

DOORS NOT CLOSED

LABOR STILL OPEN FOR MEN
FROM RANKS

The wish and purpose to maintain the wages of labor at the highest standard compatible with continued industrial activity was never more general and sincere among employers than at the present moment. High wages are the natural accompaniment of prosperity; there is a perfectly obvious reason, therefore, why employers are content to pay them. At the present moment capital is seeking not less earnestly than labor to find means whereby the wage level may be kept as high as the conditions of trade will permit. In great industrial concerns serious study has been given to the problem in the hope of devising ways through economies in other directions or through efficiency methods to avert, or at least postpone as long as possible, the necessity of wage reduction. American shipowners are trying in good faith to work out methods of operating their ships under the high wage schedules and other crew conditions of the seamen's law which put them at a serious disadvantage in comparison with the merchant marine of other countries. The great mass of the employers of labor are not open to the charge of hard-heartedness which agitators recklessly bring against them. They take account of the present high cost of living, they would gladly continue the present scales of wages, they will consider reductions only as a last resort, as the only alternative to the closing of shops.

Good-will and generous purpose, however, can have no absolute control over the wage situation in the future. The price of labor is somewhat less subject to the control of economic law than other prices, but it is not and can never be, as some false guides of labor would have it, quite independent of the laws that govern trade. If the excessive or unreasonable demands of labor close the shops, then the law begins to work with a good deal of sternness. For that reason it is as unwise for leaders of labor to insist now that there should be no reduction of wages below the war standard as it would be for employers to

order sharp and arbitrary reductions. One labor paper has insisted that if demobilization creates a great surplus of labor, hours must be shortened to the end that all may find employment at the wages paid during the war. It is unnecessary to point out that the business of production cannot be carried on in that manner. The problems of reconstruction are as yet unsolved. We cannot clearly foresee future conditions. It is, therefore, highly desirable that calmness and reason guide the counsels of both labor and capital, which in the end have a common interest.

Secretary Wilson said upon this occasion that "there is a shortage of 3,200,000 laborers and there is not only a possibility of a shortage of labor but a possibility of an increased demand for labor." These figures are surprising, since the newspapers of Jan. 26, which published a report of Mr. Wilson's remarks, published also an official report or announcement of the Department of Labor, of which he is the head, in which it was declared that conditions of unemployment in many parts of the country were "rapidly becoming serious." We quote one paragraph from the department's statement:

Subsequent local reports indicate a plain that instead of a "shortage of increase in unemployment, making it 3,200,000 laborers" in the country there is in many localities and in many trades a surplusage, indicating that men are seeking jobs, not jobs seeking men. Plainly, this is not a condition which warrants anything like an unqualified demand that wages be maintained at the war standard. Demobilization of the nation's army lately in service abroad or in training at home would ordinarily mean serious conditions of unemployment, when the country's concern would be not so much about wages as about relief measures. It is too soon to conclude, however, that there will be a great surplusage of labor. That depends upon several conditions. One is whether the country's industries are to be continuously active, as Secretary Wilson expects, or whether there is to be a slackening of trade. Another condition is that respecting immigration. A measure is pending in Congress to exclude foreign immigrants. The enactment of that measure would obviously have an influence upon the

SURGEON GENERAL
CITED FOR SERVICE

The Distinguished Service Medal, accompanied by a citation for his splendid executive service overseas, has come to Major General Merritte W. Ireland, Surgeon General of the Army. Major General Ireland was called from France to assume control of the medical forces of the army and his honored rank is due to efficient services in this and other military campaigns.

The citation, which has been made public by the War Department, reads:

"Major General Merritte W. Ireland: As Chief Surgeon of the American Expeditionary Forces he supervised and perfected the organization of the medical department in France, and to his excellent judgment, untiring efforts and high professional attainments are largely due the splendid efficiency with which the sick and wounded of the American Army have been cared for."

market of common labor. On the other hand, there is from this port and doubtless from other ports a notable current of emigration; the natives of several countries lately engaged in the war are returning to their old homes in increasing numbers. All these are factors in the wage question, and some of them are not yet determinable. Plainly, it is not the time for dogmatism about the future wage situation. It is not less true that strikes against a reasonable lowering of wages or to enforce shorter hours would be the sure way to destroy the hope of continued prosperity, to close factories and make unemployment a serious condition.

(N. Y. Times.)

The Seymour skirt is out of style,
The new one will be longer.
It will come to the shoetops, while
The price will be much stronger.
A fashion journal just from France
Brings this news o'er the sea,
But may we ask a word, perchance?
Where will the shoetops be?

It makes all the difference in the world whether it is your Commanding Officer or your civilian boss who says, "You're discharged."

Craver's

BROADWAY

WEEK FEB. 10th to 15th

Music to the Theme of the Picture on \$10,000 Pipe Organ.

Monday and Tuesday—

WILLIAM FARNUM

in Zane Grey's Dramatic Masterpiece

"The Rainbow Tail"

A stirring sequel to the great screen success, "Riders of the Purple Sage" Also latest "Gaumont News Weekly"

Wednesday and Thursday—

FRANK McINTIRE

in Rex Beach Drama of War Work

"Too Fat to Fight"

Also Fox "Sunshine Comedy"

Friday and Saturday—

GLADYS BROCKWELL

in the greatest stage hit in 25 years

"The Strange Woman"

Record runs:—1 year in New York, 1 year in London, 5 months in Chicago. Author, William J. Hurlbut Also latest "Gaumont News Weekly" and "Mutt and Jeff"