

NOBODY WORKED BUT FATHER AND NOW THE OLD MAN'S QUIT



Sorry, lady, but we're workin' a thirty-hour week now, and I've just done my six hours for today. Stop around tomorrow with that nickel.

WHILL six-hour working day be an economic possibility? On all sides is heard the demand of the workingman for a shorter work day. From the 12 hours of labor which his grandfather called a day's work he has, after many bitter struggles, succeeded in lopping off two to four hours.

Today it is generally conceded that eight hours of hard work are enough for one day if the efficiency of the worker is to be maintained. In the majority of trades the 48-hour week has long prevailed.

A world devastated by war is today crying aloud to its workers and its manufacturers to produce more goods.

"Keep the mills, the mines, the factories hard at work producing the raw materials and the manufactured goods which are needed, and needed badly. Give us more food, more cotton, more wool, more leather, more steel—give us more of everything!"

That is the appeal, the supplication, even, of the world today. Will it be possible to answer that appeal if a short work day is granted to labor? Or is it possible that a short work day will result in increased efficiency, so that the man who produced a certain quantity of manufactured product or raw material in eight hours will be able to produce the same quantity, or even more, by working harder in six hours?

He Wouldn't Work.

And when will the demands for shorter hours end? Will all trades finally be granted a 30-hour week, or is it the ambition of the workingman to emulate a well-known character in Sussex county, Delaware, who sincerely believed that work was an affliction with which some malignant devil had cursed the human race, and who steadfastly refrained from work throughout his life?

But he died when he was 60 years old—an age when some of the world's greatest men have accomplished superhuman tasks.

This eccentric Delawarean—we shall call him Jonas Brown for purposes of identity—was fortunate in having a wealthy father, who set him up as the proprietor of a well-stocked general store in the village in which he lived. But that didn't put ambition into Jonas.

He selected a comfortable rocking chair from the stock, had a boy take it out on the porch, and there he spent his time from that day on. He announced publicly that he had never worked and never intended to work. Every little while a customer would disturb him.

"Any sugar today, Jonas?"
"Oh, damn it! I suppose I have. Go in and help yourself."

A man with a jug might walk along the road. Jonas would know what he wanted, and it was his custom to call out:



The man the express company sends around after that heavy trunk on the third floor.

Fishing Hard Work.

Jonas Brown was fond of pike fishing. He frequently visited the neighboring stream until some of his friends told him he worked harder at fishing than some of them did at plowing and planting. The horrified man threw down his pike hook and retired to his rocking chair. He never fished after that.

But to pass away the time he used to whittle long, curly shavings from blocks of white pine. He became an expert at this. The boys of the village would stand open-mouthed watching him whittle. And then some village wag said in his hearing that if he would work as hard as a carpenter as he did with his jack-knife he could easily build a house for every man, woman and child in the village. Jonas heard him, and his wrath and discomfiture were worth going many miles to

see, old residents will tell you.

Glaring at the villager, Jonas half rose from his rocking chair, and with more effort than he had spent in a year he cast his jack-knife far down the road.

"Ain't I the old fool!" he muttered.

But all men are not like Jonas Brown. If there are men who want high wages for little work, and that work not done well, there are also many other men who live year after year on the accumulated wealth of a father whose policy was to work his men long hours and pay them as little as he had to.

In order to look at this matter of shorter hours and its relation to production from different angles, the writer is going to present several views of the question.

An Economist's Opinion.

Dr. Simon N. Patton has this to say on the subject:

"The great gain to be made in our life by increased production is, to my



Our stenographer madly dashing in at ten-thirty a.m. It is a point of pride with her never to let the boss beat her to it by more than two hours.

mind, not so much a question of hours as it is a question of intensive effort. That's what counts and it is intensive effort that we have to increase.

The laborer is thinking of his work in terms of hours. He is suspicious of any plan that would result in more intensive work. And I can not but realize that it is a natural suspicion. In times past he has been worked almost to death. But, nevertheless, intensive work means increased efficiency, and is necessary if we are to have a shorter work day.

"I think a six-hour day is sufficient in certain occupations. The miners are entitled to a six-hour day. Their work is dangerous, it has been poorly paid in the past; it is dirty, disagreeable, hard work, that saps energy. Six hours of it is enough. I would say that six hours' work was enough for the women who work in laundries as laundries are conducted at the present time. Their energy is also sapped.

But the conditions that now prevail

could be improved so that the people in laundries could easily work eight hours.

"A locomotive engineer can not be

expected to run his engine for eight hours day after day without feeling the great nervous strain. But a railroad conductor or brakeman is not

subjected to the same strain and can,

therefore, work longer.

I should say that, generally speaking, a six-hour day should be established in all occupations that are hazardous, that are nerve-trying and that take more than a reasonable amount of energy from the men and women engaged in them.

We Want Too Much.

"But I do not think that the six-hour day, applied to industry generally,

would work out.

"Our standards of life are rising all

the time. We want more things to

make life pleasant—and there is no

way to get them but to work harder for them. We don't produce enough food.

Why? Largely because working hours have been cut down, resulting in less food products and higher prices.

"When the American people realize that a higher standard of living demands more hours of work, I think they will choose the high standard rather than a lower standard with fewer hours.

"But to have men willingly work longer hours the employer must make better working conditions. They are face to face with that problem now.

They must choose between being fair to their employees or granting fewer hours of labor.

"I think that some organization

might come whereby the workman

gets a fair share of the products of the business in which he and his employer

are mutually engaged. I do not mean

that he should share in the profits alone—but that a proportionate share

of the products turned out are his, and

he benefits by their sale. If the em-

ployer is to stop the agitation that is

going on he must co-operate with his

men. And then the workingman will

not object to longer hours, because he

will know that his work will help him

realize a high standard of life for him-

self and his family.

seven. They say this country wastes

100,000,000 tons of coal a year. They declare that in only comparatively few plants and on comparatively few railroads is the attention given to the coal that the subject demands, but they believe the high costs of coal and of everything entering into manufacturing will force a reform that will be

of lasting benefit to the country.

So far as the coal operators are concerned they are meeting more and more opposition or competition from oil and water power. In New England oil has made considerable headway.

Some of the big oil companies having established stations there for supplying big manufacturing concerns and entering into long-term contracts to

supply the users with the fuel. Oil is

cheaper than coal and easier to han-

dle, but the costs of transforming pow-

er plants from coal burning to oil

burning are heavy.

New England offers a good field for the oil people, as there are no coal beds nearby and the oil people can lay their fuel down at the ports without much expense. Transportation expen-

ses from the coal fields of Pennsylvania, West Virginia and other terri-

tory handicaps the coal man.

Now he fears the oil people may in-

vade other sections heretofore con-

trolled by the coal people.

Don't Waste Fuel

THE seemingly incongruous cam-

paign in which coal men are

engaging of urging upon the

public economy in the use of coal and

teaching or endeavoring to teach the

public how to get more out of coal

needs explaining.

On the surface it would seem self-

interest would impel the coal opera-

tors to have the public use the largest

possible quantity of coal. As a mat-

ter of fact the coal man must make

coal cheaper or its uses will be re-

stricted. He can not reduce the price.

The public, if it avails itself of the

opportunity afforded by instruction

given, can get more out of the coal it

buys. If coal is cheapened by increas-

ing its power through the elimination

of waste, the coal man will be made

more secure in his position. That is

all there is to it.

Chemical engineers declare it would

be easier if proper methods were em-

ployed in the burning of coal to get as

much heat and power out of six tons

of coal as now are obtained out of

the coal people.