



## The Flooding of the Woods

Industrial workers of the woods: It has been rumored that the lumberjack is not capable of organizing himself. The papers have taken up the cry and are printing long stories to show that the United States Army, in the person of Colonel Disque, had to step in and organize "The Four L's" for him. The lumberjack is not supposed to have enough brains to get together, in one body, to better his conditions, and the press just now is pointing out what a "god-send" Colonel Disque was to the loggers on the west coast. This criticism is getting to be so raw that I cannot rest until I have "batted out a few" hot ones.

In the first place the Four L's wage scale has been lower than the going-wage, all around them; in the second place, the Four L's became "strong" where the conditions already were better, in the saw-mills; in the third place, where the conditions were rotten, in the woods, the I. W. W. had to "make them"—and did "make them" good.

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Regularly every year I have stated that in 1917 the I. W. W. demanded among other things an eight-hour day with a fine prospect of getting it—and they did get it. Now it may not be out of place to again remind you that even at that early date another organization, the Timber Workers of that time, now dead, tried to defeat the "Wobblie program" by demanding a nine-hour day—they, no doubt, thought they couldn't get enough exercise in eight hours.

In the saw mills, too, the "handfull" of Wobs always took the lead and, as a result of their progressive-aggressiveness the lumber barons were stampeded into making concessions credited to Colonel Disque's Four L's. The Four L's, on the other hand, tied the workers down to a very nominal wage at a time when they had economic power to enforce "respectable" wages—all over the country men were getting eight to twelve dollars per day, in conformity with the cost of living, and Colonel Disque's Four L's tied the men down to a \$6 to \$8 proposition. All the papers today have great praise for the Four L's. Colonel Disque, I understand, is a colonel no longer; he is now a brigadier-general. If he were to organize a "loyal legion" today it might take the form of Four A's—The Aimable Angels of American Aviary. But . . .

Lo, the Four L's hasn't been promoted. It is still the same old L's that stopped progress and, if the press is to be believed—which it never is—the Four L's are being groomed right now not to stop increases in wages but to accept such wages as the lumbermen may see fit to give. They ignore the I. W. W. wholly and say the coast logger would have been "out of luck" if the colonel, of that time, had not providentially happened along the logging road to hand them the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen—put them in the same cradle with the barons—how very interesting—the boss and the slave now belong to the same union. This could happen only in a legion that is loyal to the lumbermen's lousy layout; in a Loyal Legion of Lambs and Lions. Not many lambs were "taken in" and the lions are getting restless. They have called upon the united press to 'xplain to the workers how good it "tastes" for the lamb to lie in a lion's cage, side by side—with the lamb inside—the lion outside—side by side—two souls with not a single thought, except the bosses' profits. B. C. Forbes in the Financial column explains how trees that have to struggle for existence produce straight fine lumber; trees that stand apart, and have no competition, are generally knotty, rough and short—let us see: trees that *stand together* are tall and straight and make good lumber. Doesn't that prove they offer protection to each other—mutual aid.

Doesn't it prove that the elements pound unmercifully the lone tree; which gets crabby and cranky; knotty and limbey—and finally, doesn't it prove that an organization of trees survives while the mud-matted roots of the "individual" raise their gnarled fingers to the sky—in the clearing. Lumberjacks can organize themselves—even as the trees. The reflection cast upon their ability by the maneuvers of an airy colonel and the airing of it in the press should inspire every lumberjack to come out with the best that is in him—Now.

Carrol Binder too, in the News, under a Portland date puts his best foot forward and gives the lumber industry a good deal of publicity. I do not know the purpose of all this publicity but I do know that it will result in the flooding of the logging territory with men. If it floods the woods with men, am I not excusable for believing that *that as the purpose of the publicity?* I know also that the flooding of the woods will again bring the wages down to nothing. Now it's up to the lumberjack. Is he capable of organizing himself to resist a barefaced robbery? Is he able to organize—not to raise his wages—but to hold his own. And finally: is he equal to organizing a union that can and will raise wages—the Lumber Workers' Industrial Union of the I. W. W.

I am of the opinion that he can—and all this publicity in the press indicates that the barons are of the same opinion. They are in position to judge, and they not only think so, *they know so*. Therefore fellow workers don't be bashful, join a real union of workers, you have neglected it long enough.

—T-BONE SLIM.