

THE LABOR PROBLEM IN THE COAL MINING
INDUSTRY OF KANSAS.

by

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Submitted to the Department of
Economics and Commerce and the
faculty of the Graduate School
of the University of Kansas, in
partial fulfillment of the re-
quirements for the degree of
Master of Arts.

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June 2, 1920.

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PREFACE

This study of the labor problem in the coal mining industry of Kansas is designed to describe the historical development and present status of the labor problem in the coal industry of the state. In order to afford a broad view of the fundamental basis of this problem -- the first chapter has been devoted to a brief description of the coal mining industry in Kansas including marketing facilities and the consumption of coal in the state. Chapter II deals with labor legislation in Kansas as it affects the coal miner. Chapter III treats of the structure and functions of the United Mine Workers of America emphasizing especially the relations between the international and the district organizations of this union. The Great Bituminous Coal Strike of 1919, first, as it affected the country at large, and second, as it influenced labor conditions in the Fourteenth District is described by Chapter V. Chapter IV, the Fourteenth District of the United Mine Workers of America, and Chapter VI, the Outcome of the Coal Strike in Kansas are confined to an analysis of the labor problem in the

coal mining industry of the state of Kansas .

The writer wishes gratefully to acknowledge his indebtedness to the Department of Economics of the University of Kansas for their criticisms and suggestions. The author especially desires to thank Professor Duffus of the Kansas University for his hearty cooperation and valuable criticism in the preparation of this study.

CHAPTER I.

THE COAL MINING INDUSTRY OF KANSAS.

1. Historical synopsis of coal production.

The record of coal mining in southeastern Kansas begins shortly after this region was opened for settlement in 1866; coal was found in several places in the southeastern part of Cherokee county, especially along the highlands south and east of Columbus, the present county seat. Cherokee county led Kansas counties in the production of coal until about 25 years ago when Crawford county surpassed it and has maintained the lead ever since. In 1915 the production of coal in Crawford county was double that of Cherokee county; together the two counties mined ninety-four per cent of the state's total production.

2. Topography of Southeastern Kansas

Topographically this region is comparatively level, only in the central and northern parts of Crawford county do hills occur. Though cut by numerous streams which have washed out many gullies and valleys, the surface is relatively level. This fact is important in that coal beds with gentle dip lie near the surface.

in considerable portions of these counties making the area extremely favorable for steam shovel work.

3. Mining Methods.

The two methods of mining used in this field are shaft mining, using the room and pillar system, and strip pit mining. The former is generally used where coal seams range from three feet upward in thickness and are buried too deeply for stripping off the overlying cover. After sinking the shafts, and driving the entries along the coal seam, cross cuts for ventilating purposes are made to connect the main entries, the side entries, and the mining rooms as the work progresses. A separate air shaft is required to be sunk by law not over 300 feet from the main shaft in order that adequate ventilation may be secured, but this provision is only one of the many legal regulations which the following chapter treats more in detail.

A. Undercutting and Shearing.

In this district the coal is loosened from the bed by the practice of what is known as "shooting off the solid", that is, directly blasting the coal from the bed without previously undercutting or shearing it by hand or by machine, by far the safer method.

Hand shotfiring is the place of greatest danger in the mines as will be shown more fully later in this study.¹

The practice of shooting from the solid is bad as it results in much fine coal, and many times causes serious accidents. Black powder and dynamite are both used in shooting the coal, the latter however is prohibited unless its use is authorized by the pit boss, but this ruling is generally not enforced.²

Mining machines, by far the safest method of mining, are not used in the Pittsburg district. The occurrence of irregular folds, termed by the miners horsebacks, as well as larger rolls throughout the area has been such as to discourage the practice of undercutting the coal by machine which is done to some extent in the Osage district and constantly in the Illinois-Indiana Field. Beyond doubt the prevailing practice of shooting the coal off the solid has interfered with a sincere attempt to install machines.³

B. Coal Haulage and Elevation in Mines.

Mules are generally used for hauling coal in mines though gasoline and electric motors are successfully

1. United States Geological Survey. Mineral Resources in United States in 1917, p.938.

2. Brown and Carpenter, p.9.

3. 24th Annual Report, Inspector of Coal Mines and Coal Production, State of Kansas, 1916, pp.2,9,238.

used in some cases. Formerly the mules remained in the mines indefinitely but now the law requires them to be stabled outside.

Safety, self-dump cages are used for hoisting coal. These are known as hoisting drums, are cylindrical in shape being from four to eight feet in diameter, and operate in double compartment shafts.

After the coal is hoisted from the mine it is dumped into a hopper and weighed. Following this the hopper door is opened and the coal is allowed to slide down on the screens, which are covered in case mine run coal is desired, but as is generally the custom it is screened into three grades, lump, nut, and slack coal. Shaking screens and revolving trommels are used in screening operations.¹

C. Strip Pit Mining.

Stripping with horses and scrapers has been carried on in southeastern Kansas ever since the country was opened for settlement in 1866. This type of mining has, however, been confined to the vicinity of outcrops. Old strip pits of this character may be found in all directions from Pittsburg particularly to the North for a distance of from ten to fifteen miles and

1. Brown and Carpenter, pp.9-10.

to the south and west for three or four miles especially along the creeks. The average paying depth previous to the advent of the steam shovel was about ten feet of overburden.

The first steam shovel used in this district was introduced in the late seventies near the present site of Midway where it was in operation for a few months, but it did not proved satisfactory, probably on account of being too small and not having the advantage of the full swing of the shovel beam common with the modern type. Until 1902 there was no further trial of the shovel in which year the Miller Brothers put one in operation on land northwest of Mulberry. This time the steam shovel proved to be fairly satisfactory but its use was not long continued.¹

The present epoch of steam shovel use began in 1910 when the Miller-Durkee Coal Company introduced this method on their coal lands near Scammon in Cherokee County. By 1915 some thirty other steam shovels of various sizes had been installed in southeastern Kansas and were in more or less constant use. In that year the claim was made that two of the largest shovels ever constructed were in operation near Pittsburg. By

1. Brown and Carpenter, p.13.

1917 only twenty-six steam shovels were being used in mining coal in Kansas. "The total tons produced from steam-shovel pits in 1917 was 806,985 tons, or 11 per cent of the total output, against 858,370 tons, or 12 per cent in 1916."¹.

At the present time it has become practical and profitable to remove 35 feet of overburden, and successful operators fully believe that the time will come when it will pay them to remove as much as 50 feet of overburden. By the use of the steam-shovel much coal is made available which lies too deep to be recovered by horse power and too shallow to be mined by shafting, in that from 10 to 50 feet cover is insufficient to furnish suitable cover for a roof.

The fine grained shales covering the coal in this area are so nearly waterproof that they form an excellent protection for the coal. To be sure some coal near the outcrops and where cut by streams has particularly yielded to oxidation and is known as dead coal by the operators.² If this district has been broken by vertical fissures produced by dynamic disturbances which is the condition of many coal mining

1. United States Geographical Survey.
Coal in 1917, Part A, Production.
2. Brown and Carpenter, pp.13-14.

regions, probably a very large proportion of the strip coal area available would be so altered by oxidation as to render the coal unmarketable. However, the one line of earth fissures of faulting parallel ^{to} the out-cropping line ~~and~~ does cause considerable loss of coal, but it so happens that a large part of this line lies in the west within the area of shafting, therefore the acreage of good coal available for the steam-shovel is not materially curtailed. Two years ago Eugene McAuliffe, a mining engineer, furnished the following estimate of the strip coal area in the Kansas-Missouri Field.¹

Original area in Kansas	10,320 acres.
Original area in Missouri	<u>11,680</u> acres.
Total	22,000 acres.
Removed to date in Kansas	5,920 acres.
Removed to date in Missouri	<u>2,400</u> acres.
Total	8,320 acres.

Tonnage available for stripping Weir City-Pittsburg seam, 68,500,080 tons.

Another seam known as the Lighting Creek Seam in the Kansas Field covers approximately 2,640 acres available for stripping, totaling 8,680,000 tons.

If we allow 50 feet of overburden it has been estimated that there are available in Kansas 60 square miles of area for the steam-shovel.

The thickness of this coal bed varies from a minimum of three feet to a maximum of four feet with an average of about three and a half feet.

1. Stock, H.H. Steam Shovel Mining of Bituminous Coal. Transactions American Institute of Mining Engineers. Volume LVII, p. 521.

a. Steam Shovel Mining.

There are two distinct varieties of steam shovel used, a small one of yard capacity occasionally utilized for loading into the strip cars, and the mammoth sized shovels for stripping which sometimes weigh as much as 235 tons and have a six to seven yard capacity. The boom poles of these machines are from 50 to 90 feet long, and the machines can readily strip to a depth of from 40 to 50 feet.

The capacity of a machine depends as much upon the skill of the operator as the size of the machine, indeed skillful operators are half the machine, for only they can keep it going to its full capacity for the entire day.

b. Mining the Coal in the Pit.

The coal exposed by the shovel is ready for the miner. Holes are drilled in the coal bed with ordinary auger drills and a small piece of dynamite is placed therein with black powder to blast out or "shoot the coal". One coal shooter and two helpers perform this task. The coal shooter loads the holes and fires the blast, the helpers drill the holes and perform whatever other heavy work there is to be done. After blasting the coal is loaded into cars to be moved from

the pit to the tipple and this is most likely to be done by hand though as previously indicated small steam shovels may be used. The usual number of shovelers vary from 4 to 20, 14 men should load not less than 300 tons per day.¹

At the tipple the coal is screened graded and loaded into cars. Mine run, nut and stock are the general grades produced. In general the tipples at the pits amount only to frames for the screens. It is the custom for the operating companies to depend upon the railroads to weigh their coal.

c. Comparison of the use of Steam-Shovels and relative production by states, 1917.

State	Number of Shovels	Net tons Mined	Average Per day	tonnage per man. Per year.	% of total prod.
Alabama	9	231,217	5.5	1,217	1.2
Illinois	11	542,801	9.3	1,821	.6
Indiana	26	1,273,253	9.1	1,675	4.8
Kansas	26	806,985	5.5	988	11.2
Missouri	30	1,139,000	5.4	1,010	20.0
Ohio	36	2,249,181	7.4	1,108	3.1
Oklahoma	5	155,740	6.7	1,189	3.5
Penn.	33	349,944	3.5	468	.2

Bituminous Coal Mined by Other Methods, 1917.

State	Total net tonnage	Percentage mined by hand	Percentage mined by machine	Percent. mined "shot off"
Alabama	20,068,074	26.6	30.1	42.0
Illinois	86,199,387	9.9	56.3	32.8

1. Brown and Carpenter, pp. 19-20

2. United States Geographical Survey, Mineral Resources, Part II, p. 940.

Indiana	26,539,329	8.1	54.1	32.5
Kansas	7,184,975	21.1	.5	68.8
Missouri	5,670,549	19.4	19.9	36.7
Ohio	40,748,734	4.0	87.9	3.3
Oklahoma	4,386,844	.5	36.6	59.0
Penn.	172,448,142	36.8	55.4	7.2

An analysis of these statistics shows that machine mining was the predominating method of the east while in the practice of shooting off the solid prevailed in the western region of the interior province. That "Shooting off the solid is dangerous" is attested by the fact that from 1902 to 1913 66 shot-firers were killed while during the winter of 1911-12 alone 10 shot firers were killed. Previous to 1915 any attempt to introduce mechanical shot-firers or change the system in any way was met by the miners opposition,¹ but by 1918 the district convention concurred by a unanimous vote in the recommendation of President Howat that the Kansas Legislature be petitioned to pass an act compelling all coal companies where shots are fired in the State to equip their mines with up-to-date shot firing machines. The operators, however, opposed the passage of this act and were successful in having it defeated. Mr. Howat recommended at the 1920 Fourteenth District Convention of the miners that the fight for the enactment of this law to conserve human life be ²

1. Brown and Carpenter, pp. 55-56.

2. Report of Alexander Howat to 18th 14th District Convention, pp. 5-8.

continued.

It should be kept in mind that the above statistics refer to the total coal production of Kansas. Besides the Cherokee and Crawford County Field there are two other producing centers in the State, the Osage and Leavenworth Districts. However, in 1915 as already mentioned, 94% of the total production in Kansas came from the southeastern section while today the proportion is even greater, the Osage region in particular having actually declined in the tonnage produced the rate of decline being 26 per cent in 1917. The coal of the southeast district is the best of the state, it being of good bituminous quality, fairly easily mined, roof and floor conditions are excellent.. Some of the coal produced, due to its freedom from coking tendency, is locally known as dead and is used by the zinc smelters in and around Pittsburg.¹

The second of importance of the coal areas of Kansas is that adjacent to Leavenworth and Atchison in the northeast corner of the state where a thin coal seam is found at a depth of from 700 to 1500 feet. This district is the only place in which deep shaft mining is carried on in the western interior coal field.

1.1912, United States Geographical Survey,
Part II-Not-metals, pp.140-141.

Difficulties, such as extreme pressure causing the lateral walls of the entires to cave in and the floor to swell as wehl as a temperature of 78.8 degrees F. prevent the active development of this field.¹

The third district and last of any importance commercially is in the eastern central part of the state, chiefly in Osage County. The coal seam worked in this area is only 22 inches thick, but as it lies at a comparatively shallow depth many local mines abound, indeed more mines are in active operation in the Osage district than in the other two combined. However, they are small and are worked chiefly for local consumption.²

4. Statistics of Coal Production and Consumption in Kansas.

The earliest statistics of Kansas coal production show that the state produced in 1869 a total of 36,891 tons. The production from 1870 to 1880 has been estimated from the best sources available to the United States Geological Survey, and since 1882 the Survey has collected the data.

Coal Production in Kansas by Representative Years.³

1. Young, C.M., The Atchinson Deepest Bituminous Coal Mine in the United States, Mines and Minerals, Vol. 27, p. 537.
2. 1912, United States Geological Survey, Mineral Resources, Part II, Non-metals, page. 140.
3. Ibid. pp. 141-142.

OUTPUT OF THE STATE IN SHORT TONS.^{1.}

Year	Production	Crawford County	Percentage	
			of total of state	Combined
1897	2,291,806	1,590,620	48.32	
1900	4,269,716	2,335,998	54.71	
1909	5,727,650	3,586,766	61.39	
1910	5,135,391	3,374,069	65.91	
1912	6,350,396	3,818,750	60.13	
1913	7,090,579	4,318,731	60.90	
Year	Production	Cherokee County	% of total	% of total
1897	1,061,620		32.24	80.64
1900	1,357,631		31.79	85.50
1909	1,796,734		31.36	92.75
1910	1,450,809		28.31	94.92
1912	2,154,372		33.92	94.05
1913	2,332,920		32.90	93.80

Year	Quantity (net tons)	year	Quantity (net tons)	
1870	32,938	1905	6,423,979	
1880	771,442	1910	4,921,451	
1890	2,259,992	1915	6,824,474	
1900	4,467,870	1917	7,184,975	2.

An extraordinary period of prosperity in the coal mining industry began in 1904 and continued uninterrupted until the maximum amount ever produced in Kansas was reached in 1907 when 7,322,449 tons were mined. This period of prosperity corresponds with the commercial expansion of the country as a whole terminating in the panic of 1907.

1. United States Geological Survey.
Mineral Resources of the United States,
1912, Part II, Non-Metals, pp. 141-142.
2. Kansas Department of Labor 13th Annual
Report, 1914, p. 249.

1.

Value of Coal Produced in Kansas in 1917.

County	Loaded at Mines for Shipment.	Sold to local trade and used by employees	Used at Mines for Steam	Total Value	Average value per ton.
Cherokee	\$3,071,624	\$39,110	\$74,641	\$3,185,375	\$2.28
Crawford	12,116,085	195,649	254,861	12,566,995	2.28
Leavenwth	311,654	136,394	14,763	462,811	2.92
Linn and Osage	308,586	61,112	737	370,435	3.56
Other		33,061		33,061	3.07
	<u>15,807,949</u>	<u>465,326</u>	<u>345,002</u>	<u>16,618,277</u>	<u>2.31</u>
Average value per ton	2.31	2.89	1.86	2.31	

2.

Coal Produced in Kansas in 1917

County	Loaded at mines for shipment. (net tons)	Sold to local trade, and used by employees. (net tons)	Used at mines for steam and heat. (net tons)	Total Quantity (net tons)
Cherokee	1,349,607	10,978	35,810	1,396,395
Crawford	5,295,453	74,148	143,955	5,513,566
Leavenworth	107,878	45,516	5,315	158,709
Linn and Osage	85,569	19,582	384	105,535
Small mines		10,870		10,880
Total	<u>6,838,507</u>	<u>161,004</u>	<u>185,464</u>	<u>7,184,975</u>
State pro- duction, '16	6,577,064	145,054	159,338	6,881,455

Kansas ranks twelfth in coal production among the states of the United States. The States above her in order of production are Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Illinois, Ohio, Kentucky, Alabama, Colorado, Virginia, Wyoming, and Iowa.

2.

1. Kansas Dept. of Labor 13th Annual Report, 1914, page 249.
2. United States Geological Survey, Mineral Resources of the United States, 1917, Part II, page 990.

Distribution of coal mined in Kansas in 1917.^{1.}

	Quantity (net tons)	Percentage of total.
Used in Kansas:		
Used at mines for steam and heat--	185,464	
Sold to local trade, not shipped---	161,004	
Shipped to Kansas points -----	2,090,326	
	<u>2,436,794</u>	<u>33.9</u>
Shipped to other states by rail:		
Arkansas-----	2,000	
Colorado-----	1,000	
Iowa-----	81,000	
Missouri-----	792,000	
Nebraska-----	556,000	
Oklahoma-----	116,000	
	<u>1,548,000</u>	<u>21.6</u>
Used by railroads, all rail delivery	3,200,181	44.5
	<u>7,184,975</u>	<u>100.0</u>

"Kansas supplies coal to a considerable part of the Mississippi Valley section from Omaha south. Nearly 34 per cent of the entire output in 1917 was used in Kansas, mainly in the eastern half of the state, and 22 per cent went to other states, largely to Missouri and Nebraska. The railroads took the remainder, 44 per cent of the total." 1.

Source of Coal Deliveries for Consumption in Kansas, 1917.^{2.}

Source	Quantity (net tons)
Arkansas	117,000
Colorado	600,000
Illinois	107,000
Iowa	15,000
Kansas	2,436,794
Kentucky, Northeastern	27,000
Kentucky, Southwestern	27,000
Kentucky, Western	15,000
Missouri	261,000
Mexico (New)	94,000
Oklahoma	51,000
Utah and Southern Wyoming	10,000
Lake docks	30
	<u>37760,824</u>

1. United States Geological Survey, Coal in 1917, Part B, Distribution and Consumption, page 1238.

2. Ibid. page, 1256.

CHAPTER II.

KANSAS LABOR LAW AS IT AFFECTED THE MINER PRECEDING THE INDUSTRIAL COURT LAW.

1. Early Labor Legislation in Kansas.

About 1885 the people of Kansas began to feel the necessity for a more adequate legal supervision of the conditions of labor. Toward this end in 1885 there was enacted the first law of the state dealing strictly with this problem by the creation of a Bureau of Labor Statistics. The statute defined the functions of the Bureau as follows: "To collect, assort, systematize, and present in annual reports to the governor, to be biennially transmitted to the legislature, statistical details relating to all departments of labor and industrial pursuits in the state, especially in their relation to the commercial, industrial, social, educational, and sanitary conditions of the laboring classes, and to the permanent prosperity of the productive industries of the state." ¹.

For thirteen years until 1897 the Bureau of Labor Statistics operated under the above mentioned law. An important forward step marked the year 1898 when a new law was enacted creating the State Society

1. § 26th Annual Report, Kansas Bureau Labor, 1910.

of Labor and Industry which was to be composed of Labor and Industrial associations throughout the state having for their purpose the investigation of economic, commercial, and industrial pursuits. The law conferred upon this state society the authority to select their officers, the secretary and assistant secretary of which became ex officio Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner of Labor, also a state factory and an assistant state factory inspector.¹ This act in effect divorced the department from the evils of partisan politics.

2. The Law as Related to the Miner.

In 1915 a state department of Labor and Industry was created with authority to collect statistics, conduct investigations, and make recommendations concerning laws related to the welfare of labor. Mine Labor is specifically included in this act. The Department of Labor and Industry is placed by this statute under the control of a commissioner who is appointed by the Governor for a term of two years. In addition to minor clerical appointees the commissioner is empowered to appoint an assistant commissioner, "Who shall have had at least five years practical experience as a miner, particularly in the coal mines,

1." 26th Annual Report, Kansas Bureau of Labor, 1910.

and have been a resident of the Statè of Kansas for at least two years immediately preceding his appointment." The commissioner also appoints five deputy state mine inspectors, and such other special agents as may be necessary in the mines. ^{1.}

The position of the state mine inspector formerly was considered by the unions as a political plum. They always saw to it that some good union man secured the place as a fitting reward, and furthermore it became customary for the office to be passed around among the deserving, one person never holding it over two years. The result was incompetent officials who during their term of office scarcely became acquainted with even their routing duties.

Nevertheless the unions were exceeding^{ly} bitter in their attitude toward Governor Hodges who was instrumental in securing a law authorizing the state commissioner of labor to appoint the state mine inspector.

The expected happened. The office freed from union domination has vastly increased its efficiency and renders a much higher type of service to all parties concerned. The unions have come to see the advantages in the present system, for which credit is chiefly due

1. Chapter 14, Laws of 1915, General Statutes of Kansas, 10414-10417.

to James Sherwood, the present inspector, who though retaining his membership in the United Mine Workers of America is a very judicious man. Both employers and employees agree that he has accorded to them a firm but fair treatment in the administration of his official duties.

a. General Extent of Legislation.

Mining law of the state covers many subjects from methods of technique, illustrated by provisions regarding room and pillar system, shot-firing, telephone systems in mines, escape shafts, use of dynamite, black powder and other explosives to an attempt to specify matters related to the health and welfare of the miner as acts of miner endangering life, mine rescue work, examining board for the certification of miners, and bathhouses at coal mines. The mining law of the state has become so complicated and conflicting that the Inspector of coal mines pointed out in the 1915 Report that, "Our mining laws certainly need revising for they have been amended at different times to such an extent that they conflict with each other, and a person does not know which law is in effect." In answer to this need a state mining commission was created in 1917 to revise

existing laws and draft a new code. This commission consisted of six members two miners, two operators, and two qualified men one of whom was a graduate and experienced mining engineer.¹ However the legislature has thus far not seen fit to revise the law, many inconsistencies and indefinite wording persist.

b. Child Labor.

Important phases of an act of 1917 are provisions relating to child labor in the mines, children under 16 are prohibited from working in any capacity in the mines. Adequate machinery is provided for the enforcement of this provision. County superintendents of schools are instructed to furnish certificates certifying to the fact that the child is over 16. The inspector of mines and deputies are required to inspect working permits and certificates and to examine children employed in the mines in order to insure that they are over 16. It becomes the duty of the county attorney to bring all prosecutions.

c. Use of Explosives.

Section 308, Chapter 26, Article 4 of the Kansas Labor Laws forbids the use of dynamite or other

1. Laws of Kansas, 1917, Chapter 238.

detonating explosives in the mines unless such use be under rules and regulations agreed upon between miners and operators, and submitted in written form for the approval of the state mining inspector.

d. Examining Board.

Chapter 237 of the Laws of 1917 provides for the creation of an examining board for the certification of certain types of skilled mine labor. This board consists of five members, four being appointed by the governor and the fifth being chosen by these four. The governor's appointees are limited to two miners and two coal operators. Since January 1, 1919, ^{the date} this law went into effect, no shot firers, shot inspectors, gas men, fire bosses, hoisting engineers, mine foremen, or assistant mine foremen are to be employed unless examined by the board and granted certificates. All applicants for examination are required to read and write the English language, be of good moral character, and citizens of the United States, and must in every case be above 21 years of age. Their fitness for the duties of the position which they desire is determined by a thorough examination.

e. Working Conditions, Sanitation, Ventilation.

In 1913 the state mine inspector was forced

to require the closing of 12 of the largest mines of the state, throwing 3,000 men out of employment for over five months, because of the use of inadequate ventilating systems in violation of law. However, by the following year the vast majority of the Kansas mines were well ventilated. The maintainance of bathhouses at the mines for the use of the miners previous to 1913 when the inspector took steps to enforce the law rigorously was deplorable. The result today is that the bathhouses are in uniformly good condition.^{1.}

f. Accident Prevention, Safety First.

Too great care in the prevention of accidents cannot be exercised in the guarding against the many and varied dangers that continually beset the miners. Every effort needs to be exercised by the operators to insure observance of the safety first principle in the management of the mines, and the individual worker should use extreme caution in his daily labor.

g. Types of Accidents, Causes, and Advisable Legal Safeguards.

Falls of Roof.

Accidents resulting from falls of roof equal about fifty per cent of the total, of this number about

1. 28th Annual Report Kansas Bureau of Labor, 1913, pages 231-257.

85% occur at the miner's "working face." To avoid accidents of this nature the management should timber all loose rocks on roadways, and be assured that the miners are provided with sufficient suitable timbers for use in the mines, and that the timbers are being properly used, and also be certain that the miner is availing himself of all other means of making his place safe and secure before attempting to do any work.

Shot Firing.

The second greatest danger in the mines attends the shotfirer in the performance of his duty. "The defective and short fuse, the pocket of gas at the working face, and the flying coal from the shots after the explosion are some of the greatest dangers he has to contend with, but the mine explosion which rages through the mine with the speed and fury of a tornado and which dashes to death or inflicts fatal burns to the victims, who may be in its path, or suffocates them with the deadly afterdamp of the explosion, is the ever-present dread of the shot-firer."^{1.}

Methods utilized in the Crawford and Cherokee district to prevent explosions, and on the whole con-

1. 29th Annual Report Kansas Bureau of Labor 1913, pages 234-245.

tributing toward this end are those reducing the volume and velocity of the air at firing time, clearing the passageways and sprinkling them thoroughly and humidifying the air by means of heaters and steampipes.¹ However the only way to eliminate all such risks is to install electric shot firing devices instead of the human shot firer. From 1903 to 1913 sixty shot-firers lost their lives in the Kansas mines alone from explosions. The United Mine Workers of District 14 and the operators have been unable to come to an agreement as to the wages of the men operating shot-firing machines though both sides claim that they will favor the adoption of a law requiring the use of such machines in the mines. The State mine inspector and the miners unite in joint demand for the enactment of such a law.²

Fire Damp.

Fire damp is one of the greatest factors of danger in the deep mines of Crawford county, and at times has been generated in the mines in alarming quantities. Where fire damp is apt to be present additional precautions must be taken. Electric cap lamps should always be used, even if the mine be thoroughly inspected by gas man or fire boss, for there is the ever

1. Brett, Lawrence: The Cause and Prevention of Coal Mine Accidents. Thesis Kansas University of School of Engineering, 1906.

2. 29th Annual Report Kansas State Department of Labor. 1913, pages 234-235.

persistent danger of a driller striking a gas feeder in which case open lamps would ignite the gas and endanger the lives of all men in the mines.

Coal Dust.

A number of explosions have been traced to coal dust, particularly that dust lying on props, ribs, walls of rooms or entries or flating in the air, it is further well known that dust found on roadways is not nearly as dangerous due to the reason that roadway dust is mixed with a considerable amount of powered rock and is often moist. Daily washing down of places where the dust accumulates will materially less^aen^{en} this danger.^{1.}

In 1916 the State mine Inspector reported that the kegs of black powder used in the mines were much too large for the miner to use in the mines. They do not need over eight pounds a day per man, yet they are obliged to purchase 25 pound kegs to obtain an amount necessary for the next day's work. The custom among the miners is to leave the unused portion of the powder in the keg. This powder may be ignited from one cause or another and may cause great loss of life. To eliminate danger relative to the use of powder these

kegs should be reduced to $12\frac{1}{2}$ pounds in size and be delivered by the operator to the working place of the miner.^{1.}

3. Mine Inspection.

To make a success of coal mine inspection in the State it is first essential that the mining laws be practical and adapted to local Kansas conditions, and second it is necessary that the laws be complied with by the operator and miner alike.

To attain this end it is essential that the miner and operator cooperate with the mine inspection department to maintain proper discipline, remedy dangerous conditions in and about the mines, and enforce all orders of the mine inspectors. To aid the mine inspector in enforcing his recommendations it is necessary that certain police powers of the state be conferred upon him by law. The mine inspector should be a disinterested party, honest and faithful in his work, and have the best interest of the coal industry at heart, and further he ought to satisfy himself as to the safety of the men employed in and around the mines.

1. 24th Annual Report Kansas Inspector of Coal Mines, 1916, pages 10-11.
2. 24th Annual Report Kansas Inspector of Coal Mines, 1916, pages 29.

CHAPTER III.

ORGANIZATION OF THE MINERS' UNION.

1. The United Mine Workers of America.

In order to understand the effective force behind the District in management of the locals, and in making the joint interstate agreement as well as to observe the causes which hold 400,000 men in line in time of peace and industrial war it is necessary that some consideration be given to the International of the United Mine Workers of America. To get at the foundation or the existing cause of this organization nothing will give us a better conception than a view of its purposes as stated in the organization's constitution.

2. Purposes of the United Mine Workers of America.

1. "To unite in one organization regardless of creed, color, or nationality all workmen eligible for membership in and around the coal mines, coal washers, and coke ovens on the American continent.

2. "To increase wages and improve the conditions of employment for our members by legislation, conciliation, joint agreements, or strikes.

3. "To demand not more than eight hours from bank to bank in each 24 hours shall be worked by members of our organization.

1. Suffern: Conciliation and Arbitration in the Coal Industry of America, p.109.

4. "To strive for a minimum wage scale for all members of our craft.
5. "To provide for the education of our children by lawfully prohibiting their employment until they have reached at least 16 years of age.
6. "To secure equitable statutory old age pension and Workmen's compensation laws.
7. "To enforce existing just laws and to secure the repeal of those which are unjust.
8. "To secure by legislative enactment law protecting the limbs, lives, and health of our members; establish our right to organize; prohibiting the use of deception to secure strikebreakers; preventing the employment of armed guards during labor disputes; and such other legislation as will be beneficial to the members of our craft."

3. Units of Organization.

(a) International.

The organization of the Bituminous Coal Miner's Union is federal in character, the International, so called since 1905 when Canadian unions became eligible for membership, has jurisdiction over all other units and all questions of disputes, grievances, and appeals under the constitution are subject to its jurisdiction limited only the terms of the joint agreement. The decision of the executive board is final unless reversed by the International
1.
Convention.

1. Suffern: Conciliation and Arbitration in the Coal Industry of America, p.110.

(b) Districts.

The extent of the districts is determined by the international officers. They may coincide with the boundaries of a state as in Illinois, or there may be several districts in one state as in Pennsylvania, or one district may compose several states as, for instance, District number 15 which includes Utah, Colorado, and New Mexico. The Governing bodies of these districts may adopt such rules and regulations, as are not in conflict with the jurisdiction of the international or the provisions of the joint agreement. Sub-districts are created in the extra large districts as in Illinois with its 90,000 union miners.

(c) Local Unions.

The local is the basic unit upon which other jurisdictions are constructed. Its organization and jurisdiction extends over but one mine. Formerly the local was all powerful, and it still possesses much power when dealing with its local officials, but from necessity it has been found essential to delegate much power to the higher units in order to be able to present a united front and to cope with many of the problems of the industry.

It is in the local that the individual miner

of foreign birth usually receives his first training in citizenship and loyalty. Here it is that he learns to express himself and to think, to him it means self-education. By the use of the referendum in confirming policies the average individual derives training in judgment that could scarcely be gained by the miner in any other way.

A local cannot have fewer than 10 members. It is organized along industrial rather than trade lines, every man or boy working in a skilled or unskilled occupation in or about the mines is eligible¹ for membership. A few of the occupations represented in a normal local are the engineer, fireman, ashman, barnman, teamster, blacksmith, carpenter, gateman, oiler, inspector, loader, car driver, washeryman, laborer, slate picker, miner, or any of more than a score of others. No distinction for eligiblility is made on account of race, color or nationality, as far back as 1903 representatives of twenty different nationalities speaking twenty different languages were to be found² in the American locals.

4. Officers.

(a) Qualifications.

1.Suffern: Conciliation and Arbitration in the Coal Industry of America. page 117.

2.Commons,J.R. Trade Unionism and Labor Problems,p.20.

Qualifications for international officers (which are a president, secretary-treasurer, three tellers, three auditors, seven delegates to the American Federation of Labor, and the executive board composed of one member from each district) are: (1) Member of union for three consecutive years, (2) five years experience as a mine worker and (3) a clear record as to handling^(of) organization's funds.

(b) Duties of the officers.

President: Presides over the international convention and executive board meetings, fills vacancies in international offices except in case of executive board members, and may for sufficient cause remove international officers. "In short he is responsible for general supervision of the organization and is delegated sufficient authority to prevent the evils that occur as a result of divided leadership or lack of unified^{1.} policy."

Professor Commons says that the vesting of such great power in the hands of one man is primarily due to the necessity of undivided leadership in time of strike. "when for all practical purposes the union becomes a military organization in the control of which

1. Suffern: Conciliation and Arbitration in the Coal Industry of America, Page 117.

there must not be the least possibility of undivided
2.
leadership."

Vice-President: This official works under the direction of the president, devotes his time particularly to the settlement of disputes, and is eligible for the presidency in case the office becomes vacant during the term of the incumbent.

Secretary-treasurer: This officer has charge of the records of the organization and is guardian of its finances. He also has supervision over locals and their reports, and penalizes them for violation of rules. The locals are especially prone to make a smaller return of paid up membership than is actually the case except before a national convention when they make them as large as possible in order to secure a greater representation. Assessments for the international are pro rated among the locals according to membership hence the desire of the local to return a small membership in order to keep their funds at home. It is the duty of the secretary-treasurer to prevent such irregularities.

The Executive Board: In the intervals between the international convention the executive board has,

"full power to direct the workings of the organization."

In addition to a member for each district the personnel of this board includes the president, vice-president, and secretary-treasurer. It holds the funds of the organization in trust, levies and collects assessments but not for a period exceeding two months unless authorized by a referendum vote of the members. It may recommend the calling of a strike by a two-thirds vote, but in no case may it issue the call until approved by a referendum.

The Organizers, Function and Importance: The president is empowered by the constitution to appoint organizers, but from this simple statement nothing could be gathered as to their importance. "The brunt of this battle for the extension of unionism is borne by the organizers. They are the missionaries or apostles of the faith."

Upon entering virgin territory they meet with the opposition of both sides, but by congregating with the men, speaking to them in public and private, and delivering free literature of unionism they disseminate their teachings until a small group is induced to form a local and apply for a charter from the international. Upon increase of membership demand of re-

1. Suffern: Conciliation and Arbitration in the Coal Industry of America. Page 110.

cognition by the operator is made, usually however it takes a local strike and the aid of the international before this point is won.^{1.}

(c) Nomination and Election of Officers.

Nomination.

The significance of the democracy of the miner's union is in no way more manifest than in the nomination and election of officers. Twenty weeks preceeding election nomination blanks are sent out to individual members, and these must be returned within five weeks. At least ten days before the close of nominations the secretary notifies the candidates^d who have been nominated by five or more local unions. The candidate may then officially accept or refuse the nomination, but after an acceptance is on^e made he is not allowed to withdraw.^{2.}

Elections.

The international officers are elected for two year terms by vote of all members in good standing. After the votes are cast at the local, which serves as a voting precinct, they are tabulated by from three to

1. Commons: Trade Unionism and Labor Problems, page 23.

2. Suffern: Conciliation and Arbitration in the Coal Industry of America, page 119-120

six tellers elected by the locals. These officers are held strictly to account if evidence of fraud be present in the returns. Those responsible are "tried by the international executive board, and fined, suspended, or expelled as the magnitude of the trans-^{1.}gression may warrant.

Candidates receiving a plurality of the votes cast are declared elected; if no candidate receives a plurality another election is held. The recall of international officers by referendum vote of 30 per cent of the membership is provided by the constitution of 1912.

5. THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION.

(a) Powers.

The extent to which the democratic control of the organization is carried is further illustrated by the power granted to the international convention. "The Convention is the supreme body of the organization and is limited only on measures which are submitted by referendum vote."^{1.} The convention has the power to amend or revise the constitution and furthermore it may reverse any action or policy of the officials.

(b) Representation.

1. Suffern: Conciliation and Arbitration in the Coal Industry of America, page 122.

Local unions are allowed one vote for every one hundred members or less, and one additional vote for each 100 members or fraction thereof, but no one delegate is allowed more than five votes.

Representation of a local is based upon paid up membership for a period of three months previous to the convention. Locals in arrears for taxes and assessment for two months preceding the convention are not allowed representation. A person is not eligible to act as a delegate unless he has attended one half of the meetings of the local for six months previous to the convention. Delegates can only be elected by an official meeting of the local union held for that specific purpose, "No other meeting than the first advertised and called is recognized as an official meeting for the election of delegates to the convention. 1.

6. SPECIAL CONVENTIONS.

Special conventions may be called by the president when five or more districts request it, providing that reasonable ground be given in the petitions for convening it, however, the president is expected to use his discretion as to the need of issuing the call.

7. Strikes.

1. Suffern: Arbitration and Conciliation in the Coal Industry of America, page 124.

The United Mine Workers have learned by experience that the strike at the best is an expensive weapon, and to be called only as a last resort; this is substantiated by the fact that general strikes must be declared by a referendum vote. " The referendum relieves the conservative leaders from the responsibility of declaring a strike and robs the radical leaders of undue power but when conditions have arisen that stir the rank and file to the fighting point, the referendum is a fair indication as to the extent of the discontent of the industry." 1.

Local strikes are supported by the international executive board only when its sanction has previously been secured. Expenditures of locals for strike purposes must be itemized in detail on report blanks furnished by the international. Only by this means may the local hope to gain financial support.

8. Resume'

A proper understanding of the effectiveness of this organization and its solidarity in collective bargaining is necessary to gain a conception of the real forces lying behind the arguments of the leaders in the joint conference. The efficient financial system which

1. Suffern: Arbitration and Conciliation in the Coal Industry of America, page 124.

it has created enables it to prepare for and carry on a protracted struggle. The democratic control of the union policies gives the leaders greater and more vital power than they could possess under a regime in which their effectiveness depended upon their ability to sway the rank and file.^{1.} "The United Mine Workers of America is one of the most democratic organization in the world, but has the possibility of becoming all at once the most autocratic."^{2.} This condition results from the necessity of presenting a united effort in time of strike. "Government by discussion^{or} by referendum weakens a nation facing a military crisis, or a labor union engaged in a bitter industrial conflict."^{2.}

Considering the results of this organization we find a remarkable record of achievement. From the strike of 1897 to 1905 the United Mine workers extended the eight hour day into the mines of Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Kentucky, and part of Tennessee; further in this same period they secured needed wage increases for employees in these districts from 13 to over 30 per cent. Since 1898 the membership of the United Mine Workers has grown rapidly. With a beginning of 43,000 in that year the membership numbered 200,000 in 1903, and is now 425,000.^{3.}

1. Suffern: Conciliation and Arbitration in the Coal Industry of America, page 124.
2. Carlton, Frank Tracy, The History and Problems of organized Labor, page 103.
3. Commons, J.R. Trade Unionism and Labor Problems, p.32.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FOURTEENTH DISTRICT OF THE UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA.

I. HISTORY OF THE FOURTEENTH DISTRICT.

A. Early Organizations of Labor.

The first organization among the coal miners of Kansas following ^{1.}unsuccessful grange activities in the early eighties, was the Cherokee and Crawford County Miners' Union, affiliated with the Knights of Labor, organized at Stippeville in 1893. Although the spirit of organization was strong, local leadership was lacking, hence dependence was placed upon outside organizers. At this time the ten hour day in the mines prevailed and the going wage of a miner was about \$2.00 a day. A strike called by this local union to gain improved working conditions and higher wages resulted in a disastrous failure, largely due to a falling market and small industrial demand for coal though other contributing factors were the lack of coordinated effort and mismanagement of the strike by the union officials. A few southern negroes were imported by the operators as strike breakers, but no violence occurred.

1. Report of H.W. Shideler, member of Kansas House of Representatives and Publisher of the Girard Press.
(Personal interview)

The defeat of their first strike caused the death of the movement until 1896 when C.J. Derbon, an operator recognized a mine union local. The following year attempts were resumed upon a larger scale with the organization of the National Progressive Miners Union. To show its power and to gain recognition this union called a strike in the first year of its organization, 1897, to enforce the principle of collective bargaining.^{1.} The strike gained most headway in Cherokee County, the southern end of the Kansas Coal Field, where mining was more developed at this stage due to the fact that the coal bed here lies closer to the surface. Once again, due to mismanagement of the strike and small industrial demand for coal, the miners failed to carry the day and the result was dissolution of their union.^{2.}

The following year, 1898, the United Mine Workers of America, sent organizers into this field who were successful in the organization of numbers of locals. In this year the 14th district was organized from an older district including the entire states of Kansas and Missouri. It was given its present jurisdiction over the mine labor in the coal mines of several

1. 14th Annual Report Kansas Bureau of Labor, 1898.

2. 14th Annual Report Kansas Bureau of Labor 1898.

southwestern counties of Missouri and all of Kansas with the exception of the mines in the northeastern part of the state. Arthur Connery was elected first president of the newly organized district, but resigned after six weeks service, his office then being filled for two weeks by vice-president O'Donnel, when the second officially elected president, W.T. Wright, assumed office. Connery, though a successful labor agitator, was unable to get along with the other officials while O'Donnel, who did not possess the qualifications of Wright, failed of election. For seventeen years Wright had been active in Miner' organization of Iowa, seven of these year he was a state lecturer for the Knights of Labor and had risen to the position of State Master Workman having 63,000 men under his authority. Many Iowa miners who knew of Wright were working in the district hence, though but a recent arrival, he easily carried the election. Wright at once devoted himself to making the district completely organized and during his one year term succeeded with a few exception.

B. Strikes for Recognition.

- A certain company recognizing the union in
1. Report of W.T. Wright, Third 14th District President, (Personal Interview).

Kansas refused to do so in the Indian Territory where the miners were striking for recognition and improved working conditions and were alleging brutal treatment. The strikers appealed to the Kansas miners to cease working for this corporation which by their continued production in the Kansas mines was able to deny the demands of the strikers. Every effort was made in numerous joint conferences to reach an agreement, but to no avail, a strike was called and much to the surprise of the operators association, which had assumed the burden of settling the above grievance, the walkout was complete even in those mines which were not unionized. The Big Four strike, as it came to be called, began on May 13, 1899 and continued throughout the summer. Operators favorable to the miners cause, however, came to terms early in the summer and a joint agreement was drafted that in many ways merits consideration; the eight hour day was to be in effect after October 1st; each side was to pledge itself to refer disputes to a arbitration committee composed of two members representing the operators, two the miners, and one to be chosen by these four, and there was to be no stoppage of work or striking pending the decision of this board whose majority decision was to be binding on both sides.

1. Report of W.T.Wright, Former District President.

The usual procedure of plastering the union officials with injunctions was followed in this case. The state government at this time favored the cause of organized labor. The labor commissioner of the state was appointed as mediator,^{1.} but his efforts with no power to enforce awards came to nothing and the strike in the Big Four mines lasted for over eighteen months. Negro strike breakers were imported to operate the mines of the Big Four companies, stockades were erected to house these workers, and other precautions were taken but no violence occurred. The success of this attempt to operate in spite of the union may be judged from the fact that whereas the Big Four mines formerly produced 49 per cent of the coal in the district their rank at this time sank to 15 per cent while the coal produced from the mines acknowledging the United Mine Workers increased from 51 per cent to 85 per cent.

Early in 1901 George Richardson became district president. He continued the policy of his predecessor in fighting the Big Four, but not for long, for soon one at a time the individual companies of this operators association began to recognize the union, the last to do so being the Kansas and Texas Coal Company on

1. 14th Annual Report Kansas Bureau of Labor, 1898.

October 3, 1903. Since this date the union contract has prevailed in all mines of southeastern Kansas. Mr. Richardson was re-elected president at the expiration of his first term of 18 months, six months being added to his original term of office. In his third and last term of office, several important provisions, for which Wright had successfully struggled, were omitted from the joint agreement drawn up with the operators. Aside from this and that he soon afterwards became an employee of the operators association and at present is their representative, Richardson served the miners well and left a clear record. An interesting side light on the man's character is his very pronounced antipathy toward socialism or anything suggesting it. However, Richardson was not the only mine union official to go over to the side of the operators for Harrigan, a later president of the 14th District has likewise become an officer of the Southwestern Interstate Operators Association.

C. The Administration of Howat.

Alexander Howat, who has been a member of the executive board for four years, became president in 1906, and has been elected and served continually since

1. Report of W.T. Wright, former president of District 14. (personal interview)

2.

with the exception of the term 1912-1914 in which he resigned after being elected due to bribery charges. The unexpired term was filled by Vice-president Harrigan. Howat was acquitted of the bribery charges although many rumors still persist concerning his alleged questionable conduct in union politics and finances. However, Howat has undoubtedly aided in securing many improvements in working conditions as well as wage advances for the miner. Under his direction strikes of several months duration were carried to a successful issue. ^{2.} in 1906 and 1910. A fuller account of Howat's work and personal characteristics will be found in the succeeding chapter.

D. Relative Strength of the United Mine Workers of America in Kansas.

The United Mine Workers of America have the largest membership of any labor union in Kansas. Practically the entire output of the mines in the state is by members of this organization. It is well to call attention here again to the fact that all the local mine unions of the state are included in District 14 save those at Leavenworth and Atchinson which are in District 25. In 1912 there were 83 locals with a total

2. Report of H.W. Shideler, Publisher of the Girard Press and member of the Kansas House of Representatives, (personal interview)

reported membership of 10,405 in District 14. By 1916 the District included 90 Kansas and 7 Missouri locals with a paid up membership of 10,313 and 654 respectively.^{1.} Approximate figures for 1920 are 12,000 members of which about 1,000 are from the state of Missouri.^{2.}

The United Mine Workers of Kansas were slow to affiliate with the Kansas State Federation of Labor. However, by 1916 this action had been accomplished and as one would naturally expect the influence of the Federation was greatly increased.^{1.}

1. Combined 31st and 32d Annual Reports, 1915 and 1916. Kansas Department of Labor and Industry.
2. Report of James Sherwood, State Mine Inspector. (personal interview)

II. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN THE
FOURTEENTH DISTRICT.

1. Territorial jurisdiction; types of mining.

The organization known as District Fourteen of the United Mine Workers of America has jurisdiction over all members and locals within the state of Kansas except Leavenworth county, and according to the constitution such other territory as has been or hereafter may be added to the district by the National Executive Board. Several counties in southwestern Missouri are at present a part of district fourteen.

A. Ownership and management of mines.

In Cherokee and Crawford counties of Kansas there are 189 deep mines and 40 strip pits. The chief owners and operators of these mines are as follows:

Central Coal and Coke Company	5 mines.
Sheridan Coal Company	11 mines.
Western Coal Mining Company	9 mines.
Wier Coal Co. (Affiliated with the Western Coal Mining Company)	2 mines.
Clemons Coal Company	5 mines.
J.R. Crow Coal Company	5 mines.
Peet Russel Coal Company	4 mines.
Jackson-Walker Coal Company	4 mines.
Girard Coal Company	3 mines.

Several of the above companies operate strip pits in addition to their deep mines which alone are listed in the table. Since the ownership is so scattered and many mines are individually owned by separate corporations it would appear that there is little or

no concentration of ownership in these counties.

B. Character of coal produced and its market.

The production of coal in 1918 reached 7½ million tons, but for 1919 it will not exceed 5 or 6 million due to the great strike. The mines of the Central Coke and Coal Company which are among the largest producers were closed on strike from July to the last of December. The great bulk of the coal mined in this territory is shipped to Kansas City where it is marketed to the railroads as steaming coal and also sold for domestic and factory use much of it being reshipped to Missouri valley points. Crawford county produces the best coal of the central west for the production of steam.

Approximately \$1,000,000 in capital is required to equip an average deep shaft mine in this district. Some of the steam shovels alone represent an outlay of \$140,000. The stock of the majority of the coal mining corporations is closely held much of it never being offered on the market.^{1.} Railroads realizing the superior steaming qualities of this coal have acquired large blocks of stock in the mining companies.^{2.}

2. Organizations of Capital and Labor.

The Southwestern Interstate Coal Operators Association represents the organization of the coal

1. Report of W.T. Wright, Third Pres. Dist. 14 (Personal interview)
2. Report of James Sherwood, State Mine Insp. " "

mining companies corresponding with the United Mine Workers for the working-men. However, the operator's association is more than an agency for collective bargaining which is likewise true with the miners' union though collective bargaining called each into existence and still is their main function. The operators' association has come to serve as a statistical bureau collecting data respecting the production of coal, ownership and control of the mines, markets for coal and similiar matters. Chapter III specifies in detail the additional functions of the United Mine Workers. Because of these strong organizations conditions of work are remarkably uniform throughout the district. Minor details may vary as, for instance, each company carries its own employee compensation insurance, yet this charge costs all the mining corporations on the average of 10 cents per ton of coal mined.

The membership of District 14, United Mine workers of America is slightly in excess of 12,000 of which nearly 11,000 live and work in Cherokee and Crawford counties of Kansas.

A. Races.

Many races are represented among the miners

1. Report of James Sherwood, State Mine Inspector, (Personal interview)

of whom approximately 65 to 70 per cent are foreigners, while in Crawford County alone there are 38 different races working in the mines and as many languages or dialects are spoken.¹ The Italians are the most numerous, numbering over 50 per cent of the foreign population, the Austrians, French, Belgians, Germans, Welsh, Irish, Slavs, and a sprinkling of Scotch follow them in order of their importance. The Italians are subdivided into three classes the northern or Piedmonte, the middle or "Roman nosed" as they are called locally, and the southern or Sicilian. It is said that the farther north in the Italian peninsula the place of birth of an Italian the larger the stature, the fairer skinned, the better educated, the neater in person, the thriftier, and the more wholesome type of citizen he will become. The Southern Italins are prone to organize secret societies, thus they receive the name of blackhanders, frequently black hand letters are sent to members of their wown race threatening dire consequences if certain demands are not met. Occasionally an Italian is murdered, or perhaps only his place of business or residence is wrecked. In such cases county officials have found it impossible to secure incriminating evidence and since these offenses are perpetrated solely among members of the Italian race the officials after making a preliminary

1. County clerk, Crawford County (Personal interview)

investigation have adopted a "hands off" policy. Though the Italians are often suspicious of each other Americans are respected by them and need fear nothing from their members. They tend to quit the mines and engage in the petty mercantile business or agriculture as soon as they can accumulate the necessary funds to make the step. Many prosperous farms of Crawford county are now owned and well managed by Italians.¹

B. Immigration.

The employment of foreign labor in American mines has largely come about by reason of rapid expansion of the coal industry beginning about 1880. The Americanization of this great body and its relationship to accidents in the mines are two problems of prime importance. "Ignorance, dirty, and filthy living conditions, disregard for law and order, discontent and lack of civic interest lead to indifference and carelessness which are perhaps the greatest of all accident causes."

The great bulk of southern European immigration though having its initial start in 1880, has appeared in the past 18 years. English speaking races have to an increasing extent abandoned mining for more pleasant work of other kinds. Their places have been filled without difficulty by the recent immigrant.

1. Assistant County Attorney Burnett, Crawford County.
(personal interview)

Wages paid at the mines of the United States are highly attractive to the mass of agricultural laborers coming from southern Europe. Data collected by the Immigration Commission show that less than five per cent of the south[†] Italians and Croatians had mining experience in their native land as contrasted with the 80 per cent of the few Scotch and English miners still in the industry. An important effect of this southern European competition has been the preventing of the few English Scotch, and German immigrants from entering mining. Under the circumstances it is little wonder that many of the coal miners know almost nothing of rock formations, of fire damp, of the properties of coal dust, explosives, all matters of vital importance in preventing accidents.^{1.}

Mr. Albert H. Fay of the United States Bureau of Mines thinks that in nearly all cases where there appears to be encouraging civic activity on the part of foreigners, "it is nearly always due^{1.} not to their own intelligent efforts to attain citizenship and exercise its privilege, but to the influence of interested politicians who in many cases may be a leader of their own race; for example an intelligent banker or a steamship agent."

1. Fay, Albert H., Mine Accidents English Speaking vs. Non-English Speaking Employees. Coal Age, New York, November 13 and 20, 1919.

C. Religion.

Mr. Fay is also of the opinion that religion has but a slight hold on the immigrant due to indifference and poor places of worship. However, the various religious denominations can be important agents in teaching English and indicating to the foreigner his duties and privileges as an American citizen. The Catholic church is the strongest among the miners of the 14-th District though several others carry on religious work. The individual miner around Pittsburg, Kansas is said to be callous and indifferent in his attitude toward religion. This fact may perhaps be partially explained by the prevalence of socialism, with its attitude toward catholicism, and by the sharp contrast presented in the European style of worship and splendid religious edifices compared with the poor service and inhospitable church building of the average coal camp.

D. Civic Interest.

Generally speaking the miners of this district as a class come to make a very good type of citizen, they exercise the franchise, most of the foreigners becoming naturalized, maintain their own lodges, frequently assist in the establishment of a community house in their camps, and insist in giving their child-

dren an education. For the last named purpose very good elementary schools varying from one room to several are available at the camps. Foreign children are more regular in their attendance at these schools than are the children of American parentage, frequently a child of a miner will attend business college or the State Normal ^{and} Manual Training School at Pittsburg.

Great differences ^{exist} among camps and individuals in the condition of homes. Some are substantially built, well painted, and neatly kept, five or six room cottages, while others are mere weatherbeaten two and three room hovels, often housing two families. Ringo, located five miles east of Girard with its numerous well kept homes, each having a large grassy lawn, fruit trees, and ^{ens}gard^{ens} may be considered as the ideal type of a coal camp. At the other extreme is Edison with its huts clustered on barren ground and a few half starved cows wandering at large.

Women of the household engage in no outside occupation although there is scarcely a home but has several boarders or roomers. Many single men after working for a few years send to the old county for their betrothed while married men desiring to get a start in America leave their families in Europe, sending for them in a year or two. Naturally this policy results in a

preponderance of adult males.

Foreign born miners are largely induced to immigrate to this section by favorable accounts of their old neighbors. Thus the immigration of one man may lead to a heavy immigration from a certain community. In the early days of this field, foreigners came from the coal fields of Iowa, Illinois, Pennsylvania, but at the present time practically all come from the old country direct. They do not tend to drift from one section to another. but occasionally, it is said, purchase a small home in one of the camps and there they stay usually making no attempt to secure work in the summer when the mines are closed. Two reasons have been assigned for this condition: The miner as a rule has no knowledge of any other vocation as practiced in America, for though generally coming from a small European farm he is at a loss in operating American farm machinery and appears to be without mechanical adaptability. (2) A man accustomed to working underground cannot stand the summer heat in above ground occupations, he becomes temporarily unfit for mining if he works outside for any considerable length of time as for instance a summer. Many miners cultivate large gardens and truck patches though after April first, fishing is said to be the miners' favorite occupation.

E. Average Working Time and Income.

Normally before the war a miner worked an average in this district of but 150 days per annum. This total rose to about 200 days during the war years. Before the wage increase of 14 per cent allowed in December of 1919 the miner earned an average sum of \$108.00 per month for the working months, which totaled in 1917-1918 about \$975.00 per year after allowing for vacations, strikes, normal stoppage of mine work, etc. Shotfirers, engineers, and the more skilled miners of course earned considerable more. Despite these low wages, hard work, poor working and living conditions sons of foreigners, except the Italians as before mentioned, usually follow their fathers' occupation. This is one of the reasons why the market for mine labor is chronically overstocked. Each mine of the district has been able, as a rule, to have a long waiting list of applicants, though it is true many of them may be working in another mine and simply desire to make a change. James Sherwood, the state mine inspector, estimates that 1,000 miners could leave the district and not be missed in so far as the labor supply is concerned.

F. Socialism and Loyalty.

The foreigner soon picks up the rudiments of mining

and makes a good workmen. On the whole he is contented, if treated fairly, by company officials. However, let even so little evidence of exploitation or bad faith reach the foreign miner and he at once becomes suspicious, will not testify adequately before a court, or answer the questions of an investigator. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why the foreigner is so easily led by so called radicals. Though the Socialists have carried the county elections in years past, today ranking third in party strength, and the communist spirit has always been strong, going as far in several instances as the establishment of idealistic communistic villages, yet the individual miner is thoroughly loyal to the government, state and national, and subscribed liberally to the liberty loan and associated war charity drives.² It cannot be denied that many of the rank and file were opposed to Mr. Howat's influence in securing the through the action of the Fourteenth District Convention of March 8th, 1920 a contribution of 10,000 dollars to a Socialistic newspaper of Oklahoma. Other assessments of this nature have been common; for instance the convention in session voted an assessment of \$1.00 per member for the benefit of the Worlds War Veterans.

2. Assistant County Attorney Burnett,
Crawford County, (personal interview).

Lately a few of the older American miners of the district have expressed a desire for an impartial, thorough investigation of the District headquarters finances, as they said, several times considerable funds accumulated with the treasurer had disappeared. There were rumors that they had gone to finance socialistic and communistic schemes.

G. Possibilities for Promotion.

Promotion to positions of responsibility is not possible for an average miner, indeed, most of them do not desire it save as a rest for a year or so from digging coal. However, positions carrying much authority and responsibility in the coal mines are few while the first steps in the climb upward, such as to pit-boss, mine foremen, weighman, etc. pay no more than a good miner can earn and these latter though their duties frequently incur the enmity of their fellow miners whom they cannot meet on friendly terms at the local union hall as they, and all executive officials are barrèd from union membership. Still it is true that a majority of mine superintendents and a number of officials in the offices of operators are former mine laborers, while not a few mine bosses have grown old serving in this capacity. (Assistant County Attorney Burnet, Crawford County. Personal interview.)

CHAPTER V.

THE GREAT BITUMINOUS COAL STRIKE OF 1919 AS IT AFFECTED THE FOURTEENTH DISTRICT.

The nation-wide strike of the United Mine Workers of America in 1919 affected approximately 425,000 Bituminous coal miners in the United States, shook the industrial life of Kansas to its very foundations and culminated in the establishment of the Court of Industrial Relations. The situation as it existed in the Fourteenth District was so bound up with the general coal strike throughout the nation that a brief history of the issues and results of the strike as a whole is necessary.

Orders to strike were given by the executive officers of the United Mine Workers of America on October 15, 1919, and became effective at midnight on October 31st, despite all efforts of Secretary of Labor Wilson to settle the points of dispute and prevent the threatened strike.

On October 29, 1919, the President issued a public statement characterizing the proposed strike as "unjustifiable" and "unlawful" further stating that it

"must be considered as a grave moral and legal wrong against the Government and the people of the United States" and that "the law will be enforced and the means will be found to protect the interest of the nation in any emergency that may arise out of this unhappy business."^{1.}

On the same day (October 29th) representatives of the miners held a meeting to review the situation and especially the suggestion of the president that negotiations be resumed and that he appoint a board of arbitration to settle the question. However, it was decided to let the strike order stand, the miners setting forth their position as follows:

"The fundamental causes which prompted the mine workers to take this drastic action are deep-seated. For two years their wages have remained stationary. They appealed one year ago to the Federal Fuel Administrator, Dr. Garfield, and from him to the President of the United States, for an increase in wages sufficient to meet the increase in the cost of the necessities of life. Their appeal was rejected and their request refused. Notwithstanding this they continued mining coal until now their contract expires, when they are determined that their grievances must be adjusted in a reasonably satisfactory manner.

"The courts have held that the workingmen have a right to strike and may quit work either singly or collectively for the purpose of redressing grievances and righting wrongs. The constitutional guarantees of this free

1. Stoddard, C.F., The Bituminous Coal Strike. Monthly Labor Review; December 1919, Volumn IX, No. 6.

government give men the right to work or quit work individually or collectively.

"The mine workers representatives are ready, willing, and anxious to meet the coal operators for the purpose of negotiating an agreement and bringing about a settlement of the present unhappy situation. They will respond at any time to a call for such a meeting and will honestly endeavour to work out a wage agreement upon a fair equitable basis. Such action alone will put the mines in operation and guarantee the nation an adequate supply of coal." 1.

A. Miners' Demands.

The miners' demands were not as unreasonable as they seemed at the surface.. The 60 per cent increase in wages asked was set forth as a basis for bargaining. Wages in the coal industry had risen about 34 per cent since the outbreak of the war and living costs no less than 75 per cent. Taking \$1,300 as an average wage for the miners in 1918, the best year they have thus far had, and adding the 60% increase we have \$2,080. A recent Massachusetts Board of Arbitration awarded Brockton shoe cutters wages at the rate of \$2,246 per year. The assumed objection that these wages are paid for skilled labor has no force, for necessarily the miner must be a strong skilled man, moreover ought not a degree of compensation be allowed for the dirty and

1. Stoddard, C.F., The Bituminous Coal Strike. Monthly Labor Review; December 1919, Volumn Ix, No. 6.

dangerous work of mining?

The demand for the thirty hour week seemed based in part on the hoary trade union policy of making work for a large number, that is, the lump of labor theory, but in part it is to be justified in the contention that the work of the miner should be better distributed throughout the year. From 1906 to 1915, excluding 1910, the miners with the existing average of an eight hour workday with frequent intervals of broken time, worked 213 days a year which is an average of less than 35 hours per week, even if three weeks be allowed for a vacation period and holidays.

Editorially the New Republic commented on the causes for the intermittant work in the mines as follows: "Secretary of Labor Wilson has pointed out three causes for the closing down of the mines. First is the breakdown or accident, (that this factor as far as the Kansas district is concerned could be vastly lessened by the constant practice of safety first and the securing of protective legislative measures has already been dwelt upon in considerable length.) Second and more important is the seasonal demand for coal. Some seasonal variation must be expected, this is especially true with coal used mainly for domestic purposes

which deteriorates seriously with storage. But in so far as the objection to storage is merely a matter of storage charges, which is often the case, a proper reorganization of marketing facilities would meet the difficulty. Many industries could so plan to take advantage of slack summer consumption of coal by storing at least a portion of their later supply or some scheme of a "systematic distribution of coal, broadening or narrowing their zone of industrial use according to the season, would go far toward reducing the evil of intermittent work."^{1.}

The third reason for the stoppage of mine work is the difficulty in securing railroad cars for shipment. The Government demonstrated during the war that this difficulty could be greatly reduced by more economical utilization of rolling stock and elimination of cross hauling. Plainly if the demand exists some provision should be made to secure more rolling stock^{1.} even if governmental action be necessary.

B. The Injunction.

On October 31st, the Attorney General of the United States obtained from Federal Judge A. B. Anderson, at Indianapolis, an order restraining the union

1. The New Republic, November 26, 1919, pages 364-365.

officials "from doing any further act whatsoever to bring about or continue in effect the above described strike and cessation of work on the part of the miners and mine workers in the bituminous mines."^{1.}

The request for the restraining order was based on the Food and Fuel Control Act, "which makes it unlawful to limit the facilities for transportation or to restrict the distribution of any necessities", the position taken by the Government that the European war had not ended, a mere technicality, utilized as an excuse by the administration for the use of the injunction under the Lever Act above referred to for the breaking of the strike, was severely condemned by union labor and the impartial periodical press.

The following taken from an address by Secretary Wilson on November 14 indicates the administration's views clearly, "But when your dispute takes on the magnitude that affects the very social and industrial life of the country then the people at large are justified, as a matter of self-protection and self-preservation in insisting that you come to a speedy determination of the difficulties that you have had."^{2.}

1. Stoddard, C.F., The Bituminous Coal Strike, page 1725, Monthly Labor Review, December 1919, Volumn IX, number 6.

2. New Republic, November 26, 1919, pages 364-365.

As to the success of the injunction, the New Republic says, "The Government's initial steps have not been well calculated. It has succeeded in affecting a formal revocation of the strike call without, however, getting the men back to work." The position of the government was unfortunate and apparently took the side of the employers, "for it seems to confirm the unfortunate suspicion of the workingman that in the real test the Government is the agent of the propertied class."^{1.}

President Wilson severely denounced the miners' persistency in calling the strike. This denunciation rested in part on an alleged breach of faith in issuing strike orders "at a time when the war itself is still a fact."^{2.} But war time prohibition also ran for the duration of the war, yet the President vetoed enforcement legislation October 27th on the ground that the war-time emergency no longer existed.^{3.} Policy rather than consistency would seem to be an explanation of the President's act. However, it is fair to say that undoubtedly the majority of the American people favored the President's course while the conservative and

1. The New Republic, November 26, 1919, pp. 364-365.
2. The Nation, November 8, 1919, pp. 577-578.
3. American Coal Miner, November 5, 1919, pages 1-6.

and capitalistic press were solid in their backing. There was substantial agreement that the Government adopted a wise policy in restoring maximum prices on bituminous coal and war-time priorities in its distribution.

The miners answered the President by the contention that their wage agreement had terminated with the close of the war and that hence they were repudiating no contract, and in opening negotiations they were inspired by a desire to renew contract relations with their employers without in the meantime ceasing work (as customarily follows the expiration of a contract until a new one is negotiated.)

C. Duration of the Strike.

The Government's application for a temporary injunction was granted on November 8th, the miners being given until 6 P.M. November 11th to withdraw the strike order. This the union officials agreed to do, fearing jail sentences for contempt of court. The injunction proved a complete failure in inducing the men to return to work, the rank and file remaining steadfast despite the fact that they could receive no strike benefits or official encouragement from their leaders.

A joint conference held on November 14th came

to nothing; the miners accepted the proposed compromise measures of Secretary Wilson, but the operators requested an adjournment to consider the proposal separately, and to consult Dr. Garfield, the Fuel Administrator, to learn if he would fix a selling price which would enable them to operate if they granted this increase.

D. Dr. Garfield's Proposal for settlement.

On November 26th, Dr. Garfield, with the authorization of the cabinet, announced that the miners were entitled to a 14 per cent increase and that on this basis the operators would not be allowed to increase the price of coal.

"Dr. Garfield pointed out that according to data furnished by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics the average increase in wages of all mine labor is now 57.6 per cent over the 1914 base, while the increase in the cost of living in the central coal field during the same period has been 79.8 per cent.

"In other words an average increase of 14.1 per cent in the present rate of wages would bring the increase in the wages of their industry up to a parity with the increase in the cost of living. Miners are paid by the ton; other mine workers are paid by the day. The day laborers generally have received advances of wages since 1913 equal to, and in some instances in excess of, the increase in the cost of living."

Settlement of the strike on this basis was

1. Stoddard, C.F., The Bituminous Coal Strike: Monthly Labor Review, December 1919, Volume IX, Number 6.

rejected by the miners, though the operators appeared to be willing to adopt the suggestion. By December 1st the Government had secured sufficient evidence to institute contempt proceedings against certain leaders of the mine workers, alleging that they had violated the injunction by contriving to encourage and assist the strike.

The President's Appeal and Termination of the Strike.

On December 6th the President issued a statement appealing to the miners to return to work on a temporary agreement of a 14 per cent increase announced by Dr. Garfield, and renewed a former suggestion "that upon the general resumption of mining operations a suitable tribunal would be erected for the purpose of investigating and adjusting the matters in controversy between the operators and miners. A meeting of the mine rs representatives held at Indianapolis December 9th voted to accept the President's proposition. The operators were substantially agreed with this position, hence the strike which had been called off under the mandate of the court, November 11, ended by a general resumption of work almost a month later."¹ The President

1. Stoddard, C.F., The Bituminous Coal Strike: Monthly Labor Review, December 1919, Volumn IX, Number 6.

subsequently appointed as members of a Commission to study the situation and make a report, Rembrandt Peale, a mine owner and operator in active business, to represent the operators, John P. White, a practical miner and former official of the United Mine Workers to represent the miners, and Harry M. Robinson, a well know public spirited citizen, to represent the public.^{1.}

2. Governor Allen's Action in Kansas.

The motive back of Governor Allen's action in State operation of the coal mines can best be explained by an extract from his message to the legislature meeting in special session in the month following the strike, "With a heartlessness that has no parallel in the history of the industrial quarrel the public was told that, that while the controversy over a wage scale was going on between capital and labor it could freeze----. In the midst of winter with a shortage of coal which usually confronts this section of the country because of indifferent mining during the summer months operation ceased. It was estimated that the reserve supply in this section would last two weeks."^{2.}

1. Commission is appointed by President Wilson to Determine Wages, Working Conditions, and the Selling Price of Coal in the Bituminous Industry, United Mine Workers Journal, January 1, 1920.

2. Message of Governor Henry J. Allen, to the Kansas Legislature in Extraordinary Session, January 5, 1920.

In substance the Governor further said that schools and public utilities in Kansas began rapidly closing down and there was suffering in the homes and hospitals of the state for lack of heat. A typical instance occurred at Pittsburg where the principal hospital of the city located in the center of the coal district was allowed to go without coal until provided by the state.

Upon the request of the attorney general of Kansas the Supreme Court of Kansas authorized the appointment of receivers to take charge and operate certain designated mine properties. Three receivers were appointed, but as two, representing the miners and the operators respectively, declined to accept appointment, the Court appointed another receiver and directed the two immediately to take possession of the property designated and proceed with all possible haste to mine coal. A week was spent in urging the miners to return to work for the state, the governor promising wages equal to those later to be determined by agreement of the international and operators made retroactive to the time of beginning work. But the miners refused to "scab on their fellow workers in other states," as Mr. Howat put it, though according to Governor Allen,

"A large number of miners expressed to me their desire to work, ~~the~~ lack of sympathy with the effort to freeze the public; but said that if they should go back to work their ~~property~~ property would be in peril, their families ^{1.} humiliated, and their lives endangered."

On Thanksgiving Day the Governor called for 1,000 volunteers. This response was instantaneous, more than 10,000 enrolling, of whom 1,000 were selected, many from the schools and colleges of the state, and a large number being ex-service men. The Fourth Regiment of the Kansas National Guard was ordered to the district at the same time for the purpose of maintaining ^{2.} order.

The achievement of the volunteers deserves commendation for the weather was cold, at times below zero, and both guardsmen and volunteers lived in tents under the most trying and uncomfortable conditions. As the State attempted only to operate the strip pit mines considerable anxiety was felt by the Governor and the receivers as to whether operatives could be secured for the steam shovels. To attain any sizable production of coal it was essential that experienced men

1. Message of Governor Allen to the Extraordinary Session of the Kansas Legislature. January 5, 1920.
2. They dug Trenches in France and Coal in Kansas, The Literary Digest, December 27, 1919, pp-44-47.

be secured for operating the shovels. However, within less than 40 hours the Governor had complete shovel crews of 8 men each, and in less than 50 hours they were on their way to the coal fields. When the receivers were ready to operate the mines on the three shift day basis there were more than enough skilled and experienced men to man the steam shovels for every shift.

Then we must consider that this was in the dead of winter when many of the pits were out of operation normally as well as being undrained. Two hundred cars of coal were mined during the first 10 days of the receivership and about 700 cars were produced in the entire period of the receivership. Moreover, much restoration and draining had to be done before the mines were in a condition to operate. As to the success of state operation the Governor says:

"When the volunteers went out and the union miners returned the latter found the pits in better shape than had characterized those mines for a long time. The water had been pumped out, new drainage conditions established and the machinery placed in better condition; in some mines better equipment provided and the possibility of increased productivity established. That the action of the state in entering the situation, not only warded off the danger of famine, but hurried forward the settlement of the strike no thoughtful person doubts. I am told by the receivers that the proceeds from the sale of coal will take care of the cost of mining operations."

3. The Action of Howat.

After the strike was called off by the International officials the contempt of court cases against all United Mine Workers' officials, except Alexander Howat, were continued indefinitely by Judge Anderson of the Federal Court at Indianapolis. Federal Attorneys informed the court that a strike declared against the Central Coke and Coal Company on the previous July 17th had not been called off. The miners taking the position that the status quo of October 31st. should be restored. The Government claimed that the general strike of November 1st merged all strikes which were in affect at that time. Mr. Howat was charged with having defied the Government and the law as well as the injunction in refusing to order the men striking against the Central Coal and Coke Company back to work.

Mr. Howat was ordered to appear before the court December 22d to answer the charges against him. When he appeared the judge administered a severe lecture to him for violating the law and the injunction and then committed him to jail until such time as he could determine the amount of the bond to be given for Mr. Howat's reappearance on December 29th the day set for the final hearing. In the meantime 3,000 Kansas miners went on strike as a protest against their

leader's imprisonment, thus introducing a new complicating element into the situation. The following day William Green, the International Secretary, and Mr. Howat went before the court and stated that an order had been sent from the International headquarters instructing Kansas miners to return to work at once. Mr. Howat was released on \$10,000 bail with the understanding that he return to the Kansas coal fields and call a meeting of District 14th for December 26th where he would use his influence to have all striking miners return to work. This pledge was faithfully fulfilled^{1.} by Mr. Howat:

1. United Mine Worker's Journal, January 1, 1920,
page 7.

Chapter VI.

THE OUTCOME OF THE COAL STRIKE IN KANSAS.

1. The position of Governor Allen.

Whatever else may be said of Governor Allen it must be acknowledged by all that he is preeminently a leader, one desiring to break the way for others to follow, and it must also be granted by friend and foe that he is a man who knows no obstacle and brooks no effective opposition. It is not surprising that a man of his type being temporarily bested by a labor union and observing what he regarded as rank injustice, would attempt to use all forces within his power to rectify the apparent wrong.^{1.} His reasons and arguments for the innovations he desired introduced into the statutes of the state of Kansas should not be paraphrased; but should be given by extracts from his message to the Kansas Legislature called in extraordinary session, January 5th, 1920.

I believe, however, that it would be a great error if Kansas, having taken advantage of the unselfish devotion of these volunteers to relieve the immediate emergency, should now neglect to provide at once safeguard against the recurrence of this expensive and dangerous form of industrial warfare. As we review the growing quarrel between capital and labor we are all impressed with the fact that we have made absolutely no progress toward the provision

1. Kansas City Star, January 24, 1920.

of a just and orderly basis of solution. Every settlement of every controversy has been upon a temporary adjustment, and the sole concern in every temporary adjustment has had to do with the advantages of capital or labor. In a few controversies does there ever come a consideration of the rights of the public. The largest party at interest scarcely receives a hearing, I believe the time has come, in the increasing industrial life of the country, when a tribunal should be established which shall have the power to take under its jurisdiction the offenses committed against society in the name of industrial warfare, a tribunal which shall have the authority to meet industrial discontent before it crystallizes, by a careful oversight and regulation of the condition of labor before any injustices are allowed to fester and breed class hatred and bitter antagonisms.

There is no reason why Government should not have the same power to protect society against the ruthless offenses of industrial strife as it always has had to protect it against recognized crime. I have called the legislature into extraordinary session in the hope that we may create a "Court of Industrial Relations" which shall provide a substitute for strikes and lockouts and protect the public against the abuses which now come upon it during the course of industrial controversies. In the accomplishment of this purpose and the added need of a better and surer provision for the welfare of workers, and the protection of their rights, there is a broad field of effective service for a court of this character. Such a court must hold the possibility of exact justice for employers, employees, and the public. It should represent in its broad power, government, with all its dignity and righteous justice. If moral principles do not exist in Anglo-Saxon institutions to justify their extension to meet this vital American need, then Anglo-Saxon institutions are doomed to failure. It must be apparent to all that we cannot allow the erection in this country of a recognized condition of warfare between government and any organized portion of society

which claims the privilege to menace the public and to challenge government itself. Any minority which has secured control of a product upon which human life depends, and which undertakes, for the purpose of affecting wages or profit, to withhold that product from the public until the public shall freeze or starve, has, in effect, superseded government and has abrogated to itself the control of the destinies of human life which government alone may have the power to safeguard.---

The thought of establishing a court of this character is not a new one. It has come out of the evolution of a hundred years during which industrial controversies have been growing in number and importance. This evolution has brought us to the same point of determination that society reached after the evolution of events had brought the need of criminal and civil courts. I am not unconscious of the fact that labor has bettered its condition through its organized solidarity; that capital has been forced to make concessions under threat which it should have made voluntarily, and I would be opposed to any form of legislation which deprived labor of the proper use or benefits of wholesome organization. 1.

Professor Seager of Columbia University, one of the foremost authorities on labor legislation in the United States, has the following to say of the feasibility of plans of compulsory arbitration, the practical effects of which appear in the operation of the Kansas Court of Industrial Relation Act in so far as the dispute lies between the employer and the employee:

Nevertheless the experiments that are being tried in Australasia^a with compulsory arbitration deserve to be watched with interest. The same forces that have led all countries to

1. Message of Governor Allen to Kansas Legislature in Extraordinary Session, January 5th, 1920.

put a stop to 'civil strife and insist that citizens who cannot agree shall bring their troubles into a court rather than fight over them, may in time cause the adoption of a similiar policy in reference to industrial strife. If, as many competent witnesses maintain, strikes and lockouts can be entirely superceded by compulsory arbitration without the detriment eit^{er} to employers, employees, and the public, the adoption of the system of compelling the parties to industrial disputes to submit their differences to authoritative arbitration by all progressive countries is likely to be a question of only time and occasion. 1.

2. Arguments Pro and Con on the Court of Industrial Relations Act.

Arguments used in favor of the bill creating the Court of Industrial Relations may be summarized as follows: (1) it would do away with the necessity for striking; (2) it would enable the miner and other laborers to remain at work while appealing for relief; and (3) it would enable the State to make an impartial investigation of the merits of the controversy. The chief reasons advanced by labor leaders and employers for opposing the bill are: (1) under the measure a man becomes chained to his job, in a form amounting to practical slavery, (2) the measure is unconstitutional because it provides for, (a) confiscation of property without due process of law, and (b) involuntary servitude of labor. The bill

1. Seager, H.R., Principles of Economics, 1917 edition, p. 561.

creating the Court of Industrial Relations passed the Legislature, largely in the form desired by Governor Allen by a vote of 35 to 5 in the senate and 119 to 7 in the House.

3. Bitter Opposition and Criticism by the Miners.

The miners, meeting at Kansas City, Missouri, in their district convention in the week of March 8th, 1920, expressed their supreme contempt of "Allen's peonage act" as they called it, openly threatening to strike if the law were invoked against them, and passed an amendment to the Fourteenth District Constitution penalizing appeals to the Court of Industrial Relations by fines of \$50 for a member and \$5,000 for an officer. Mr. Howat made statements from time to time calculated to prevent the public from forgetting the miners' opposition to Governor Allen's solution of the labor problem, and openly stated at a convention of the Twelfth District of the United Mine Workers in the state of Illinois that a strike in opposition to the Kansas Court of Industrial Relations would soon be called.

4. Investigation of Coal Mining Conditions by the Court of Industrial Relations.

On April 5th, 1920 the Court of Industrial

Relations started an investigation of conditions in the coal mining industry of Kansas in the face of a protest strike indulged in by 1,500 miners dissatisfied with the findings and the 27 per cent wage increase allowed them by the National Coal Commission. The Court acted promptly in ordering 24 pit committeemen^{1.} to give facts concerning the strike.

Mr. Howat and other officials of the District refused to appear before the Court and give testimony, even after they were order to do so my District Judge Curran of Crawford County, to whom the Court of Industrial Relations applied for aid. The Judge then issued a writ against Alexander Howat, August Dorchy,, vice-president of District Fourteen, and Thomas Harvey, the secretary-treasurer, changing contempt of court.^{2.} On the behalf of Howat an answer was filed attacking the legality of the court.^{3.} On the following day, April 9th, 1920, Judge Curran sentenced the mine workers' leaders to the Crawford county jail, to remain there until they consented to appea# before the Court of Industrial Relations and answer such questions as might be put to them. Without official order the miners of the District walked out on strike and remained out

1. Kansas City Star, April 7, 1920.
2. Kansas City Star, April 17, 1920.
3. Kansas City Star, April 8, 1920.

until after their officers were released from jail on bond. A few days following this event practically all the mines were idle, again, the grievance alleged being excessive powder prices charged by the operators. April 26th about three-fourths of the mines resumed operation on the basis of a temporary agreement pending a thorough investigation of the joint conference of miners and operators of the Fourteenth District, as to the powder charges .

Considerable dissatisfaction still exists (May 1st, 1920) over some phases of the award of the National Coal Commission which the International accepted with representatives of the coal operators' associations. The main ground of dissatisfaction are: (1) a feeling that day men should have been allowed an increase of \$1.35 per day instead of \$1.00, in order to equalize their wages with the 27 per cent increase granted the miner; and (2) a desire of the miners that in no case should the price charged them for powder exceed that charged on October 31st 1919.

An interesting episode occurred at the Crawford County jail when Sheriff Webb permitted Mr. Howat and his fellow officials to address a mass meeting of miners. Speeches moderate in tone were made by all except Mr.

Howat who, after receiving slight applause, (which, it is said, nearly always seems to serve as a red flag to the "Bull of the Woods" as Mr. Howat is locally known) expressed himself freely in language far from moderate, with respect to Governor Allen and his industrial court. The result was criminal proceedings brought against Mr. Howat for alleged seditious remarks and an ouster suit directed against Sheriff Webb requesting that he be suspended from office at once pending the hearing of the ouster proceedings. The latter proceedings, however, were rendered unnecessary by the resignation of Webb, its acceptance by Governor Allen, and the dismissal of the ouster suit.¹ Public sentiment throughout the District was opposed to Mr. Howat's course because it was believe that the investigation conducted by the Court of Industrial Relations enabled dissatisfied miners to voice their grievances against the party in power. Two of them, Alexander McAllister, a miner of 20 years residence in the country, and W.T.Wright, an early president of the Fourteenth District did this in no uncertain terms. The most serious charge made was the misappropriation of union funds in subsidizing socialistic newspapers. These men, though members of the union, were termed outlaws by

1.Kansas City Star, April 17,1920.

the Howat element who refused to testify before the court or give any authentic information to the press, claiming that facts were not given in their true light in the supposedly public papers. Mr. Howat has told the miners that the capitalist newspapers are opposed to labor, that they are in fact corporation sheets which should not be permitted to enter a worker's home.^{1.}

5. Ruling of the Court of Industrial Relations.

The most important feature of the ruling of the Court in this case was the limitation placed upon the check-off system of collecting union finances. It may from henceforth be used only for the collection of membership dues, benefit assessments authorized by referendum of the entire union body, and nominal fines assessed against members in order to maintain the morale of the organization.^{2.}

On April 27th, after two postponements, the State's application for a temporary injunction to supersede the restraining order issued early in the month prohibiting the union officials from calling a strike, came to trial before Judge Andrew J. Curran of the Crawford County District Court at Pittsburg, Kansas. The case turned at once to a test of the constitutionality

1. Personal Interview. 2. Kansas City Star, April 26, 1920

of the Kansas Court of Industrial Relations. On April 30th, 1920 Judge Curran held the act creating the Court of Industrial Relations constitutional, and granted a temporary injunction injoining the calling of a strike by Alexander Howat and 250 other district and local union officials.^{1.}

6. Mr. Howat's Basis of Power.

It cannot be denied that Mr. Howat continues to hold first place among the miners of Kansas. Though opposition has appeared occasionally among dissatisfied local leaders it has had no effective influence in curtailing Mr. Howat's influence with the rank and file. In seeking reasons for this popularity probably first should be placed his outstanding personality with his vigorous decisive manner. Another important factor is that a worker's unsettled grievance is never too trivial for his prompt attention, and further, it is claimed, he never fails to espouse the worker's cause against the operator. Mr. Howat is a born organizer and politician. It is frequently said that but few of the more conservative union miners attend business meetings of the locals and that thus the "radical element", represented by the Howat partisans, finds it easy to control. Mr. Howat's solid backing comes from the foreign

1. Kansas City Star, April 28, 1920.

born miners, who, according to some local reports, follow him like sheep. Mr. Howat is a capable man and his past record in securing improvements in working conditions with fair wage agreements justifies much of the miner's faith in him. His quick temper and abrupt bearing are unfortunate, because they often result in a delay of justice and give support to the many wild rumors circulated concerning his past record.

Much of the radicalism attributed to Mr. Howat, whether properly so considered or not, is due to his early training. His first occupation in life was that of a pugilist; he was quite successful until absolutely defeated one night in Kansas City. Being penniless a collection was taken from sympathetic bystanders, the proceeds to enable him to return to the coal fields. Arriving in Southeastern Kansas he obtained work as a miner and, strange to say, at first refused to aid in the organization of the early locals of the United Mine Workers of America. But in 1899 after joining a union, because his fellow miners did so, he soon became active and within three years was on the executive board of the Fourteenth District.

Mr. Howat was a good miner as well as a very successful agitator and organizer. His experience as

a practical miner was gained at a time when practices were prevalent in the Kansas coal fields which are now strictly forbidden by law under severe penalty. He had little or no opportunity for schooling, but learned a great deal in the rough school of experience. At this time the struggle for recognition was going on all the while arousing Mr. Howat's instinct of combat.^{1.}

7. Present and Future Tendencies.

Professor Hoxie is authority for the classification of labor unions according to structure and function. Structurally the United Mine Workers of America is an industrial union. "This type, as the name implies, is organized on the basis of the industry rather than the craft. That is to say it attempts to unite into one homogeneous organic group all the workers, skilled and unskilled, engaged in turning out and putting on the market ~~to~~ a given finished product or series of closely related products."^{2.}

Functionally the coal miners' union may be designated as a type of business unionism. Business unionism aims chiefly at immediate ends "in terms mainly of higher wages, shorter hours, and better working conditions, regardless for the most part of the welfare

1. Personal Interview.

2. Hoxie, Robert F., Trade Unionism in the United States, page 40.

of the workers outside of the particular organic group.----it regards unionism mainly as a bargaining institution, and seeks its ends chiefly through collectively bargaining----. It favors voluntary arbitration, deprecates strikes, and avoids political action, but it will refuse arbitration, and will resort to strikes and politics when such action seems best calculated to support its bargaining efforts and increase its bargaining power."^{1.}

In no recent case has the United Mine workers countenanced violence or direct action. Heretofore, they have refrained from taking a direct part in politics as an organization, but today President Howat says that the best way for labor to combat adverse legislation is for it to engage directly in political activity and elect labor representatives, pledged to work in the interests of labor, to county and state offices.^{2.}

Phil H. Callery, Attorney for the Fourteenth District, United Mine workers of America thinks that the only true solution for the labor problem in the coal mining industry lies in cooperation. "This must be

1. Hoxie, Robert F., Trade Unionism in the United States, pages 45-46.
2. Howat, Alexander, Report to the Eighteenth Consecutive and Fourth Biennial Convention District Number Fourteen, United Mine Workers of America, pages 33-34.

1.
genuine cooperation", he said, "not paternalism or any scheme of allotting corporation stock to the worker as a bonus." He suggested that the operator be allowed 10 per cent profit on his investment, the surplus above this to be equally divided with the worker. Mr. Callery further said that under the present system the laborer has no active interest in the product of his labour, for, as the system is organized, wages and living conditions are matters of barter and sale, the sellers, the miners, actively competing if not unionized, striving to sell their product for what they can, and the buyers, the operators, attempting to force down the price and buy to the best advantage. That the miners consider cooperation seriously though not to the extent Mr. Callery advocates, is evident for a large number of cooperative enterprises, particularly in the mercantile trade, are being established among them at the present time.

What the future holds for the Kansas Court of Industrial Relations only time can tell. Judging by the Australian experience it is safe to say that a considerable number of strikes will continue to occur if labor considers that it does not receive its just

1. Phil H. Callery, Attorney, Fourteenth District, United Mine Workers of America. (Personal Interview).

awards. Manifestly no argument could be drawn from the success of such a court in an agricultural state as in Kansas which would justify its existence in an industrial state.

John Fitch, writing in the Survey, severely criticizes the Kansas law for taking away organized labor's weapon of the strike and failing to give it any recourse not offset by positive advantages of the employer under the act. This social investigator does not see in what manner we may ever expect industrial peace by the Kansas way which is an attempt to extend the principle of the state's jurisdiction over industries affected with a public interest to disputes between employers and employees.¹

Willard E. Atkins, writing in the Journal of Political Economy for April, 1920, says of the Kansas Court of Industrial Relations Act:

"Manifestly the Act is contrary to what labor has considered to be its interests. Although the Act permits organization and recognizes it, declares that labor has the right to representation in disputes and in court through attorneys and other individuals of its own choosing, and although a declaration is made affirming labor's right to a fair wage and decent conditions, and although the court does not interfere except when disagreements affect production and transportation, still

1. Fitch, John A., Industrial Peace by Law-
The Kansas Way, in Survey, April 3, 1920, p.7.

these concessions have not reconciled labor, ordinarily, to the degree that labor has felt it could give up the right to strike. The experiment in this country, the history of legislation in England which places no limitations upon the strike, the Canadian Industrial Disputes Act which makes provision for certain strikes to be called legal and has not prevented many illegal ones, and checkered history of compulsory arbitration, do not suggest that Kansas has a substitute for strikes, or that striking may not be an excellent thing to recognize on certain occasions. These facts coupled with an unfortunate failure to assure the worker that someone truly represents his interests do not augur well for the Kansas experiment.-----1.

"The Court of Industrial Relations of the State of Kansas is an experiment. Laboratory material will result. Whether the findings will be significant or whether the the experiment will be without special import in the history of the relations of labor to the state, is a question which cannot yet be answered with certainty. 2.

The extension of the doctrine of public policy is not without limits and the courts have "decision after decision to the effect that the Act violates constitutional guarantees clearly, unconstitutionally."
4.

Plainly the present act should not be regarded as final. Even if it is declared unconstitutional, there is no reason to believe that it will

1. Atkins, William E., The Kansas Court of Industrial relations in Journal of Political Economy, April, 1920, pp. 344-45
2. Ibid. page 339.
4. Ibid. page 348.

not be reenacted in an amended form in an attempt to eliminate the imperfections pointed out by experience^{1.} and indicated by judicial decision.

If the Court of Industrial Relations succeeds in affecting its purpose of attaining justice by judicial decision in case of disputes between employers and employees it is manifest that noteworthy changes will result in the organization and function of the United Mine Workers of the Fourteenth District. Such changes as may occur only time can determine; no attempt can be made at this writing to predict as to what the outcome may be.

1. Atkins, Willard E., The Kansas Court of Industrial Relations in Journal of Political Economy, April, 1920 p.348.