

"Starvester's Dream"

By T-Bone Slim

(air: Prisoners Song)

(Sentiments expressed by
young man, age 17, Jennings,
Kansas July 6, 1930)

"O, I'll get me a job in a brick yard,
In the place of a man "gone to
wars"—

I will hasten to Hastings, Nebraska—
I am tired of pounding on doors!

"And I'll push there a loaded wheel-
barrow—

There I'll live, stay and there too I'll
die—

While the man I replace does the
harvest,

Does the battles of corn, wheat and
rye.

"There I'll stay—'cause a man gone
to harvest

Nevermore can regain his old place—
And when thousands of harvesters

starvest
I'll be joyously clogging my face."

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What a dream! What a face!

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Ah, if imagination only would
bring high wages! But it won't. I've
tried it. And, I've got a damned
good imagination . . .

I've just sat there on the ant-hill
and imagined and imagined, 6, 7, 8,
13 dollars I imagined—finally get-
ting up off the ants' homestead to
find the farmer offering 4 dollars
for a full day's work and board—
and what board—enough for me, of
course, as I hardly ever eat more
than a few pounds of sunkissed-
dried beef of a setting.

No, imagination won't bring high
wages. It's gonna take piles and piles
of organization work; yes, the dele-
gates are gonna be pretty busy.

But that isn't all—the delegates
are gonna be too busy stamping up
the boys to round up the thousands
of harvest hands that are fairly ach-
ing to take out cards—here's where
the rank and file comes in. The rank
and file has done enough posing on
that sidewalk and are due right now
to step out and offer encouraging
words to the downtrodden unorgan-
ized and escort them to the dele-
gates with all due and civil honors
—not necessarily by the ear; be-
cause, didn't I just now say they are
aching to take out cards?

Hardly a man of them but un-
derstands the theory of **getting all
he can for his day's labors**—a thing
that was profound secret to him un-
til this year—and, in so far as un-
ionsism will bring him more than
he is able to get single handed, he
is ready and willing to join any and
all unions, right now.

So, just as soon as the rank and
file turns a few more times on his
heel on that sidewalk and quits
posing we can expect to put the
delegates on double shift . . . Our
rank and file, of which I am one, are
fully conscious to necessity of func-
tioning as "guard of honor" to the
unorganized men, and I'm not tell-
ing them a thing—I'm just remind-
ing them, like saying: "Buddy, here
comes your train."

Above herewith is a poor little,
innocent poem with the cruel title,
"Starvester's Dream" — of course
everybody knows I didn't and
wouldn't invent such a vicious name
for a sweet, sentimental song. Never-
theless it is true many unorganized
harvesters are starving—I call under-
consumption the worst kind of starv-
ation—it is also known that organ-
ized men are not starving and can
not starve; because co-operation be-
tween them forbids and brings them
an assortment of good foods, board,
that can be best described 4 ft. wide
and 10 ft. long—and coffee.

Ah, if Sammy Domb was only here
to view that acreage of "french-
toast" we had this morning in
Minden, Nebr.—37 pieces left over
after everybody was packed full—
umh! and that peach jelly.