

what these trades may be getting. I hardly expect to be called on for proof of this point and I do not wish to "rub it in."

That salaries can be raised by unionization need only be stated to be adopted. It is, of course, assumed that engineers will stick together and work together. If they do not, they have abandoned the principle of unionization and it cannot help them.

2. Col. Leonard, the retiring president of the Engineering Institute, has emphasized a point that has been made before,—that the world needs engineers at the present time and that it needs them very much indeed. But the world is not going to get engineers, as such, unless it pays them better to be engineers than to be something else, and the world is offering engineers much greater rewards as salesmen and managers than it is as engineers, and this not at all necessarily because their training fits them as salesmen or managers or such like, but for the simple reason that the world is accustomed to paying better salaries for these positions than it does for engineering positions.

Other Agencies Have Failed

3. Unionization is necessary because other agencies have failed. There is a stirring in the dry bones of a number of the national engineering societies of America and the members longingly expect that this time something will be done. I cannot say that I think so. It was pointed out very aptly by a writer in one of the technical weeklies that the type of man who is elected to office in these societies is not the type of man who can be expected to be very much interested in the salaries of the junior members of the profession. (And right here let me say that I have always considered that the salaries paid in the higher branches depend very much on those paid to the juniors in the profession.) The writer to whom I have referred points out that if the railway brotherhoods had elected as their presidents, the presidents of the Pennsylvania and New York Central railways, the negotiations between the brotherhoods and the railways might have been conducted with more diplomacy than they were, but the results as affecting salaries would not be comparable to what they have been under the methods adopted. Being interpreted, this means that when you elect as the president of the Engineering Institute one of the wealthiest men in Canada, you will have a splendid president, but you should not expect too much in the way of increased salaries. I mention this merely to indicate one of the reasons why existing agencies have failed in the past and will probably fail in the future.

Unionization Has Never Failed

4. Unionization has never failed in the long run. This is a strong statement, but it is abundantly justified. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers has never lost a strike in its history and has not had a strike in 25 years or more. This record is probably not equalled by any other union.

Unions are fallible and make mistakes and get beaten for them. It is not surprising that union leaders should make mistakes. They are not generally expected to be men of great education, and the history of the labor union movement is such that it is not surprising if some of their leaders should go to extremes.

Less than 100 years ago it was a crime for a man to belong to a labor union, and within the lifetime of men still living, people were sent to prison for such an offence. The right of collective bargaining is not even yet universally conceded, and practically every advantage which the unions possess at the present day has been the result of battle after battle.

Because other unions have made mistakes in the past, it does not mean that a union of engineers need repeat such mistakes. If engineers unionize, it will not be too much to expect that they will act in a gentlemanly and professional way. They have handled the powers of nature in the past in a way which has been creditable to the profession, and it is not to be expected that when they secure the use of powers to which they are abundantly entitled, and which will

redound to their own advantage, that they will not use these powers wisely.

5. Unionization is necessary because if we do not work together, we shall, as we have proved many times in the past, get nowhere. As it was said at the time of the American Revolution, we must hang together, for if we do not hang together it is perfectly certain that we shall hang separately. We have certainly hung separately in the past, because we have used a minimum of co-operation. This condition we must change, and the change must inevitably be in the nature of unionization.

Founded on Correct Principles

6. Unionization is founded on correct fundamental principles. A practical proof of this exists in the fourth point, which I have made before. Unionization has never failed in the long run. I might preach a sermon under this head from the text "Ask and ye shall receive," and in that case I would particularly emphasize the word "ask." There is a vast difference between asking and begging. It is a different thing to ask knowing that your request will receive serious consideration because several hundreds, if not thousands, of others are asking for the same thing at the same time, from what it is when you ask knowing that you are asking for yourself alone.

These particular arguments are valuable but they are not as fundamental, perhaps, as following the reasoning of the political economists. The economists state that there is a fund from which labor and capital draw their resources. This fund is circumscribed to this extent, according to the economists, that if labor takes too much there will be nothing left for capital. Of course, on the other hand, if capital takes too much, labor will starve, and capital would for that reason be destroyed.

Only two conditions are possible with regard to this fund. It is either ample to take care of the demands made upon it by both labor and capital, or it is not ample. If it is ample, there is no question but that engineers should receive their fair share. If wages have gone up—and surely nobody will deny that they have—the salaries of engineers should have gone up in the same proportion. I do not need to prove that they have not.

Let us suppose, however, that the fund is not ample,—that there is not enough wealth in this fund for everyone. In this case I believe that the engineer should get his share first by reason of his education and ability.

I am reminded of Æsop's fable of the bat, which I should like to quote for the benefit of the engineer who feels that he should not be classed with labor. The mice asked the bat to be their king and were turned down with a certain amount of indignation by the bat, who said that he was a bird; and to prove it he flew over to the birds, who laughed at him and assured him that he was not a bird. The bat flew back to the mice to be a king, but the mice had elected a king and would no longer have anything to do with the bat. If the engineer feels that he is an ally of capital, is it not possible that he may be giving up his position as king of labor?

Conclusion

Unionization is advisable, practical and necessary. There are many minor points that I have not touched at all; probably the first objection that anyone makes to the subject of unionization is that it is not professional, or that it would lower the dignity of the profession. Over 15,000 engineers who already belong to unions disagree with this stand and I cannot find it consistent myself with the definitions which the new dictionary of the English language gives of the words profession and dignity.

"Profession" is an occupation that properly involves a liberal education or its equivalent, and mental rather than manual labor; hence any calling or occupation involving special mental and other attainments or special discipline.

"Dignity" is defined as grave or noble bearing, impressiveness of manner or character, repose and serenity of demeanor, the state or quality of being excellent, worthy or honorable.