

# CANADIAN LABOR PRESS

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## Great Labor Chieftain Passes

### Death Came Quietly at San Antonio, Texas

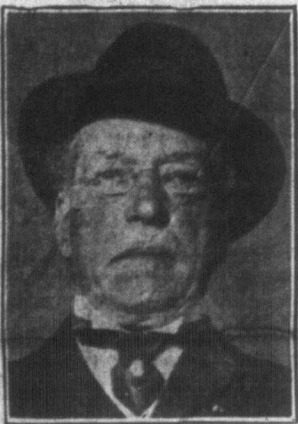
San Antonio, Texas.—Samuel Gompers, veteran president of the American Federation of Labor, died here at 4.05, December 13.

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 1894, 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.

#### 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. 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.

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 means for the settlement of labor disputes. (Continued on Page 2)

## 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.



"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.

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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 Canada.

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 committee 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 employees in the various industries, excepting agriculture and fishing. Information was received from 5,263 employers, having 690,317 employees.

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

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# Editorial Page of The Canadian Labor Press

## Buy Made In Canada Goods, Keep Canadian Workmen Employed

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Following in brief is an outline of our Policy:

1. The Canadian Labor Press supports the International Trade Union Movement, of which there are approximately three hundred thousand members in Canada.
2. The Canadian Labor Press supports the policy of the present Dominion Trades and Labor Congress of Canada.
3. In the interests of the Canadian Worker, The Canadian Labor Press believes that Canadian industry needs adequate tariff protection.
4. The Canadian Labor Press advocates fair play to employer and employee.
5. The Canadian Labor Press stands for the betterment of Trade Union conditions in Canada and the welfare of our country at large.
6. The Canadian Labor Press is independent in politics and free from any political influences.

### The Gasoline Tax

ACCORDING to press reports, Hon. G. S. Henry states legislation providing for a tax of two cents per gallon of gasoline used in automobile consumption will be introduced at the next session of the Ontario Legislature.

It was inevitable in view of all the recent agitation about the price of gasoline that some tax would be proposed in order that the Government would participate in the alleged high profits of the gasoline industry. As the Canadian Labor Press pointed out sometime ago, the agitation that was carried on, especially in the City of Toronto, was bound to result in a reaction against the consumer's interest and now we have the Government's proposal to further mulct the motorist user of gasoline, who in the majority of cases is a workman, and whose car is used almost wholly for recreation of his family.

Frankly, the Canadian Labor Press believes that the proposed tax will not be as popular as the Government thinks it will and we do not agree that an industry should be penalized because of an agitation that had its origin in civic political ambitions. If a tax is really necessary for the upkeep of roads and highways, then a much better way would be to increase the license fee in proportion to the size of the car or truck as the payment would be given at one time and collecting costs would be cheaper. There is a moral dissatisfaction every time one has to pay a small tax such as is proposed, that does not exist when payment is made at one time.

All the public outcries that have taken place have been against the alleged high profits of the oil companies, profits that we are convinced do not and never did exist, but no attention has been paid to the retailers' profits which upon analysis prove illuminating. When the price of gasoline was 40 cents per gallon, the retailer's profit was ten per cent of four cents per gallon, and now that the price of gasoline varies from twenty to twenty-four cents per gallon, the retailer's profit is 14.5 p. c. to 15 p. c. or 3 1/2 per gallon when, if the former ratio at the high price still obtained, the retailer's profit should now be 24 p. c. per gallon instead of 15 p. c. It is natural to expect that when prices rise the same ratio of profit will prevail, but it is also natural to assume that when prices drop the same ratio will obtain. In this case however, when the wholesale price drops nearly in half, the retailer's profit has gone up.

If there is any justification for a loss to be borne in connection with gasoline, it is in the retailer's end of it but up to date they

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have escaped criticism completely and the whole burden of defending the industry has been placed on the wholesalers. The Canadian Labor Press feels that in justification to the gasoline industry, these facts should be known and that in any reductions in the price of gasoline, the retailer should bear his share.

### A Live Business Is Local Candidate

Unemployment Committee of the City Council Do Real Work—Not All Talk—Big Gang of Men Start on New Government Building

Toronto, Ont.—The Unemployment Committee of the City Council has only had one object in view, and has been working to this end all year, and that is to supply work and keep the factories of the city operating," declared Alderman Bert Wemp today, who is a member of the committee. Criticism has been leveled at the aldermen as a member of the committee in going to the Parliament Buildings and securing a promise that United States material would not be imported, but that the building would be constructed of Canadian material, by Toronto workmen, everything being done with a view to keeping Toronto factories busy and the local bonafide men on the payroll.

"When information reached the committee that the Government was thinking of importing steel from the United States for the new building in Queen's Park the committee interviewed the Hon. George Henry asking that local material be used. It was pointed out that the building was being erected this winter to relieve unemployment, and therefore the local factories should also be kept busy supplying the

material. The Hon. Mr. Henry agreed entirely with the suggestion, and the committee understands that the work will be carried on for the benefit of the working men and factories in the city. It was pointed out by the Government to the committee that this work could have been delayed for several years, but was being carried on now to relieve unemployment, and therefore, the sole object was to help the unemployed.

"The committee has absolutely no interest in any type of material to be used, and the suggestions made to the Minister were to the effect that Canada has material with which this new building can be constructed and Canadian material should be used in preference to that from the United States, giving the Toronto workmen work both in the factory and on the job itself."

The work of tearing down the old buildings in Queen's Park for the

new started several days ago, and already a large gang of bona fide residents are being employed. The construction of the building will mean work for several hundred Toronto men, and a number of such jobs will help to eat into the army of unemployed.

### Carpenters Will Establish Home

Site Has Been Secured at Lakeland, Florida

On Tuesday evening the carpenters had a well attended meeting, called for the purpose of voting on the amendments to the general constitution.

The proposed amendments were all carried at the general convention and are submitted to the membership as a whole for ratification.

The voting for the election of general officers also was a part of the proceedings.

The chief item of interest, and one of great importance, was the proposed rules and regulations governing the aged members' home and the pension scheme.

The brotherhood last year purchased a large tract of land in Florida, where it is proposed to build a home, not only for the aged member himself, but also a place where he can take his wife, so they can finish their days in peace and comfort, they so desire.

If a member does not feel that he cares to leave his old home, but would rather stay and finish his days amongst his old associates and surroundings, he will be entitled to receive his pension.

The home site is beautifully situated at Lakeland, and some hundreds of acres are planted with citrus fruit trees. This year the crop from the orange and grapefruit trees will amount to 35,000 boxes. These are offered for sale to the members of the organization very cheaply

and it is expected that the very large membership that is in the brotherhood will purchase the total crop. There is also two million feet of standing pine on the site, which will largely be used in the building of the home and the making of boxes in which to pack the fruit.

It has taken a long time to get this proposition into shape, but if the proposition is adopted by the membership—and there is no doubt that it will be—the officials of the United Brotherhood will at once proceed with the construction of the home.

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### Great Labor Chieftain Passes

(Continued from Page 1)

means to meet the condition in the United States growing out of the Spanish-American war, and he was a member of the committee that presented the views of that conference to President McKinley.

Notwithstanding earnest opposition by a substantial part of the union labor element, Mr. Gompers took an active part in the organization of the National Civic Federation, formed to establish better relations between capital and labor. He represented labor in the federation and was vice-president of the organization. He also took part in many congresses, conferences and conventions devoted to the promotion of social service.

He was affiliated with the Society for Ethical Culture of New York city, established in 1867 by Felix Adler, and in addition to the American Federation of Labor remained an active member of the Cigar-Makers' International Union. He also belonged to the Free and Accepted Masons, the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks and the Home Club.

He was the author of numerous small pamphlets in the nature of tracts on labor questions, wrote a book on the world labor movement, and edited the American Federationist, the official organ of the American Federation.

Throughout his career, Mr. Gompers refused to become identified with any political party, taking the position that he could be of more service to the cause of labor by hiding himself aloof from identification with any single political organization.

Mr. Gompers was twice married. His first wife, Sophie Julian, of New York, died in 1915, shortly after the celebration of their 50th wedding anniversary. They had three sons and a daughter; the latter, a nurse in France, died during the war. On April 15, 1921, the labor leader, then 71 years old, married Mrs. Gertrude A. G. Neuscheler, 55 years old, a music teacher.

## Co-operation

Successful operation of Toronto's own street railway is vital to the prosperity of the city and its residents.

A great portion of the traffic on the street cars is of those who travel regularly to and from their daily work. To the good service of this important number of car riders, the Commission owes an obligation of full consideration and best effort.

Similarly, those who comprise such a large group of the passengers owe to the service—their service—an obligation of support and co-operation, which means so much to its satisfactory operation.

The Commission acknowledges with appreciation the support and co-operation received during this and previous years.

A continuance of this community of interest and effort will result, undoubtedly, in still greater satisfaction from Toronto's street car service, already appraised by railway experts as second to none on this continent.

It is at once the hope and purpose of the Commission to serve well a happy and prosperous people during the New Year.

TORONTO TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION.



