES T. GUNN  
Staff representative of "The Canadian Labor Press" in Great Britain.

Mr. Gunn will study general labor conditions in the British Isles and the results of his investigations will be furnished exclusively to the Canadian Labor Press.

Among the subjects he will deal with are unemployment, emigration, cost of living, accident prevention, wages, how far is British Labor Socialist, and what is the real strength of the Left Wing movement.

Mr. Gunn will remain in Britain during January, February and March and will visit all the large industrial centres including London, Birmingham, Derby, Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, Cardiff, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, Dublin and Belfast.

In addition he will make a special study of agricultural workers organization and conditions, and he will endeavor to obtain the viewpoint of both workers and employers towards Canada.

Mr. Gunn is very well known in Canada, having acted as a labor representative for a number of years and has the reputation of being one of the best informed men on labor questions in the Dominion. He has held various official positions in the movement, such as business manager for the Electrical Workers' Union and Secretary of the Canadian Federation of Labor. He has served on a number of Boards of Conciliation and a Royal Commission in connection with trade union affairs and has been a candidate for the labor party in the Federal election of 1917 and the Ontario election of 1923. He has always been active in public life and served on a number of social service and welfare committees and has been a consistent supporter of the Workers' Educational movement in Can-

ada taking a deep interest in adult education.

Mr. Gunn, although a self-educated man, holds a position of lecturer in one of the University of Toronto Colleges, and has acted as examiner for Toronto University students, consequently he is well fitted for the studies he is taking up in Great Britain.

## Workless Ask Work at Union Rates

Winnipeg, Man.—Two or three hundred unemployed filled the corridors of the city hall waiting to see Mayor Farmer. Miss Edith Hancox, one of the leaders of the men, stated that they intended to ask for work at union wages or, in default, relief to the same standard. Neil Crowe and other representatives of the Trades and Labor Council, were also present with the delegation.

Most of the men were young, and it is understood that more than 50 were from points outside of Winnipeg. Many of them have been working in the harvest fields and claim that the farmers would not keep them over the winter. Two brothers were from Prince Edward Island.

The civic unemployment committees met recently and is trying to get the Dominion government to reconsider its decision not to extend any assistance in connection with unemployment relief to municipalities. Some members are disposed to take a very sharp stand against the unemployed, while others do not think it possible to refuse all relief, but will insist on rigorous inquiry into the record of each man relieved.

## 8-Hour Day in Canadian Industry

The results of a recent inquiry made by the Canadian department of labor to ascertain the present position of the eight-hour day movement in industrial undertakings in Canada were made known to the select committee on industrial and international relations by the assistant deputy minister of labor.

The inquiry was based on returns received from employers having fifteen or more employes in the various industries, excepting agriculture and fishing. Information was received from 5,263 employers, having 690,317 employes.

It is interesting to note that the industry in which the highest proportion of employes was working a 48-hour week or less was transportation, with 91.5 per cent, and the industry in which the smallest proportion of the employes worked a 48-hour week and less was logging, with 19.23 per cent.

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