



# Acumen

The limits of education are as yet un-prescribed. Each worker, no matter how bright, has access to an unlimited fund of knowledge which is lying around loose and which belongs to nobody in particular.

Each worker, further, is duty bound to scatter knowledge as he goes. Let's have it. Let's have it in black and white—write down your best thoughts and send them to our editors. Do this for the sake of our common interest.

Many workers plead ignorance as an excuse for not busting into print. Therefore let us discuss that hydra-headed monster—Ignorance.

Who can tell where "lunacy" ends and ignorance begins; where ignorance ends and intelligence or where intelligence ends and intellectuality begins, assuming that intelligence ends when intellectuality begins. Who, indeed? Nobody—so you see your excuse won't do!

You may have been encouraged by false friends, in the belief that your brow is lower or flatter than somebody's—You may have been unduly influenced to think that a certain amount of brains in your head won't work as well as the same amount of brains in another head; that a certain kind of ivory must surround a man's brain or it won't work. How ridiculous! Our heads are as wide as the best of 'em; our forehead as high as the rest of 'em; of brains, we are simply "possest of 'em"; in fact, we've got a full crest of 'em—(nest of 'em).

If only we had opportunity to make a test of 'em; give them an airing and occasional (educational) exercising.

Confidence in one's ability is a healthy condition of mind and makes for progress and clinches progress made, and turns it over to history. To illustrate: A couple of workers were discussing efficiency, etc.—thusly: "Why was that efficiency expert fired? Was he incompetent?" "Incompetent? Hell, no! He was too darn competent. He discovered that the boss was wasting half of our time telling us things that we knew better than he did."

"Pugilist (Luis Angelo) Firpo proves business sense"—Nets \$75,000 on "Tacy Bout."—(press). Our brains are—oh, what's the use! Let labor show its business acumen—sell labor high (and buy cheap), organize.

I see some of my readers are beginning to doubt their competence, so I must hasten to trot out competent testimony to prove that labor is competent, should I say, mentally. Who but the boss is qualified to pass on man's gray matter? When he wants to hire a Wobbly he advertises thusly: "Wanted an intelligent man for factory."

And when he gets a bunch of men into the shop, he hangs up boxes and requests the boys to drop their ideas into the box. Does that indicate that the worker is dumb? Why does he want the workers idea? He wants them for the same reason that the editor wants your ideas. They are gold—there is reason in them. Let nobody tell you different!

Our education can never be complete, but we can polish it up from time to time through our own initiative and through the troyan efforts of the I. W. W. Educational Bureau, its agencies and periodical literature, etc.

Now that labor is proven a reasoning creature let us glance at the way he uses his brain—the boss being also a reasoning creature offers this man a prize. A first prize of \$1.25 is offered for the best cleaned machine in the factory; a second prize of 50c is handed for the second best effort in line with cleanliness. The prizes are given once a week, 52 times a year. Fifty-two different men receive first prizes of \$1.25 in the course of a year; 52 other men receive second prizes of 50c in the same period of time. No man receives two prizes in one year.

In an instiuttion of 800 men (doing piece work), 104 receive first or second prize once in every 8 years; 696 must wait their turn the long weary years to come (and quarrel). Eight hundred men work one hour every Saturday A. M., cleaning their machines. Eight hundred labor hours is thus paid for with \$1.75—\$1.75 for 800 hours—800 hours equal 100 days—100 days at \$1.75 equals 1 1/4 cents per day (if my figures hold; 1 1/4 cents per day equals cheap labor. Therefore it would seem that the bosses' generosity is not altogether devoid of entangling alliances, if I may use the term.

What the worker needs is a little more business acumen, whatever that is.—Firpo gets \$75,000 for a few minutes' work. Bimbo gets \$75,000 for his efforts. Hundreds of thousands are paid various individuals every year for no work at all. John D. gets millions out of the common pot yearly.

Lots of it there! Plenty!

Step up labor and make your wants known—don't be bashful—organize.