



**Discharging cargo from the forward hatches. In this picture the tangle of gear is shown. The winches for two hatchways can be seen, with the booms and mast necessary in handling cargo**

RUSSELL SAGE  
FOUNDATION

# THE LONGSHOREMEN

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NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR



NEW YORK  
SURVEY ASSOCIATES, INC.  
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## PREFACE

**I**N THIS story of the longshoremen are found some of the conditions which have produced and will produce, as long as they are allowed to continue, the distress and dislocation of healthy community life which came so forcibly to the front and so stirred us in the years 1914 and 1915.

The investigation on which this report is based was made by Mr. Barnes when a fellow of the Bureau of Social Research of the New York School of Philanthropy, chiefly in the years 1910 and 1911.\* Mr. Barnes' study of longshoremen and their work was an intimate and careful one. Its aim is to give a picture of the men, of the conditions of labor which affect them, of the relations existing between them and their employers and bosses, and of their own efforts to co-operate with one another in trying to improve their lot in life. The facts have been gathered from all available sources and every effort has been made to make the study as comprehensive and impartial as possible. Mr. Barnes has succeeded in producing a valuable and trustworthy contribution to the history of an important industry.

The report shows clearly some of the more conspicuous and harmful forms of intermittent employment and casual labor, due partly to special features of the shipping trade and partly to over-competition of labor. Extraordinarily long continuous hours, and even days, of work result in exhaustion and breakdown. Lack of possible physical safeguards against accidents, as well as inadequate supervision over the men, results in unnecessary injuries and death. Lack of places where men may wait when work is not going on or where they may eat and sit during the lunch hour drives them into innumerable saloons which invite them continually with sympathetic hospitality. The inevitable consequence is that many of the men engaged on the piers can not earn a steady

\*The material in the appendices relating to London and Liverpool was gathered by Miss Louise Edgar Peters, and that relating to Hamburg by Miss Dorothy Browning Kirchwey, during visits to the places named.



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support for a moderate sized family. They must live under conditions which still further lessen their ability to care for themselves and so become dependent on the charity of the community—a drain on both its financial resources and its morale.

Such conditions should not be allowed to continue in a craft or city. It is essential to our community life, as well as to our business development, that we find saner and more humane methods of dealing between fellow men. These conditions are all the more dangerous because their consequences are often indirect and scattered, and so not realized by the public. The problems involved may not be easy to solve quickly, but the effort to solve them must be made. They are so interesting, so puzzling, and of such vital importance to our private and public life as to challenge the attention of our ablest men.

Yet the conclusion is forced upon us in reading this report that few employers of labor connected with the loading and unloading of ships take any personal interest in the lives of the longshoremen or their families, or feel any personal responsibility for the serious effects of the terms and conditions of labor which they permit. This was made clear also in the testimony given by the representatives of shipping corporations before the United States Commission on Industrial Relations at the hearings in June, 1914 arranged by Mr. Barnes.

The responsibility for practical action would seem to rest primarily on the employers of longshore labor, and on the concerted action of the longshoremen themselves. Up to the present time the inertia and resistance of employers has stayed effective action by themselves and by the workmen. If employers fail to interest themselves in the lives and welfare of their workmen, they can not fairly complain when the troubles of the latter are exploited by others who may or may not be competent to deal wisely with them. If both employers and workmen fail to bring about improvements, the public must get into the game and through the weight of public opinion and legislation compel steady improvement in conditions of labor.

JOHN M. GLENN  
General Director  
Russell Sage Foundation

## INTRODUCTION

**P**ICTURESQUENESS and magnitude unite in the handling of cargoes. Gold from Ophir, cedars from Tyre, spices and precious stones from Sheba, the crown and summit of the material glory of the richest of ancient kings fades out of sight before the bulk and variety of the merchandise brought daily from every corner of the globe into the greatest port of the world—New York. The stupendous character of the commerce of today is lost in its familiarity.\*

And if the wonder of the trade is hid from the eyes of a practical people, much more is the wonder of the worker. The most conspicuous fact concerning the longshoreman is his inconspicuousness. Libraries, statistical reports, labor histories almost without exception ignore him or misstate his case. The records of civic betterment of New York City, written in vast numbers of institutions for the welfare of wage workers, contain this entry: one Longshoremen's Rest.

Extraordinary as the omission appears it is true that no reliable official data regarding longshoremen in the United States have been collected. The dock department of the port of New York gathers none; the municipality gathers none; nor has the federal government with all its vast machinery any reliable statistics on the subject. Even the state reports must be discounted because of their incompleteness.

The few figures obtainable on this important subject are not only inadequate but inaccurate as well. The returns of the

\* In the fiscal year ending June 30, 1913, the net tonnage of vessels entering the port of New York from foreign countries was 14,464,161, while the net tonnage of vessels clearing from New York for foreign countries was 14,370,619. The total value of imports was \$1,048,320,629 and the total value of exports was \$917,935,988, the total value of imports and exports combined, \$1,966,256,617, representing 46.0 per cent of the entire foreign commerce of the United States. The foregoing figures relate to foreign trade only. Figures for coast wise and local traffic cannot be given.—Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1913, pp. 313 and 652-55.

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United States census of 1900\* give the number of longshoremen for the entire United States as 20,934, and of stevedores, 9,139; for New York state, 6,290 longshoremen and 900 stevedores.† The latter figures include all the ports of the state.‡ Conservative estimates among people familiar with the waterfront indicate that in Manhattan and Brooklyn alone there were in 1900 at least three times the number of longshoremen allotted to the state. At the present time only about 50 stevedoring firms are registered in the business directories of the city. Even if all the small unlisted firms were counted there can not, at the time the census was taken, have been more than 300 stevedores in the entire state. The greatly understated number of longshoremen and the greatly overstated number of stevedores, therefore, throw out the census returns as worthless as a basis of information for this great body of men. The state reports, though slightly fuller, are also insufficient.

But the most convincing method of proving the neglect which has been accorded to the longshoreman is to attempt to find literature about him. One searches the libraries of great American cities and universities only to find no entry whatever under the name. Next, if of a persistent nature, one studies histories of the labor movement in America. Although there are several good ones, and although they treat other industries with great fullness, the longshoreman is again almost completely ignored. In *The Labor Movement*, by George E. McNeill,§ he receives his largest mention. There are several references to labor

\* In the federal census for 1900, longshoremen and stevedores are classed under the heading Domestic and Personal Service. It is difficult to imagine any sufficient reason why this work of cargo handling is not classified as a branch of Trade and Transportation. The New York bureau of labor statistics classifies it under Transportation, and this seems to be its proper place.

† In this country the terms stevedore and longshoreman are often used interchangeably. The custom is confusing, and the figures of the report suggest that the census gatherers followed this loose usage. A stevedore is one who takes contracts to load or unload a vessel. A head foreman, however, is sometimes called a stevedore. The longshoreman is the workman hired to handle the cargo under direction of a foreman. In England, a skilled longshoreman who loads foreign cargoes is called a stevedore.

‡ The Twelfth Federal Census reports 18 female longshoremen and 21 female stevedores in the United States, but it is impossible to learn of any woman who has ever done longshore work in the port of New York.

§ See p. 93.

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troubles among waterfront workers. The ten-volume work edited by John R. Commons, *A Documentary History of American Industrial Society*, covers the period from 1649 to 1880. If the comprehensiveness of this work is to be trusted, there appear to be no extant documents treating directly the struggles of the great body of longshoremen in the port of New York; no documents relating to the conditions of longshoremen in any of the ports of America. The newspapers are hardly better. Except during acute labor troubles one finds here and there a stray reference; that is all.\*

In answer to an obvious need, and under the difficulties cited, this investigation was begun. While a general survey of longshore work has been made, the investigation has been chiefly concerned with the port of New York, and concentrated upon conditions in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Hoboken—the main shipping centers.

The first task that confronted the investigator was to obtain from the men themselves the information which research had shown could not be had second hand. This method of procedure was not without its embarrassments. No group of men are more shy, more difficult to draw out, than longshoremen. And it is always less easy to ascertain facts of ordinary conditions than to learn about unusual happenings. Men recall clearly the incidents of a critical time. The day of a famous battle stands out plainly in the mind of an old soldier; every detail is vivid; but the routine life which preceded it, the long stretch of grinding toil—the details of these are forgotten.

Interviews, cross-examinations, observations in all parts of the port have been carefully recorded and are here welded together. A minute comparison of the records has been made in order to combine supplementary statements and harmonize contradictions; traditions have been sifted down to verified facts. Every variety of waterfront worker, as well as superintendents of piers, employes of steamship companies, members of firms and of corporations, contracting stevedores, newspaper men, religious and philanthropic workers who have been among the waterfront people, lawyers who have settled their claims and intervened in their disputes—all

\* For a further account of sources consulted, see Appendix J, p. 249.

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these and others have contributed their personal knowledge to this report.

Business meetings of local longshore unions as well as open meetings have been attended. Men connected with large insurance companies and the insurance department of the state have been interviewed. Inmates of Sailors' Snug Harbor, on Staten Island, and the City Home on Blackwell's Island, as well as retired foremen living out of the city, have been visited in order to get information from older men on events which they alone remember. Their reports have been compared one with another and with the traditions believed by the active men of today. A study was made of the state records of labor organizations at Albany, and a comparative study at first hand of Boston longshoremen. Information regarding the situation in London, Liverpool, and Hamburg has been secured through correspondence or by personal investigations made in those ports.

The lack of public interest in longshoremen, which is mirrored in the dearth of literature and current mention, can not be explained on the plea that individually or as a body they are not worth while. Few appreciate the variety of fine racial and personal types to be found on the waterfront, or realize the skill required in the various branches of the longshoreman's work. By people generally the longshoreman is classed loosely with the industrial outcast—the unskilled laborer. He is thought to be shiftless and a drunkard, as unworthy of serious attention personally and socially as he is industrially. Color has undoubtedly been lent to this impression not only by the presence everywhere along the docks of the "shenangoes," parasites of the trade, to whom attention will be given in a later chapter, but by the enforced "loafing" of the regular longshoremen while waiting for the ships to dock.

But those who know longshoremen well invariably testify that individually they are a particularly interesting type of men. Collectively they are tremendous. Serious estimates of their numbers in the port of New York in 1914 varied from 27,000 to 60,000. Probably 35,000 foreign commerce and coastwise men is approximately the truth.

## INTRODUCTION

The emphasis of the following study has been placed on what, for the sake of distinction, is called the regular longshoreman. But it should be understood that, for reasons which will be set forth in the chapter on longshore work, the "regular" longshoreman is virtually a casual worker. Casual labor in any trade implies intermittent employment. It was the knowledge of this condition among so large a body of workers which suggested the necessity and social value of an extensive study of this occupation. Other questions immediately suggested themselves: Does intermittent employment in longshore work imply also under-employment? Are we, by any avoidable conditions of the work, adding to the ranks of the chronically under-employed? With this question another, inseparable from it, suggests itself. Are we, by maintaining a body of intermittently unemployed or chronically under-employed, creating a serious labor problem for the community? Does the present organization or lack of organization of longshore work tend to produce a body of permanent unemployables? If it is shown that this is in fact the case, what is the way out?

It was in the hope of answering these questions, as well as to stimulate a better understanding of this great group of workers, that the present investigation was undertaken.

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## EXTENT OF THE WATERFRONT AND PIER FACILITIES

THE port of New York is the largest in the world, not only in the amount of commerce which it harbors, but in the length of its available waterfront. No law defines its boundaries, but the following may be quoted from the customs regulations.

"Under the date of July 20, 1910, the Treasury Department expressed the opinion that the limits of the Port of New York so far as the Customs laws and regulations are concerned, 'should be considered as including all the territory lying within the corporate limits of the cities of Greater New York and Yonkers, N. Y., and of Jersey City, N. J., and in addition thereto all the waters and shores of the Hudson River and Kill von Kull in the State of New Jersey from a point opposite Fort Washington to Bergen Point Light and all the waters and shores of Newark Bay and the Hackensack River lying within Hudson County, N. J., from Bergen Point Light to the city limits of Jersey City.'"

According to the report of the New York Chamber of Commerce from which the above excerpt is taken, this great area has a waterfront of 771 miles of which 392 miles is developed (measured around piers and along heads of slips) with 852 piers. Manhattan Borough alone has a direct waterfront of 43 miles. Its developed waterfront is about 76 miles.†

With such an extent of available waterfront New York has relied on piers jutting out from the river fronts and no intensive development of docks or basins has been undertaken. In other great ports, it has been necessary to expend large sums in the construction of enclosed docks with lock gates to control the level of the water. Yet their port facilities are far superior. Already the new Chelsea piers are out of date, as they are not long enough to accommodate the 900 and 1000-foot vessels now being launched.

In 1911 the steamship companies owning these piers asked the Harbor Line Board of the United States War Department for permission to extend the piers to the thousand-foot line. The fairway at that time

\* New York Chamber of Commerce. Annual Report, 1913-14. Part II, p. 191.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 194-195.

## EXTENT OF THE WATERFRONT AND PIER FACILITIES

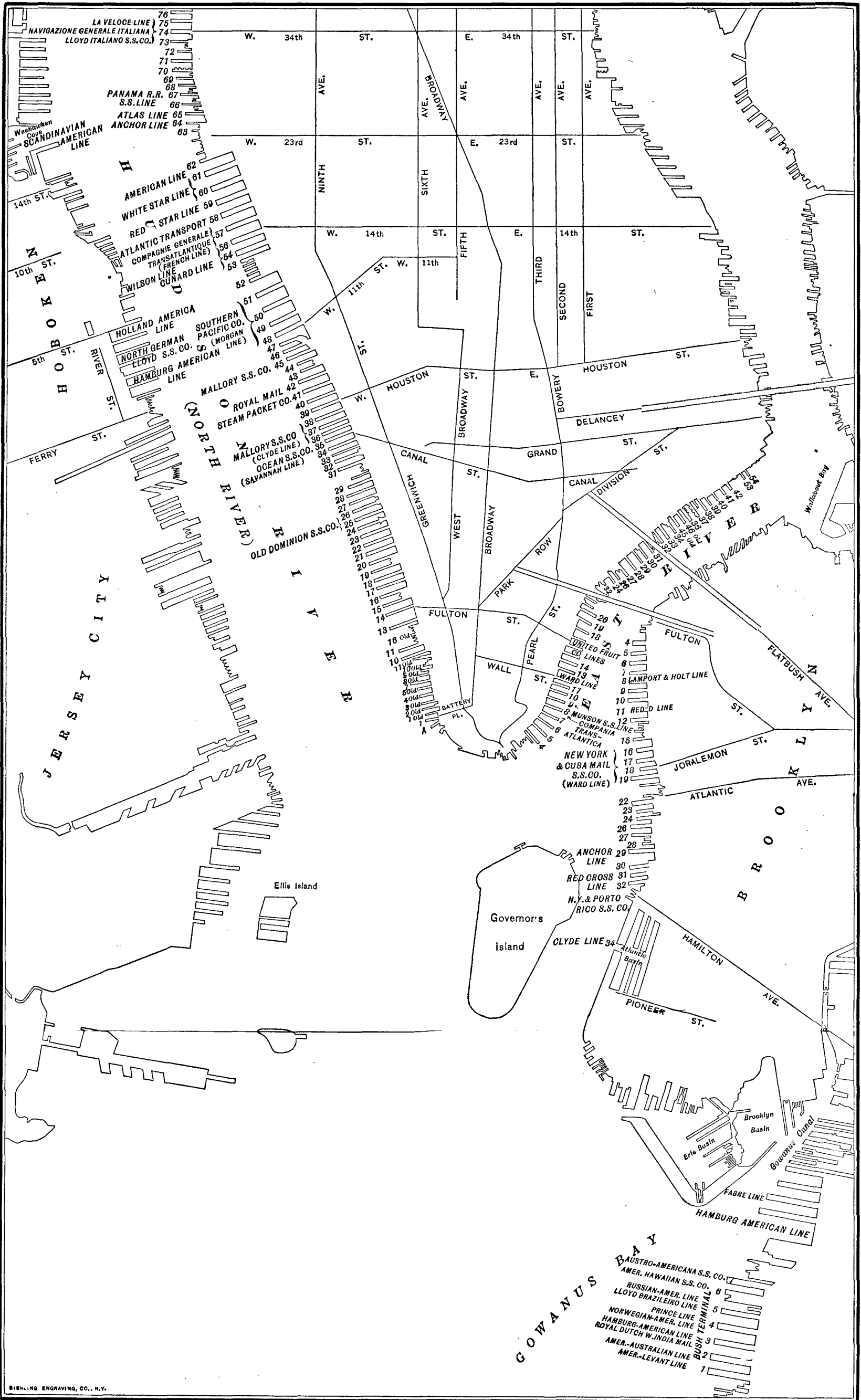
between the New Jersey pier-head line and the New York pier-head was 2750 feet. To grant an extension of 100 feet to piers on both sides of the river would leave a fairway of only 2550 feet. In the opinion of the Harbor Line Board, this would be too narrow, and it refused to permit further extension.

However, after a re-opening of the case and after several hearings, this authority in March, 1911, granted a temporary permit to the New York Star Line, allowing it to construct false-work extensions long enough to protect the new vessels, and they were built, making the length of certain piers about 900 feet. This permit was good for only eighteen months, however; it merely deferred the final solution. Later, permission was obtained for these temporary extensions to stand until the city should build longer piers at some other point. The city is now (March, 1913) building such piers in the region of West Forty-sixth Street, Manhattan. In March, 1913, a law was passed permitting the straightening of the head line along the Manhattan side of the North River below Gansevoort Street. This permits the extension of pier lengths.\*

Several plans have been proposed for the development of the waterfront to meet the new conditions. It has been suggested that an elevated road along the marginal way would relieve the congestion by the traffic of freight. Sea walls between the Battery and Governor's Island might be built to extend the available pier space. Outlying districts such as Fort Pond Bay, Montauk Point, and Jamaica Bay, have been proposed as centers for the heavy traffic. In the meantime the city and various steamship companies have been compelled to meet mostly with temporary expedients the new problems which arise in the rapid development of shipping and commerce of the port.

\* Information from commissioner's office, Department of Docks and Ferries, March 16, 1915.





BIHLING ENGRAVING, CO., N.Y.

PIER MAP OF NEW YORK HARBOR

SHOWING THE LOCATION OF PIERS OF THE PRINCIPAL FOREIGN AND COASTWISE LINES IN THE HARBOR OF NEW YORK

## CHAPTER I

### THE SHIP COMES IN

*Reported by wireless, May 19. SS. Lapland, Antwerp to New York (Red Star Line), was 500 miles east of Sandy Hook at 7 a.m., due 20th, 4 p.m.*

SUCH is the newspaper notice which first calls the attention of the longshoreman to the ship on which he may obtain work,\* and from that moment he loses no news of her whereabouts. He knows when she has passed Fire Island. Later, by flags run up on poles at the entrance to the pier or possibly through the medium of a blackboard placed for the purpose, he learns when she is likely to dock. But no man can calculate with certainty the hour of a ship's docking. The instability of the weather and other unavoidable delays of a great port add elements of uncertainty to her movements that seem to leave her for the moment outside the great domain of organized transportation.

It is the harbor captain who decides on which side of the pier the ship shall be berthed, and flags are run up on masts to notify the pilot of his decision. As she steams slowly up to her pier she is met by tugs that lead and push her toward her moorings. If the tide is strong and the vessel of heavy tonnage she may require a half dozen or more tugs to swing her in.

Meanwhile longshoremen, specially hired for this preliminary work,† are busy opening pier doors and making ready gangways, lines, and fenders. Next they bring the float stage,—the "breaking-round fender,"—haul it to the corner of the pier, and project it into the water ready to receive the first impact of the ship. As she swings in, sailors heave ashore the lines, or hawsers, and the longshoremen throw them over the mooring posts on the pier. The power capstans on the vessel's deck are turned and she is warped in alongside. But because of the bowing out of the

\* For old and modern methods of reporting ships, see pp. 55 ff.

† See Methods of Hiring, pp. 55 ff.

## THE LONGSHOREMEN

sides of a ship, it is not safe to bring her flush against the solid side of the pier. In the rising and falling of the tide it would be possible for her to crush it. To obviate this she is breasted off a few feet from the pier by floating fenders—narrow rafts of heavy timbers. Heavy spars or masts, one end mounted on rollers or low trucks, are braced against the side of the vessel at regular intervals and hold her out. As a ship is under the control of her officers until she is docked, this work is done under their direction. When the whistle announces that she is safely berthed, sailors place and secure the passenger gangways.

On board, no time has been lost in preparing to unload. The crew has raised the baggage from the hold with "span" and "fall"\* and piled it ready on the deck. Thence it is dragged and pushed along gangways onto the pier, where it falls into the hands of the longshoremen. Amid the bustle of passengers, friends from shore, and officers of the custom house, it is placed on trucks and wheeled to that part of the pier sectioned off for the customs inspection. Thence longshoremen truck it outside the lines. The work of taking off baggage is eagerly sought to obtain the tips, and also because men who do this work are more likely to be hired to discharge the cargo.

Unless the ship has docked late in the day the foreman or head stevedore at once calls in the longshoremen to unload her.† To uncover the hatches, rig the deck, open pier doors, and make ready slings, nets, trucks, and other apparatus for moving the goods is the work of an hour. When the work of discharging cargo is well under way, the medley of spans, booms, and guy ropes, blocks, falls, leads, coils of rope ends, the whirl of winches, the cries and whistles of gangway men, the shouts of foremen mingled with invectives, the creaking of innumerable drafts, or loads, make up a commotion, a tangle, bewildering to ear and eye. Add to this the gear and work of coaling and you have a picture of cargo handling as it is on a modern ship. And if the loading begins, as it frequently does, before the discharging is finished, the effect, to the outsider at least, is dizzy confusion.

\* For definitions of technical terms used, see p. 28 and the Glossary, p. 261.

† For a full description of the work of loading and discharging cargoes, see Chapter IV, Longshore Work, pp. 28 ff.

### THE SHIP COMES IN

In and out among rolling and swinging boxes, bales, heavy iron rails, one moment stepping aside to avoid a collision with a truck, another dodging to escape a descending draft, bustle slouchily or push ahead with eager alertness the cosmopolitan denizens of the waterfront. Here a tall, stalwart blond from Germany or the Scandinavian peninsula, there a brawny son of Ireland, here a stocky Polack, there a quick, wiry Italian, tug together at some refractory bale, forgetful of the accumulated animosities of their respective races, under the influence of a new world commerce which knows nothing of racial resentment or governmental tyranny. Back and forth, within and yet without, moves the Negro, still under the ban of his half freedom, doing as he may the simpler work of trucking on the pier. Such is the picture, rough but representative, that one sees the length of the waterfront as the ship comes in.

## CHAPTER II

### THE LONGSHOREMEN

#### NATIONALITIES ON THE WATERFRONT

TO WHAT race, to what nation, does the longshoreman of the port belong? In that he is a longshoreman—in that he is a New Yorker—he can no longer be classified as to race or nationality. The longshoremen of today are not only not predominantly of the same nation as the longshoremen of yesterday: they are of many races, of many nations. The cosmopolitan character of the workers who swarm about the docks; their varied customs and activities; their entirely human rivalries of individuals and groups, lend a picturesqueness to dock labor which even the scientific student of society may pause and admire. The quaint jargon of the waterfront is almost a dialect in its vivid suggestiveness and variety. Nor is it without linguistic history could we but trace the obscure stages of growth through which its pertinent words and phrases have passed.

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century a great change took place in the ethnic composition of our immigration. Up to about 1890, immigrants had come chiefly from the British Isles, Germany, France, and the Scandinavian peninsula; since that time the greatest numbers of aliens have come to the United States from Italy, Austria-Hungary, and Russia.\* The change is significant. It means a shifting of the sources of immigration from countries allied by race and tradition to our own, to countries of different and therefore less easily assimilated races and traditions.†

\* Abstract of the Statistical Review of Immigration to the United States, 1820-1910. Washington, 1911, p. 16.

† "A line drawn across the continent of Europe from northeast to southwest . . . separates countries not only of distinct races but also of distinct civilizations. . . . It separates lands where education is universal from lands where illiteracy predominates; it separates manufacturing countries, progressive agriculture, and skilled labor from primitive hand industries, backward agriculture, and unskilled labor; it separates an educated, thrifty peasantry from a peasantry scarcely a single generation removed from serfdom."—Commons, John R.: *Races and Immigrants in America*, p. 69. New York, Macmillan, 1907.

## NATIONALITIES ON THE WATERFRONT

As might be expected, this great change in race composition is reflected in a similar change in the composition of New York's waterfront workers. There are no statistics available as to the nationality of longshoremen; even the United States census does not classify them. But there seems good reason to believe the estimate of those familiar with the waterfront, that as late as 1880, 95 per cent of the longshoremen of New York, both foreign and coastwise, were Irish and Irish-Americans; the remaining 5 per cent, Germans, Scotch, English, and Scandinavians. This estimate is supported by old longshoremen who have been in the work since their youth and have seen the changes. There is no discrepancy of testimony; it is an accepted fact among them.

At the time of this investigation (1912), while the Irish (including Irish-Americans) were still in excess of any other nationality, the Italians ranked a close second, making up about one-third of the total.\* Before 1880 immigration from Italy had been a thin stream; but by 1887 the Italians, especially from southern Italy,† were beginning to come in large numbers. In that year the total reached 47,622, and the numbers rapidly increased from that time on.

It was this coming of the southern Italians with their low standards of wages and living‡ that made possible a change to a poorer grade of labor in longshore work. The change was consummated by the "big strike" of 1887,§ the Knights of Labor strike, which was said to have affected 50,000 men in various lines

\* The lines between the other peoples are so indefinite that it is impossible to form an estimate even approximately correct. One can merely say that the remaining two-thirds of the workers of the port included, besides the predominant Irish, the Polacks (see page 9) and other European nationalities—chiefly from the southeast, and American Negroes.

† More than 84 per cent of the Italian immigrants from Italy in the eleven fiscal years from 1900 to 1911 came from southern Italy, where the power of the landlord and the consequent oppression of the tenants is greatest.—Annual Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration, Washington, 1901-1911: 1901-1908, Table V; 1908-1911, Table VIII.

‡ "Unskilled laborers [in Italy] get 25 cents to 50 cents a day, and such skilled workers as masons and carpenters get only 27 cents to \$1.40 a day. This wide range of wages corresponds generally with the south and north, the lowest rate being in the south and the highest toward the north. In France and England wages are two and one-half times higher than in Italy, while in Germany they are about 30 per cent to 50 per cent higher."—Commons, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

§ See p. 102.

## THE LONGSHOREMEN

of work connected with the waterfront. When the regular men went out on strike, the steamship companies had to take on raw labor in order to finish loading or unloading the vessels on which work had already been begun. The men would leave the ships when only an hour or two would have been required to finish loading; and there were cases where half the consignment of a single shipper was left unloaded. The employment of large numbers of untrained men was dreaded, and with good reason. Many stories are told of the great difficulties the foremen had with the strike-breakers. Sometimes the stowing of goods would have to be entirely done over; badly stowed cargoes were broken in transit. The men were so unused to longshore work and so inefficient that the steamship companies lost heavily.

Yet in looking about after the strike was over for means to prevent a recurrence, the companies naturally turned to this large body of unskilled labor. Separated as it was, by race and language, from sympathy with the older workers, a gang of Italians was found to have a deterrent effect on them. The Irish were afraid of Italian competition. This fear lessened the likelihood of a strike and kept the men from actively resenting abuses.

Through some of their numbers who understood English, and by means of signs, the Italians could be given orders, and it was not long before they picked up enough of the language to be trusted in the less skilled positions where few orders were required. But the extensive substitution of Italians did not begin immediately after the strike. It was not until 1890 to 1892 that the presence of Italian longshoremen began to be very noticeable, and not until 1896 that their number assumed proportions threatening to the Irish.

The employment of Italians proved so advantageous that, as soon as the wedge was in, the opening for them was certain to become wider and wider. The tremendous annual increase of unskilled labor by immigration, the eagerness of the Italians for the work, their willingness to submit to deductions from their wages, leaving a neat little commission to be divided between foremen, saloon keepers, and native bosses,—all these considerations insured the permanence of the Italian in longshore work. They were imitative. They would get themselves up like long-



A "shape" in front of one of the Chelsea piers. The calling has begun and men begin to step from the line



## NATIONALITIES ON THE WATERFRONT

shoremen, with longshoremen's hooks in their belts, and "shape"\* with the rest, although they might never have done any longshore work. They stood together. Each Italian who found employment brought relatives, "trade brothers," who wanted work. If one secured a job as foreman, he gave the preference to his countrymen. Backed by bankers of their own nation, some of the Italians became contracting stevedores.†

From the standpoint of the Italian immigrant the work offered numerous advantages. It required little or no previous training and gave full wages at once. The fact that part of their pay went to a number of "friends" who were instrumental in getting them their jobs was soon understood to be a necessary condition, but one concerning which they must keep silent.

It has been stated above that more than 84 per cent of the immigrants from Italy in eleven years, ending June, 1911, came from southern Italy. Many of these had been peasants or farm laborers. They had lived in cities and frequently had been obliged to walk long distances to their work. The same combination of out-of-door labor with the advantages of urban life in colonies of their own people must have influenced them strongly toward longshore work. Another large contingent of these southern Italians had been waterfront workers in the ports of Italy and Sicily. Some had come as sailors on ships landing at this port. These men turned naturally to work of which they had already had experience. In any case, at an average of nine to ten dollars a week,‡ it was to be preferred to other outdoor work, such as excavating or constructing, with an average of seven to eight dollars.§

Unlike the Irish, who are often unmanageable and not always dependable, the Italians were tractable, could be relied on to turn up when wanted, and to hang around as long as there

\* At the time of the hiring, the men form in a semicircle, or "shape," around the opening in front of a pier, and the more promising or experienced ones are chosen by the foreman in charge. See *Methods of Hiring*, pp. 55 ff.

† See *Contracting Stevedores*, p. 67.

‡ See *Wages and Earnings*, pp. 76 ff.

§ These estimates are computed on a basis of three or four days' work a week according to statements given by Italians who have been foremen and organizers.

## THE LONGSHOREMEN

was any chance of work. The Irish considered their political rights and were resentful of oppression. The Italians had not awakened to the sense of being oppressed. This racial tractability, rather than the chance of graft or the possibility of paying a lower wage, was the determining cause among employers of the gradual increase of Italians in longshore work.

It was difficult to make the Irish work harmoniously with the Italians. At first it was impossible. Then Italians were put on in separate gangs or to handle coal; but care had to be exercised. If a gang of "Ginnies," or "Dagoes," as they were called, was put in the hold with the Irish, the latter would quit. Accordingly, sharp foremen played one race against the other. They took advantage of the irascibility of the Irish to force them out and so gain the advantage of employing Italians. They could then truthfully say that it was impossible to get "white men"\* and that they were obliged to take Italians.

The result is that the older types of Irish, Germans, and Scandinavians are now being pushed out to employment elsewhere, or remain only with certain conservative steamship companies, and in positions of superior skill or responsibility. Another reason for this upward movement of the Irish is that the educational status of those who are now coming into industry is higher. They are, therefore, unwilling to take their places at the bottom of the economic ladder, but step at once into less arduous positions, such as employes of street railways, hotels, or saloons, or else as clerks. The sons of Irish longshoremen now seek preferment in the police and fire departments, or in political offices.

The introduction of Italian labor was not the only result of the strike of 1887. Another effect has been a gradual increase in the number of Negro longshoremen. The old National Steamship Line brought in Negroes at the time of the strike, but found them unable to do certain parts of the work. They were strong and capable of heavy lifting, but seldom became deck men or foremen. After the strike, steamship companies for the most part found it more satisfactory to take back their former men. The Atlantic

\* The term used along the waterfront to designate the fair-skinned German, Scandinavian, British, and native white workers, as distinguished from the more swarthy southern and southeastern Europeans.

## NATIONALITIES ON THE WATERFRONT

Transport Line, formerly on the East River, employs some Negroes. In 1895, the Ward Line broke a local strike with Negroes, and since then has used them to the exclusion of all other races.

Since 1900 many Polacks and Jews have gone into longshore work. Polack is a term originally used to designate the Poles from Germany and Russia; but it is now used more loosely to mean any group of the Slavic people, whether they come from central Europe or the Balkan peninsula. It is bestowed upon the diverse groups of Austrians, such as the Slovaks, Bohemians, and others. The Irish do not distinguish between them and have succeeded in fastening the same name to all these stalwart, broad-faced foreigners. They are easily to be distinguished from the Italians by their stronger and larger physique, fairer complexions, and harshness of speech. They are considered along the waterfront to be a better class of workers than the Italians. In the distribution of labor, they are generally placed on the pier or in the hold. They work well with the Irish. The Irish have a contemptuous dislike for the Italians—for one reason because the latter have superseded them in the work—but against the Polacks less antagonism exists.

It is difficult to estimate the justice of the criticisms of the Italians, on account of antagonism between the races. It is evident that they have less physical strength than the Irish. On some piers it is said that "one 'white man' is as good as two or three Italians." The Scandinavian-American Line, Hoboken, once worked a gang of Irish in one coal boat and a gang of Italians in another at the same time, and found by actual count that the Irish brought up two bucketfuls to the Italians' one. A foreman on one of the large steamship piers on the East River testified that Italians are not good at the work. "Often they do not understand English and will do everything wrong. If you are a man with a temper, they will nearly set you crazy." He told of once having put Italians to work piling sugar. It had been the custom to pile it four and five bags high, but when they got it three bags high they had reached their limit. Another stated that he had seen Italians sink helpless under bags of sugar which the Irish handled easily. A third said there is a knack in the work which the Irish possess. He had seen two Irishmen grab a bag of sugar by its

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ears and swing it up, after Italians had tugged at it for some time without moving it.

On the other hand, some testify to the efficiency of Italians, but seldom more than that a good Italian is as good as other men, or that Italians are sometimes preferred for unloading Mediterranean fruit and certain other goods. In the main, it is the inferior grades of longshore work which fall to the lot of the Italians. They are used as coal shovelers, pier men, and sometimes as hold men, but rarely on the deck. There are many Italian foremen, but only where large numbers of Italian longshoremen are employed.

Besides the nationalities already mentioned, there is a scattered representation of almost all the nations of Europe along the waterfront—Jews (Russian and other), Greeks, French, French Canucks, and Dutch have been found doing this work. The distribution of the different races about the port can not be stated in clearly defined terms or with any degree of finality. There is a continual interchange of individuals and nationalities in almost every locality. Nevertheless, there are piers at which certain races are more readily employed than at others. For instance, the nine piers of the Chelsea Improvement Company\* and the German piers in Hoboken stand for the most efficient work, and, as might be expected, employ a high grade of labor. Irish, Germans, and Scandinavians, it has been explained, are employed in superior positions and with the more conservative firms. Accordingly, one finds that the majority of longshoremen who work at the nine Chelsea piers are Irish; that there are still a large number of them in Hoboken; and that many remain as foremen all over the waterfront. The great center for German longshoremen is Hoboken. At the Hamburg-American and North German Lloyd piers they are preferred to all others, as steady men. The term Scandinavian includes Norwegians, Swedes, and Danes—"squareheads." These are found in Hoboken, especially on the Scandinavian-American piers, at the Chelsea piers, and scattered elsewhere throughout the port. Norwegians and Swedes are much sought as longshore sailors or riggers.†

The American Line alone of the Chelsea Improvement

\* See p. 60.

† Those who make a specialty of putting up the rigging on deck and pier.

## NATIONALITIES ON THE WATERFRONT

companies uses a majority of Italians. The coal handlers on the Chelsea piers are chiefly Italians, and an increasing number do the irregular work in Hoboken and on the East River. At the Bush Terminal, Brooklyn, all sorts of foreigners, but mainly Italians, are employed. The Prince Line changed to an Italian force about 1903. In 1909, the California Line (American-Hawaiian) changed its stevedore, and employed one who uses only Italians to unload; so that, whereas all the longshoremen working on the California Line pier were formerly of English-speaking nationalities, now half are Italian. The Lloyd Brasileiro Line employs only Italians, even the foremen being of that race; but the superintendent of the pier is an Irish-American.

The great line of cleavage between the older and newer type of longshoreman, between the sturdy races of northwestern Europe and the more alien immigrants of southern and southeastern Europe, is generally admitted to be an important factor in bringing about a deterioration in efficiency among the longshoremen of the port; but the readiness of foremen and stevedores to engage a poorer grade of labor, and the general lack of consideration on the part of the employers—as will be brought out in the course of this study—for the safety and wellbeing of their employes, must not be disregarded as contributing causes. However, the oldtime Irish and German longshoremen, we are also told, were a much finer class than the longshoremen of their own races today. That the younger Irishmen now going into the work are, as a class, inferior to their predecessors, is seldom disputed. "There was a time," said one of the older men with a look of pride, "when many Irishmen doing longshore work made 'big money,' always got their clothes from a merchant tailor, had their shoes made to order, and bought the best of everything to eat. Now, not so much money can be made." These earlier workers felt more responsibility for the satisfactory completion of their work. If a gang of men were told to have the cargo out at a certain time, no foreman was necessary to oversee them. "Leave it to us," they would say, and they would get it done.

What is to be the outcome? There are, as we have seen, very few young Irishmen now going into longshore work, and

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when this generation dies off the "foreigners" seem destined more and more to possess the field. The fact that the Irish, along with the other related races of northwestern Europe, are gradually being driven out is the logical result of the general tendency of the steamship companies, and of the almost total absence of public interest or governmental control. If these conditions continue there can be only one outcome. The change which has been begun will be completed; representatives of the older immigration will have disappeared from the waterfront. It is the constant prediction of the more intelligent Irish longshoremen that ten years hence the longshore work of the port will be largely controlled by the Italians. From the point of view of the more capable workers, this is not a result to be desired. Although the foreigners have not come into longshore work on a lower wage scale, yet their low standard of living and their inability to manage strikes or otherwise secure advances have a tendency here, as in other industries, to keep down wages, and so hold down the level of subsistence. Already the presence of a large body of low-grade workers has had its influence in retarding progress and improvements in conditions which will be discussed in later chapters. The occupation will have to be made more desirable to intelligent, responsible men if deterioration is to be arrested.

## CHAPTER III

### THE LONGSHOREMEN (CONTINUED)

#### CHARACTERISTICS AND OPPORTUNITIES

##### I. THE LONGSHOREMAN AS A MAN

**A** CLEAN-CUT man nearly fifty years of age, clean shaven save his upper lip, five feet nine in height, and weighing about 170 pounds, broad in the shoulders, strong of arm, but with a slight stoop; somehow wholesome looking, a man that one would touch without recoil, notwithstanding the accumulation of cargo dirt; a man who supports a wife and four children and inhabits a four-room tenement; a man who speaks in a high-pitched voice suggestive of much loud shouting, and laughs with a deep reverberating laugh indicating friendliness and good-fellowship; a hearty eater and lover of a social drink with his companions; a friendly man throughout, but a quick, keen critic of his fellow-workman; thoroughly efficient in all the details of his own work, and surprisingly full of information concerning the matters and the methods of the waterfront—this is a longshoreman, a handler of foreign cargoes. He is above the average, to be sure, but still an ordinary longshoreman, one who works in the vessel's hold.

This is the worker whom public opinion has branded, without discrimination, as a loafer, a drinker, a brawler. Again and again in the course of this study we have been met with look or word of surprise that anyone should be interested in him. Yet in the teeth of this harsh judgment we have heard one of their number characterized by a man of education and wide opportunity as "the nicest man I know. I do not mean the nicest longshoreman," he added, "but the nicest *man*."

The mistake has come about naturally enough. A man whose business calls him occasionally to the waterfront, or a passenger on an ocean liner, sees longshoremen straggling along the

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sidewalk waiting to be called,\* or perchance happens on a group of drunken shenangoes† loafing about the pier entrances. Instantly the vague impression of worthlessness which has hung about his conception of the waterfront people is confirmed. This judgment remains firmly fixed. When occasion arises he passes it on to those who later verify it by an experience similar to his.

The root of the confusion lies in a loose understanding of what the work of a longshoreman really is, and in the failure to recognize that widely different types of men pass under the designation. The term "longshoremen" includes the foreign commerce men (popularly called regular longshoremen), coastwise workers, banana handlers, and the lower industrial class described above.

Each of the classes represents a type differing somewhat from the others; each must be estimated individually. But even then the complexity is not removed. Within the groups there is considerable variety of skill and personality. The range is wide from the man who can rig up and handle the working gear of a large vessel to the latest foreign recruit who requires supervision in the pushing of a hand truck.

Before taking up the "regular" longshoreman, let us consider briefly the type which has done so much to discredit this whole labor group in the eyes of the public. Though shenangoes wear longshoremen's hooks,‡ hang about the waterfront, and handle the cargoes of barges and lighters, they must be distinguished sharply from the skilled and semi-skilled workmen whose good name they have helped to tarnish. In the first place, habitual drunkards can not do regular longshore work. A man who has had too much liquor may pass the foreman, but he will soon be spotted by his fellows and perhaps knocked off; the other men do not like to risk working with him. If a man has had only a little he may remain and "sweat it out," but the drinking man finds his muscles growing soft; little by little he becomes unfitted for the work, is no longer taken on, and finally falls into the class

\* See pp. 18 and 27.

† The "down-and-outs" who drift along the waterfront seeking any kind of job, augmented by the several gangs of toughs who hang about the docks in special neighborhoods.

‡ The essential implement of the longshoreman's trade. See p. 34.



## CHARACTERISTICS AND OPPORTUNITIES

of the shenango. The miner, and in some cases the day laborer, when he reaches a certain point in the downward path of drink is obliged to give up his occupation; but the dock laborer, though partly wrecked by drink, can find odd jobs along the waterfront and still be classed as a longshoreman, to the detriment of the latter.

Occasionally other workmen on a spree go down and join the waterfront people for a few days, working and drinking with them, and adding to the disrepute in which the longshoreman is held. Workers may not make good in their own trades or may get tired of their low wages and go to the waterfront. Irresponsible workers of this type are much more likely to drift into the ranks of the shenangoes than to find a place among the more steady men. But shenangoes are largely recruited from Irish longshoremen, either broken down by drink and unfitted for regular work, or longshoremen in good standing temporarily out on a spree. The Irishman, who stands as the best type of waterfront worker, when he begins to lose ground slips to the lowest level and represents the worst.

In the neighborhood of Coenties Slip, East River, is found a group of similar grade—the banana handlers,\* or “banana fiends.” Several nationalities are to be found among them, but here, as among the shenangoes, there are many Irish and Irish-Americans. Educated, even professional men, it is said, have been reduced to this labor through misfortune and drink. Banana fiends, like the shenangoes, live for the most part in the lodging houses of the neighborhood and go about to free lunch counters and cheap restaurants for their meals.

South of the foreign commerce district on the West Side, as far as Canal Street and east to Varick and Bleecker streets, live the main body of coastwise workers—those who load and discharge cargoes carried between United States ports. Although there is a difference between groups employed by individual coastwise lines, on the whole coastwise workers are not up to the standard of the regular longshoremen.

Those who handle lumber† form perhaps the most distinctive group. It is necessary to know something of rigging and

\* For description of their work, see pp. 44 ff.

† See pp. 48 ff.

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splicing rope; therefore men who have been sailors are preferred. Sailors out of work often take up lumber handling temporarily. The work is hard and hazardous. Except in emergencies lumber men will not do regular longshore work, nor will ordinary longshoremen discharge lumber schooners. When no lumber handling is to be had, these men generally work on lighters or other small craft; they rarely go up into the city to look for jobs.

It has been shown how natural it is that the casual observer of the waterfront, seeing the shenango loafing about, somewhat the worse for liquor, or the city bum out on a spree, should immediately conclude that the longshoreman is a disreputable fellow. But let us try to see the longshoreman as he is, unobscured by popular misconceptions.

The foreign commerce men,\* commonly called the "regular" longshoremen, are not loafers, drunkards, or brawlers. Although many are hard swearers and often ready for a fight, and although the conditions of their hiring and the lack of suitable waiting places† require them to hang about the docks and in the saloons, not without considerable drinking, yet as a rule they are a big-hearted, goodnatured, honest set of workers. One of their number has pertinently said of his fellows, "They will cut you and hand you a plaster." Nine-tenths of them are supporters of families, and live in tenements as near as may be to their work.

Roughly speaking, there are four main centers of foreign shipping located in widely separated districts.‡ These are the Chelsea Improvement piers on the North River, Manhattan; the great trans-Atlantic companies of Hoboken; the Bush Terminal piers, South Brooklyn; and the piers of the Atlantic Basin, Brooklyn. Accordingly, the great body of foreign commerce men working on the North River piers live in the West Side section between Hudson and West streets and, farther north, between Eighth and Eleventh avenues, and from Christopher Street up to Thirtieth Street, while a smaller group live on the East Side from Houston Street to South Ferry as far west as Second Avenue.

\* For full description of foreign commerce work, see pp. 29 ff.

† See Shelters, pp. 24 ff.

‡ See map folder, opposite page 1.



A goodnatured foreman allows a respite for the taking of a group picture with the officers' pets in the foreground



Types of longshoremen along the Chelsea waterfront

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In giving these boundaries it is not meant that the groups are confined absolutely within any specified district. Beyond the limits set are many scattered homes. A considerable number of the longshoremen who work in Manhattan live far uptown. There is at present a decided movement of longshoremen from the neighborhood of the coastwise piers, which were formerly occupied by the trans-Atlantic lines, to the section in front of the Chelsea piers. Probably the district containing the greatest number in proportion to its size is that bounded on the north by Twenty-eighth Street and on the south by West Eleventh Street.

At least half of the total number of longshoremen in the port live in Brooklyn. The foreign commerce men congregate there as near as may be to the Bush piers and the Atlantic Basin, mentioned above. A section containing large numbers of foreign commerce workers is that around the Erie and Atlantic Basins from Hamilton Avenue to Pioneer Street—the Italian quarter. It is difficult to district the coastwise workers dwelling in Brooklyn, but it can at least be said that large numbers of them live near the Wall Street ferry.

The men who work in Hoboken live all over that city, but large numbers are concentrated in the district bounded on the north by Sixth Street, on the south by Ferry Street, between Jackson and River streets. Many of those who work on the Scandinavian-American Line live near Fourteenth Street.

In their personal appearance we have seen that longshoremen vary, as representatives of different races must. There is the greatest diversity of height, build, and complexion. The longshoreman has always been thought of as a husky fellow. This is still true in general, but with the incoming of the Italian the average of height and weight has decreased. At the more important foreign piers, however, the majority of the men are sturdy, well built, and muscular. There is nothing unique about their wearing apparel except perhaps its extraordinary staying qualities. The work is always hard on a man's clothes, and some varieties of cargo are particularly destructive. Longshoremen always wear belts to accommodate the indispensable hook.

All longshoremen have gnarled hands; it is impossible for them to escape this distinguishing sign. And herein lies a

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grievance: that a mechanic can wash, dress up, and so disguise his occupation, while a cargo handler must always be known for what he is. Because of the undefined slight attached to the name, longshoremen are exceedingly sensitive about their trade. Often a man is so careful to keep his occupation hidden that his neighbors in the same house do not know how he earns a living. During the taking of the last census, many wives of longshoremen reported their husbands as laborers or shipping clerks; they were ashamed of the occupation. "Certainly," say the men, "we're ashamed to be called longshoremen. If one of us is arrested and owns up his occupation to the judge, that is good for thirty days, whether he's done anything or not."

The root of this shame is the bad reputation for loafing and drinking which, as we have seen, has been put upon him by a careless and indiscriminating public.\* The testimony of those who know them, that the great bulk of the men do not drink more than other laborers, is almost universal. The greater temptation to drink makes this the more remarkable. There is required at all times a great deal of hanging about awaiting the arrival of ships or freight.† This is a matter not of minutes but of hours sometimes of whole days. Longshoremen, except while at work are not allowed on the piers. They can not go to their homes for fear they will not be on hand when wanted. Consequently, they must stand on the sidewalks, in doorways, or on street corners, and acquire the reputation of being loafers; or go to the saloon, which is always conveniently located, and be stamped as drunkards. For it is impossible to remain in the saloon and take nothing. The man who does not drink is asked with intent, "Who is paying the rent?" or "Who pays for these lights?" He must drink or leave. Given the alternative of standing room on the street or in a saloon, does the ordinary workman hesitate if he can afford the latter? And if the argument for the saloon is convincing in fair weather, how much more is it unanswerable in extreme heat, extreme cold, rain, or snow. At only one spot are they offered a different refuge—the Longshoremen's Rest at the foot of West Twenty-second Street.‡

\* See p. 13.

† See *Methods of Hiring*, pp. 55 ff.

‡ For discussion of the efforts that have been made to provide shelters, see close of this chapter, pp. 24 ff.

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It is believed that there is less drinking among longshoremen today than formerly. This may be because of the greater competition; the men attach more importance to being in condition for work. Then the younger generation has had more schooling, and its ideal of manhood is a little higher. The greater proportion of Italians may have had something to do with the decrease of intoxication, for Italians spend less money at the saloon than other races. It is the custom among the latter to go to the saloon and "treat." The Italians send one of their number for a can of beer, and the group consumes it. The fact that the work itself goes on in a more orderly way than formerly tends toward greater regularity of habit. Each of these causes has had its share in making the longshoreman of the present a more sober member of society than was his predecessor of a few years ago.

It has already been shown that the older elements in this industrial class are the most independent,—and for independence, longshoremen probably take the lead among so-called unskilled workers. One aspect of the longshoreman's independence is his hatred of toadyism. At the better piers a man may find himself disliked for no other reason than that he has been seen talking to the foreman. It has been hinted that though independent, the longshoreman is very shy. Partly because of a certain suspicion of the intent of any intruder, partly from natural diffidence, knowing in how little esteem he is held, it is hard to win his confidence. But once it is won he is as trustful as he was previously suspicious.

Being very human, the longshoreman is not without inconsistencies, as a superintendent of a Hoboken line has borne witness. Though this officer tried to make a study of the men, he found that in some ways they were beyond his comprehension. He does not believe there is another class of workmen so hard to get in touch with and understand. After the loss of the strike of 1907\* he noticed that the men were discontented and in a thoroughly bad frame of mind. A few years earlier certain classes of the workers had received five cents an hour extra. Thinking that it would improve the spirit of the men, he offered to return to this system. But they refused the increase, saying that they didn't want it. If a clue is sought to this apparently incompre-

\* See pp. 115 ff.

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hensible attitude of men who had recently been on strike for a raise in wages, it must be found in the strong resentment felt by a body of high-spirited workers toward patronage, even though it be only implied.

Longshoremen are for the most part honest. Occasionally a cask of bottled liquor is "accidentally" broken or a box of sardines tampered with, but rarely is anything taken except for immediate consumption. This is the more deserving of comment when one realizes that the men handle all kinds of goods from the coarsest to the most costly. The presence of men in the hold and on the pier whose duty it is to check the freight as it is being loaded or discharged, to a certain degree acts as a restraint upon dishonest tendencies; but though always nominally under supervision longshoremen have many chances to steal. Probably they have a greater temptation and a better opportunity to pilfer from their employers than any other class of workmen. A time-keeper of a North River pier once lost his time-book. It was known that the pay was about \$1,500, and the management decided to let the men give in their hours. Whatever they claimed on pay day they received. Later the book was found. The company had paid out \$4.85 less than the amount due the men.

Public-spirited men—especially lawyers who have known them in the way of business—have expressed admiration of some of the manly principles for which longshoremen stand, as well as for the decency and order which characterize their meetings. The public misconception had previously been accepted and the facts as found caused surprise. The opinion that seamen are superior to longshoremen, an idea which is shared by sailors themselves, is widespread. Yet it is the judgment of many who have been in touch with both classes, some in the capacity of superiors, that this is not the case; that the longshoremen are more steady than the rovers of the sea, easier to get along with, more dependable. The testimony to a measure of self-restraint and manliness among men who have the reputation of being uncontrolled and violent is borne out by a study of the port's one Longshoremen's Rest. The appreciation shown by the men in their use of the only shelter that has been provided for them is a strong argument against the belief that they frequent the saloon by choice.\*

\* See pp. 24 ff.



Waiting for the "shape"



Splicing a trolley fall and a burton fall together. This is a task which requires skill and care



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Longshoremen are gregarious. When out of work, if the weather permits, the majority of them hang about the street corners in groups or sit on freight piled in front of the piers. Some chat or gossip or argue mooted questions about methods of work or dates of waterfront happenings; some read the papers and are intelligent critics of current events. Often on the far side of the street a string of longshoremen are seen sitting on the handles of their hooks, the crooks down, their backs braced against the wall or fence, perhaps watching a friendly wrestling match or a game. A favorite pastime while hanging about the piers is tossing pennies—a modification of "heads and tails." Two players often attract a crowd, and side bets soon increase the interest. Skylarking acts as a safety valve while waiting for the "shape" or for work during the day. Once all pressure of work is removed they are like boys on a holiday. Many are the pranks played on one another, which are generally accepted in good humor.\*

If not called to work, the tired longshoreman may spend his evenings with his family, attend the meetings of his union, or join his companions on the street corner or in the saloon. Sunday is to him often a day of labor. If not, it passes much the same as with other workingmen. It is the meeting day of several of his unions. Many attend their church services. The predominance of Irish and Italians determines the prevailing religion; undoubtedly a large percentage are Catholics.

Conveniences for longshoremen on the piers are almost totally lacking. The drinking is usually done at water taps, and there is no special place provided for a man to wash his hands. Towels are unheard of. Such toilets as exist are nearly always unwholesome and repulsive—another reason for the men to frequent saloons. While working, a man usually wears his hat. There are neither lockers nor hooks where he can hang up his coat; if he lays it off he must leave it where it can be seen, for fear of stragglers from outside.

\* Nicknames are very common, and they are often indicative of some personal peculiarity. One hears of "Mike, the Minister," "Smiler," "Windy," "The Pirate," "Coney Island," "Old Country Chap," "Dingbat," "Malachy, the Bear," "Johnny Milk Punch," "Sunny Jim," "The Millionaire," and "Long Island Tom."

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As might be expected of men whose earnings are haphazard, longshoremen have no very keen sense of the value of money; they spend freely. A certain generosity of nature leads them to let go of their money easily when they get it. Rarely does a longshoreman drop less than a quarter into the collection box for a fellow-workman who has been hurt.\* Often he gives much more, even though, as in many cases, he does not know for whom he is contributing.

Here is a great occupation unique among trades, in that a man instead of beginning as a boy and working up in it gradually, must, before he can take it up, be a fullgrown man. And he is at once in the thick of it. There are few longshoremen who have not in early life or alternately done other work. Haverstraw brick workers, sound boatmen, and many other seasonal workers drifting into longshore work when their own trades are slack, often remain permanently. A teamster is thrown out of his job. His employment has brought him in touch with longshoremen, and through the influence of some acquaintance he begins to shape for work at the piers. An opportunity offers and he returns to teaming. The next time he is out of employment he remembers and returns to the waterfront. After this experience has been repeated several times, he may give up his teaming and take up longshore work permanently.

There are few opportunities for advancement in longshore work. A pier man may look forward to being taken on in the hold or even on deck,† but, though the work may be steadier, in neither case does he receive a higher rate of pay. His ultimate hope is to become a foreman. This grade once reached, even if only that of hourly foreman, may eventually mean that he rises to the position of head foreman with entire charge of a pier, and possibly the title of stevedore.

There was a time in the port of New York when the capable longshoreman could look forward to becoming a contracting stevedore.‡ If by thrift he saved a small sum of money, this with his

\* For discussion of accidents and compensation, see *Risks of the Trade*, pp. 129 ff.

† For divisions of the work, see pp. 29 ff. See also *Is Longshore Work Skilled Labor?* pp. 51 ff.

‡ See *Contracting Stevedores*, p. 67.

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ability was capital enough. It is said that there were then several hundred stevedores in the port; but this was before the days of combinations and when few steamship companies did their own work. There are at present seven or eight large firms and a number of small stevedores,—some of the latter "lumpers," who take bulk contracts,—but in proportion to the work they are very few.

Yet, though the work is irregular and the opportunities for advancement are infrequent, the waterfront is not without its men of talent and its celebrities. The loading of barrel oil, once accomplished at great waste of space and labor, was, some eighteen years ago, revolutionized by obscure longshoremen. Instead of the clumsy method of laying dunnage in the spaces left by the barrels to create a level platform for the next layer, hold men, it is said, suggested the method now called "bilge and contline"\* by which no space is lost. Many of the improvements which have taken place in the methods of work have been forced on foremen and superintendents by the longshoremen.

Foremen who have come up from the ranks are a very bright class of men. They have of necessity a thorough knowledge of the work—a grasp of details, a mastery of the whole, and executive ability not usually accredited to them.† A few of the cleverer have passed from longshore work to higher callings.

Thrift, as has already been indicated, is not one of the virtues of longshoremen. Their standard of living is as high as could be expected considering their earnings; but the inevitable irregularity of their habits, the considerable amount of drinking, and their comparatively short period of working efficiency make it impossible for them to live any but a hand-to-mouth existence. Where the home is above the standard usual among tenement dwellers, it can be inferred that other members of the family help to maintain it.

\* By this method the rows of barrels in each succeeding layer are fitted into the space between the bulge of two rows of the next layer. See also p. 52.

† Among them are many interesting characters. There are a few head foremen whose names are known to every English-speaking longshoreman in the port. "Ned Doanely" (J. E.), foreman for the White Star Line, was with his company for forty years, and remained in active service until his death in March, 1915. Another, and probably the most widely known, "Joe Jennings," of the American Line, has been retired on a comfortable pension from his company.

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Rarely is any money saved for old age; and the dearth of savings is particularly serious in the case of the longshoreman. He does not usually live to be an old man, but he is worn out and laid aside comparatively early, and for the period between the close of his active life and his death provision must be made.

A few longshoremen after they can no longer handle cargoes become watchmen on the piers.\* Some who have a political pull obtain positions as street sweepers or dock cleaners. A few who at some time have been sailors are admitted to Sailor's Snug Harbor on Staten Island. Many pass their old age in the City Home on Blackwell's Island. But probably the majority of longshoremen, when they can no longer take care of themselves, are supported by their children. Early marriage is, in this trade, a good investment—a kind of old-age insurance.

### II. SHELTERS

Reference has already been made to the long waits out-of-doors in all sorts of weather, forced on longshoremen by the irregularity of their work. They must hang about for hours at a time on street corners or along the pier entrances. If they seek shelter the saloon is their only refuge. There is, obviously, need of a different type of shelter which would offer the advantages of the saloon without its temptation to undue expenditure and the subsequent demoralizing effects.

Some twenty years ago this need was recognized in Hoboken and a frame building was erected near the piers as a center for longshoremen. The steamship companies contributed toward its maintenance. A man was placed in charge who, in addition to his other duties, sold light refreshments. Though the experiment was acknowledged to be a success, when, after about five years, the ground was needed for warehouse room, the building was removed. Several years later one of the longshoremen's unions rented a basement on West Eleventh Street, Manhattan, for the benefit of the men who worked on the North River. But this experiment was short lived on account of the removal of the foreign commerce lines to the Chelsea section.

For several years the Church Temperance Society tried to

\* See p. 53.



Scenes in the rooms of the Longshoremen's Rest, West Twenty-second Street, New York City

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lease a building on the waterfront for use as a longshoremen's Rest. As no effort was made to conceal the purpose for which the place was wanted, every attempt to locate was blocked—presumably by the liquor interests. Finally a three-story brick building opposite the Chelsea piers, at the foot of West Twenty-second Street, was secured, and a Rest was opened June 15, 1910.

At first the new Rest was not welcome. The longshoremen regarded it with suspicion. They feared the steamship companies were backing it and would use it as a center for strikebreakers. But the place was skilfully run and their distrust soon changed to appreciation. Union officials wrote to the secretary that the Rest had not only helped to promote temperance, but had in other ways improved the tone of the men.

These results were obtained indirectly and without ostentation. Temperance was not preached. Men under the influence of liquor sometimes enter but rarely do they make trouble. No rules demanded order, but it was understood that while in the Rest the men must behave and respect the rights of others; that there must be no loud, boisterous conversation, no sleeping in chairs. The men responded to the tacit appeal. The reading matter at their disposal has met a real demand.

All three floors are used for longshoremen. On the first floor there is a long room with a table down the center. Along one side of the room are small tables; on the other, benches and a shuffle-board. Often more than a hundred of the denizens of the waterfront can be seen at one time, reading, sitting about in groups playing games, or formed into circles outside the groups, following the play with words of encouragement or derision.

The men who frequent the Rest are self-respecting and orderly. Irish, Germans, and Italians are the most frequent patrons. There is no race division, but one notices that the Italians flock together. All, however, are goodnatured. There is no active antagonism between races. Most are in their working clothes, as though awaiting the shape; some, turned down at an early shape, are killing time until the next opportunity offers. A few, covered with black grime, reveal themselves as coal handlers. The attendance at the Rest varies with the amount of work

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at the docks and with the weather. It is highest during the winter months. During the year 1914 the daily average was 424 visits.

This is a short record of efforts to benefit longshoremen from outside their own ranks. As a history of shelters actually established, it is complete. But one more effort, from which no results have as yet materialized, must be recorded.

The agitation which had been going on among the longshoremen for several years previous to the founding of the Longshoremen's Rest had still another result. In 1910 an effort was made by the Citizens' Union to persuade the city to erect shelters along the waterfront. A committee from the Citizens' Union reported to the dock commissioner that on account of the large numbers of longshoremen employed by the hour and the number of hours they lost in waiting around for work, with no place but the saloons for shelter from all kinds of weather, it earnestly requested that the city erect shelters along the waterfront on the marginal way. The report reads: "The conditions of their employment are peculiar to their class of work, and we ask the establishing of better conditions for this class of men on the same ground that prompts the erection of recreation piers, parks, and so forth, to develop in them a higher degree of pride and value of their citizenship, which would revert to the interest of all the people of the city." The committee also made recommendations regarding the location, size, and equipment of several experimental shelters.

A public hearing was called to consider the matter. Many spoke of the need for shelters. The dock commissioner was in favor of the plan, but argued that the shelters should be of a temporary nature in order that they could be transferred whenever the shifting of a center of traffic made it advisable. After about a year the city made an appropriation of \$3,000 for the erection of one shelter, to be located near the foot of West Seventeenth Street, Manhattan. The promoters of the scheme hoped that if the city put up the building, they could persuade some private organization that it could be run at a profit. Unfortunately the organizations which they approached did not believe that the profit would be forthcoming. Finally the Church Temperance Society offered to take over and run the shelter if the city would

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appropriate \$1,700 a year for its maintenance. No additional appropriation, however, has as yet been secured.

Longshoremen have often talked of forming clubs, the dues of which should be used to maintain shelters. There are, however, several serious objections to the plan. The class of men whose need of such places is greatest are those who can least well afford to pay for their up-keep—the most irregularly employed. The work of the ordinary longshoreman takes him to so many different parts of the port that a club would be of little use to him. The scheme would be practicable only among those who work with unusual regularity for a special company or in a particular neighborhood. It appears, therefore, that if shelters are to be operated for the benefit of longshoremen they must be established and maintained by an outside agency. The facts seem to show that some suitable provision should be made if only in the interest of better citizenship.



## CHAPTER IV

### LONGSHORE WORK

A TRAVELER in a strange city is confused by the tangle of narrow and winding streets and the din of traffic. But give him a map and he steps forth with the confidence of an old resident. Just so one finds oneself confused by the mass of technical and mechanical terms and detail characteristic of longshore work. Each pier is a law unto itself. It has its own traditions and methods of work, makes its own rules, hires its own men\* without let or hindrance from outside. A chart is needed, therefore, a general outline, to safeguard the reader from the bewildering tangle of details.

The first essential to such an outline is a key to the technical terms used, some of which are peculiar to this occupation. For convenience of reference in reading the following pages it has seemed best to insert in a footnote at this point definitions of a few of the most common terms.† A complete list of terms and defini-

\* For methods of hiring see Chapter V, pp. 55 ff. Although the hiring is in a peculiar sense a preliminary step to each job with longshoremen, and the discussion of it logically should precede this chapter, yet as the men usually are not hired according to the division of work which they do, a description of the procedure is not essential to an understanding of this chapter. It has seemed better, therefore, to group the chapter on methods of hiring with those on irregularity of the employment and on wages and earnings, which show the results of those methods.

† Cargoes of vessels are loaded or discharged through the "hatches," openings in the vessels which extend from the hold up through the decks of the vessel. The hatch "coamings" are the raised edges around a hatchway. The "draft" is the load of goods which is raised from or lowered into the hold. The "rigging" of the deck preparatory to loading or unloading involves, first of all, the uncovering of the hatches and adjusting of "spans," "booms," "blocks," and "falls." The "span" is a rope or cable stretched between two objects, usually the masts. The "boom" is a long pole, or "spar," swung out from a mast, and ordinarily used to extend the sail at its base. The "fall" is a rope with a hook at one end, by which the draft is raised or lowered. The "block" is the small wooden frame or shell incasing the grooved pulley wheel over which the fall passes; the pulley wheel is also called the "sheave." The block is usually attached by a hook to a span or boom. The "sling" is the rope used to fasten the draft to the fall. It

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tions will be found in the Glossary. The illustrations, with their descriptive captions, will be an additional aid to an understanding of the apparatus and the various phases of longshore work which are described in this chapter.

The shipping of the port of New York falls naturally into three divisions: First, foreign commerce, which includes all goods carried to or from ports outside the United States; second, coast-wise trade—all cargoes carried between coast ports of the United States belong to this division; third, local trade, which is the internal commerce of the port. To this latter branch belong goods transferred in lighters, scows, and barges, the cargoes of brick boats, coal scows, car floats, and canal boats. Foreign commerce is dealt with first, because in foreign commerce the main and more universal features of the work come out most clearly.

### I. FOREIGN COMMERCE

It is estimated that at least three-fourths of all the longshoremen of the port of New York work on vessels which sail to foreign ports. Foreign commerce is the largest in bulk, the most varied in the materials transported, and on account of the great numbers of finely appointed passenger vessels which carry freight, is the most widely known. Here, too, longshore work can be seen in the greatest variety and under its most complete organization.

But even in foreign commerce the organization of longshore work is in a rudimentary stage. Some of the methods still in use are primitive.\* Larger ships with greater carrying capacity, reg-

consists of a circle of rope with the ends spliced. It is stretched to form a double band and placed under the draft, leaving a loop on either side; the two ends are then drawn around the draft and one is passed, or "rove," through the other, the "bite," and attached to the hook of the fall lowered to receive it. (For further details of the adjusting of the sling, see p. 34, and illustrations opposite pp. 35 and 39.) The "winch" is a hoisting engine with either center or end "drums," or both, on which the falls are wound and drawn tight or slackened as the loads are raised or lowered. Winches are shown in the illustrations opposite pp. 34 and 148.

\* An important feature of this study was an inquiry made among the older longshoremen, stevedores, and others, with regard to changes in methods of handling cargoes in the port of New York which have taken place since about the middle of the nineteenth century. The data thus obtained are believed to be of considerable value, as apparently no records have been kept of the historical development of the industry. The results of the inquiry may be found in Appendix K, pp. 352 ff.

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ular sailings, the introduction of steam as propelling power and of steam winches, have forced changes. Yet it is characteristic of the shipping industry that improvements have been neither rapid nor universal. Old methods have remained along with the new, when the new were avowedly more effective. There is a conservatism about longshore work which has ever met the spirit of progress reluctantly; a kind of traditionalism which, from a sense of habit, clings to things as they have been.

The review of the chief methods of work in use since 1860, given in Appendix K, shows clearly that the lack of standardization already referred to has at all times been characteristic of the industry. Necessarily, there has been similarity in the methods employed, but this has always existed along with minor differences. Today each pier, as has been said, has its own system of work. In the size of drafts, the methods of loading and unloading, and the rush with which the work is put through, each determines its own standards.

The regular sailings of mail and passenger vessels necessitate a drive in the work which was unknown in earlier days. Cargoes are more varied than formerly; foremen are more numerous. But neither the increased complexity nor the more careful supervision has brought about any standardization of the work. There is as much difference in methods of work at different piers at the present time as there is between the up-to-date piers of recent construction and the piers of twenty and twenty-five years ago. Even at the nine Chelsea piers, North River, and at the Hamburg-American and North German Lloyd piers, Hoboken, where the work is on the largest scale, there are no uniform methods of handling cargoes.

### I. CLASSIFICATION OF THE MEN

Yet, notwithstanding the lack of settled standards, there are certain general divisions which call for specialization among the men. These divisions spring from the nature of the work and are, therefore, roughly speaking, universal.

Longshoremen can be classified in two ways: according to the kind of cargo they handle, or according to the special subdivisions of the work. The lines which separate groups of cargo



Deck men at work discharging cargo. Two drafts are coming out of this hatchway at the same time, involving danger to the men. One draft is made up of corrugated iron; the other is a "fruit box" (see p. 35)



The "fruit box" as it is being landed on the pier. The pier men are standing ready with their trucks. In the background are seen a breasting-off spar (see p. 2) and a passenger gang plank

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handlers are not sharply defined, but such groups are perfectly wellknown to the men themselves. General cargo handlers, coal handlers, oil handlers, grain handlers, and even sugar handlers are to some extent specialized workmen. The division in such cases is solely according to the nature of the work.

Classified according to the subdivisions of the work, longshoremen who handle foreign cargoes fall into three groups: pier or dock men, deck men, and hold men. Although the work in these divisions is specialized the men can be to some extent employed interchangeably. Especially is this true in the case of pier and hold men.

A group of pier men, deck men, and hold men together make up a hatch gang. Pier men, under the direction of the pier foreman, do the trucking back and forth on the pier or outside at the pier entrance. They stack up the goods, "sling" the drafts in loading, and land them in unloading. Hold men, supervised by the "header," or hold foreman, receive the drafts and stow the goods in loading; in discharging, they lift or "break out" the goods, and transfer them to the "square" of the hatch, where they place the sling around them and attach the fall by which the draft is lifted out of the hold. The work of the deck men is more specialized and varied. They are first called on to "rig the ship," as a necessary preparation for handling the cargo. As soon as the actual work is in progress they run the winches, control the falls, and do most of the signalling.\*

Usually a certain number constitutes a hatch gang, but the number varies at different piers and from time to time at the same pier. The character of the cargo, the rush of the work, whether a ship is being loaded or discharged—each of these considerations is a determining factor in the size of the gang. From 100 to 125 men are employed to unload the five-hatch ships of passenger lines.†

The distribution of the men within the hatch gangs at various piers is given in the following tables:

\* For details of this work, see pp. 36 ff.

† A few four-hatch ships remain, but in modern ship building the smallest are the five-hatch ships of the Anchor Line, and the largest are the eleven-hatch ships of the Hamburg-American Line.

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TABLE 1.—DISTRIBUTION OF THE MEN EMPLOYED IN HATCH GANGS AT NINE CHELSEA PIERS

Line	Piers	Men in gang	Men working				
			On the pier		On deck	In the hold	
			Un-loading	Load-ing		Un-loading	Load-ing
White Star Line . . . . .	2	23-24	12	6	5-6	6	12
Cunard Line . . . . .	3	25-27	10-12	8-10	7	8	10-12
Red Star Line . . . . .	1	23-24	12	6	5-6	6	12
Atlantic Transport Line . . . . .	1	20-21	11-12	7-8	4	4-6	8-10
French Line . . . . .	1	23	12	6	5	6	12
American Line . . . . .	1	21-23	10-12	6-8	5	6	10

TABLE 2.—DISTRIBUTION OF THE MEN EMPLOYED IN HATCH GANGS AT NINE HOBOKEN PIERS

Line	Piers	Men in gang	Men working				
			On the pier		On deck	In the hold	
			Un-loading	Load-ing		Un-loading	Load-ing
Hamburg-American Line . . . . .	3	18-24	8-12	6-10	3-5	6-7	8-10
North German Lloyd Line . . . . .	3	20-25	10-14	6-10	3-5	6-7	8-12
Holland America Line . . . . .	1	16-18	8-10	4-6	3-4	4	4-8
Phoenix Line . . . . .	1	15-20	6-10	4-8	3-5	4-6	6-8
Scandinavian Line . . . . .	1	18-22	8-10	6-8	4-5	4-6	6-10

In loading, the number of men in the hold is greater than on the pier. In discharging, more men are needed on the pier. On the White Star piers, for instance, in discharging, six men of each hatch gang are worked in the hold, five to six on deck, and 12 on the pier. In loading, six of the pier men are transferred to the hold. But from pier to pier the numbers vary. On the Brooklyn piers 14 men often constitute a hatch gang.

Speaking generally, however, one can say that there are usually from 18 to 23 men to a hatch gang. There are usually from nine to 12 men on the pier—two or three "slingers," who fasten the slings around the drafts, and the rest for trucking and

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tying up; from four to six men on deck—including the gangway man, winch man, drumend man, and "hooker-on"; and, including the headers or hold foremen, six or eight men in the hold.

Where the character of the cargo or restricted space on the pier necessitate high stacking—often 18 feet or even higher—additional men for tying up are employed. In the old days when piers were small the stacks were frequently carried to the roof. But there is not much need for high tying on the large modern piers, such as those of the Chelsea Improvement.

The congestion on some of the piers is often relieved by storing cargo on the "farm."\* One of the sights of the waterfront is this space thickly covered with heavy casks, bales, or logs, and with streets and narrow lanes giving access to the piers between the piles of freight.

Considerations of economy often cause the number of men employed on a particular job to be reduced below the point of safety. This is most often the case when the work is done by contracting stevedores. For instance, when only four men are employed on deck, the gangway man may have to act as hooker-on. Sometimes the same man is required to turn on the steam for a winch and to act as drumend man.

Another practice even more dangerous is due to the effort to economize time. When a ship is being rushed, two or even three gangs are sometimes worked in the same hatch. How inevitably either of these forms of economy invites accidents will appear as the description of the work proceeds.†

There is throughout longshore work a swing and rhythm as well as a shared responsibility. The gangs must work as a unit if the maximum amount is to be accomplished. Rhythm is attained as soon as the gangs are settled at the work. The respon-

\* According to tradition on the waterfront, the origin of this term is as follows:

Walsh Brothers, once the most important stevedores of the port (see p. 96), had at one time a foreman named Morris Walsh, who had been a farmer in Ireland. Among the men he became known as the "farmer." His particular work was to supervise the storing of goods on the open space in front of the piers. Men used to say: "I'm going out to work with the farmer" or "on the farm." Gradually the open space in front of any pier became known throughout the port as the "farm."

† See also *Risks of the Trade*, pp. 129 ff.

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sibility of each man working on a vessel for every other man in his gang is characteristic of this great industry. Both the effectiveness of the work and the safety of the men vary in direct ratio to their appreciation of the dependence of each upon the others.

### 2. HOW THE CARGO IS HANDLED\*

When a vessel is to be loaded from the pier, the goods are trucked to sections of the pier opposite the hatchways of the ship. Portions of the walls of the pier "shed" are so constructed that they can be opened inward and drawn up out of the way,† or shifted like sliding doors. The pier foreman directs in what order the articles shall be handled, and gives general oversight to the drafts.

Two or three men are assigned to sling the ropes around the drafts. Usually a dock man trucks the goods to the point desired, dumps them, and the slingers make up a load and balance it across a "slinging plank." This is a narrow plank which lies flat on the pier, point on to the ship. The ends of the load project out on either side of the plank. The circle of rope which forms the sling is then caught under each of the projecting ends and brought up forming two loops, the longer of which is "rove" through the other, and attached to the fall, as has been described.‡ In case barrels or bales are to be loaded, the slinging plank is removed and they are rolled directly onto the sling. Chain or wire slings are used for machinery and other heavy loads. Wire falls also are necessary for raising drafts weighing 3,500 pounds or more; a draft of even 2,500 pounds is a serious strain on the ordinary rope fall.§

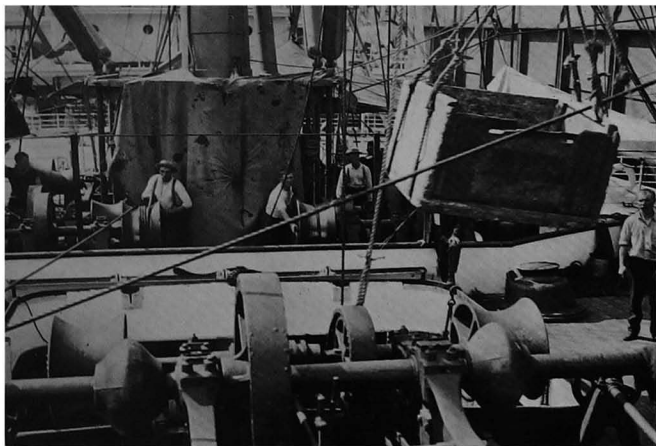
\* Wherever longshoremen are seen handling cargo the "cotton hook," a distinctive mark of their occupation, is in evidence. When not in use it is carried in the belt. It is a strong hook, made of three-eighths iron, is a little over a foot long, including the crook, and has a heavy wooden handle. It is to be distinguished from the heavier "case hook" or "loader's hook" used by truckmen, which is also seen along the waterfront.

† See illustration opposite page 39. The term "shed" is still used, even though the pier may be largely of concrete, and the construction modern and permanent.

‡ See footnote, p. 29.

§ The rope falls are made of Manila rope. They are usually a three-strand rope either three and a half or three and three-fourths inches in circumference. The three and a half inch fall is the standard, and is expected to withstand a strain of





An empty "fruit box" is on its way to the hold to receive its load. In the foreground and beyond the hatch are shown the drumends and other parts of the winches (see pp. 36 ff.)



The drumend men are at the winches swinging a draft of barrels. To the right a tarpaulin has been rigged to protect the men from the sun. Near the draft are the gangway man and the hooker-on who is steadying the load



A large draft has been landed on deck. The gangway man is unhooking the up and down fall. As no regular place is provided for the men's coats, they are seen hanging and lying about



The gangway man unhooks the up and down fall from a swinging draft to which the burton fall has been attached. The draft will now be swung over the ship's side and landed on the pier

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If the load consists of a number of small articles, a large rope net, or a wooden box called a "fruit box,"\* is substituted for the sling. Besides these, there are "platforms," flat, oblong, and closed at the ends, for carrying small boxes, and buckets or tubs used in transferring such articles as coal or spiegel iron.

The weight of the draft tightens the sling as it rises. Sometimes a heavy load or a large number of boxes, bales, or casks are slung up at one time, and are held from slipping by the nice adjusting of the "slingers" and the pull of the draft. Great dexterity and knack are required to adjust a sling properly. If a box or bale should slip or the fall slacken so that the draft rests for a moment on rail or hatch coamings, the whole load may drop overboard and be lost, or seriously endanger the lives of the men in the hold.

In modern handling of cargoes two falls are used: an up-and-down fall—known usually as "the fall," but at some piers called the "midship fall"—and the "burton." The up-and-down fall hoists and lowers the goods. The burton carries the draft athwart the ship. This burton acts as a guy rope† to prevent the rising draft from swinging against the side of the ship, and holds the load in check as it swings across the deck and over the hatch. The up-and-down fall runs from the winch, passes through one or more pulley blocks, and terminates in a hook to which the draft is attached. The block for the up-and-down fall is usually suspended by a hook from one of the booms swung from the mast or from a span running from mast to mast. When a burton is used, the block on modern piers is suspended from a hook permanently attached to an extension of the pier wall above the roof of the "shed."‡

The number of articles slung at a time and the weight of the draft are not always uniform. When drafts of ordinary

about 2,500 pounds. On the larger ships these falls are cut from 25 to 40 fathoms in length. Wire falls are made from heavy steel wire covered with marling.

The work is very hard on the rope fall and it is a good fall that will last through the working of one ship. If the cargo is heavy one hatch may use up as many as three falls. Rejected falls are cut up into slings.

\* This is sometimes known as the "ambulance," because it is in the "fruit box" that men who have been disabled or killed in an accident are hoisted ashore.

† See illustration opposite p. 137.

‡ See illustration opposite p. 148.

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weight are handled, a single block—that is, a block with a single pulley wheel—is generally used for the up-and-down fall. If the block contains only one sheave or pulley wheel, it is known as a single or gun tackle purchase. But when several tons must be raised, extra gear is put on. In this case a double block—one containing two pulley wheels—is suspended from the span. The fall runs from the winch over one of the pulley wheels in the double block; it is then passed down through a single unattached block equipped with a heavy hook to which the draft can be fastened, carried back over the second pulley wheel in the double block, and finally brought down again and fastened to the swinging block. This gear is referred to as a double purchase. The reeving of the fall through two blocks gives such great leverage that heavy drafts are easily lifted, but as this method is much slower, it is used only where the load can not be safely lifted by a single purchase.

On some piers, even when a double purchase is used, drafts weighing over five tons are not handled with the ship's gear. For drafts over this weight floating derricks are employed. On the coastwise lines, however, with a wire fall and by use of several purchases, drafts weighing 15 to 20 tons are handled with the gear of the ship. Below is a list of drafts of cargoes commonly handled in this port:

Draft	Approximate weight in pounds
6 bags of sugar . . . . .	2,000
3 boxes of bacon . . . . .	2,100
9 barrels of apples . . . . .	800
5 barrels of flour . . . . .	900
3 to 5 barrels of wax . . . . .	1,200 to 1,500
3 to 5 barrels of bottled beer . . . . .	1,000
9 to 16 crates of brick . . . . .	1,900
18 to 20 boxes of tin . . . . .	1,800
19 pigs of tin . . . . .	2,100
20 to 25 pigs of lead . . . . .	2,200

When one of the slingers has fastened the draft to the hook of the fall it passes out of the hands of the pier men into those of the deck men, who are responsible for its safe arrival in the hold.

The power for handling a ship's cargo is furnished by the steam winch, of which there are three types in use on the waterfront. That most generally used has both center and end "drums,"

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the center drum for the burton fall, the drum ends for the up-and-down falls.\* When the draft is ready to be raised the winch man turns on the steam, and the gangway man, who directs the work by gesture, whistle, or call, signals to the first drumend man—also called the up-and-down man—to “hoist away.” The drumend man has taken a few turns of the fall around the drum, being careful that each coil fits snugly against its fellow, so that when the drum turns and the weight is placed upon the up-and-down fall, the friction, or “bite,” will prevent the coils from slipping and thus letting the load drop. Then, holding the fall firmly by the end as the drum turns, he tightens or slackens the coils, thus letting out more rope or tightening it, as needed. He can tell by the “feel” when to tighten and when to loosen the turns.

As long as the drumend man is handling a draft, he is engaged in tightening or slackening the rope, or in taking quick turns around the drumend. The turns are taken in the direction opposite to the run of the fall and the number varies from three to six. Skill is required in knowing just how many turns to take, and when to tighten or slacken the ropes. The length of rope which is not needed is made up into a coil, and hung out of the way of the drumend man, who must have only enough free rope for his immediate use. Too much slack increases the risk of a twist or kink, and a kink in the rope means loss of control and danger to the men. The expert can work with fewer turns than the new hand, and the heavier the load the more turns are required. When the drumend gets very warm, extra turns are necessary, as the bite is not so good. Where drafts are heavy and the handling is continuous, the drumend—and even the rope—becomes so hot that it can not be touched with the bare hand.

\* Another type of winch has only drum ends. On some floating coal hoists a winch with only a center drum is used. Winches are sometimes used on the pier as auxiliaries to the winches on the ship.

Winches with only drum ends have one movement. Those with center drums to which the fall is permanently attached are necessarily reversible and have two gears. When the drum ends are used an extra man is employed to turn on the steam. This winch man must watch the position of the draft. When the draft is descending the speed of the winch is slackened. When it has landed the steam is turned off. See illustration opposite p. 34.

When the wire falls are used they are fastened to the center drum of the winch. The winch man then controls the backward and forward motion of the winch with a shifting lever.

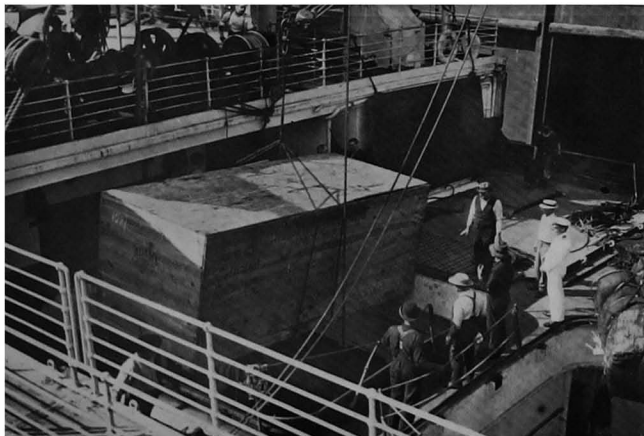
## THE LONGSHOREMEN

While the first drumend man has been raising the draft another is taking turns around the second drumend with his fall, which has been attached to the first fall, preparatory to swinging or lowering the load. When the signal for lowering is given, the speed of the winch is lessened and this second drumend man slackens his rope and lowers the draft to its place in the hold. When a draft is being lowered the slack of the rope will pass with great rapidity through the hands. To protect himself the drumend man wears a leather hand guard like a half mitten loosely fastened at the wrist, which he swings in front of his palm as needed.

By the time the load has cleared the rail and arrived over the hatch, the gangway man is there ready to signal, first for the men in the hold to stand clear, then for the lowering of the goods. Sometimes the drumend man has a mark or "telltale" on the fall to indicate about how far he should let it run; but more often, knowing on which deck in the hold his draft must land, he tells by the feel how far to let it go.

At the signal of the gangway man the draft is let go with a rush and is stopped suddenly a few feet above the deck on which it is to be stowed. It is then seized by the hold men and swung over as far as possible toward the position the goods will finally occupy. The gangway man by watching or by means of a signal from the hold learns that it is "ready to let go." Again he signals to the drumend man, and the draft is landed. The sling is then thrown off by the hold men. An empty sling is fastened to the hook of the fall as it rises from the hold to be lowered to the pier for the next draft. Meanwhile the hold men with hands, hooks, or hand trucks are hauling or rolling the goods and fitting them swiftly into their places.

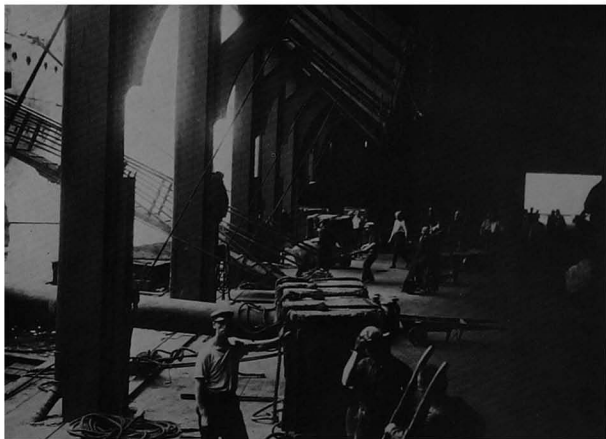
In discharging, the process described is reversed. A sorter or checker is assigned to each hatch. He carries a copy of the manifest of the contents of his hatch, indicating the lots of goods and the number of packages each lot contains. From him the pier foreman learns the nature of the goods, and accordingly is able to mark out on the pier the sections for tiering up the varied cargo. As soon as these preliminaries have been accomplished the real work of discharging begins.



A boxed automobile raised to the level of the hatch coamings. The weight of this draft is over 3000 pounds and double purchase gear is being used. The gangway man is standing alert to give the signals to the drumend man as this draft is swung across the ship. Note the low hatch coamings



The boxed automobile as it swings athwart the ship on its way to be lowered to the pier. The gangway man steadies it with a touch of his hand. To the right is seen a draft just rising from an adjoining hatch. The hooker-on is in the act of catching it with the burton fall



Pier men landing and trucking cargo from the ship. Note the raised sides of the pier shed (see p. 34)



Drafts landed on the pier. Observe on the floor the rope sling from which the bags have just been removed



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The headers break out the cargo from its place in the hold and sling it up. The gangway man signals to the drumend man to hoist away. When the load reaches the hatch coamings, unless the burton is permanently attached the hooker-on fastens to it the burton fall. The burton swings the draft across, clear of the ship's rail, and the gangway man throws off the up-and-down fall. Another signal from the gangway man notifies the burton man to lower it onto the pier. The landers unhook the fall, throw off the sling, and hook an empty sling to the fall. The goods are then trucked to their appointed place on the pier.

The above is a fair description of the work as it is carried on at one of the larger piers today. Whatever modifications and improvements have taken place from time to time in the methods of longshore work have resulted, in the last analysis, from the increased size of vessels and the greater haste with which the work is now put through. Probably the most effective time-saving device is the "rapid transit" or "hurry up" used by some companies in discharging. An extra fall, worked by a third drumend man, known as the "rapid transit man," is used for the work of each gang. An extra or sister block is fastened to the boom or, on the larger vessels, to the span, and from the two blocks hang the two falls. One, the up-and-down fall, brings the draft up from the hold until it is abreast of the hatch coamings. The hooker-on makes fast to this the extra fall, to which the burton is permanently attached. The up-and-down fall is then thrown off and, by the aid of the burton, the draft is swung athwart the ship and lowered into the hold. By the time the extra fall returns there is a draft awaiting it.

Mechanical devices and machinery—such as traveling cranes and towers—have revolutionized the methods of work in several European ports.\* In New York no such improvements have been introduced. Some of the German ships, however, when they dock on this side, use traveling cranes with which they are equipped. In discharging, one crane brings up the

\* See Appendices B, C, and E, concerning dock work in London, Liverpool, and Hamburg, pp. 188, 199, and 210.

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draft and lands it on deck, another carries it across the ship and lands it on the pier. On these piers, too, are found flat hand trucks larger than those commonly used, which require two men to propel them. The heavy trucks moved by electricity are an even greater improvement. Where either of these is in use, drafts are frequently landed directly on the trucks so that the lifting of cargo from pier to truck is avoided. The use of the electric trucks relieves the men of some of the heaviest work of the trade.\* Labor-saving devices will be discussed more fully in the Appendices describing the work in foreign ports.

All this complex work,—the details as well as the management of the whole,—all the various types of workmen, are under the supervision of foremen of various grades, from the hourly hold foreman, an expert worker who acts as go-between to see that the foreman's orders are carried out in the hold, to the head foreman, sometimes called stevedore,† who may have charge of one or more piers and do the hiring.‡

The different piers vary in the placing of the foremen as well as in the number employed. Before 1900, on the White Star piers there was for each ship one foreman on the pier and one on deck, but none especially for the hold. In addition there were usually three or four assistant foremen on the pier. After 1900, and until about 1908, this company employed a head foreman, a foreman for each pier gang, and four foremen who went up and down between deck and hold—two fore and two aft. There was no regular hatch foreman. Since 1908, this line has employed a foreman over each pier gang, two foremen on deck, and a foreman in each hatch. This addition has largely increased the total number of foremen. The regular foremen are paid by the week. The economy of hourly foremen lies in the fact that they can be laid off when not needed. The Atlantic Transport Line has at present the same number and arrangement of foremen which the White Star had before 1900, and with slight variations this number and arrangement hold good in general throughout the port.

\* See footnote, p. 129.

† For definition, see the Introduction and the Glossary, p. 264.

‡ See Methods of Hiring, p. 60.

## LONGSHORE WORK

### 3. THE USE OF LIGHTERS

Most of the goods coming into New York to be shipped by water are brought to the piers in flat, uncovered boats propelled by tugs and called lighters. From the lighters goods are either transferred to the piers to be loaded later into the ship or they are loaded directly into the vessel's hold.

In loading and discharging, lighters are brought along the off shore side of the vessel. The gang which works on the lighters is made up partly of the regular pier men, partly of shenangoes engaged by the captain of the lighter. The up-and-down fall is operated by the winch on the vessel. The block of the burton is attached to the ship's booms or to a derrick "stepped" on the off side of the vessel opposite the hatch. If the loads are particularly heavy a floating derrick is used. In other respects the work of transferring the cargo is carried on as though the lighter were a pier. By this means the long trucking across the pier is avoided, and both time and money are saved.

With the exception of refrigerator goods, all freight brought in on the New Jersey railroads and intended for water shipment is thus transferred. At the railroad terminals on the west shore of the North River and the bay, freight cars are run directly onto car floats, which may hold as many as 16 cars. These floats are taken by tugs to the different railroad piers of the port and the goods unloaded. Such of the freight as is destined for foreign or coastwise ships is loaded onto lighters and transferred to seagoing vessels. In the case of refrigerator goods, the car float is brought alongside the vessel and the goods are transferred directly from the refrigerator car to the refrigerator of the vessel.

Cargoes from foreign ports, brought by vessels which dock in Manhattan, are transported by lighter across the North River if they are destined for other than the city trade. But both in outgoing and incoming traffic there are exceptions to these methods. Some piers, such as those at the Bush Terminal, have railroad tracks, and cars are run in on these tracks. Freight is then transferred directly between car and ship.

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### 4. SPECIAL BRANCHES OF FOREIGN COMMERCE WORK

**SUGAR.** Sugar handling, though broadly speaking part of general cargo handling, is in a sense specialized work. It is differentiated from the handling of miscellaneous cargoes both by its method and by the greater muscular effort required. In loading bag sugar a pile, or "stool," is usually built of the bags in the square at the bottom of the hatch, and on this the drafts are landed. The men back up to this stool, and each one catches a bag of sugar across his back and carries it to the place in the hold where the bags are to be floored off.\* The men always keep the layers of bags beneath their feet so that no tiering up is necessary. After the first tier is laid they are obliged to carry these heavy bags—weighing 300 pounds or more†—while they walk over the yielding floor. This greatly increases the difficulty of the work. Men have been known to leave the pier after having been taken on, when they were told that the cargo to be loaded was sugar.

**OIL.** The loading of oil is distinctly specialized work, and the men engaged in it rarely do any other kind of longshore work. Oil is shipped in cases, barrels, or tanks. Case oil is put up in five-gallon cans and packed, two cans to a case, in thin wooden cases. This is the form in which it is most largely handled by the regular oil handlers.

When a vessel is to be loaded with a cargo of oil, lighters carrying the case oil are brought alongside. The draft, usually of eight cases, is dragged up a skid. In stowing, the cases are floored off, and as long as the height of the hold permits, each tier is kept beneath the men's feet. The gangs contain from 13 to 16 men, eight of whom work in the hold. Four of the hold men are headers. Oil handling is irregular and the work is very heavy. To stow over 10,000 cases in an eight-hour day—1,300 an hour—is considered average work for a gang. There is very little breathing time for the oil handler.

**GRAIN.** The export of grain, once a large item in the trade of the port, has been materially reduced owing to various causes which need not be entered into here. Grain that is brought in by

\* To "floor off" is to distribute evenly over the bottom of the hold.

† See footnote, p. 129.

## LONGSHORE WORK

canal boats is transferred into the hold of the ship by floating elevators. The canal boat and floating elevator are brought alongside the vessel which is to be loaded. The "leg" of the elevator is let down into the grain and the grain is lifted in small buckets attached to an endless belt, and dumped into a pipe which conveys it to the hold. There it is shoveled and trimmed into place by the grain trimmers.

**COAL.** On the general freight boats in foreign commerce a longshoreman is expected to handle any kind of cargo, from the heaviest machinery to the smallest package, but the line between him and the man who coals the ship is clear. The coaling is done by a special group of men, largely made up of Italians.

When a vessel is to be coaled she is held off by breasting spars far enough for a coal boat to come in between her and the pier. Off shore and in shore loading can then go on at the same time, and the bunkers be filled from both sides at once. Shovelers, guy men who control the rope which guides the buckets, and coal hoisters, who run the winches, are employed. In coaling from off shore the power is often furnished by floating winches. The men shovel the coal into iron buckets, which are raised from the boat by means of a "coal whip," the coal derrick being "stepped" from the ship's side. When the bucket reaches the porthole of the ship, the coal is dumped by men standing on a hanging shelf, into a chute which conducts it to the bunkers, or it is dumped into a wheelbarrow, which is wheeled inside to a chute or directly to the bunkers.

The ships of the Hamburg-American and the American lines are coaled by means of conveyors. These are large, tower-like structures, somewhat similar in appearance and in operation to grain elevators. When not in use they hang from the side of the pier, but when coaling begins are lowered onto the coal barges. They contain endless chains with small buckets attached. The shovelers feed the machine at its base. The buckets carry the coal to the top of the tower, and there dump it automatically into a pipe which conducts it to the porthole of the vessel. This pipe is adjustable, and is regulated to correspond with the distance between the top of the conveyor and the porthole. When a coal conveyor is being used the dust thrown up is so penetrating that

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it can injure the furniture in the cabins and saloons of the ship. Tarpaulin, or sail cloth, is accordingly placed around the spar deck of the vessel to prevent the dust from entering the passengers' quarters.

### 5. THE BANANA TRAFFIC

There is one branch of foreign commerce so different fundamentally from all other types of work which pass under that head that it requires separate treatment. This is the banana traffic. There is a spontaneity, an apparent disorder, about everything connected with banana handling which differentiates it from the more orderly branches of foreign commerce.\* By comparison the methods of handling general cargoes seem well regulated. The fruit itself is distinctive; the men who do the work are a separate class, recruited from many different social strata; the methods of work are striking, different. All these characteristics mark out the banana traffic as a picturesque and unique branch of foreign commerce.

Bananas come chiefly from South America, Central America, and the West Indies, and are for the most part brought in on ships built especially for the trade.†

Although the heavy season for banana shipment is summer, this fruit is regularly imported throughout the year. The ships may or may not carry a return cargo. When they take back a general cargo they are in some cases reloaded by a different stevedore, and always by regular foreign commerce longshoremen. "Banana fiends"‡ are limited in their work strictly to the handling of bananas. Only occasionally are a few of the best of them allowed to work with the regular longshoremen. Many of them are Irish and Irish-Americans of the Bowery lodging-house type.

In unloading bananas two gangs, an "on shore" and an "off shore" gang, are as a rule worked in each hatch. But at times as many as four gangs may be worked in one hatch. The men are in all cases worked through until the unloading is completed, it matters not if this requires a stretch of three or eleven hours;

\* See *Methods of Hiring*, p. 65.

† The trade in the port of New York is almost wholly in the hands of three companies, the United Fruit Company, the Atlantic Fruit Company, and the Cuneo Importing Company, all of which dock in the East River. ‡ See pp. 15 and 65.



Hiring banana handlers. The foreman is standing in a banana truck looking the crowd over. From this point he will toss working checks to the men



The bunches of bananas are handed from one man to another, on their way from the hatch to the truck on the pier



The bunches of bananas passing from one man to another, from ship to pier. The men stand on suspended platforms and gangways



The banana trucks on the pier are backed up to the ship as closely as possible. The bunches of bananas are placed at once in the trucks



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and they work in all weathers. There are no stops for meals, but the men soon learn to eat the ripe bananas which fall from the bunches, without letting this interfere with their work. A banana foreman calls attention to the fact that though handling bananas is considered light work, to carry bunches weighing from 40 to 90 pounds all day or even a few hours means a heavy tax on a man's strength.

Great care is necessary in handling this fruit. A scratch or bruise on the skin may be the starting point of decay. For this reason bananas are rarely piled up on the pier, but are passed by hand from the ship's hold to the truck or to the car into which they are to be loaded. In some ports conveyors, working on the principle of grain conveyors, are used. An endless belt is furnished with cups or steps in each one of which a bunch is placed. This method has not been introduced in New York.

Bunches of bananas are classed according to size as "six-hand," "seven-hand," "eight-hand," "nine-hand," and so on. By a "hand" is meant one of the layers or growths of bananas around the stem, and the number sometimes runs as high as 12 or 13 bananas to a hand. A six-hand is ordinarily about 72 bananas to a bunch, and a nine-hand about 120. The weight of the bunches varies from about 28 to 90 pounds. In the spring bananas run heavier, weighing more in proportion to their size than at other seasons.

When the bananas are unloaded they are either sold for the local trade or sent out of the city in refrigerator cars. As a uniform temperature is necessary to keep the fruit in good condition, the cars are lined with paper and warmed during cool weather with oil stoves. The fruit which is intended for city use is either sold privately or auctioned off on the piers.

To give an idea of the process of unloading bananas, let us describe the banana fiends discharging the cargo of a representative ship belonging to the Atlantic Fruit Company. The steamship Stavangeren is being unloaded at Pier 9. Her cargo consists of 21,000 bunches of bananas, 10,000 of which are to be loaded into railroad cars lying on floats which are anchored alongside the vessel. The remainder will be put into trucks on the pier and auctioned off.

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To do this discharging 147 men are employed, hired as needed. First, nine men are engaged to prepare the ship; that is, to take off the hatches, fix the gang planks, and in general attend to the preparatory work. These men later break out and lift the bunches from the hold, a task which requires extra care and is the only part of the work of unloading bananas which can, in any sense, be called skilled. The men are divided into gangs. As they get deeper into the hold, more men are needed. There may be 18 or 20 men in a hatch gang which is unloading on shore, while the gang unloading off shore onto the floats may reach 30 or more.

A breaker-out starts the bunch from below by lifting it carefully from the pile in the hold and handing it to the man next to him, the second man passes it to a third, and so on. The number of handlings varies according to the distance of the pile from the hatch. The man at the hatch passes the bunch up through the hatch opening to the next deck, and two men toss it up onto the "hanger." The hanger is a platform or shelf, about six feet by two, suspended on an iron frame by hooks from the coaming of the hatch and about five feet below it. It is covered with a mat or gunny sack to break the fall of the fruit. Two men on the hanger raise the bunch to the first man on the upper deck, who passes it to another, and he again to another, until it has reached the ship's rail.

If the bananas are to be loaded into cars waiting on the floats, a "selector" on that side of the ship grades the bunches into "firsts" and "seconds." The last man on the gang plank between the ship and the float then passes a bunch of bananas to a man who puts it on his shoulder and carries it to the car for which it is intended. One or two bunches are carried, according to the size. Near the door of each car is a "checker" with a "clock," the string of which he pulls as each bunch goes in. They are received by a "stacker" who is expected to pack them so that the swaying of the car will not disturb the load. One layer is placed on end and "kneed"; that is, given a slightly leaning position. On top of the first layer may be laid one or two horizontal layers. Near the doorway of the car is a temporary slatted framework about six or eight feet square, against which the bunches

## LONGSHORE WORK

are loaded. This arrangement leaves an open space near the doorway in which oil stoves can be placed when it is necessary to raise the temperature of the car. In summer these cars are so arranged that the motion forces air in at one point and out at another; by this means even temperature and ventilation are attained.

If the bananas are to be unloaded on shore the selector stands at the ship's rail nearest the pier and grades the bunches. They are then placed in trucks, each load consisting of bunches of the same number of hands; but of different grades. The checker or tally man with his clock stands near the ship's rail to count the number of bunches that are loaded onto the trucks. Trucks hold from 100 to 135 bunches of green bananas, or 35 bunches of red bananas. The red bananas do not grow more than six-hand, but the bunches are much larger in proportion to the number of bananas they contain.

When a truck has been loaded, a slip with its number and the number and size of the bunches it holds is passed up to the auctioneer, who stands on the upper deck and calls them out to the crowd below. Unlike the ordinary auctioneer he starts the bid himself at a high figure, and comes down gradually till an actual bid is given, after which he auctions off the load in the usual way.

## II. THE COASTWISE TRADE

Work at the coastwise piers is similar to that of the foreign commerce piers. Differences in method are not fundamental. As in foreign commerce, the men are worked in gangs, and in each gang are the same sub-divisions of pier men, deck men, and hold men. The distinction between these sub-gangs is, however, less marked than in the better organized work.

When the vessel has been tied alongside the pier, skids or gang planks are placed from the main deck to the pier. Goods are brought up from the hold by winch and fall just as on foreign commerce ships, but where there is a "blind hatch," that is, one which is not carried through all the decks, the draft is landed on deck and trucked through one of the large open ports, along the gangway, and onto the pier. As the goods are unloaded from a

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boat it rises, and care must be taken to unload it so that it will not list. As the ship rises the lower ports are opened, and the goods from the lower decks are brought up an inclined way which has been cut or built into the pier to allow the skid or gangway to be placed lower than the level of the pier. There is less hoisting than in foreign commerce, the loads travel less distance, and less machinery is used. These differences in methods of work make it possible to handle goods at a cost much lower than that for unloading from foreign vessels.

But there are exceptions to this system of work. In the "all over" hatches\* which are found on coastwise ships the draft is brought directly from hold to pier. Timber and long bar iron are generally loaded in these hatches. The Old Dominion Line raises freight from the hold by elevators which resemble the ordinary freight elevator. It is then trucked to the pier.

LUMBER. One of the chief cargoes carried in the coastwise trade is lumber. Lumber schooners come chiefly from the South Atlantic states and from Maine, and carry largely white, yellow, and "bastard" pine; a number bring in spruce from Maine. Savannah is the distinctive lumber port in the South; Bangor in Maine. The yellow pine is generally sawed into boards, but light boards are most often cut from the bastard pine. More light than heavy timber is brought by schooners to this port. The ships' capacity ranges from 90 to 1,900 tons. With the exception of a few propellers, they come in under sail.

The trade is extremely irregular, winter being the slack season. For the past ten years, owing to the increased use of steel and other fireproofing material in building, and because the lumber supply from nearby districts is being exhausted, this lumber traffic has decreased. Much of the schooner trade, too, has been taken by the regular coastwise lines, as, for instance, the Clyde and Mallory Lines.

Lumber is unloaded all over the port, but at some points the trade is particularly heavy. Newtown Creek, Brooklyn, is probably the largest lumber center. Here yellow pine and spruce are handled. The second largest center, also for yellow pine and spruce, is Oak Point, at the foot of Prospect Avenue in The Bronx.

\* See Glossary, p. 261.

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Another important place for unloading yellow pine is Greenpoint, Brooklyn. Cross-ties are unloaded at Seventy-second Street, North River, and at the West Shore Railroad piers on the Jersey side. On the East River, at about Ninetieth Street, is a center, and above Corlear's Hook schooners are discharged, whenever convenient, at any of the open piers. Around Thirtieth Street and Fifty-fifth Street, North River, a good deal of lumber is brought in for piano factories. Besides these points there are Long Slip, Hoboken, and other centers on the Jersey side.\*

In handling heavy lumber six men, as a rule, constitute a gang, and only one gang is worked on a schooner. Where lumber is discharged from the ports two are placed in the hold for slinging, two at the fall, and two on the pier for piling. If the lumber comes over the side, three men are used in piling, one acting as guymen. Steam hoisters generally furnish the power. In unloading light lumber four men constitute a gang. About 7,000 feet an hour, 50,000 a day, is good average work for six men. This number can discharge a thousand-ton schooner in twelve to fifteen days.

Some of the schooners return empty, but the majority take an outgoing cargo of fertilizer, cement, or stone. If they carry fertilizer, the loading is usually done by the men at the fertilizer factory. For other cargoes regular longshoremen are employed.

### III. THE LOCAL TRAFFIC

There are many branches of local traffic. The handling of brick and other building materials and coal, lighter work, loading and unloading canal boats, are its chief divisions.

**COAL HANDLING.** The coaling of sea-going vessels, which is described under foreign commerce, must be distinguished from the local traffic of unloading coal from barges, hauling and stowing it in apartment houses, hotels, schools, and other buildings in the city. Handled by separate contractors and done by a different class of men, these two lines of work constitute quite different branches of the commerce of the waterfront.

In the local traffic, buckets and "diggers" are used. Shovel-

\* For a description of the men engaged in handling lumber, see p. 44. For lumber stevedores, see p. 68.

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ers fill the buckets from a "break down" or hollow, dug in the coal. When buckets are used, one man can shovel from 50 to 100 tons a day, though 70 is a high average. The amount which can be shoveled varies with the size of the coal handled. More of the small sizes can be shoveled in a given time. "Curly" coal is particularly difficult to handle, but most difficult of all is coal that has been frozen. The power for raising the buckets is furnished by a team of horses or a single horse, led by a man or boy who is called the hoist boy.\* It is said that gasoline engines for power will soon supersede horses.

There are a number of large coal yards along the North and East Rivers, which are equipped with all the modern appliances for handling coal for the local market. The coal is lifted from the barges by "diggers." These are double cups which are let down into the coal to scoop it up. As the work proceeds it becomes necessary for shovelers to pile the coal so that the digger may get at it. The power for lifting the diggers is furnished by steam winches.

**UNLOADING BRICK.** In unloading brick, knack and strength rather than skill are required; yet it is specialized work and the men who do it usually stick to this one line. There are generally three or four men in a gang. The bricks are handled seven brick at a "raise." Brick handlers merely pass them over the string piece of the dock, the loading into trucks being done by the driver and his helper. Brick is brought in largest quantities during the summer months.

Captains of brick boats do not carry a large enough crew to unload them. If a brick boat docks at any place along the waterfront where no brick handlers hang out, the captain usually sends to the brick market, between Fifty-second and Fifty-fourth Streets, North River, for men.

The slip between the piers in this district is reserved for the North River brick boats. Dealers go to the brick market to negotiate for or purchase brick by the boatload. Many of the loads thus purchased are not discharged at the market, but are

\* It is interesting to note that this was the method used half a century ago in handling cargoes from sailing vessels. See Appendix K, p. 252.

## LONGSHORE WORK

transferred to whatever point on the waterfront the buyer desires. A large number are taken to the East River and docked between Twenty-fourth and Forty-eighth Streets. In the district above Ninety-second Street on the East River is another brick boat landing.

The local commerce of the waterfront, though differing in size of vessels, cargoes handled, and personnel of the men, hangs together in a singular unity and interdependence. Grain which has been brought in on canal boats, cotton from the South Atlantic states, are transferred to ocean greyhounds. Lighters move to and fro making connections between vessels from the remotest ports of the earth. Coal furnishes a link for all branches of commerce. It is discharged from barges as local traffic and loaded as cargo or fuel into sea-going vessels. The men, too, are interdependent and often interchangeable.

### IV. IS LONGSHORE WORK SKILLED LABOR?

The prevailing opinion, not only with the public but also among the steamship companies which employ this large industrial force, undoubtedly is that longshore work is unskilled labor. Yet it is perfectly clear from the foregoing analysis that many phases of it require intelligence, experience, and superior judgment. This the companies have learned when during the strikes they have been obliged to take on raw men. But if we are justified in taking issue with the popular judgment on this point and denying that longshore work is unskilled labor, dare we go a step further and claim that it is skilled labor? If skill is required for any portion of the work it must be for certain branches of foreign commerce. Let us examine the conditions in order to learn just how great a degree of industrial ability they require.

Even on the pier where the work is simplest, if the slingers do not understand their business the cargo will be damaged or someone may be injured or killed. But it is in the hold and on deck where the chief skill of longshore work must be sought. There are certain rules in regard to loading which arise out of the nature of the ships and the character of the cargoes. These the men must know as they know their own names. Heavy freight,

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such as logs of wood, iron bars, barrel oil, or steel rails is generally stowed first. Where a large amount of cargo is to be taken on and the vessel is fitted for water ballast, the water tanks in the hold are emptied and filled with freight.

An especially high degree of skill is required to load certain classes of goods properly. Machinery and agricultural implements require special care in stowing. A case is cited where a vessel loaded with agricultural machinery for Australia had to be unloaded and restowed before the ship was allowed to sail. The loading of barrel oil requires much experience. The barrels must be stowed "bilge and contline." If the first tier is not properly laid it means loss of space as the work proceeds.

What is called "chocking" is accomplished by means of dunnage—short pieces of wood like firewood—which is laid on the bottom or in the "wings" or sides of the hold where cargo can not be fitted in, to prevent it from shifting; for a cargo, like a chain, is only as strong as its weakest part; and if any portion shifts, it may unsettle the whole cargo and cause the ship to list. Whenever expert hold men are employed the stowing goes on with remarkable swiftness and efficiency.

The loss of the *Erin* (National Line) in 1890 is attributed by the men along the waterfront to the cheap labor employed to load her. She carried a miscellaneous cargo—barrel oil, lard, bacon, cheese, flour, grain in bulk, and several hundred cattle and sheep—and was manned by a crew of about 80. She ranked well among staunch sea-going vessels, but from the day she cleared Sandy Hook nothing has been heard of her. It is believed that improper stowing caused her loss.

From experience the foremen acquire remarkable acuteness. A good header or hold foreman can, by looking, or by measuring with his belt the empty spaces in the hold, estimate very nearly the exact number of boxes or bales they will contain. The foreman who has charge of the loading must also exercise care to see that certain kinds of freight are not stowed near one another. For example, bales of hops are not to be placed near butter. Neither dried apples nor tobacco accord well with breakfast cereals. Tea is not allowed in the neighborhood of flour or sugar, nor is barrel oil placed near cotton. Sometimes for protection a





A miscellaneous cargo. See second draft in the background



One draft has just been landed on deck. The other is swinging over the hatchway which is entirely unprotected by coamings



Throwing the burton hook; an exhibition of skill. The hatch coamings are sufficiently high to afford some protection



A rising draft showing the burton hook adjusted

## LONGSHORE WORK

tarpaulin or sail cloth called a "save-all" is placed between goods which may be injurious to each other.

The escaping of Cayenne pepper has been known to cause violent and dangerous sneezing among a neighboring load of horses. The fumes escaping from empty aniline drums have left a yellow deposit on all goods in their vicinity. One header interviewed told of having seen badly chocked cargoes loosen and break up fine wines, Belfast ales, and other similar goods, till only small fragments of the glass bottles remained.

The work of a deck man requires not only skill but a different kind of judgment and a higher sense of responsibility than that required of a man working on the pier or in the hold. There is a chance for the display of peculiar skill, not only by the winch man and the gangway man, whose work has been described, but by the hooker-on, in the use of the burton. As the draft clears the hatch coamings, the hooker-on reaches out and by a quick, dexterous fling causes the hook to circle several times around the up-and-down fall. A jerk of the burton catches the hook under the sling and makes it fast. Another evidence of dexterity is in landing drafts on the pier loft. Where baled cotton and bag stuff are stored on the second floor of a pier the men become very skilful in swinging in the drafts. By the aid of the burton they frequently land them 15 or 20 feet in from the edge of the pier. But this is possible only where the deck of the vessel is approximately on the same level as the pier loft.

Promotion is an important factor in longshore work. A green man is first put to work on the pier. If he shows himself capable he may at the first emergency be transferred to the hold. Some skilled pier men, however, dodge this promotion, preferring pier work to any other. Deck men are generally recruited from the hold men, but where a sailor applies for longshore work he is often put directly on the deck. Foremen nearly always come up from the ranks. In fact, men who have been longshoremen are preferred because of their thorough knowledge of the business. They know how to work the men to the best advantage.\*

\* Gatemen and watchmen may be old longshoremen or active longshoremen detailed to these positions. Checkers may be longshoremen promoted in an emergency, but are never old longshoremen. Many custom house laborers, who help weigh dutiable goods, have been longshoremen.

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By this survey it becomes increasingly clear that longshore work can by no means be classed as unskilled labor. While there is no apprentice system and a green man must be taken on and worked into the gang, it is only by years of experience that he develops the ability to perform the more difficult branches of the work. If labor which can be performed satisfactorily only after years of practical training and which carries with it the demand for judgment and the sense of responsibility is not to be called skilled, it is difficult to fix the types of industry to which the term can justly be applied.

## CHAPTER V

### METHODS OF HIRING AND IRREGULARITY OF THE EMPLOYMENT

#### METHODS OF HIRING

##### I. THE REPORTING OF SHIPS

“**I**S THE flag up?” was once the all important question on the waterfront. When a ship was reported at Sandy Hook an American flag was run up on the pier at which she was to dock. To the longshoremen this bit of bunting was momentous. It meant the possibility of work, the chance of an immediate livelihood.

It was an almost universal custom, and one still held to by the principal steamship lines, to run up a flag on the pier when a vessel was expected. For the trans-Atlantic ships the flag was supposed to be raised after the vessel had passed Fire Island—from four to five hours before the pier was reached. In actual practice, however, there was no such regularity. Sometimes vessels docked in less than an hour after the flag went up.

Fire Island has for many years been a reporting station. Before wireless came into use vessels were sighted far out to sea by means of glasses. During the day they could be recognized by characteristic marks. Some ships, when off Fire Island, hung up their signals or code letters on a large piece of canvas. At night they sent up rockets of different colors, which indicated the line or name of the ship.

The discovery of wireless telegraphy, which since 1896 has been rapidly coming into use, has revolutionized the methods of keeping in touch with ships. The possibilities of knowing a ship's whereabouts and further movements have been incalculably increased. A federal law of July 23, 1912, amending an act which went into effect in June, 1910, makes it unlawful for any vessel

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licensed to carry or carrying 50 or more persons, including passengers and crew, to leave or attempt to leave any port of the United States unless it is equipped with wireless apparatus capable of transmitting and receiving messages over a distance of at least 100 miles.\*

Steamship companies keep in as close touch as possible with their ships. Vessels sailing along the coast are often in communication with their home port throughout their entire course. This is not always true of ships which cross the ocean. Notice of the whereabouts of trans-Atlantic ships may be received at Cape Race, Sable Island, or some coast station south of these, either directly or through a nearer vessel which has received the message and passed it on. After a ship has approached within 100 miles of her destination, she is in constant communication with the port; from this point on the ship's wireless operator is not allowed to leave his post.

The changes which have taken place and the improved facilities for keeping in touch with ocean vessels, however, have not greatly benefited the longshoremen. The irregularity in regard to the time when the flag is run up makes it impossible for them to tell the time a ship will dock. They have no means of getting more definite information from the company except to inquire of the watchman at the pier entrance. He may or may not know. For this reason men are afraid to leave the waterfront even to go home for a meal. A short absence might cost them their chance of work for a week.

Although the steamship companies have not attempted to give advance notice of incoming vessels, the wireless reports in the newspapers are of some benefit to longshoremen. By watching these they can ascertain about the date a ship will be at her pier, and make arrangements to "shape" there on the docking day. If a man is turned away at a pier where he usually gets work, he may through the newspapers know where he stands another chance of being taken on. The wireless news gives the men another advantage. They sometimes quit on the last day of the work at one

\* Radio Communication Laws of the United States. Regulations governing Radio Operators, etc. Edition of July 27, 1914. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Navigation. Washington, 1914.

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ship in order to shape for another incoming vessel where there is a prospect of four or five days' work.

### II. HOURS OF HIRING AND PERIODS OF WORK\*

The hours of hiring for the beginning of work on a ship vary with the time of her arrival. To warp in, moor, and rig the ship a small force of men is hired before she docks. This may be at any hour of the day. Longshoremen informed of the expected arrival of a vessel often wait around for hours, sometimes till late at night, in order to be on hand for the hiring. If the landing is made at night, taking off first class baggage is the only work done and lasts about an hour. Then the men hired for that purpose are laid off till morning.

The entire hiring of the port is based on the system of hourly employment.† The longshoreman is on a more casual basis than the ordinary day laborer, who, when he is hired, is at least assured of a day's work. After work has begun, men are knocked off and rehired at any hour according to the demands of the work. For instance, if steamship companies are in the habit of getting their cargo handled at a certain rate, they require their foremen to keep the labor cost down to that rate. Consequently, if freight is delayed, if a winch breaks, or any other setback occurs, the foremen knock off the men temporarily. A saving of even fifteen minutes' pay of several hundred men is a considerable item to the company. Sometimes men are told to "go to the corner," meaning the far side of the street—really the saloon—until they are wanted. They may be kept waiting all day, but dare not leave and seek work elsewhere for fear of gaining the ill will of the boss; for each foreman has his own following and the necessity for standing well with him is, therefore, a serious consideration.

Yet, theoretically, hours of hiring are, for day work, 7 a. m. and 1 p. m., and for night work, 7 p. m. With the exception of a few lines, chiefly coastwise, these hours hold for the entire port. This statement, in that it suggests work by the day or half day, is mis-

\* For further discussion of periods of work, see *Irregularity of the Employment*, pp. 68 ff.

† For discussion of attempts to establish weekly hiring and a weekly wage, see pp. 73 and 79.

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leading. Not only does the first hiring depend on the arrival of the ship, and the continuity of the work on the conditions of gear and freight, but even under the most favorable conditions men who have been worked through the morning are rehired in gangs after the noon meal. If a man should not be on hand he would be dropped.

The irregularity in the hours of beginning work is reflected in the uncertain length of periods of continuous employment. The hours of work are, theoretically, from 7 a. m. to 12 m. and from 1 p. m. to 6 p. m.—a ten-hour day; at 6 o'clock the foreman blows his whistle and the work stops. As a matter of fact, however, there is no greater certainty about the length of time work will last than there is about the hours of hiring. Men are often required to work through the meal hour, during the night, and on Sundays and holidays. Two days and a night is usually the limit of a man's endurance, but many have testified to having worked thirty-five and forty hours on a stretch.\* Even much longer periods of consecutive work are matters of history. But it should be stated that though the work is called consecutive, it is not so, strictly speaking. The men knock off for an hour at noon, at 6 p. m., and, when the work has been carried through the night, at 6 a. m. Half an hour is usually given at midnight, but at some piers they work right through the midnight hour, one man at a time being given leave to go and get some light refreshment.

Stretches of work, however, are seldom so long as they were in the past. From the end of the Civil War until the end of the Spanish-American War excessive hours of work were common. Men often worked forty hours or more—two days and two nights, or even three days and two nights. One old longshoreman, a gangway man, tells that just after the Civil War he once worked from seven o'clock Monday morning until three or four the following Saturday afternoon—a total of 103 hours. Other similar cases are on record. But when such extremely long stretches of work have occurred, it has usually been in the hold, where occasionally a short period of rest can be snatched, one man resting and another doing his work; and time for meals had of course to be allowed.

Men cannot now endure these excessive hours, owing to the

\* See *Dangers from Overfatigue*, pp. 130 ff.



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greater pressure of the work. The large 900 or 1000-foot ship will not pay if left long in port, and in consequence the utmost endeavor is made to have her lie in the dock as few days as possible. If she is late in docking, if she has a large cargo to discharge or much cargo to take on, work must continue day and night. At present men will not usually work more than two days and a night consecutively. They agree among themselves not to come back, and foremen are obliged to shift the gangs. One foreman for a large company of contracting stevedores does not require his men to work more than one day and night. Often they are given three half nights in addition to day's work; that is, on three consecutive days they work till 11 p. m.

These long stretches of work are exhausting. The increased risk of accident and liability to disease due to physical depletion will be discussed in a later chapter.\* But at best these long periods of labor necessarily produce a reaction. Men are obliged to "lay off" for a day or two, or even a week, after such a strain. But the uncertainty of employment is so great that they dare not let the work go when they have it, even under such conditions.†

### III. METHODS OF HIRING IN FOREIGN COMMERCE

Formerly, as soon as the flag was seen longshoremen congregated at the street corner opposite the pier. They did not go to the pier. It was a point greatly insisted on by the men that they should force the foremen to come to them, because thereby they gained a certain prestige in the hiring. Any man who tried to obtain work by other means was soon driven from the neighborhood by the resentment of his fellow workmen. About a half hour before the ship docked the foreman came to the corner and hired the longshore sailors to assist in mooring and rigging the ship, preparatory to the work of unloading. As soon as he left the pier he was seen by some of the men on watch. The cry was raised: "Here comes the boss," and stragglers joined the main group. When the vessel was moored, rigged, and ready for unloading, the foreman returned to the corner and selected the men needed for discharging the cargo. Each gave his name to the timekeeper when hired, and again when quitting or "knocking off." Since

\* See *Risks of the Trade*, pp. 129 ff.

† See also p. 74.

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1887 the prestige so insisted on has been lost. The men now gather, or shape, directly in front of the pier and are engaged there.

Almost all the large steamship companies now do their own discharging and loading. They engage a head foreman, sometimes called a stevedore, who does the hiring, overlooks the work, and is responsible to the company. Smaller companies, as well as a few of the larger ones, let out their work to contracting stevedores,\* who, at a certain ton rate or package rate, take the responsibility of doing the work. When this is done the head foreman is hired by the contracting stevedore and is accountable to him.

Though there is one general system of hiring, it has many modifications. One distinction, however, is of sufficient importance to serve as a basis for a minor classification. Men are hired either by individuals and gangs, or by hundreds.

Differences of method will be made clear by a description of systems of hiring at some of the more representative piers. Whatever is done at the Hamburg-American and North German Lloyd piers, Hoboken, and at the Chelsea piers, Manhattan, is done on a large scale and usually more efficiently than elsewhere. At the Hamburg-American and North German Lloyd piers the hiring is by hundreds. At the Chelsea piers it is by individuals and gangs. Hiring by individuals and gangs means that the individual longshoreman is the unit of the hiring. This system, which is the older of the two methods and is in general use except at a few of the Hoboken piers—such as those mentioned above—will be first considered.

### I. HIRING BY INDIVIDUALS AND GANGS

At about half-past six o'clock in the morning thin streams or little groups of longshoremen may be seen going down the side streets leading to the Chelsea piers. Before long several hundred have gathered on the far side of the street from the piers. Just before seven the foreman blows his whistle for them to "shape"; that is, to take their places in a half circle in front of the pier. As far as the space allows, this semi-circular line is always kept, but the number of rows deep the men may stand is limited only by the number seeking work.

\* See pp. 22 and 67.



A section of the "shape." The men are just ready to be called



Longshoremen entering a White Star pier to begin work

## HIRING AND IRREGULARITY

The foreman stands at a point where he can command the crowd before him, or walks back and forth in the opening reserved by the curved line of the shape. He selects the men on account of some previous knowledge of them or, if they are new men, because they look strong and capable. The men called pass the time-keeper, give their names, and each receives a check which he holds until the next pay day. Usually they are called individually at the "start of a ship" and made up into gangs as called. At each new shape for the same ship the gangs are rehired as gangs, and places of men "short in the gang" are filled by extra men hired individually. On some piers the gangs hold over and are rehired as gangs whenever a ship comes in. For instance, the timekeeper for one of the leading Chelsea piers has the names of members of regular gangs on his book and rarely changes them.\* The foreman, therefore, may call the gangs at the beginning of work on a ship, just as though they had been formed the day before. If a man who belongs to a regular gang drops out from the exhaustion of a long stretch of work or other cause, his place is filled. Often he is left out for a week as a lesson and a warning. Thus, though there are permanent gangs at these piers, the individual members are constantly shifting.

At the White Star piers, hold men, deck men, and pier men† gather in separate groups for the hiring. These are the only piers where this is done. When, in loading a ship, pier men are transferred to the hold, they still gather in their original group of pier men the next time they are hired. But if a man should drop out of the hold gang permanently and a pier man be given his place, the latter would take his place with the hold men during the working of that ship.‡

\* There are piers where names do not count for much. For instance, one Brooklyn firm has had as many as 17 Italians of the same name working on one ship, all claiming to be relatives. One is reminded of the statement of a beach walker that there were at one time seven Pat Murphys working for the Cunard Line. They had, of course, to be designated as Pat Murphy number one, Pat Murphy number two, and so on, up to Pat Murphy number seven. Twelve John Sullivans at the White Star piers were also numbered.

† For classification of the men, see pp. 30 ff.

‡ The joke may then be passed around at his expense. "Now, Johnny, you can tell your girl that you are a hold man." For hold men are considered along the docks to be superior as workmen to those who work on the pier.

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Pay day and the hour of paying off vary at different piers. The men form in line, single file, and receive their money through a small window in the paymaster's office. At some piers they call out their names; at others they present their working checks and the amount due is paid them; and at a few piers both names and check numbers are called. Some men may have worked at several different piers during the week; in which case they must present themselves at each of the piers in order to get their pay.

At the White Star piers, paying off begins every Saturday at 11 a. m. The men form in a long line and pass in single file by the pay office. The men call out their names to the timekeeper, he states the amounts due them, and the paymaster passes out their earnings for the week.

The Cunard Line has always had unique methods of hiring and payment. For more than thirty years, and until 1907, this line employed about 250 men by the month, and paid them every two weeks by check. Besides these there were about 300 extra men, hired by the hour. These were paid once a week with gold, silver, and copper money. The monthly and hourly men were registered alphabetically in separate books. The calling was not done in alphabetical order, so that all stood an equal chance of work. Old men were treated considerably. Whenever possible they were kept to do the light work.

At present the method of hiring at the Cunard piers is about the same as that used on the White Star piers. Brass checks, consecutively numbered, however, are given out for the week when men are taken on. The men give their names to the timekeeper when first hired. The rest of the week they give their check numbers. Each man returns his check as he is paid his week's wage.

### 2. HIRING BY HUNDREDS

At the Hamburg-American and North German Lloyd piers, as has been said, the hiring is by hundreds. Under this system preference checks are given out which are not relinquished at the end of each job. Men who hold checks represent the best or most regular workers at the given piers and are entitled to work before other applicants. The holders of the lowest numbers are hired first. The Hamburg-American Line has two full piers and a half

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pier. Unlike most of the other piers, the space at the entrance is small. The hiring is done in front of Pier 1.

This company issues 600 brass checks. These working checks are brass discs of different shapes, stamped with a number and generally marked with the initials of the company. The foreman or gateman calls in the men by their check numbers, a hundred at a time, or whatever part of a hundred is necessary. When more than 600 men are needed, extra checks are given out, but the men who hold the first 600 are always given preference. The first hundreds are called first, so that the man with the lowest number has the best chance of securing work.

It is the sixth of February, a few minutes before 1 p. m. A cold, fierce wind is blowing from the north, carrying with it flurries of snow. Streams of men are pouring through the narrow opening leading into the open space in front of Pier 1 of the Hamburg-American Line, in Hoboken. Most are of heavy build, stout and bulky. Here and there a giant is seen towering above the rest. As the open space in front of the pier is not large, it is soon filled. The form of the space and its narrow limits do not permit the usual semi-circular formation, called the shape. The men though packed together are goodnatured and ready to pass a rough joke when the chance offers. Here and there a struggle occurs to get to the front of the mass. A rope is drawn across the entrance through which wagons and trucks are driven onto the pier, to hold back the men. The narrow doorway at one side, through which the men will later be admitted to the pier, is guarded by a watchman.

By one o'clock the crowd has grown so that it numbers between 1,200 and 1,500. Promptly at that hour the whistle on the pier announces that the hiring is to begin, and the gateman begins at once to call the hundreds. As the men are called they struggle out of the crowd and pass rapidly through the narrow doorway at the side of the pier, each showing his check as he enters.

After the first six or seven hundred are called, the struggle of the remaining men to get into conspicuous places increases. They are so thickly packed near the doorway that often a man who is entitled to pass in has to be pulled through by his fellows. A few

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get through who either have no check or have the wrong one. They are promptly stopped, jerked toward the rope at the wagon entrance, and told to get under the rope and outside. This is difficult, for the crowd of men against the rope is a solid mass. They are forced to push themselves into this crowd. One man driven out lowers his head till it is about on a level with the stomachs of the men in front, makes a sort of catapult of himself, and shoots into the mass, striking the men as he goes. His progress far out into the crowd can be traced by the wriggle or wave motion he produces. Sometimes the line of the shape is broken, and the whole mass surges forward. The gateman is handed a stout switch, with which he attempts to strike the men over their faces. They, knowing what is coming, duck their heads and receive the blows on their caps. But the discipline has its effect, and the mass retreats a few steps, allowing the foreman to make his selection. If the rod fails, the hose is turned on, even in winter. In the meantime large delivery wagons loaded with goods have perhaps driven up, impatient to leave the pier, but they cannot do so until the hiring is completed and the space is cleared.

Above the noise and confusion the foreman can be heard calling out the eleven hundreds. This means that over 1,100 men have been hired. Meanwhile those who have been taken on pass through one of the turnstiles near the timekeeper's office and go rapidly down the pier. They then pass into an enclosure where there are seven time clocks. Each man gives his number to a checker, who punches it on the clock, and after this they are assigned to their places. The first 600 usually know where to go. Of the seven time clocks, six register 150 and one registers 100—a total of 1,000 numbers. If more than a thousand men are taken on, the time of the extra men is registered in a book. The names of men holding the 600 regular checks are kept on the books, but where additional checks are given out the names of the men are not taken.

Saturday is pay day, and the paying is done entirely by check number. Two windows are opened in the timekeeper's office on the pier. At one of these the timekeeper's assistant sits with the payroll in front of him. The men pass one by one behind the railing to this window and show their checks to the assistant time-

### HIRING AND IRREGULARITY

keeper, who calls out the amount due them. At the next window the timekeeper has a huge tray filled with silver and gold, and he lays out in front of each man the sum he has earned. No envelopes are used. In Hoboken, as on the Manhattan side, the regular men may also get work at other piers, and on pay day they will have perhaps three or four different checks and must lose considerable time in going from pier to pier to collect their earnings.

#### 3. THE HIRING OF OIL HANDLERS

The few hundred men who handle case oil—"case oil men"—are hired for the most part on a street corner near Hamilton Ferry, Brooklyn. The men assemble in the evening and make arrangements with the stevedore for the next day. This evening hiring enables them to make an early start and reach their destination by eight o'clock in the morning. They are transported free by ferry from Hamilton Ferry to Bayonne or Hunter's Point, or any other part of the port where case oil is to be loaded; but they do not draw pay until they actually start work. On account of the heavy labor the men work only an eight-hour day with a half hour off at noon. The inflammability of the oil makes night work impracticable.

#### 4. HIRING IN THE BANANA TRAFFIC

Hiring for the banana boats, like everything else in that trade, requires separate mention. Banana handlers do not shape in the usual manner; there is no uniformity in the method of hiring. The men are hired individually—not all at once, but as needed—and made into gangs afterward. At first a few men are selected to get the ship ready for unloading. Sometimes they constitute a regular gang which has held over from a previous ship. Others are called from time to time, and as the work gets deeper into the hold, there may be 20 or 30 to a gang. As many as 200 may be employed on an ordinary banana boat.

When a banana ship is ready for unloading the foreman goes out in front of the pier, and climbs on top of some oil barrels or other cargo lying about. At once, from 100 to 200 men gather about him with outstretched hands, and with loud cries clamor for checks. The demoralized character of many of this group,



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which has already been described, makes it difficult to preserve any discipline or order among them. Some to gain prominent positions climb onto trucks or piles of freight till the foreman with oaths orders them down. Others appeal by self-recommendation,—“Matty, you know me,” they say; or “Matty, we don’t walk, we run.” The foreman has a large number of brass checks strung on a bent wire. As he unsnaps each check he calls out the first name or nickname of a man, and tosses him the check. Occasionally, when he throws a check to one man, another snatches it. When he has given out about 20 checks, he snaps the wire together and informs the men that he will be back in ten minutes to hire another gang. When more men are needed the foreman returns, hands checks to the men who are hanging about awaiting him, and tells them with an oath “to get down there and go to work.” Or he may rush back to the crowd and throw out checks to the men who look hearty and strong with a “here you” as he points out some particular man. If this man is at the back of the crowd, another may seize the check, and a scuffle follows.

The men who receive checks pass the timekeeper, and he takes each man’s number and his time; no names are recorded. It is so hard to keep track of these workers as they scatter over the boats and car floats, and so many drop out before the day is over, that it is necessary to check up their time at intervals of about an hour. A timekeeper with the list of numbers on a time sheet passes among them and checks each man’s number for that particular period of time. The men are paid in full each evening. If a man has worked well the foreman may call out that he is to have an extra nickel for the day’s work.

### IV. HIRING IN THE COASTWISE AND LOCAL TRAFFIC

There is no hiring by hundreds on the coastwise lines. Hiring by individuals and gangs on these lines is not characteristically different from that system as it is used in foreign commerce. The custom of taking the names of the men is peculiar to a few piers,—a survival of a method used in earlier days. Usually checks are given out when the men are engaged. Sometimes checks of two shapes are used, the different shapes on alternate weeks. The holder of such a working check is not hired for any week or piece

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of work, but according to custom he is taken on every day during the working of a given ship. The check is used to identify the holder, and must be given up when his wages are paid. It is in no sense a preference check which will help him to secure employment at some subsequent time.

Lumber and brick handlers congregate about the piers where these cargoes are landed, and are hired as needed. The latter frequent especially the brick market between Fifty-second and Fifty-fourth Streets on the North River.

Shenangoes, who unload and load barges, lighters, and canal boats, are picked up as wanted along the waterfront by small contractors or by the captains of these craft. The work may last only two or three hours, and the men are paid at the end of the day or job. The number of men employed on these boats is so small, and the method by which they are selected is so haphazard, that it cannot be called a system of hiring; nevertheless, the shenangoes cannot be disregarded in any discussion of waterfront hiring.

## V. CONTRACTING STEVEDORES\*

There are seven or eight firms of contracting stevedores in the port which do a large business, handling almost all the foreign commerce work which is not done by the companies themselves. The work is carried on through superintendents and foremen, one firm having as many as 40 foremen. The longshoremen are hired in front of the piers where they are to work. In case the number of men who shape is insufficient, the foreman selects a few whom he knows and makes each responsible for bringing others. It is said that about 6,000 men earn a living through these eight firms. They work in all parts of the port from Yonkers to Bayonne, from Hoboken to the Bush Terminal. They unload and load all sorts of cargoes, unload bananas, and coal vessels. Some of the large ocean lines let out their entire stevedoring work. The nature of the goods handled by contracting stevedores is so varied that the superintendent in making estimates for contracts has to know something about practically every commodity that is produced in the world.

Besides the large stevedoring companies, there are 40 or 50

\* See also pp. 22 and 60.

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other firms who take contracts for general stevedoring, local traffic, coal handling,\* unloading schooners, and in general do the work of the lesser craft. There are also in the port less than a dozen lumber stevedores each employing 18 or more men at a time.† In addition, there are a number of men who take contracts for unloading light lumber boards. Two or three of these men take a contract, and, with one extra man, do the work. One receives the wages and divides up with the rest.

In the old days a longshoreman could look forward to becoming an employing stevedore of this type. If he saved some money, he could make a start in a small way by taking minor contracts. At one time there were several scores of small stevedores who took all sorts of contracts for waterfront work, but these have been nearly eliminated by the large firms and by the taking over of this work by the steamship companies.

The disadvantages to the longshoreman of the lack of system in hiring which has been described are obvious. Not only are the hours of hiring irregular and uncertain, but the men do not know with any surety whether they will be chosen at a shape. The duration of the work when obtained is uncertain; it may be short, it may be long with frequent knock offs, or it may be one long continuous stretch. The sum of these conditions which result from the methods of hiring is extreme irregularity. Such are the facts of the hiring. The conditions of the bargain, the far-reaching effects of this method of employment on the labor force, will appear as the discussion proceeds.

### IRREGULARITY OF THE EMPLOYMENT

In addition to the irregularity in the hours of hiring and the uncertainty as to whether they will be taken on at the shape, longshoremen have, as we have seen, a third aspect of instability to contend with. There is no guarantee of the permanency of employment when obtained. Men are discharged without notice

\* Coal handling is done by small as well as large firms. Two or three firms do most of the local work of unloading coal scows and of trimming or shoveling the coal after it has been carted to bins in hotels or apartment houses in the city.

† See lumber handling, pp. 48 ff.

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whenever a job is finished, or turned off for an hour or two without pay when a delay in the work occurs.

There are, further, industrial and seasonal fluctuations of the trade. The bulk of cargoes varies with the amount of supply and demand for imports and exports and is therefore related to the prosperity of this and other countries. It varies also seasonally. Trade is most brisk in the autumn in preparation for the winter market; in December there is a lull; during the late winter and spring it becomes lively again; and finally is dullest in summer.

### I. SOME EXAMPLES OF IRREGULARITY AND UNEMPLOYMENT

When the Wainwright Commission made its study of unemployment in 1910,\* it attempted to secure data about various industries. At this time the writer made a request to the Commission that the same questions sent to employers in other trades should be sent to stevedoring firms and steamship companies who employed longshoremen. The returns were meager. The total number of hours worked weekly by the men employed by two firms may, however, be given, and will serve to illustrate the extreme irregularity of the work.

The first of these firms reported for a period of nine weeks, during which time the total number of hours worked by its employes per week ranged from 22,890 to 44,878. Thus the maximum number of hours in any week exceeded the minimum by nearly 100 per cent.

The second firm reported for fifteen weeks. In three of these weeks its total of hours of employment given fell below 500; and in three others the figure was 2,000 or over. The extreme range in weekly records was from 230 to 2,755 hours.

"During the month of June, it will be seen that there were almost 16,000 more hours of work in one week than in another. If all the men worked full days of ten hours, it would mean that these stevedoring companies had no work at the end of June for 1,600 dock laborers whom they employed in the middle of the month."†

\* Report to the Legislature of the State of New York by the Commission appointed under Chapter 518 of the Laws of 1909 to inquire into the question of employers' liability and other matters. Third Report. Unemployment and Farm Labor. 1911.

† Ibid., Appendix I, p. 49.

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As indicating the amount of unemployment these figures are incomplete and inconclusive. In no case do they give the length of employment of the individual. The fact also that a man often works at several piers is not taken into account. Two other firms gave the number of men employed each day and the total hours they worked. Obviously the variations in the number of hours of employment do not show the steadiness of the work for an individual. On successive days which show the same number employed, part of the men may work four hours, part five, and part eight hours.

It is only in the hours worked by the individual longshoreman that we get a true measure of the steadiness of the work. Yet with the exception of the diaries of earnings of four longshoremen, discussed in the next chapter, we have no records on which conclusions regarding the amount of unemployment in longshore work can be based. Three of these diaries gave records of hours worked. Let us therefore consider these records for the sake of the light they throw on the amount of employment among the most steadily employed.

The record of the first longshoreman shows that on 298 days out of 602, or nearly one-half (49.5 per cent), he did no work. If, however, we assume that the longshoreman, like any other workman, should normally take one day's rest in seven, his abnormal unemployment would be represented by 298 days minus 86 days, or 212 days, which is only 35.2 per cent of the total of 602 days. Moreover, on 73 of the 304 days when he was at work his time was five hours or less. Yet there were 53 days on which he worked from 13 to 22 hours, and on four of these days his work continued more than 20 hours. There were 15 weeks (not consecutive) in which there was lack of employment throughout the entire week.

In considering this record as proof of unemployment on the one hand and overwork on the other, it should be understood that the longshoreman whose industrial record it is, is a sober and domestic man, so steady and methodical in his habits that he voluntarily kept a daily account of his hours and earnings in order that his wife might know how much she could afford to spend on their daily living.

#### HIRING AND IRREGULARITY

The diary of the second longshoreman whose earnings were recorded does not show the number of days and hours employed.

The record of the third longshoreman, covering 85 weeks and five days, shows a slightly lower percentage of unemployment, as measured by days when no work was done, than does that of the first longshoreman. On 291 days out of a total of 600, or 48.5 per cent, the third longshoreman did no work; while if the same allowance for Sundays be made as in the case of the first man, the third was abnormally out of work 205 days (that is, 291 minus 86), or 34.2 per cent of the total number of days. On 57 of the 309 days when he was at work the third longshoreman worked five hours or less, and on 63 days he worked 13 hours or more—on six days putting in from 18 to 21 hours daily. There were four weeks among the 86 when he obtained no work at all.

The fourth longshoreman, also a reliable and efficient worker, worked on all but 24 days of 238 covered by his record. He had therefore less than one day of rest per week; moreover, at no time did he fail for more than three consecutive days to find employment. On 29 of the 214 days when he had work his time was five hours or less. On the other hand, there were 62 days (out of the remaining 185) on which he worked from 13 to 21 hours. On 14 of these days he worked 18 hours or more each day.

The fourth longshoreman worked an average for the whole period of about 10 hours per day. But he was compelled to work 65 nights, and actually performed 370 hours of labor at night. This means that about 17 per cent of all his labor was night work.

There is therefore proof that even among the men of the highest earning capacity employment is intermittent. They, like others, suffer from uncertainty in the hours of hiring, uncertainty of employment, and uncertainty of the length of work. Repeated long stretches of overwork are forced on them if they wish to make up financially for the days and weeks of unemployment. And if these slack periods are in evidence among the steadiest and most efficient men, with whom unemployment is known to be reduced to its lowest terms, it is reasonable to infer that among the

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less steady and less efficient the amount of unemployment is greatly increased.

### II. FAILURE TO DISTRIBUTE THE AVAILABLE LABOR FORCE

The maladjustment between supply and demand, and a large oversupply of labor, enormously complicate the problem of unemployment. That there should be a poor distribution of labor is hardly to be wondered at considering the lack of organization and co-operation among employers. The system on which longshore work is carried on, if it can be called a system, is haphazard, inconsequent. While the longshoremen are wandering from pier to pier in search of work, with no means of knowing at what piers extra men are needed, the employers who are short of men are equally at sea as to where efficient men can be had. Both employer and longshoreman suffer from this failure to make connection. There is no pooling of interests on the waterfront to bring together these mutually dependent factors; no clearing house of information. The result is that there exist at the same time chronic conditions of oversupply and of shortage of labor. For the men this means irregular employment, involving in turn no work and excessively long hours.

No discussion of irregularity or casualness in longshore work is complete without considering the effects of an oversupply of labor. Oversupply is the central pillar on which the casual system rests. When there are three men waiting for every job, irregularity of employment must inevitably follow. It is estimated that at least one-third of the longshoremen of the port of New York are always out of employment. This condition is aggravated by the dropping in temporarily of laborers from other trades. The ship owners and stevedores are therefore free to impose their own conditions. It is clear, too, that this large amount of surplus labor makes it easy for foremen to select the men they desire, and to make their power felt. Men endure the insults and obey the commands of their bosses more readily when they know that hundreds of others are waiting to step into their places. Oversupply not only puts the employer in the position of a dictator, and makes cheap labor possible; but, as will be shown, it is also the chief obstacle, on the part of the unions, to regularizing the employment.

## HIRING AND IRREGULARITY

### III. THE MAXIMUM OF REGULARITY IN THE PORT

The maximum of permanency and regularity which has been attained in this port is represented by the use of preference checks and of so-called regular gangs,\* which have been described. The practice of hiring the same gangs regularly has distinct advantages. It gives more steady work to the men thus employed, and insures greater efficiency as the men become familiar with the methods and requirements of the particular foremen under whom they work. It tends also to procure a better class of workers.

On the other hand, where there is so large an amount of surplus labor in proportion to the work offered, and no guarantee of permanency of employment, it is often urged as an objection that this system of hiring regular gangs concentrates the work in a few hands. Overwork is the result for these few. Men, it is said, will work themselves to death for fear of losing the advantage of belonging to a regular gang.†

There have been several attempts to regularize work by establishing a custom of weekly hiring and weekly pay.‡ Such an effort on the part of the Old Dominion Line was one of the causes that precipitated the strike of 1887.§ The Cunard Line, as we have seen, for many years hired a considerable number of men by the month. During the strike of 1887 these men stood by the company, but in 1907 they too went out on strike. After the strike was over, the company refused to take them back as monthly men, and since then has employed only on the hourly basis.

Other companies have from time to time made offers to pay the men by the week, but these offers have been refused, or if the plan was tried it was soon discontinued. The White Star Line some fifteen years ago offered to employ their men by the week. The gangwaymen and headers were to receive \$18 per week of 60 hours. All others were to receive \$15, and 45 cents an hour for all overtime. The longshoremen refused the offer and the matter was dropped.

\* See *Methods of Hiring*, pp. 55 ff. For discussion of the systems in use in London, Liverpool, and Hamburg, see Appendices B, C, and E, pp. 188, 199, and 210.

† See *Dangers from Overfatigue*, pp. 129 ff.

‡ See pp. 79 and 102.

§ See pp. 102 ff.



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A system which had been tried in Europe was attempted about three years ago in Hoboken. A form of agreement was presented to the men. Those who signed it were to have preference in the hiring, practically steady work, and \$18 for a week of 60 hours. Two shifts were to be worked, one during the day, one at night. The union fought this agreement so hard that only about 70 men signed, and the plan fell through.

Foremen have never been very earnest in their endeavor to force on the men offers of the companies to pay by the week. Under the present system, if no ship is in they may get a day or part of a day off. If large numbers of men were employed by the week, it would be necessary for the foremen to find work for them to do and to remain and see that it was done.

On the surface the attitude of the men in refusing steady work with a weekly wage seems unreasonable. The fact is that whenever there is a large oversupply of labor any change in the method of employment is regarded with suspicion by the workers. Whether from selfish or altruistic motives they insist that the men squeezed out must be provided for. They also fear that if they were paid by the week they would be worked to death; that if they dropped out, they would lose their jobs. The rush is so great that the irregularity of the employment is, they think, the one thing that saves them from utter exhaustion. Periods of rest are as much a part of the system as periods of labor. The men have not even glimpsed the possibility of regular employment for a limited number of hours without killing stretches of overtime. To them employment by the week means a reduction in the number of workmen, and the loss of their periods of recuperation.

### IV. THE EFFECT OF IRREGULARITY ON THE LONGSHOREMAN

The irregularity of his employment can readily be seen to be a curse to the waterfront worker in that it tends to place him in the shiftless class; to force him into the ranks of the unemployed merely because he is not every day of his life vigorously seeking employment. The man who has a regular job has the incentive of holding that job to spur him on, and goes to work regardless of his physical condition, his mental attitude, or the call of other interests. He must work or lose his job. The longshoreman has

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no such incentive to steady habits. He knows that to drop out for a day or two does not destroy his chance of work when he returns. There is for him no pride in the position he occupies, no stimulating sense of being a permanent part of a great undertaking. The lack of incentive and of ambition tends inevitably to the demoralization of the workman.

The intermittent labor performed by the ordinary casual has by English students\* been shown to be bad from the point of view of everybody concerned. The uncertainty of work and the daily or hourly wage are shown to encourage thriftlessness in the men. The establishment of any standard on which to base the expenses of the family becomes an impossibility. The periods of idleness deplete the savings from periods of work, so that there can be no surplus for hard times. Shifting about from one employer to another, his reputation as a worker makes little difference to the casual, and he sees no reason why he should attempt to improve the quality of his work. As the casual laborer must spend his enforced leisure seeking work, he is in a chronic state of unrest.

From the point of view of the employer, the casual system, though often defended and usually, for the sake of maintaining a supply equal to the maximum demand, definitely encouraged, is seen to be a short-sighted policy. Casuals take less interest in their work than regular laborers, are almost inevitably less efficient, and are, as a rule, irresponsible in their attitude. Deterioration in the work is the result. It is therefore to the best interest of the employer as well as of the employe that work should be regularized.†

\* See Chapter X, pp. 171 ff.

† For further discussion see pp. 170 ff.

## CHAPTER VI

### WAGES AND EARNINGS\*

**I**N THE study of the methods of hiring which prevail on the waterfront, we have shown how those methods result in industrial instability. That such instability should exist in any occupation and not be reflected in the incomes of the workers is a contradiction in terms. Stability of employment means normally a steady if not an adequate income. Irregularity of employment means ordinarily the lack of both. It invariably means the want of a definite and known income on which to base the expenses of a family.

To discover the actual earnings of workers in a casual trade and to determine the degree of stability and adequacy in their incomes, it is clear that the rate of wages paid per hour is the first item which must be ascertained.

#### I. RATES OF WAGES FROM 1860 TO 1912

The rate of pay for longshore work has varied many times during the past fifty years; nor has there ever been complete uniformity throughout the port. Various branches of commerce and individual companies or stevedores have at the same time paid different wages. Yet, though uniformity of wages has been incomplete, there has always been a standard rate which has prevailed more or less generally.

#### 1. THE FOREIGN TRADE

Before the Civil War the famous "long and short quarter" prevailed. Longshoremen were paid \$1.50 a day. The day be-

\* For the reasons given in the Introduction it is impossible in this chapter, as well as in the two following chapters, which deal with the history of unions and strikes among the longshoremen, to give definite sources of information for many of the statements made. It should be said, however, that in addition to the careful method of verification adopted by the author, the completed study has been examined by a number of persons closely in touch with longshore work and has met with their approval.—Editor.

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gan at 7 a. m. and ended at 5 p. m. From 12 to 1 o'clock was the meal hour. The custom of taking on men at 7 or 9 o'clock divided the first half day into quarters of unequal length, one from 7 to 9, the other from 9 to 12. The pay was the same for these two unequal periods; that is, a man received  $37\frac{1}{2}$  cents, the fourth part of \$1.50, whether he worked the "short quarter" of two hours or the "long quarter" of three hours. Many excuses could be found for not beginning work until 9 o'clock. The custom house did not open until 8 o'clock; in starting work on a ship, permission to unseal the hatches could not be had until after that hour. As might be expected, foremen took advantage of various conditions to work the men through the "long quarter" whenever possible. There was constant friction, and the "long and short quarter" continued to be a bone of contention between employers and employes until it was abolished in 1861.

Gradually, with the rise in the cost of living due to the Civil War, there was a corresponding rise in wages. About 1863, in response to a demand, the rate was raised to 25 cents and in some instances to 30 cents an hour. Two or three years later a demand for 33 cents was granted, and about 1868 another protest was made, and the rate was raised to 40 cents an hour for day and night work. But foremen took advantage of this uniform rate to do a great deal of night work. The piers were small, and trucking and tiering could be carried on to greater advantage at night when there were no teams to interfere. The men protested against this, and with a desire to cut out the excessive night and Sunday work they demanded a high rate for working at these times. In 1872 this demand procured them an advance to 40 cents an hour for day work, 80 cents for night work, and \$1.00 for Sundays.

This was the "golden period" of the longshoremen. Any discussion of wages with old longshoremen always brings out the remark, "There was a time when 80 cents and a dollar was paid." But in 1874 the employers decided that longshoremen were making too much money, and a cut was made in the rate. The men replied by a strike\* which lasted several weeks and was lost. The rate on some of the North River piers was reduced to 25 cents for

\* For full discussion of strikes and the development of the unions, see Chapters VII and VIII, pp. 93 ff.

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day work and 35 cents for night and Sunday work, but this prevailed for less than a year.\* On the East River and in Brooklyn 40 cents flat was paid for day and night work; but wherever this 40 cents flat was given, four men instead of six were placed in the hold. So much trouble resulted that finally pier after pier advanced the rate to 30 cents for day work and 45 cents for night work and Sundays.

The next increase in wages was due in part to a revival of trade unionism. The union had received a severe setback in the loss of the strike of 1874, but by 1879 it began to regain strength.† Through a resolution passed in the union, the demand was then made at different piers, and granted gradually throughout the port, for 60 cents for night and Sunday work. It was brought about in this way: The headers represented the grievances of the men. If the men were told to work at night, the headers would say that they must have 60 cents. If the demand was granted the men went to work; if not, they knocked off until the next morning. This was repeated time after time until the men won their point. The protest came directly from the men, but the union supported them by fining those who worked for less than the rate demanded.

At about this time the men began to protest against being worked through the meal hour. If the loading or discharging of a ship had to be rushed the gangs were not allowed to go off at noon, but were worked right through until 3 or 4 o'clock or until a particular lot of cargo was cleared up. The men would ask if they were to get extra pay for working through the meal hour; if not, they would quit and go to their meal. A great deal of dissatisfaction resulted. Finally, in 1881, some of the piers began to pay 60 cents for work during the meal hour and for the hours men were kept away from the meal. Little by little this became the custom. At some piers the rate of 60 cents was not granted, but the same result was obtained by allowing double time for the meal hour.

Where the cargo was cotton and the bales were stowed the same as other cargo, the regular rate of 30 and 60 cents applied. But when the freight rate on cotton was high and it was desired

\* See *Early Unions and Strikes*, p. 98.

† See p. 99.

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to make the vessel hold as much as possible, the cotton bales were "screwed"—that is, the bales were compressed in the hold with powerful screws until sometimes the decks bulged. This was a special branch of the work requiring particular skill. Regular cotton screwers received \$5.00 a day, while the headers or "toters" were paid \$6.00. In the early eighties, with the advent of larger vessels, cotton screwing in this port was almost entirely discontinued.

On the East River, the great landing place of sailing vessels, 40 cents an hour was paid for day or night work at this period. However, on the sailing vessels very little night work was done. The rates, as has been shown, had gradually increased up to 1881, and those then in force prevailed in foreign commerce until 1887, when the most momentous strike in the history of longshore work in this port occurred.

The Big Strike, or Knights of Labor strike, of 1887\* started on one of the coastwise piers. The superintendent of the Old Dominion Line attempted to force on the men regular work with a weekly wage.† This resulted in a strike with a demand for a raise from 25 to 30 cents an hour. At the same time the coal handlers of New Jersey resisted a reduction in their wages. A sympathetic strike of all waterfront workers followed. The wages of the coal handlers were restored, but the strike had so demoralized all the longshoremen that foreign steamship companies were able to reduce the wages to the rates which had prevailed before 1879,—30 cents for day work, and 45 cents for nights and Sundays. This meant that the advantage of extra pay for Sundays and holidays which the men had gradually won was now lost.

At that time many of the men working in Brooklyn lived on the Manhattan side of the East River. Although wages of foreign commerce men were nominally uniform throughout the port, the prevailing rate was not really so good in Brooklyn as on the North River, where the work was less scattered and the men could, by living in the immediate neighborhood, save the expense of transportation.

During the latter part of 1890 the National Line for a short

\* See pp. 102 ff.

† See pp. 57, 73, and 102.

## THE LONGSHOREMEN

time worked six or seven gangs of men at a weekly wage. The pay was \$18 for a week of sixty hours to headers or "toters," with 40 cents an hour overtime; and \$15 to the regular longshoremen. It was part of the contract that men should work at night when required. But the weekly wage was unpopular and did not last long.

Several minor changes gradually led to the rate of wages now paid. About 1898 there was a raise from 30 to 45 cents for holidays as well as Sundays. The other advances took place about 1900. The Sunday pay was changed from 45 to 60 cents, and at some piers employers began to pay 60 cents for the meal hour. At about this time the Hamburg-American and North German Lloyd Lines in Hoboken paid 25 cents an hour flat with no extras. In June, 1900, they granted an advance of 10 cents on night work. In 1903 they raised the rates to 30 and 45 cents as in other parts of the port.

In 1907 another attempt was made to raise wages. The men struck and demanded 40 cents for day work and 60 cents for night work, all holidays, Sundays, and for all hours that men were kept away from their meal. The strike was lost and the old rate was maintained.

About the years 1911 and 1912 the wages were fairly uniform. Day work was paid at the rate of 30 cents an hour; night work and holidays as time and a half—45 cents; Sundays and Christmas, double time—60 cents.\* This was the general rate for foreign commerce work and for coaling vessels. It was paid by the larger steamship companies.†

In the year 1911 a joint council of the Longshoremen's Union Protective Association and the International Longshoremen's Association appointed a Committee on Request who on

\* The custom of paying 60 cents for the Sunday hours produced some odd results. A man who had worked all day Sunday might be ordered back at night. When he commenced work at 7 o'clock in the evening his rate was not, as on week days, increased to time and a half, which in this case would be 90 cents, but the 60-cent rate still held; that is, it held until midnight. After midnight he worked at the ordinary night rate of 45 cents.

† There were, however, variations from this standard. On some piers 30 cents for day work, and 45 cents for night work, Sundays, and holidays was paid. At some places 60 cents was given only for work on Christmas day. On some North River piers 60 cents was paid for the meal hour. But this applied only to the one hour of the meal, not, as before 1887, to all hours men were kept from their meal. On some sailing vessels 40 cents flat was paid. In the banana traffic the pay was 25 cents an hour.

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July 15, 1912, sent to all the steamship companies a request for a new wage schedule. The principal request was an advance to 35 cents for day work and 50 for night work. The committee asked for an answer by July 29. By a close vote among the steamship companies it was decided to grant a part of the advance asked for. This went into effect September 2, 1912, so that at present the schedule is 33 cents per hour from 7 a. m. to 6 p. m.; 50 cents from 7 p. m. to 6 a. m. Holidays, 50 cents per hour; Sundays, Christmas, July 4th, and for work during meal hours, 60 cents.

It is the general custom, and one of many years' standing, to pay gangway men and headers 5 cents an hour extra. The Hamburg-American Line, however, pays its gangway men the same as ordinary longshoremen.

Foremen are generally paid by the day or week. They get from \$18 to \$40, occasionally even \$60 a week. The usual wage is about \$24. Minor foremen, at some places called hatchway bosses, are hourly men. They receive from 35 to 50 cents an hour.

### 2. THE COASTWISE TRADE

Rates on the coastwise lines have varied independently of the fluctuations in foreign commerce, yet have mirrored the crises in the latter. Up to 1898 most of these lines paid a flat rate of 25 cents an hour for day, night, and Sunday work. By 1912 several of the lines—the Clyde and Mallory, Old Dominion, and Ward\*—were paying 30 cents for day work and 30 or 35 cents for night and Sunday work, though the Metropolitan Line held to the old flat rate.

The Morgan and Savannah lines have stood apart from the majority of coastwise lines. Before 1887 they paid 30 cents for day work and 45 and 60 cents respectively for night work; and after a drop to 25 and 35 cents in 1887, they were again in 1898 paying rates of 30 and 45 cents for day and night work respectively. In 1907, 35 cents for day work and 50 cents for night and Sunday work was paid; and from 1907 down to 1912, 30 cents for day, 45 cents for night, and 50 cents for Sunday work were the established rates for both lines.

\* The Ward Line though strictly belonging to foreign commerce is popularly included among coastwise lines.



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### II. EARNINGS

To gain an accurate idea of the average weekly earnings of the longshoremen of the port today is impossible. The data on which to base a definite conclusion are not obtainable, and to make an estimate even approximately correct is extremely difficult. A statement of the rate of wages is of little assistance in estimating the earnings, for the amount of work obtained, no less than the rate of pay per hour, is a determining factor in the earnings of longshoremen. The fluctuations of the trade and the irregular methods of hiring are, as has been shown, the great barriers in the attainment of regular work and an adequate income.

Only rarely does even a superior workman keep an account. To study the payrolls of employers, even if this were possible, would not throw much light on the subject, because, as was explained in the chapter on methods of hiring, the men sometimes work at four or even five different piers in the seven days.

#### I. ESTIMATED AVERAGE EARNINGS

Estimates of the average earnings per week, made by men who are closely in touch with the work, vary from \$6.00 to \$15, and men even on the same pier differ in their opinion of the average earnings of longshoremen working there. For instance, the timekeeper of an important Chelsea pier places the average weekly earnings of all longshoremen of the port at \$7.00; his assistant believes the average is a little higher.

Of 20 men in superior positions who are intimately in touch with the work—superintendents, foremen, timekeepers, union officials, and one editor who was formerly a longshoreman—17 place the average at \$12 or less, while three make it \$12 to \$14. Six of the 20 men are timekeepers and foremen who, if anyone, ought to know the earnings of the men. Of these six men, two give the average as \$7.00, one as \$9.00, and three as \$12.

The testimony of the longshoremen is equally divergent. Out of 31 men who have worked from ten to twenty-five years in foreign commerce, 24 place the average of weekly earnings throughout the port at \$12 or less. These for the most part base their calculations on money made at the Chelsea piers, where earnings

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are comparatively high. One fixes it as low as \$6.00 to \$7.00, even at Chelsea piers; one at \$8.00 or less; several at from \$8.00 to \$9.00; several at \$10, and so on. The remaining seven of the 31 estimate it as from \$12 to \$14 or \$12 to \$15, but always with a qualifying phrase,—“of those who stick to work,” or “on the White Star and Cunard Lines, including regulars,” meaning those favored in hiring.

These differing estimates are in part explained by the intermittency of the work. Each man has based his calculations on varying amounts of employment. The only conclusion that the writer feels justified in drawing is that the earnings of the typical longshoreman of the port average less than \$12 a week, while those of many fall below \$10; and even this conclusion, though based upon innumerable conversations along the waterfront, carries only the weight of a personal opinion.\* The average earnings of the typical Italian longshoremen are probably somewhat lower, not because Italians are paid at a lower rate, but because they are more often the victims of graft and because the work is for them more than ordinarily precarious and casual.

Nor is there evidence that actual earnings have ever been much higher than in 1912. It is the testimony of the older men that on account of the great irregularity of the work even in the golden days between 1872 and 1874, when wages were 40 cents for day work, 80 cents for night work, and a dollar for Sundays, the earnings for the whole body of men were but little higher than today.

Rumors regarding the large earnings of longshoremen coupled with the fact that the rate per hour is comparatively high for “unskilled” labor, have established a general belief that the average earnings in this work are high. When a longshoreman makes a “big week,” he often boasts of it. Where there have been long stretches of work, earnings of \$19 to \$25 per week are not uncommon. Such sums as \$28, \$32, and even \$40 have been earned in the seven days and nights, especially among the better paid men,

\* See Willets, Gilson: *Workers of the Nation*. In an *Encyclopedia of the Occupations of the American People*. New York, Dodd, Mead and Co., 1903. In this book the average pay in 100 occupations is given. The figures are made up from government reports. The author places “stevedores” (longshoremen) ninety-seventh on the list with an average yearly earning of \$340, or \$6.50 a week.

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such as gangway men and headers. But these sums are as exceptional as the prizes in a lottery. They are rumored abroad, while little mention is made of the paltry earnings of weeks when only two or three days' work can be had. When the rate of pay per hour is considered, there is a possibility of fair earnings. But this possibility compared with the reality serves, as nothing else can, to emphasize the great casualness of the longshoreman's work.\*

### 2. RECORDS OF EARNINGS KEPT BY LONGSHOREMEN

We have with much difficulty and by rare good fortune succeeded in obtaining records in the form of diary entries of the earnings of four foreign commerce longshoremen for fairly long periods of time. As very few longshoremen keep accurate accounts, these records of actual earnings by the week and by the year are of peculiar interest. But as none but a superior man has the ability or persistence needed to keep such a record, they indicate rather the high water mark than the average of earnings in the trade. The first three can be regarded as high average men. The fourth has the reputation of standing second in earning capacity among all the longshoremen in the port.

The first of the group is an Englishman about twenty-six years of age. At the age of twelve the death of his father made it necessary for him to become self-supporting. He went to work in a mill, but was unable to endure the conditions for more than six months. Accordingly, he shipped as sailor, giving his age as sixteen. By the time he was twenty he had risen to the position of quartermaster. Finally he married, left the sea, and went into longshore work in New York. Most of the time he has been employed on the White Star piers, considered by many to be the best place in the port to make money, but he has also worked for the Cunard and the Atlantic Transport Companies. He calls himself a pier man but occasionally is sent on deck to run a winch. His account gives dates, ships on which he worked, hours of day and night work, earnings for each day and the total for each week.

It must be remembered in considering this record of time and earnings that a higher wage per hour is paid for night work.

\* Coastwise workers average a little less than foreign commerce men. In the lumber trade, though the pay is 40 cents an hour for the men, and 50 cents for foremen, the trade is so irregular and the winter season so slack that if a man earns \$500 a year he is doing well.



**Typical groups of New York longshoremen**

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This is an important point in computing daily earnings. For instance, on May 24, 1909, this man worked five hours during the day, which at 30 cents per hour amounts to \$1.50. He also worked five hours at night, which at 45 cents per hour is \$2.25. Thus the total earnings for that day were \$3.75.

The account shows that in the 86 weeks from May 13, 1909, to January 4, 1911,—a period of more than a year and a half,—this pier man earned \$909.03. This is the sum total of the amounts received per week. The account shows an average for the period of 86 weeks of \$10.57 per week. In 15 weeks no work was obtained. For the 71 remaining weeks of the period the man's earnings ranged from a weekly maximum of \$25.65 to a weekly minimum of \$1.50. The fifteen weeks in which no work was done were not consecutive. The hours of work of this longshoreman were exceedingly irregular. A considerable amount of night work paid for at a higher rate helped to bring up the average of earnings.

The second longshoreman, also a pier man, is of Irish descent and was born in Massachusetts. He is small in stature, well groomed, and about thirty years of age. His wife is refined and thrifty, and their home is above the average. He is domestic, rarely smokes, and never drinks. At one time he kept a grocery and meat shop, but the necessity for giving credit at the time of the Fall River (Massachusetts) strike bankrupted him. Having a brother in longshore work in New York he turned to the waterfront for a living, and most of the time since becoming a longshoreman he has worked for the White Star Line. He stands, industrially, as the highest type of pier man, is given all the work possible, and takes all he can get. He has twice been president of his local union. This account shows that during the 52 weeks from January 1 to December 30, 1911, he earned a total of \$735.46. His average for the period was \$14.14 per week. There was one week in the year for which he did not draw any pay. For the weeks in which work was obtained his maximum weekly earnings were \$25.05 (March 11) and his minimum weekly earnings 45 cents (March 4).

The third longshoreman of whose earnings we have a record had worked in Ireland as a teamster or truck driver. He is forty-five years old. He came to this country about twenty-six years

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ago, at once entered longshore work, and has labored at it continuously ever since. A man of average height, build, and strength, far above the average in intelligence, he has worked all over the port, and has a thorough knowledge of longshore work. He has been president of a union, delegate, and beach walker.

The wage account of this third longshoreman gives the totals of each week from August 17, 1907, to April 3, 1909. The amount earned in this period of eighty-six weeks\* is \$1,121.92, or an average of \$13.09 a week. The maximum is \$33.27 (December 14, 1907) and the minimum for a week in which employment was obtained, \$1.05 (July 4, 1908). There were four continuous weeks during which he was ill and did no work at all. His average weekly earnings for the 82 remaining weeks were \$13.73. The hours of work of this longshoreman are less irregular than those of the first and the amount of night work he did is less.

The fourth longshoreman is about thirty-eight years old and was born in Scotland. Until fifteen years ago he was a sailor; since then he has been doing longshore work. For the last ten years he has worked almost exclusively at the White Star piers as a deck man, or longshore sailor. It is said that there is only one longshoreman in the port who equals or exceeds him in earnings. Out of 500 men who work at his pier there are probably only 40 whose earnings approach his in amount.

This longshoreman for several years kept account books in which he recorded the number of hours he worked each day and the ship on which he worked. He entered the totals of hours and earnings for each week and for the year, and computed the average weekly earnings. His books were kept with remarkable neatness and accuracy; the weekly averages were carried out to the fraction of a cent. Some of the books have been destroyed, but those which remained show that his total earnings for the year 1908 were \$975.17, with a weekly average of \$18.75. For 32 weeks of 1910—up to the date when he was interviewed—he earned \$612.90, or an average of \$19.15 a week. During the year 1909 he kept an account for the first 34 weeks. During this period, from December 31, 1908, to August 25, 1909, he earned \$740.41, with an average of \$21.78 a week. His maximum was \$31.80 (February

\* Eighty-five weeks, five days.

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24, 1909) and his minimum \$12.82 (March 3, 1909). The regularity of the hours and of the weekly earnings of this longshoreman is noteworthy when compared with the irregularity of the preceding accounts. His hours reveal the large amount of night work which was required to make his high average.

A comparison of the records kept by the four longshoremen shows that their average weekly earnings during the periods covered ranged from \$10.57 to \$21.78. Their maximum weekly earnings ran from \$25.05 to \$33.27, and their minimum earnings for weeks in which employment was secured, from 45 cents to \$1.50.

Five other fragmentary records are in our possession. One was kept by an Irishman born in England, and about thirty-nine years old. When about fifteen years of age he went into longshore work in Liverpool. Since that time he has been a boiler cleaner, a coal shoveler, a sailor, a butcher, and has worked at box making for a biscuit company. For the past nine years he has done little but longshore work. At the writer's request he kept an account of his earnings for five weeks, and during this period his highest earnings for any week were \$9.00 and his lowest \$1.05. His account shows the total earnings of the five weeks in question to be \$26.40—a weekly average of \$5.28.

The second, an Irishman, about forty-seven years of age, has been an "all over" hold man since 1888. He kept an account of his earnings for several years and found that the year through he would average about \$12 a week. Weekly earnings are recorded as \$34, \$28, \$15, \$10, \$9.00, \$6.00, and even lower. In spite of the "high weeks" his weekly average for a year fell to approximately \$12.

The third, also Irish, kept an account of his earnings for one year, and found that he averaged \$17 a week. Though there were two or three other years when he believed he did as well, this average was unusually high.

The fourth is an Irishman of some education, fifty-two years of age, who has been in longshore work since 1879. Less than fifteen years ago he kept an account of his earnings for five years. This he had turned over to an investigator from the United States Labor Bureau but was able to give most of the averages from memory. The first year his total was \$1,200, the second \$700, and the third \$600, the fourth a little over \$300, and the fifth he could not

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remember. But for the five years he thought the average per year was something under \$800. This is equivalent to about \$15 per week.

The fifth, a man of Irish descent, about forty-five years of age, with a family, has worked as a longshoreman for over ten years. He is employed as a pier man, but is occasionally sent into the hold. He had kept an account for the past four years. However, the figures could be secured only for the yearly totals, which range from \$562.48 to \$585.68. The fluctuations from week to week are not known. The monthly and weekly averages as computed by the man himself show a correspondingly narrow range—from \$46.87 to \$48.80 in the one case, and from \$10.81 to \$11.26 in the other. The weekly average for the four years is \$10.98.

The reader must again be reminded that though the wage accounts just given bring out clearly a very great irregularity of employment and of income, they represent the earnings of men who have been taken on with comparative regularity for a number of years, and who are known as "stand-bys,"—who among "regular longshoremen" are looked upon as superior and in the case of whom unemployment has been reduced to a minimum. We have no means of measuring the amount of unemployment or the average earnings among the less regularly employed. Of them the saying of a recent English writer holds good, that the average earnings of the casual laborer is an "arithmetical abstraction." Yet the estimates already mentioned are reinforced by a study of the few wage records secured. Under the circumstances no average for the port can be estimated, but in the writer's opinion such an average, if obtainable, would not be higher than \$10 to \$12 a week, or from \$520 to \$624 a year.

### 3. DEDUCTIONS FROM THE EARNINGS

The nature of the longshoreman's work is such that there is little opportunity for the deduction of fines from his earnings. One fine, however, which is exacted on some piers has caused a great deal of resentment. If a draft or part of a draft slips out of a sling and is lost overboard, the amount of the loss is deducted pro rata from all the men in that hatch gang. A man in the hold



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may not know of the loss until he notices the deduction from his earnings on pay day. Men have been known to quit shaping at a pier where money was taken from them in this way.\*

In all longshore work the minimum of time counted is the half-hour. At certain piers the men feel that they are treated with entire fairness in the matter of calculating their time. Cases occur, however, where a gang will be knocked off fifteen to twenty-five minutes after a half-hour period, and the extra time not be counted, the company reaping the advantage. At some piers the foreman blows his whistle a little before and a little after the hour to get that much extra time for the company. Other firms rob Italian longshoremen of a little time in making up their accounts—a kind of fraud to which the Irish will not submit. For instance, if an Italian has thirty hours' work to his credit, he will probably be paid for twenty-nine and a half hours, or even less. This shaving off of the hours is a considerable saving to the employer, where two or three hundred men are at work, but makes so small a difference in each individual's payment that he is ashamed or afraid to protest. If he does not know the language, he cannot argue with the foreman, and he is well aware that if he does complain he will be left out when the gangs are next called.

Many men believe that there is a black list agreement between foremen of some of the large neighboring piers. For instance, a man was hurt while working and a fellow workman was called to testify against the company. This man was afterwards kept on in his regular place, but one day failed to show up, and after that he was not taken on. He tried other piers, but though men of no greater ability were occasionally hired he was always turned away. This kind of blacklisting is particularly hard to combat. A man has no ground for complaint against any one; he hasn't been discharged and cannot prove that there is any agreement to deprive him of work. This incident illustrates the power of the foreman in giving and withholding employment. He is naturally open to influence in dispensing his favors.

\* Some bars of copper slipped from a draft and were lost at the pier of a prominent line on the North River. On pay day the men working at the particular batch from which the copper was lost found that several dollars had been deducted from the pay of each. Such a storm of protest arose that finally the superintendent of the company ordered the money returned to the men.

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It is universally conceded that graft exists, but mainly at the expense of the Italians. There is no padrone system, as this is usually understood, among Italian longshoremen. It is true, however, that foremen of their race indirectly make them pay small amounts for being taken on and this money is usually divided with others, as, for example, with the English-speaking foremen.\* It is a matter depending on each individual foreman and, consequently, varies at each pier. Sometimes the collecting is above board; at other times it is worked by quieter means. For instance, a timekeeper on one of the large foreign piers was accused of collecting money for working checks and was arrested on the charge of graft. He was found to have sold checks, chiefly to the Italians, for amounts varying from five to fifty dollars, according to the number of the check. The men who bought these checks were not so well taken care of as they expected, and consequently they exposed the scheme.

One great source of graft is found in the men recruited from other trades, who are willing to pay to be taken on. During the winter time many Italians, and others who have been doing railroad or construction work up state and can get no jobs while the ground is frozen, come to New York for about five months—from November until March. If these men have friends in longshore work they may be taken to the foremen of certain piers where labor is always needed because work is extremely irregular, and even though they are green, they will be taken on for a consideration. The foremen distribute them one new man to each gang.

### III. WAGES AND EARNINGS IN LOCAL TRAFFIC

The earnings of the men who work in local traffic are even more precarious and difficult to estimate than those of the foreign commerce or coastwise men. Their work is still more haphazard, and they are, as a rule, less able to give correct estimates.

In the local traffic, men are paid eight cents a ton for shoveling coal and eight cents a cubic yard for gravel and stone. The work is so irregular that under the most favorable conditions they cannot average more than \$12 a week. If a man earns a good

\* This is not to be compared with the extensive and systematic graft which goes on among the railroad pier freight handlers.

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wage in a day of exhausting labor, he may be unfitted to work the next day.

Brick handlers are paid 40 cents a thousand. If "riding" is good they can make five or six dollars a day. "Good riding" is when many brick carts are running to move brick. In general, this trade is so irregular that the brick handler's yearly earnings are no higher than those of foreign commerce longshoremen.

In the last few years the grain trade, as has been mentioned, has been largely deflected from New York to other Atlantic ports. In consequence the grain trimmers do not occupy the position which they once did among waterfront workers. At one time all kinds of grain were transported in bags, but for over a decade grain has been handled in bulk. The floating grain elevators carry a small crew, who are paid by the month at varying rates. The regular grain trimmers are hired as needed and are paid by the bushel. In former years the capacity of a canal boat was limited to 8,000 bushels of grain and this amount became standard. Canal boats which carry upwards of 20,000 bushels are now built, but in referring to the amount of grain handled the term "boat" is still used to mean 8,000 bushels. A floating elevator in a day of ten hours may handle from seven to 10 "boats,"—that is, from 56,000 to 80,000 bushels. To do this requires a gang of 20 to 28 grain trimmers. The rate of wage is in general \$3.50 per thousand bushels for day work, and \$6.00 per thousand for night, Sunday, and holiday work. During the months of June, July, and August the rate is \$6.00 per thousand for all grain handled after 12 o'clock noon. The total amount earned is divided among the gang of grain trimmers. For instance, if an elevator handles nine "boats" (72,000 bushels) in a day, the grain trimmers earn \$252. If the gang consists of 28 men, each man receives \$9.00. This amount is not at all unusual and a grain trimmer often earns \$40 per week. But the work is seasonal and very irregular, and the yearly earnings of the grain trimmers are probably not more than 25 per cent higher than those of regular longshoremen.

The scow trimmers of the city refuse are very poorly paid. The pay is by the hour and varies according to the class of work performed. The paper sorters receive 13 cents per hour; the forkers, 15 cents; rag sorters and bailers, 17½ cents, and the in-

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cinerators, 20 cents. A number of scow trimmers belong to a union of their own which is a local of the I. L. A.\* The wages just quoted are from a scale agreed to at one time between the employers and the union, though it is understood that different rates than those quoted are paid at some points. The contract for this work is let by the city; therefore eight hours should constitute a day's work, but the length of the actual day varies greatly.

Shenangoes ordinarily get 30 to 40 cents an hour, or a set price for the job. Sometimes they are paid by the piece—so much for a box or bale. Their jobs usually last from a half hour to six or seven hours and the shenangoes receive their pay when the work is finished. Their work is so haphazard that even to guess their average earnings is impossible.

### IV. CONCLUDING NOTE

The record of the wages of longshoremen thus shows great fluctuations. The discussion of their earnings based on accounts kept by individuals indicates that the work is uncertain for even the best men. Stability of income is therefore impossible. In the cases of the four exceptional men cited who kept wage records, average weekly earnings ranged, as we have seen, from \$10.57 to \$21.78; and in order to attain the higher average, the men were obliged to work much at night. There is absolutely no way of knowing the average earnings of the less regularly employed.

Men familiar with longshore work estimate the average yearly earnings of longshoremen at from \$520 to \$624 a year. Other men of equal experience place this average considerably lower—at less than \$500. Recent investigations into the standard of living in New York City have abundantly proved that a family of normal size requires \$800 to \$900† annually, or from \$15 to \$18 weekly, if it is to maintain itself in health and decency. An adequate income is therefore rarely within the reach of a longshoreman, even of a superior man willing to work excessively long hours. The unsuccessful efforts made by the men themselves to secure a more equitable recompense for their labor are discussed in greater detail in the following chapters.

\* See p. 123.

† Chapin, Robert Coit: *Standard of Living among Workingmen's Families in New York City*. Russell Sage Foundation Publication. New York, Charities Publication Committee, 1909.

## CHAPTER VII

### EARLY UNIONS AND STRIKES

THE rise and fall of the longshore unions in this port show the same tendencies and vicissitudes that have characterized the labor movement throughout the country from the beginning of that movement until the present day. Longshoremen are said to have been the first workmen to strike in the United States.\* Having no steady job to jeopardize, they take bad treatment with less grace than do men in other trades.†

The earliest longshore strike of which there is historical record took place in 1836. "In 1836 the longshoremen, riggers, and other employes connected with shipping in New York, struck for an increase of wages and less hours, and upon finding that their places were being taken by others not members of their organizations, they went from wharf to wharf, first requesting the workmen to leave their work, and then it is claimed threatened them. The mayor ordered the military under arms, and, as the papers of that day say, threatened them with ball cartridges. The same scenes were enacted in Philadelphia, and a riot was feared. The men were finally obliged to return to work under much the same conditions as when they struck."‡ The phrase, "others not members of their organizations," suggests that as early as 1836 organizations of some sort existed among longshoremen.

Additional proof of the early organization of longshoremen is found in the newspapers. The New York Daily *Tribune* of June 1, 1853, states that about 500 riggers had been on strike for

\* McNeill, Geo. E.: *The Labor Movement*, pp. 69, 71. Boston, A. M. Bridgman and Co., 1887.

† It is of interest to note that the spirit of independence among this class of workers was in evidence as early as the time of the Revolution. The burning of the *Gaspee*, a British armed vessel, at Providence, R. I., in 1772, was carried out by "loaders and unloaders" under the direction of the most influential merchant of the town, the patriot John Brown. See Arnold, Samuel Greene: *History of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, 1636-1790*. Providence, Preston and Rounds, 1894.

‡ McNeill, op. cit., pp. 87-88.

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a fortnight for a raise in wages to \$2.00 a day. An informal meeting was "got up by some persons who have no connection with the Riggers' Society." These early strikes may have been brought about by groups of men called together for the first time, or by societies organized for such purposes, but more loosely than the unions of today. It has been definitely ascertained, however, that a Longshoremen's Provident Union was formed in Boston in the year 1847.\* This was probably the first strictly longshoremen's union in the United States.

### I. FIRST CHARTERS OF LONGSHOREMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS

The attempt to clarify the vague information concerning these and later organizations of longshore workers in the port of New York has led in many directions. It was soon discovered that the men's memories could not be trusted for the dates of founding of such societies. An attempt was therefore made to secure from the union officials some of the old charters which were said to be still in existence. This search usually ended in failure. The charter had in many cases been carried off by some old member, and at his death destroyed or lost.

Very rarely had a union taken out a charter immediately on its formation. More often the matter would be talked of, put off from time to time, and so drag along until some excess of energy or some acute trouble occurred to bring it to a head. Perhaps it is on this account that it has been impossible in all cases to make the dates given by the men fit with the dates recorded in those official papers which have been found. This is especially true of the first decade after the beginning of the Civil War. It has been thought best, therefore, to take the preponderating evidence of the men as to the periods when certain specified unions existed, but not for the actual dates of their chartering. Records of a few were found which had never applied for incorporation.

In the search for reliable data, visits were made to the office of the secretary of state in Albany, to the state insurance department, to the office of the county clerk, and to other sources to which the writer was directed, and wherever possible the original charters were found and examined. The list thus obtained is by

\*See Appendix A, Some Aspects of Longshore Work in Boston, p. 181.

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no means complete, but from the information secured it is possible to follow the development of organization among longshoremen up to the time of their first great trial of strength—the strike of 1874. A brief résumé of the history of these early unions may be found in the Appendix.\*

The early unions were established for benevolent purposes, but almost from the beginning their possibilities in the direction of securing better conditions were recognized. In the *New York Tribune* for April 1, 1854, an account appears of a demand for better wages made by the earliest association on our list.†

The Alongshoremen's Union Protective Association, believed to be the forerunner of the famous "L. U. P. A.," was chartered by act of legislature in 1864. The name "alongshoremen" had by this time begun to yield to the pressure of continual use. In the press of the day, the "a" had given place to the apostrophe. "'Longshoremen" was a step in the transition to the present form, but the word "alongshoremen" was as yet the official term.

### II. THE STRIKE OF 1874

In every old longshoreman's mind there are four events which stand out in bold relief as epoch makers. These are the strike of 1874, the Knights of Labor strike of 1887, the coming of Edward McHugh from England in 1896, and the strike of 1907. Though it is not possible to fix positively the dates of the birth and death of each union, it is possible to know labor conditions during the periods just mentioned, and by taking account of the activities of the unions then in existence, to learn something of their standing and power.

Following the depression of 1873, the industrial conditions of 1873-4 were particularly hard. The suffering of the poor was extreme, especially in the large cities; thousands were in danger of starvation. Many meetings of the unemployed were held and the condition of the poor attracted the attention of all classes. The labor movement by 1874 had reached colossal proportions.‡

In the fall of 1874 the merchants of New York began to protest against the high cost of freight. Longshoremen, it was

\* See Appendix L, p. 255.

† See Appendix L, p. 255.

‡ McNeill, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

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said, were being paid a rate of wages established during the inflation following the Civil War. They received 40 cents for day work, 80 cents for night work, and \$1.00 for Sundays. When work was steady there was the possibility of large earnings. Why, it was asked, should the price for handling cargo freight be so high when railroad freight was handled at the rate of 17½ cents an hour. Accordingly, early in November, a notice was published in the city papers that on the sixteenth of the month longshoremen's wages would be reduced to 30 cents for day work and 45 cents for night work.\*

The longshoremen held meetings and notwithstanding the hard times decided to resist. They claimed that the companies were unjust to reduce wages after a slack summer with low earnings, and just as cold weather was setting in; that their average earnings now were from \$12 to \$13 a week, and that they couldn't support their families on less. As the unions in New York, Brooklyn, Jersey City, and Hoboken had, it was claimed, as much as \$70,000 in their treasuries, they believed they could hold out until the employers were forced to return to the old rate. Green hands, by causing loss of time, late sailings, destruction of cargoes, and possibly the loss of ships, would, they felt sure, force the companies to come to terms.†

At this time there were five unions in the port: Numbers 1, 2, and 3, of Manhattan, and Numbers 1 and 2 of Brooklyn,—really independent locals of the L. U. P. A., not regularly held together by any central body.

\* Cf. pp. 77 ff.

† At that time many of the shipping lines were owned abroad, and the handling of cargoes in this port was done by stevedores under contract. These contracts were at a specified rate with extras for work done under certain conditions. The men believed that a species of graft was practiced by some of the stevedores which helped to increase the cost of freight to merchants. This was said to be carried on in different ways. Pay rolls were padded by adding to the time of the men hours which they never worked and for which they were never paid, or men paid by the owners to do extra work were used by the stevedores for their own work. The men were so firmly convinced of this that they raised money and sent a prominent longshoreman to Europe to inform the foreign owners how much they were suffering from these dishonest practices.

The leading firm of stevedores, Walsh Brothers, received the brunt of the hostile criticism. They were accused of having taken contracts at ruinously low rates in order to monopolize the work, and of then trying to recoup their losses by reducing wages. They defended themselves by asserting that their reductions were forced by the large reductions made in the contract prices by steamship companies.



## EARLY UNIONS AND STRIKES

The strike began on the sixteenth of November, 1874, and involved between 8,000 and 10,000 men. The men were resolute but, for the most part, orderly. A few riots occurred. The strike-breakers were protected by the police and at some of the piers slept on the ships on which they worked and ate in temporary kitchens built on the piers.

At first there was no reduction in wages on the sailing vessels of the East River and in Brooklyn, and some of the steamship companies continued to pay the old rate. There was a time during the strike when the men could have compromised on 40 and 60 cents had they chosen to accept the offer, and some of the leading longshoremen were in favor of accepting these terms, but they were overruled by the majority. As the strikebreakers increased in efficiency, however, the resolution of the companies to hold out grew into a determination to crush the unions, and it soon became evident that the strikers were losing ground. On December 15 an important meeting was held, and after prolonged discussion a committee was appointed to offer the companies a compromise of 40 and 60 cents. If these terms were refused the committee was authorized to secure the best attainable; but it was stipulated that the old men were to be taken back. This committee reported at a meeting the following day that the companies refused to give more than 30 and 45 cents, and would not promise to take back the union men.

The strike had lasted nearly five weeks and many of the men had weakened in their allegiance. The weather was cold and they complained that they were not given enough from the union funds to support their families. Some had given up their badges and returned to work. Accordingly, a motion to put an end to the strike was unanimously carried. There were protest meetings of several unions, but the strike was practically ended by this action of December sixteenth. On the morning of the seventeenth of December large numbers of the union men applied for work, and in many places they were accepted. But many of the men still held out, and it was weeks before conditions again became normal.

It is worth noting that this was strictly a longshoremen's strike. No other trade or occupation was involved. There was

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no sympathetic strike by any of the other trade unionists of the time. The longshoremen received no financial aid from outside; they stood alone throughout.

As might be expected, the loss of the strike seriously weakened the unions. Though the strike had involved the whole port, the chief battleground had been on the North River where the steamship lines were centered. During the years immediately following, the greatest strength of the unions was exhibited on the East River and in Brooklyn. They had at least sufficient power to enforce a regulation among their members which had the effect of fining ships on which the crew was employed in discharging. When sailors were hired abroad they were not paid off until they reached their home port, and many ship captains economized by using their crews in unloading cargo. But in the more skilled work of stowing, regular longshoremen were necessary. Union men were fined ten cents per ton of cargo for loading such ships. Nominally, the men were fined, but in reality the stevedore was obliged to pay the fine in a lump sum to the beach walker before union men would go on the pier to work. Many hundreds of dollars were collected as a result of this regulation.

### III. THE DISRUPTION AND REORGANIZATION OF THE UNIONS

At about this time a longshoremen's convention was formed, made up of delegates from the different unions, but chiefly from those on the East River and in Brooklyn. Though this convention was less important than the Executive Council of the present L. U. P. A., it had sufficient authority to be instrumental in enforcing the fine just mentioned.

Further reductions in wages along the North River—in some cases to 25 cents for day and 35 cents for night work—and disagreement between employers and men resulted from time to time in local strikes. The most successful effort of this period to improve conditions on the North River occurred about 1877. There was a general agreement among the men—not as unions but as individuals and groups—not to do night work, even when specifically ordered back, until the rate had been raised. Instructions to this effect were passed quietly about. Many vessels were de-

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layed, and the companies were finally compelled to restore the rate (30 and 45 cents) established after the strike of 1874.\*

In the period just preceding this advance, unionism was at its lowest ebb. L. U. P. A. Local Number 3 of Manhattan went out of existence, and the other locals passed through a period of weakness and inefficiency. Numbers 1 and 2 of Brooklyn, though considerably weakened, held their own better than the others.

Just before 1880 the power of the union movement began to reassert itself and the unions to gain new recruits. When a sufficient number of men had been drawn together to form a new branch, Number 3 of Manhattan was reorganized, and grew very rapidly. It is evident, however, that it did not take out a charter until long after its reorganization, for according to the state records its charter was issued December 2, 1885, when it is known to have had a membership of at least 2,000. The other unions also became stronger, so that by the year 1886 there were more than 10,000 organized longshoremen in the port.† Number 3 was probably the strongest, Number 2 of Brooklyn next in strength. The combined strength of the two Brooklyn unions was probably about equal to Number 3 of Manhattan.

Until the Knights of Labor came into prominence in 1885, the branches of the L. U. P. A. were either very loosely held together, or entirely separate. Under such circumstances friction was inevitable. The formation of the longshoremen's convention soon after the strike of 1874 indicated that even at that early date the leaders had begun to recognize the disadvantages of such loose organization.

\* See Wages and Earnings, p. 78.

† Two unions of minor importance were chartered in 1881 and 1886 respectively. The members of the latter were popularly known as "Gold Badge Men," from their custom of wearing a gold badge on state occasions, as the insignia of their order. From the beginning of longshore organizations, the union members had worn a white metal badge during working hours. This metal badge and the custom of wearing it on the belt were probably brought over from England with the earlier longshoremen who were trained in the work there. It became universal in this port. The badges were shield, heart, half moon, and shamrock shaped, and were issued quarterly. If a man wore a badge of the shape which represented the current quarter of the year the beach walker knew that he had paid his dues up to date. But wearing the badge on the belt often made it hard for the beach walker to distinguish whether or not it was the last one issued. In January, 1906, therefore, by order of the Executive Board of the different branches, the metal badge was changed to a button worn on the hat or on some other conspicuous part of the clothing. Quarterly changes in color were substituted for changes in shape.

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Much of the bickering which existed between the branches until the strike of 1887 was the result of the different scales of wages which prevailed in different parts of the port for work on steam and sailing vessels. For instance, sailing vessels which docked chiefly in Brooklyn, almost without exception paid 40 cents flat, and were rarely worked at night. The men in Branch Number 2 of Brooklyn, who worked mainly in Brooklyn and on the Manhattan side of the East River, therefore received 40 cents an hour, and if brought temporarily to the North River side of the island they still demanded the 40 cents flat to which they were accustomed. Branch 3 of Manhattan was almost entirely composed of North River men who received 30 and 45 cents an hour. Branch 1, however, drew its membership from both East and North Rivers. Some of its members therefore worked for 40 cents flat, others for 30 and 45 cents.

The differing rates caused the men not only to stay, for the most part, on their own sides of the island and in their own sections, but to join the union which represented their wage and their neighborhood, and the sectional feeling prevented any feeling of unity from growing up among them. This was the great drawback to the success of unionism among longshoremen. The need of solidarity was recognized by the leaders, and about 1885 a meeting was called of delegates from all longshore organizations in the port. It was hoped that this meeting would result in better understanding and that the differences would be so adjusted that the men from different branches would work together harmoniously on the same ship, but nothing permanent was accomplished. Soon after this the Knights of Labor began to absorb the longshoremen along with the workers in all other trades.\*

The period immediately preceding the strike of 1887 was a very important period in the history of the longshoremen of this port. At that time there were in existence four branches of the L. U. P. A. in Manhattan, two in Brooklyn, and one in Jersey City.

\* The benefit feature has been an important factor in attracting members in so hazardous a trade. (See *Risks of the Trade*, pp. 131 ff.) The charters of most of the unions call definitely for either sick or death benefits or both. Yet in actual practice only death benefits as a rule have been paid. Some longshoremen at the present time keep up their dues after they have ceased to work at their trade so that their families may receive the death benefit.

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It is not possible to say what the combined membership of these branches was; the estimates given by the men vary from 12,000 to 20,000. It is possible that there were over 10,000 organized men and probably not far from 20,000 longshoremen of all kinds in the port. Probably more longshoremen were organized than ever before or than have ever been organized since, excepting, perhaps, during a short period of the "McHugh Organization" of 1896.\* It is believed, too, that there were then more longshoremen in the port, in proportion to the amount of goods handled, than there are today. There are many reasons to account for this. The larger ships have caused changes in the methods of the work, whereby greater quantities of cargo can now be handled without a proportionate increase of men. Then, too, the increase in the size of the piers has rendered high tiering of goods less necessary.

In 1869, U. S. Stevens founded the Knights of Labor in the city of Philadelphia. This order, starting in one trade, gradually spread to all branches of labor, and by October, 1885, it was said to have a membership of 111,000 in different parts of the country. From that date until December, 1886—but little over a year—the membership increased until it was between 500,000 and 600,000. Men of every trade, of every industry, flocked to join. New York City felt the spell of the movement, and District Assembly 49, K. of L., was formed. In 1885 a street car strike, carried through with marked success, added to the popularity of the organization. The longshoremen began to follow the example of workers in other trades and enroll themselves with the new organization.

Oddly enough, it was the men from the coastwise lines who first became Knights. Up to this time there had never been any organization among coastwise men, who received the lowest pay of any longshore workers. The unions whose histories have already been outlined were made up entirely of foreign commerce men. Now the coastwise workers became Knights of Labor under the title of Ocean Associations. Others followed until by the fall of 1886 the majority of the members of all the regular longshore organizations had joined the Ocean or Maritime Associations of the Knights of Labor. This did not mean that they gave up their

\* See pp. 110 ff.

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membership in their old unions, however. Some of the older men state that they entered the new order with great reluctance.

The rapid growth of the Knights of Labor of 1885 led to over-organization. Indeed, the leaders felt constrained to check the initiation of new members. So huge and so sudden was the growth that they were inadequately prepared to handle the numerous labor disputes that arose among the many trades represented. This was an unfortunate state of affairs for the longshoremen, for in a very short time one of their disputes was to come under the jurisdiction of the new order.

### IV. THE KNIGHTS OF LABOR STRIKE OF 1887

Early in 1887 a disagreement arose in the port of New York which finally developed into the "Big Strike" of that year. The causes which brought about the strike were trivial compared with their tremendous effects. Trouble arose on the Old Dominion Steamship Line both in Newport News, Virginia, and in New York City. At the latter port an attempt was made to change the hourly rate of 25 cents then prevailing on the coastwise lines to a weekly wage. On the morning of Monday, January third, the superintendent of the Old Dominion Line announced to his men the decision of the company thereafter to hire men by the week at a wage of \$12 for 60 hours.\* The men asked for time to consider the proposition, but their request was denied. Their action was evidently expected by the superintendent, for new men were already at hand to take the places of the old. In this lockout of the old and the taking on of new men the Big Strike was born.

The coastwise workers who were thus shut out from work—about 150 in number—were members of Ocean Association Number 1, District Assembly 49 of the Knights of Labor. The men appealed to their organization, and the Executive Board of Assembly 49 took immediate action. An appeal was issued to the longshoremen's unions of the entire port, requesting the men not to handle freight which came in by the Old Dominion Line. Whether the men would respond or not to this call was not known. As already stated, the coastwise workers had up to that time been non-union men and it was thought that possibly the regular union

\* See Wages and Earnings, p. 79.

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men would refuse to recognize their obligation to these new recruits. But this doubt was speedily removed. Within a week no waterfront worker, whether a union or non-union man, would touch any goods in transit to or from the tabooed line. The company meanwhile was informed that the men were ready at any time to arbitrate.

Simultaneously with the dispute on the Old Dominion Line another arose which came under the jurisdiction of the Knights of Labor. A reduction was made in the wages of some coal handlers in Weehawken, Hoboken, and other points along the Jersey shore. Coal handlers who had been receiving 22½ cents an hour were reduced to 20 cents. They protested and at the same time demanded 25 cents. The work, they claimed, was unhealthful, dangerous, and very hard. Under the rate of wages then paid they did not average more than \$7.00 a week and they were hired much after the manner of regular longshoremen, so that a large part of their time was spent in waiting. In the strike which followed they were supported by the Knights of Labor of both New York and New Jersey.

The fact that the striking coal handlers were supported by the coal boatmen made the transportation of coal exceedingly difficult. For a fortnight at least the handling of coal was practically tied up and prices became very high. Strikebreakers under the protection of Pinkerton deputies were introduced. As the trouble grew and began to look more and more serious, the Executive Board appealed to the railroad companies to arbitrate the dispute.

The longshoremen at the same time that they were boycotting the freight of the Old Dominion Line, refused to handle "scab" coal, and so became involved in the coal handlers' strike. On Sunday, January 16, a meeting of some branches of the L. U. P. A. was held, at which a resolution was adopted warning merchants, brokers, and stevedores that thereafter no freight in transit to or from the Old Dominion docks would be handled, and that no coal which had been loaded into boats since the strike began would be transferred to the ships. Steamship companies, therefore, which were able to have the coal brought across the river found it impossible, after it had been delivered alongside,

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to get it into the hold. By the twenty-first of the month brakemen on the railroads caught the general fever of unrest and at some places refused to handle coal cars empty or loaded until the strike was ended.

The fact that the longshoremen, along with the union boatmen, the tow boatmen, and the coal drivers, were now involved in the coal strike increased their own difficulties twofold. The situation grew more and more tense. Shippers undertook to handle freight coming through the Old Dominion Line. A mandamus was issued by the court to compel the fulfilling of contracts for carrying freight entered into before the strike began.\*

The longshoremen now working on the piers were at this time under continual strain and were subjected to incessant annoyances. The boycott on Old Dominion goods was strictly enforced. Through sympathizers, some of whom were working on the Old Dominion piers, a very effective watch was kept of all goods which passed through their hands. Various schemes were tried by the companies to deceive the men into handling the tabooed freight. Marks were removed or changed, but all to no purpose. The men almost invariably "smelt them out."

On one occasion the longshoremen working on the French Line piers refused to unload cotton from certain lighters, on the ground that the owners had once worked for a firm which had in the past handled Old Dominion freight. To remove the taboo from this cotton it was taken to the Morgan Line piers. From there it was brought up in other lighters, at an additional cost of \$50, to the French Line. It was then loaded by the same men who had previously declined to touch it. This incident illustrates the length to which the companies were obliged to go in order to get the "scab" goods handled.

To avoid touching Old Dominion goods, the longshoremen

\* The old Dominion Line brought suit against John J. McKenna and others for \$20,000 damages claimed to have been sustained through the action of the "Executive Board of the Ocean Associations of the Longshoremen's Union" in declaring a boycott of the plaintiff's business. Among the averments of this suit was the claim that the boycott was made for the purpose of procuring the same wages for the Negroes of their southern ports that the longshoremen received in the port of New York. In addition, James T. Quinn, Master Workman of District Assembly 49 of the Knights of Labor, was arrested on the charge that he with others "had conspired to destroy and injure the property of the Old Dominion Steamship Company."



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were sometimes compelled to knock off five or six times a day. This was annoying enough, but in addition, they had also to be careful that they did not handle any coal loaded by the strike-breakers in Jersey. While all this was going on in New York, a Master Workman of the Knights of Labor was dispatched to Newport News, Virginia, to establish co-operation with the longshoremen's local union there. He succeeded in persuading it to pass a resolution not to touch any freight brought there by the Old Dominion Line. The strain of the situation began to render the men desperate, and calls for a general strike to bring matters to a climax were heard.

The situation in New York was fast becoming unbearable. After much discussion of the subject and several conferences, on Tuesday evening, January 25, 1887, a general strike was ordered, and it was thought at that time that the General Executive Board of the Knights of Labor would take charge. However, in the end New York shouldered the responsibility, and the decisions devolved on District Assembly 49. The call for a strike was published the next day in the morning papers. By Thursday, January 27, the strike had spread along the entire waterfront of the port. The following Sunday it was formally endorsed by District Assembly 49. The delegates assembled represented nearly 70,000 organized workmen.

In obedience to the summons, longshoremen, grain trimmers, coal passers, custom house weighers, freight handlers, and cartmen knocked off. It is estimated that 50,000 men were involved. The greatest sympathetic strike which up to that time had ever taken place in New York City was in progress. While some of the strikers drawn into it took occasion to demand a raise of wages or betterment of conditions in their own branch of work, thousands of the men called out had no formulated grievance. The grievances of 150 coastwise workers in Manhattan and of 100 coal handlers in New Jersey had gradually led to the uprising of the entire waterfront with its kindred industries.

When the general strike was called it was decided to make the dispute of the coal handlers in New Jersey the issue. It was thought that if this point could be won it would be easy to effect a settlement with the Old Dominion Line.

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The huge proportions of the strike and the great number of industries affected by it made the situation very grave. Factories which received their supplies by water were obliged to close. Steamships could not sail for want of men to load them, and incoming vessels were unable to discharge their cargoes. For ten days the port was practically tied up. Mail ships sailed, but with very little change in their cargoes. Freight loaded in England, for instance, was carried back as ballast. Some little freight was handled by the vessels' crews.

Considering the number of men involved in the strike, there were very few disturbances. Small riots occurred at individual piers on the New York side of the river, but on the whole, order and sobriety prevailed. Although the city authorities announced that they feared no disorder, they neglected no precaution. Hundreds of policemen were detailed to the piers. On the New Jersey shore, among the coal handlers, riots occurred more frequently. The Pinkerton guards were a source of irritation from the moment they appeared on the scene.

In the handling of foreign cargoes there was no very vigorous attempt to introduce strikebreakers. Although the strike was the beginning of the Italian invasion in waterfront work, this change came about a little later.\* Not many Italians were used during the actual progress of the strike. The trouble on the Old Dominion Line, however, was, as has been explained, the cause of the introduction of considerable Negro labor. But strikebreakers were freely used to take the places of the refractory coal handlers in New Jersey, and in spite of the general strike considerable coal was brought across the river. This was a serious matter for the strikers, for it enabled many breweries and factories to run which otherwise would have been compelled to close.

Meantime there had developed among the leaders a strong feeling for arbitration. An attempt was made to settle the matter by sending a committee representing District Assembly 49 to Philadelphia, to confer with Austin Corbin, president of the Reading Railroad, which at that time controlled nearly half the coal traffic of the port. Although a conference was held, nothing of importance was accomplished. It was apparent to many that

\* See p. 5.

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the only way to win the strike was to call out the stationary engineers who were burning "scab" coal. A meeting was held with their officers during which it was disclosed that the engineers were working under a contract which would not run out until April, and that unless for a very serious disagreement they were unwilling to give up their jobs. When this attitude of the engineers became known the longshoremen felt that the strike was lost. A spirit of discouragement spread among the waterfront workers. The men talked of having been sold out and of graft. All sorts of schemes were suggested by which the strike might be ended.

The engineers having failed them, as a last resort, on Friday, February 11, representatives of District Assembly 49 were sent to Philadelphia to consult with the employes of the Reading Railroad. A committee of these employes visited President Corbin and threatened to strike at once if an agreement satisfactory to District Assembly 49 were not made. Mr. Corbin was unable to face the additional inconvenience of not having men to run his trains. Accordingly a settlement was reached. The Reading Railroad agreed to pay 22½ cents an hour and to re-employ its old hands. When this had been accomplished the strike was practically settled, for the other railroads were counted on to follow Mr. Corbin's lead. At a meeting of District Assembly 49 the same evening at Pythagoras Hall, New York, the agreement was officially ratified "in the interest of the industries of the port," and the Big Strike was declared to be at an end.

The longshoremen still out on sympathetic strike felt that the Knights of Labor had deserted them. They had first entered into this struggle for the benefit of the Old Dominion workers. The Knights of Labor had chosen the coal handlers' dispute as the issue on which to fight, and practically this issue had been won; but wittingly or unwittingly the Knights of Labor had left the longshore dispute out of consideration. The demoralization which had begun as soon as the attitude of the stationary engineers was known was now complete. On Monday morning, February 14, there was a rush for the piers. Without waiting for the action of their own locals, the longshoremen shaped at the piers for work.

This demoralized attitude of the men indicated to the steamship companies that they had used up their power of re-

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sistance and there would be no more concerted action. The companies, therefore, immediately made a cut of 15 cents an hour on overtime and Sunday work, and a reduction to 30 cents for holiday work. In addition, the extra pay for working during meal hours was withdrawn. On the coastwise lines there was a general reduction at all piers to the 25-cent rate.

But not all the men returned to work at once. Some held out and declared that the strike was still in force; some of the companies refused to take the old men back. The resumption of work proceeded more slowly on the New Jersey side of the port than in New York, and not until early in 1888 were all piers working their full complement of men.

### V. REACTION AGAINST UNIONISM

This strike was apparently the death blow to unionism among the longshoremen of the port of New York, and was probably one of the worst disasters in their history. Their belief in the invincibility of the Knights of Labor had been their undoing. While from the standpoint of the Knights the strike was won, yet the result to the longshoremen was such as to make them leave the order. They could not appreciate at the time that in spite of the fact that the strike of 1887 was lost, it furnished a wonderful example of the power of solidarity when this power is well directed. They felt that the strike had not been managed in their interest; that they had been used as a catspaw. Not only did they leave the Knights of Labor, but dissensions arose among their own branches. These began to weaken and die. Some made a brave struggle for their life but finally succumbed. Branch Number 1 in Brooklyn probably held out longer than any of the others, but within a year after the ending of the strike there were no longshore organizations in the port.

In the period immediately following, the reaction was extreme.

From 1888 to 1896 the longshoremen were more at the mercy of their employers than at any other time since organization had been known. To the employers the memory of the strike remained as a warning against too great independence on the part of the men. They were thereafter willing to take any labor force

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which promised to be tractable. Thus it came about, as we have seen, that the Italian was introduced into waterfront work.

Doubtless during the period we are now considering, efficiency on the piers was at a low ebb. Individually the men are said to have been less efficient than previous to or after that time. Carelessness also was characteristic of the period, and some of the loss in shipping has been laid at the door of the indifferent and irresponsible work done.

From time to time there was further talk of organization, but for the most part nothing came of it. In the winter of 1890-91, a labor leader named Reed, who came from England, attempted to bring the men together. He succeeded in starting a union which was made up chiefly of the men working on the National Line pier. But this attempt was only temporarily successful. Within a few months the union died out.

## CHAPTER VIII

### ORGANIZATION SINCE 1896

#### I. THE "McHUGH ORGANIZATION"

**L**ONGSHOREMEN in the United States have intermittently felt an impetus from workers in their line in Europe, and especially from those in England. About 1896 a plan was conceived among the English dockers of organizing not only longshoremen but all waterfront workers and seamen in all parts of the world. Tom Mann, the chief figure in the movement in England, wrote an article regarding the plan,\* in which he directed attention to the large number of waterfront workers in America. He estimated that in the United States there were at that time as many as 70,000. Naturally this presented itself as a great field in which to carry forward the movement. One of the incentives toward organizing in America was said to be the fact that laborers from the United States had once been used to break an English dock strike.

As a result of this discussion the Dockers' Union of England contributed \$1,500 and sent Edward McHugh to this country to organize all types of waterfront workers in the different ports. In New York he found many thousand longshoremen ripe for organization. The long period without organization and the introduction of alien labor had brought about conditions in the work that were hard to bear. Abuse by foremen, restrictions in many little privileges which the men considered theirs, as well as the fact that there was no one to whom to turn in case of important disputes, made the men eager to join any association which offered itself as a remedy for these ills. Moreover, Edward McHugh was a man whom the longshoremen soon learned to trust.

\* Mann, Tom: *The Position of Dockers and Sailors in 1897 and the International Federation of Ship, Dock, and River Workers*. London, "The Clarion" Newspaper Co. Limited, 1897.

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McHugh as a single taxer soon came in touch with Bolton Hall and James R. Brown, both prominent followers of Henry George. Henry George, too, interested himself in the organization. Another important associate was J. Havelock Wilson, now president of the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union of Great Britain and Ireland, and once a member of Parliament. Under the leadership of these men an organization was founded in October, 1896, and given the name of the American Longshoremen's Union. Popularly, it was known as the A. L. U. or the "McHugh organization." As McHugh was opposed to organizing under a charter, it was not incorporated.

At the provisional convention held in January, 1897, a constitution and rules were adopted. The motto "all men are brothers" was adopted. There was to be no distinction of race, creed, color, or nativity. Membership was open to "every man employed about the piers or docks in any capacity in connection with the shipping or carrying industries." McHugh was chosen president, Frank J. Devlin, general secretary, and Bolton Hall, general treasurer. The direction of affairs was delegated to an Executive Council of ten members, with authority to organize new branches and to decide appeals.\* This council was to be elected annually by a committee composed of delegates from the branches.

Immediately after the formation of the union, efforts to better the conditions of its members were begun. Wages were first considered. The pay was at that time 30 cents an hour for day work, 45 cents for night or Sunday work, and a raise was secured to 45 cents an hour for day work on all holidays. The union also tried to prevent the saloon keepers from having any connection with the paying off of the longshoremen. It brought up for consideration the long waits for work, and there was talk of attempting to establish stated times of hiring. The members intended to inaugurate a system, then in vogue in England, which fixed the hours of hiring at 7 a. m., 1 p. m., and 8 p. m., the men taken on at any one of these times to be entitled to a half day's

\* For those who joined within three months of the formation of any branch the initiation fee was \$1.00. After six months \$5.00 was charged. Dues were 25 cents a month. A burial allowance was to be made to relatives of a deceased member who had been in good standing for one year before his death.

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work. Although it did not carry through this particular improvement, the union was successful in securing better treatment of the men by the foremen, which was an important gain. At some of the piers the abuses had been intolerable.

The growth of the McHugh organization was very rapid. When it reached its height there were 21 branches, each with its own board of officers. As no accurate records were kept it is extremely difficult to give the total actual membership of these branches. Estimates which deserve consideration range from 13,000 to 20,000. From the best evidence obtainable it is clear that there must have been nearly 15,000 men organized under the A. L. U. and that 1,500 of these were Italians. The union maintained four beach walkers. More than half of the branches, it may be noted, were located in Brooklyn; but then as now Brooklyn contained more than half of the longshoremen of the port.\*

The prospects of the American Longshoremen's Union were good; the men were united in spirit, the membership was increasing, and the association promised to become a power. The men not only had absolute confidence in Mr. McHugh, but in general a feeling of trust pervaded the organization. This sense of security, as well as considerations of convenience, led the treasurers of the branches to turn over the dues as they were collected to General Secretary Devlin, instead of directly to the general treasurer, Mr. Hall. But the confidence in the general secretary was misplaced; both Mr. Devlin and the money disappeared. The amount misappropriated is variously estimated at from several hundred to three thousand dollars. The absconding of Devlin was a great blow to the longshoremen and once more aroused all their distrust. Memories of previous betrayals returned and weakened their faith in the new venture. Moreover, the actions of some of the branches had been thwarted by some members of the Executive Council. This added to the discontent. The men on the East River and in

\* Mr. McHugh did not confine his activities to this port. He also undertook to organize the longshoremen of Philadelphia as the next step in the proposed chain of unions which was to extend along the Atlantic coast and to have its headquarters in New York. In June, 1898, there was a strike among the longshoremen of Philadelphia. The New York organization, not without some internal disagreement, voted \$3,000, the amount then in the treasury, to aid them.



Brooklyn who were dissatisfied with the wage scale accepted by the McHugh organization started a new union. But this new organization was short-lived.

The real crisis occurred on July 17, 1898. McHugh was in Philadelphia. When he applied to the general treasurer for money to carry on his work in that city, he discovered that the funds were overdrawn. He hastened to New York only to find that he was involved in the unpopularity accorded to Secretary Devlin. No serious doubt of Mr. McHugh's integrity existed, but it was the general feeling that as president of the union he should have required Secretary Devlin to execute a bond.

Mr. McHugh at once set to work to straighten out the affair. An expert accountant was engaged to examine the books. When the question of payment for this service arose, Mr. McHugh desired that each branch should collect its share of the debt by levying a tax on its members. But this plan did not meet with the approval of the branches. The matter was taken to court. A receiver was appointed and an order issued by the court to the treasurers of the different branches to pay whatever sums they collected in the future to this receiver until the entire bill was liquidated. This unpopular order, together with the influence of outside interests which had been unfavorably affected by the McHugh organization, brought the trouble to a head. At a meeting of the officers of all the branches it was decided to discontinue the organization as the A. L. U. and to organize again under the name of the "L. U. P. A.)\* The records in the office of the clerk of the county of New York show that on September 27, 1898, an application was filed for the incorporation of the Longshoremen's Union Protective Association of Greater New York, a membership corporation.

By dissolving the organization under which they were then working (a non-incorporated body), and by re-organizing as a union under a charter from the state, the longshoremen escaped paying a debt for which they were legally but, as they thought, unjustly bound. It was an unusual and ingenious way for a body of men to escape paying an obligation which had been incurred without their consent.

\* For origin of this title see p. 95.

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Little by little the men dropped out of the branches of the A. L. U. and before the end of 1898, hardly more than two years from its organization, this strong body had entirely dissolved. When Mr. McHugh perceived that there was no longer any possibility of holding the men in the organization which he had formed, he returned to England, disappointed and heartsick over the failure of what had seemed at one time to be the first step toward the union of the waterfront workers of the United States.

But although the men deserted the McHugh organization and were at first exceedingly bitter in their criticism of its founder, there remained ultimately only the irritation aroused by the financial tangle in which they had been involved. The longshoremen of today, almost without a dissenting voice, give Mr. McHugh unqualified praise as an efficient and trustworthy leader. When speaking of the difficulties of organization, the younger men say jestingly that the old men are waiting for the spirit of McHugh to come and once more bring them together.

### II. THE "L. U. P. A." (Longshoremen's Union Protective Association)

Immediately after the charter was obtained branches were formed under the L. U. P. A. It is stated in the charter that "the particular objects for which the corporation is to be formed are to unite in one organization all men employed as longshoremen in the city of New York for their mutual aid, benefit, and protection, and to ensure proper Christian burial for its deceased members."

There were numerous points of difference between the methods of the A. L. U. and of the L. U. P. A. For instance, contrary to the custom of the A. L. U., each branch of the L. U. P. A. controlled its own funds and regulated its own affairs. A standing committee known as the Executive Committee of the L. U. P. A. was formed, each branch selecting two delegates who served on this committee for a period of six months. Both the branch officers and the delegates were elected twice a year. Any man who performed longshore work in any capacity (clerical work excepted) was qualified to join.

Although the L. U. P. A. never became as strong as the McHugh organization had been, it had a steady if uneventful growth up to the year 1907. At the more important piers the

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union was recognized. Though only a small part of the work of the port was done under union supervision the moral influence it exerted was such that a fairly uniform rate of wages prevailed. The treatment of men by the foremen was much better than it had been throughout the decade preceding 1896. On piers where the union had control, any man to whom the union raised an objection was not taken on. From time to time disputes as to wages and other matters arose at various piers, but they were adjusted without causing serious trouble. Though it is difficult to make a comparison, it is more than probable that the L. U. P. A. prior to 1907 wielded more power in the port than did the two opposing unions together before their amalgamation in 1914.\*

Early in the year 1907, five branches of the L. U. P. A. existed in Manhattan, seven in Brooklyn, and three in Hoboken. One branch in Brooklyn and one in Hoboken were Italian, corresponding to Italian branches of the McHugh organization.

By 1906 the membership of the Brooklyn Italian Branch had reached several hundred. As many of these Italian longshoremen could not speak English, they felt it was necessary to have an Italian-speaking business agent to settle their difficulties; but the Executive Council declined to give them a beach walker of their own nationality. The branch soon after, therefore, withdrew from the L. U. P. A., and on December 21, 1906, they secured a state charter under the title of The United Longshoremen's Union Protective Association.

### III. THE STRIKE OF 1907

At the beginning of the year 1907, the total membership of all the branches of the L. U. P. A. was 3,100. By April considerable unrest was evident in different sections of the port. In the latter part of the month, the unorganized coastwise workers on the Clyde Line pier in Hoboken struck for an advance from 25 cents an hour for both night and day work to 30 cents for day and 45 cents for night work. This demand was at once granted. On Sunday morning, April 28, the steamer Celtic was docked at Pier 13, instead of at the regular White Star piers, 48 and 49, North River. The foreign commerce men working at Pier 13 were mostly

\* See pp. 123 ff.

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non-union men and received 30 cents for day work and 40 cents for night and Sunday work. The men quit, and all the persuasions of the popular foreman, Joseph Jennings, could not induce them to return. The non-union Italians on Pier 14 of the American Line caught the fever and also threw down their hooks. The success of the first coastwise strike—that at the Clyde Line pier—led to others. On Monday, April 29, the non-union men of the Mallory and Ward lines in Brooklyn went out demanding higher wages.

It should be noted that the discontent originated among the coastwise workers and that the first foreign commerce longshoremen to follow their lead were the non-union men. The organized foreign commerce workers had as yet no part in these disturbances.

Probably all these disputes would have been adjusted and the strike of 1907 averted had it not been for the Italian longshoremen of Brooklyn. The majority of them, speaking little or no English, had been subjected to injustice and to considerable abuse from their foremen. May 1 is Labor Day in Europe. During April there were rumors about that on this day the Italian waterfront workers would make a demonstration in the hope of receiving better treatment. The question of wages was a secondary matter or not considered at all. On the first of May a demonstration was started at one of the Bush Terminal piers and soon spread far beyond the proportions at first anticipated. Large groups, mainly composed of non-union Italians, forced others to come out.

The longshoremen employed on the French Line pier, Number 42, North River, some of whom were Italians, were union men. As they were returning from their noon dinner the next day, May 2, a large body of Italians appeared and by threats and intimidations induced them to quit work. The officers of the union, including the walking delegate, made a fruitless attempt to persuade the men to finish the French ships. They were, however, successful in preventing the contagion from spreading to the neighboring pier of the Atlantic Transport Company, and by the following day the longshoremen of the French Line were induced to return and finish their ships.

As yet the strikes were sporadic and unrecognized by the union, but the widespread and increasing unrest, and the fact that

strikes were being forced at piers where the union nominally held control, led the Executive Committee of the L. U. P. A. to take action in the matter. The whole movement up to this time was a fine illustration of the power of suggestion—"the spirit of the hive."

A meeting of the Executive Committee took place on Saturday evening, May 4, at St. Peter's School Hall, on the corner of Cedar Street and Trinity Place.\* At this meeting the subject of the strikes which had taken place during the past week was discussed. The meeting adjourned until three o'clock Sunday, when the discussion was continued, and considerable bitterness was displayed. By a majority of one on the first ballot, a strike was called to begin at once. At the same time a demand was made for an advance in wages from 30 cents for day, 45 cents for night, and 60 cents for Sunday work, to 40 cents for day work and to 60 cents for night, Sunday, and holiday work and for working through the meal hour.

Considerable opposition to the calling of the strike at once developed, but during the next few days the opposition died out. Thus began a most ill-advised strike. No previous formulation of grievances had been made; no opportunity had been given the steamship companies to manifest their willingness or unwillingness to grant any demands. The strike, to take place the following morning, was declared at the meeting during which the demands were formulated. Dissatisfaction among the Italians was the prime cause of the strike and it has often been charged that this unrest was fomented by certain men who hoped to profit by an upheaval in the work and the shifting of contracts to new stevedores and foremen.

The strike caused a temporary feeling of solidarity along the waterfront. All classes of longshoremen rushed to join the unions. In a short time the total membership rose to over 12,000. But this large increase represented a spasmodic rather than a solid growth; men gave their names, paid their initiation fees, and were never seen again. As soon as the strike was over, many dropped out as suddenly as they had previously come in.

\* The specific details concerning this strike were obtained in personal interviews and from strikers' circulars, newspapers, and various publications. They have been verified by men who participated in the strike.

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The Italians of Brooklyn had been eager to join and by the end of the strike seven additional branches of the U. L. U. P. A.\* had been formed. It is estimated that nearly 6,000 Italian longshoremen were organized at this time. Those in Brooklyn joined the U. L. U. P. A.; and in Manhattan a few became members of the L. U. P. A.

Although only about 12,000 men at this time registered themselves as union members, probably as many as 30,000 were out on strike. These were all either longshoremen or directly connected with longshore work. Attempts made to induce the tugboat men, lightermen, grain handlers, and teamsters to join were unsuccessful; the longshoremen stood alone.

The employers had serious difficulty in maintaining a working force. Many foremen had joined the strikers, and bookkeepers and clerks took their places. On some ships the crews were pressed into service to handle the freight. Non-union men were taken on, but after working a short time they were persuaded by the union to stop work. This was repeated daily. All these raw laborers caused much trouble. Goods were stowed badly and had to be unloaded and restowed; carelessness and incompetence, especially in the placing of hatch covers, caused many accidents. Ships were compelled to sail with very light loads. At some piers only perishable goods or goods already contracted for were handled, and many piers were piled high with freight.

Riots took place all over the port, though the most serious were along the North River in Manhattan. With the increase of strikebreakers and non-union men the riots became more frequent till they were of almost daily occurrence, varying in importance from altercations among small groups to actual fights where large numbers were involved, and in which the use of clubs, stones, and knives resulted in serious injuries. Many arrests were made. The waterfront was strongly policed, and police protection was afforded the strikebreakers, who were frequently conducted to and from work by the officers of the law. In some cases they were fed and even housed on piers where they worked.

A few companies, chiefly in the coastwise trade, compromised

\* See page 115.

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with their men, agreeing to advance wages in some cases to 35 and 50 cents, in others to 40 and 60 cents. The White Star was at this time looked upon as the leading line in the port, and any action taken by this company was regarded by the longshoremen as representing the attitude of the other companies. The men working there were better organized than any other group. A tentative advance made to the union through a representative of this company, about a week after the beginning of the strike, and summarily rejected by the president of the Executive Committee, may therefore be considered as the first attempt at a settlement of the strike.

Outside influences endeavored to establish arbitration. Colonel Michael J. Reagan of the state board of arbitration brought about a conference between representatives of the companies and of the unions, but nothing came of it. Later Herman Y. Robinson, an organizer of the American Federation of Labor, became interested and tried to effect a compromise, but the companies declined to make an offer. On May 10, more than 30 steamship companies entered into a compact to stand by one another in fighting the strikers. An executive committee was appointed to look after the hiring, transportation, and housing of the strike-breakers, and a project was formed to organize a flying squadron of longshoremen who could be used to help any line in an emergency.

About May 27 a tentative offer was made by the employers of 35 cents for day work, 50 cents for night work, and 60 cents for Sunday work. The strikers interpreted this concession as indicating weakness on the part of their adversaries and rejected the offer. Nevertheless, the resources of the men were fast being exhausted, while the steamship companies were gaining ground. During the early days of the strike, benefits had been paid by some of the branches, orders for groceries were given, or rent was paid; but not all of the branches were in a financial condition to do this extensively. Branch 2 of Manhattan, which was the most prosperous at the beginning of the strike, loaned \$1,000 to the Executive Committee to help carry it on, and another \$1,000 to the unions in Hoboken. The former loan was ultimately repaid, the latter was not. The expenses of the strike were heavy, for not only did the unions endeavor to help their poorer members: they

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also paid the fines of strikers arrested in the riots, the salaries of extra walking delegates or business agents, and they maintained a gasoline launch and crew. Where strikebreakers were persuaded to quit work, the union paid their return fares back to the points from which they came. It is easy to see that with all these calls upon their funds and with the wages of the members as a whole seriously reduced, the resources of the unions soon became inadequate to meet the appeals of personal distress. The lack of any outlook for an increase in their receipts greatly augmented the despair of the men.

On June 2 it was decided by the union to ask for 35 cents for day, 50 cents for night, and 60 cents for Sunday work, the same rate that had been offered them a few days earlier. This the companies completely ignored. They then felt that they were masters of the situation. Finally, on Thursday evening, June 13, a meeting of the representatives of the 17 or 18 longshore organizations of the port was held at Crotty's Hall, corner of Hudson and Leroy Streets, and after a short discussion the strike was declared off. Every effort had been made, but the companies had proved too strong. The men were instructed to return to work on the best terms obtainable.

But this was not the end. On the same evening the companies were officially informed that the strike was at an end and that the men would return to work the next morning. The following day at 1 p. m. the strikebreakers who had been housed on some of the North River piers were turned out in the face of a gathering mob. The strikers had assembled in a body on the far side of the street and maddened by their recent sufferings and privations they fell on the interlopers with blows and kicks. Only the prompt intervention of the police prevented the riot from ending in murder. Similar scenes took place in other parts of the port until wisdom grew with experience and the strikebreakers were paid off under police protection.

Gradually the new men were dropped and the old ones taken on. The steamship companies were glad to regain their experienced workers. Some of the foremen were utterly exhausted with the strain of directing and working alongside the raw and



incompetent workmen on whom they had been obliged to depend.

Not only was this strike ill advised, but throughout it was badly managed. It is generally acknowledged that in spite of the fact that the ocean carrying rates were at that time very low, the men might have secured at least part of their demands if they had been willing to accept a compromise. The longshoremen today attribute this failure to the stubbornness of the leaders in insisting upon the rate first asked for. The great body of the men would have been willing to modify their demands.

During this six weeks' strife the men had lost over a million dollars in wages. When they returned to work their wage was no higher than it had been before the strike. Even the small stevedores and coastwise lines that had advanced wages during the strike gradually resumed their former rates. These considerations as well as the way the strike had been conducted left the men sullen and discontented. They were resentful toward the union and its leaders and irritable and antagonistic toward their foremen.

#### IV. DIVISION AND HOSTILITY

##### THE L. U. P. A. AND THE I. L. A.

While the strike was in progress the idea of withdrawing from the L. U. P. A. and organizing under a charter from the International Longshoremen, Marine, and Transport Workers' Association was discussed by some of the men. This I. L. M. and T. A. was affiliated with the American Federation of Labor and was already wellknown in the port. The harbor boatmen, hoisting engineers, and grain handlers belonged to it, while several other connected trades, as, for example, the teamsters, were united directly with the American Federation of Labor.

The I. L. M. and T. A. was organized in Detroit, August, 1892, under the name International Association of the Lumber Handlers. The next year this association became affiliated with the American Federation of Labor and began to take in all of the marine manual toilers. Its growth from that time was steady. By 1902 the total number of charters issued to locals was 363. At

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the eleventh annual convention, the same year, the name was changed to the International Longshoremen, Marine, and Transport Workers' Association.

The fact that the coal handlers had for years been organized under the I. L. M. and T. A. may have had an indirect influence in turning the attention of the longshoremen to this association. On June 9, 1907, near the end of the strike, in response to a strong feeling among the longshoremen in favor of affiliation with the American Federation of Labor, a self-appointed committee canvassed the port. It found the feeling for affiliation strong enough to justify the calling of a special meeting of the Executive Committee of the L. U. P. A. to consider the matter, but the proposal to affiliate was rejected. A meeting was also held in Brooklyn at which it was decided to organize under the I. L. M. and T. A. but this decision was never carried into effect.

After the loss of the strike the matter was again taken up, this time with definite results. Branch 8, of Manhattan, which was composed of longshore sailors and riggers, withdrew from the L. U. P. A., and on August 1, 1907, became Local 783 of the I. L. M. and T. A. Naturally, this action aroused resentment in the L. U. P. A. and the Executive Committee caused a notice to be served on the steamship companies that on and after November 1, 1907, no member of the L. U. P. A. would work on the same ship with members of Local 783. Branch 2 of the L. U. P. A., the strong Manhattan local, was opposed to this order and at once issued a notice to the steamship companies that on and after the date given its members would continue to work with members of Local 783.

A rumor that the Executive Committee was considering the establishment of a uniform wage scale throughout the port caused another rupture. At this time the rate in Brooklyn was 30 cents for day, 45 cents for night, Sunday, and holiday work, while on the North River and in other parts of the port, 60 cents was given for Sundays, Christmas, and for working through the meal hour. It was said that the uniformity was to be brought about by making the Brooklyn rate universal. This rumor brought the subconscious irritation to a climax, and early in April, 1908, Branch 2 began to consider severing its connection with the association. On April

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21, by a vote of 141 to 60, it withdrew from the L. U. P. A., and in June of the same year the withdrawing members took out a charter\* as Local 791 of the I. L. M. and T. A.; while the minority who were opposed to withdrawing still held together as Branch 2, L. U. P. A. Confusion and ill feeling resulted, and attempts were made on both sides to win over adherents from the opposing party.

About this time the Seamen's International Union denied the Association's right to use the term "Marine and Transport Workers." Accordingly, after some controversy, in July, 1908, the name was changed to International Longshoremen's Association, the "I. L. A.," its present form.

In the latter part of the year 1908 many of the branches withdrew from the L. U. P. A. and enrolled themselves under the new organization. There was no formal reorganization. They merely changed from one jurisdiction to another. Often the transfer was followed by stormy scenes.†

## V. PRESENT CONDITIONS

In the matter of organization the longshoremen of this port were until 1914 in a deplorable condition.‡ It is a conservative estimate to say that less than 15 per cent of the coastwise and foreign commerce longshoremen were organized. The bitterness which grew out of the rupture had been only slightly softened by time. An occasional transfer of a member of one union to the ranks of the other helped to keep the breach open. There was nothing fundamental in the objects of the two organizations to prevent them from coming together; but the possibility of an understanding between the unions was weakened by the fact that certain leaders

\* Dates and contents of charters not on file in state or county offices were obtained largely from copies hanging on the walls of the meeting rooms of the various branches or unions.

† Several of the unions have been notable for their frequent changes from one jurisdiction to another. One Hoboken local, for instance, was first formed as a branch of the A. L. U. On the death of that organization it joined the L. U. P. A. Shortly afterward it became a local of the I. L. M. and T. A. Next it left the I. L. M. and T. A. and again joined the L. U. P. A. After the strike of 1907 it returned to the I. L. M. and T. A., which in July, 1908, as we have seen, became the I. L. A.

‡ Recently there has been a consolidation, the branches of the L. U. P. A. having in May, 1914, taken out charters under the I. L. A. Thus the long-standing struggle between the L. U. P. A. and the I. L. A. has been ended.

## THE LONGSHOREMEN

cherished their old antagonisms and never missed an opportunity to do each other an ill turn. This attitude made it impossible to form a basis of amalgamation. To old members of the L. U. P. A., the I. L. A. was merely a set of "young fellows" who wanted to split off; to the "young fellows" the L. U. P. A. was a "bunch of old fogies." In spite of their differences, however, the men worked side by side on the same piers. The rank and file of the two organizations deplored the split and realized the harm it had done their common cause, but the feeling of hostility persisted. On the whole the L. U. P. A. lost ground while the I. L. A. was growing.

The L. U. P. A. stood alone, was strictly a local body, handled all its own funds, contributed nothing to outside organizations, decided all its own questions, and was answerable to no higher authority. Members of the locals of the I. L. A., on the contrary, contributed a certain sum—15 cents a month—to the international body and were subject to its authority in many matters, such, for instance, as the declaring of a strike. In return they received the support of the parent organization in any demand for higher pay which appealed to its leaders as just, and in the settlement of disputes between the locals or between the employers and the unions.

The L. U. P. A. still had its Executive Committee, sometimes known as the standing committee, which came into existence at the time of its formation in 1898. This committee had power to decide all questions affecting the association as a whole. The I. L. A. had what was known as the District Council of New York and Vicinity. The Council was organized March 14, 1909, and in 1912 had 19 locals on its roll. The unions of New York, Brooklyn, and New Jersey were represented in the Council by two members each and by the respective presidents ex-officio. The I. L. A. takes in longshoremen (both foreign and coastwise), coal shovelers, brick handlers, lumber men, freight handlers, scow trimmers, lighter captains, tide water boatmen, hoisting engineers, and checkers.

In the early days there was no such thing as race division in the unions, but since the Italians have been organized under the I. L. A. it has been customary to form them into locals of their own. Branch 6, composed of Negroes, was the only branch of the L. U. P. A. where race divisions were observed. In Brooklyn

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practically all the organizations under the I. L. A. are made up of Italians. The other races are not organized into separate branches.

There has been very little division according to the kind of work done. Now and then a union has been largely made up of the longshore sailors or riggers, who consider themselves the aristocrats of the trade. The main reason for this lack of division is probably that the pay has always been the same whether a man worked on the pier, on deck, or in the hold. Until 1887, as has been shown, coastwise workers as such never had any organization in this port. At that time they joined the Ocean Associations of the Knights of Labor. After the Knights of Labor disbanded they remained unorganized until the latter part of 1911, when organization under the I. L. A. began. Stray coastwise workers, however, have from time to time joined the unions of foreign commerce workers.

In 1911 there were in the port six branches of the L. U. P. A., numbers 2, 3, 5, 6, 12, and 15. Number 5 was located in Hoboken, the others in Manhattan. Number 3 was the strongest.

The I. L. A. had 19 locals. Of these 12 can be classed as regular longshore organizations, including foreign commerce workers and the men who coal the ships. The remaining locals were made up of boatmen, brick handlers, scow trimmers, and coal handlers.\*

The total membership of all the unions is hard to determine. It fluctuates from season to season, even from month to month. The best estimates indicate that the six branches of the L. U. P. A. comprised in 1911 about 1,700 members. Though it is possible to give accurately the number of members of the I. L. A. on which the per capita tax was paid to the chartering body, this is not a fair basis on which to estimate the total membership. Many whose names were on the books of the local had let their membership lapse, but might at any time pay up. Allowing for this margin the total membership of the I. L. A. locals in 1911 was about 3,200.†

\* Of those which were strictly longshoremen's unions, three were located in Hoboken,—numbers 304, 306, and 311; five were Brooklyn locals,—numbers 326, 327, 338, 339, and 346; and four belonged to Manhattan,—numbers 334 (coastwise), 379, 783, and 791.

† Since the consolidation of the L. U. P. A. and the I. L. A. in 1914, there are 30 locals with a possible total membership of over 6,000.

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There was, as there had been at all times in the past, a feeling of unrest and instability within the longshore organizations. At least two branches of the L. U. P. A. had voted to take out charters under the I. L. A. On the other hand, it was reported that one of the locals of the I. L. A. was considering the question of withdrawal from that body.\*

### VI. THE FAILURE OF STRIKES: A SUMMARY

From their first serious effort in 1836 to the present time, as has been shown, longshoremen have invariably failed in their efforts to better their condition by strikes. The great strikes left in their wake decreased vitality, dissensions, or utter ruin. Whenever an advance in wages has been secured it has been the result of a demand presented with calm determination to the companies. In some cases the companies seeing the justice of the demand have acceded; at other times they have been forced to yield by the united resolution of the men to hinder the work in all possible ways until they won their point. Thus, quiet persistence and not the strike has been the road to success.

Throughout their struggle the longshoremen have stood alone; they have never had the benefit of a sympathetic strike in other trades. It is true that in the Big Strike of 1887 the longshoremen were involved along with other trades more or less connected with the waterfront, but they were striking for the benefit of others and not for any advance in wages or other advantage to themselves.†

During the years immediately following the strike of 1874

\* The effects of the consolidation in 1914 are yet to be demonstrated.

There have been attempts, through the formation of a Waterfront Federation, to bring European and American longshoremen into one common body. The organizations in England at all times take a deep interest in those along the Atlantic coast of the United States, and the hope has often been held out of a worldwide organization of dock workers. At the present time (April, 1915) there is great hope that at the conclusion of the European war, with the consequent increase in shipping, the long-dreamed-of American-European consolidation will be effected.

† Although the longshoremen have received no assistance in their battles, yet there is a friendly feeling between them and workers in other lines with which they are in touch. Teamsters, who have their own union, often do longshore work for a week or two at a time on the piers without arousing opposition. Structural iron workers, for instance, are permitted to join the longshoremen's union, even when it is known that they intend to do longshore work only while their own trade is slack.

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unionism was at a very low ebb. After the strike of 1887 the unions entirely died out, and it was ten years before they were again organized. The result of the strike of 1907 was the division of the unions into two separate bodies with all the evil that attends such divisions. The loss of the first two strikes resulted in a decrease of wages, while after the strike of 1907 the wages remained the same.

Poor judgment on the part of the leaders, or their fanatical and even stubborn belief in the invincibility of the longshoremen have, almost without exception, been the causes of failure. Add to these a lack of permanent solidarity among the men, jealousy and bickerings between the unions and among the men individually, different rates of wages in different parts of the port and at different piers, and you have a picture of conditions which inevitably lead to failure.

Curiously enough, throughout the history of unionism in this port there has never been a signed wage scale, just as there has never been official recognition of any union. Both these advantages have been won in Boston,\* in San Francisco, and in Galveston. In the port of San Francisco the union is not only recognized but wields considerable power. The lack of a uniform and official wage scale in New York is all the more noteworthy in that the differing rate in different parts of the port was in the early days a prime cause in perpetuating the animosity of the men and in preventing any coming together of the unions.

It must be said, however, that though so small a percentage of the longshoremen of the port is organized, and though the power of the organization is not clearly defined, it is real. By no company, and at no pier, are the unions recognized, as we have seen; yet the companies discern in them a certain intangible power of making trouble and accordingly do not allow their foremen to reject union men. Union men are, generally speaking, the best, and if it were discovered that any company discriminated against them, they would all quietly quit work. At certain piers practically none but union men are taken; but it would be impossible for the unions to run a closed shop, for they have not sufficient strength.

\* See Appendix A, Some Aspects of Longshore Work in Boston, pp. 184 ff.

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Therefore, although the companies refuse to recognize the unions or to treat officially with their committees, they tolerate them. In rejecting wage scales they have argued with the union representatives and attempted to show that their *low profits* would not allow of any advance. In short, the companies, realizing that any undue pressure on their part would call forth quick and united resistance and stimulate the growth of organization, have adopted a policy of opportunism.



## CHAPTER IX

### RISKS OF THE TRADE

#### I. DANGERS FROM OVERFATIGUE

IT IS clear that longshore work requires the severest muscular exertion and that it taxes the physical powers of the men to the utmost. Contrary to the popular belief that longshoremen are, as a rule, large and vigorous, many are small and wiry,\* but there are rarely any weaklings among them. Great physical endurance is essential. The result is, at least on the better piers, that only men in their prime and in good condition are employed.†

On an average, under ordinary working conditions, a longshoreman handles about 3,000 pounds per hour. This figure is obtained by dividing the number of pounds moved in a given hour by the number of men employed. A longshoreman customarily carries on his back, or tiers up, sacks of potatoes weighing 180 pounds, bags of flour weighing 280 pounds, and bags of sugar weighing 320 pounds.‡ The men complain that this lifting of extremely

\* See page 17.

† See Chapter III, The Longshoremen, p. 16.

‡ The following data were supplied by John F. Riley, vice-president International Longshoremen's Association, at the request of the Federal Industrial Relations Commission, for the hearings on longshore work held in New York City in June, 1914:

New York, N. Y., 6-9-'14

Commissioners,

Dear Sirs:

Enclosed please find lists of weights which the men carry on their backs from five to twenty hours at a stretch.

Sugar . . . . .	250-360 lbs.	Starch . . . . .	225	lbs.
Flour . . . . .	280	Cocoanut . . . . .	175	"
Beef . . . . .	300	Pitch . . . . .	185	"
Potatoes . . . . .	168	Oilcake . . . . .	275	"
Riceflour . . . . .	280	Birdseed . . . . .	320-400	"
Coffee . . . . .	250	Birdlime . . . . .	200	"
Turnips . . . . .	168	Cement . . . . .	100	"
Coal . . . . .	175	Salt . . . . .	300	"
Ivorynuts . . . . .	200	Beans . . . . .	200	"

Respectfully,  
(Signed) Jno. F. Riley.

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heavy weights often causes hernia. It frequently produces soreness of the muscles so extreme that it has been mistaken for rheumatism.

Under normal circumstances, after hours of waiting with uncertainty as to whether they will be taken on, longshoremen work a ten-hour day. Often they are kept continuously at work from fifteen to forty hours.\* Under these conditions men have been known to fall asleep on their feet, and when this occurs amid the dangers of deck, pier, or hold, accidents are almost inevitable.

It is probable that there is no other heavy physical work which is accompanied with so much overtime and such long stretches of toil without interruption. Even the steel mills do not require the extreme length of working hours found on the piers. Some of the mills work their men twelve hours a day, and when the fortnightly shift of the day and night men is made, twenty-four hours on end. But a forty-hour stretch is unheard of. Other industries have their seasons of overtime, but in longshore work there is no period of the year which is exempt. "The ship must sail on time." With modern ship schedules and with the attempts to reduce the time a ship remains in port, speeding up and overtime become necessary.† This causes fearful wear and tear not only on the longshoremen, but on every one connected with the loading and discharging. As already indicated, introduction of better machinery in New York to handle cargo has in no way tended to relieve the strain on the men. The foreman does not willingly change gangs; at least he objects to changing if the stretch of work does not extend over twenty-four hours. Longshoremen submit to these long hours so that they may not lose the opportunity to "get in a good week," or from fear of losing their place in the gang. The extremely long hours of work, the rush and the physical exertion, result in overfatigue and combine to wear them out.

It is during these long stretches that another element of danger is at its height. When the work is rushed and the risk increases moment by moment, the foremen are usually most abusive. This use of violent language is a survival and is con-

\* See *Hours and Periods of Work*, pp. 57 ff.

† *Ibid.*, p. 59.

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tinued largely under the mistaken notion that it is the only way to "handle the men," or that it strengthens the authority of the foremen. Longshoremen resent it, though many share the notion that it is a necessary means of enforcing authority. Under the stress of long-continued work, and language more than ordinarily violent, timid men, "rattled" by a volley of abuse, become nervous, drop something, make a false move, and thus cause an accident.

Many have testified that after working stretches of thirty and forty hours, only stopping for meals, they do not fully recover for days, or sometimes even for a week. Others have contended that a full night's rest after a long stretch of labor makes them ready to shape for work next morning. The long hours of hard work over, men told of stopping for "one ball," then home for a hastily swallowed meal, followed by a plunge into bed only partially undressed, where they lay for many hours in a sleep that closely resembled a stupor. But though after such an experience a man may rise feeling that he is again ready for work, he can not often repeat the experience without impairing his health. The first warning that he is not "up to the mark" may be some slip on his part that means disablement or death. Indulgence in alcohol is not a necessary link in the chain. The dazed condition and muscular inaccuracy resulting from overfatigue may in themselves induce the "carelessness" that so often brings in its train a fatal mishap.

### II. ACCIDENTS

Observation of longshore work shows danger of bodily injury to be ever present. Cargoes are handled amid a tangle of ropes, gear, spans, masts, derricks, and swinging booms. On deck, the whistles and calls of command, the rattle and whirl of winches, the creaking of booms and drafts, the noise of chains, are confusing to ear and brain. Buckets of coal are dumped into the port-holes with a roar, amid flying dust. Huge loads of goods jerked from the hold or pier, sway and twirl as they rush through the air and swing past the heads of the men. Spans of steel wire sag and sway. In the hold below, the work goes on amidst the rolling and tumbling of boxes, bales, and barrels, or out in the

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"square of the hatch" under the ascending and descending loads. On the pier, packages are trucked back and forth, bags are carried on the back, boxes and bales tiered up amid the confusion of horses and wagons, the cries of teamsters, the swinging of drafts.

At night all these dangers are increased. The light is less adequate; signals are not so readily understood. There is usually the weariness from the day's work just passed; men are likely to relax their usual caution or to drop asleep at critical moments. There is that slackness which so often goes with night work, and which greatly increases the dangers.

Ordinary carelessness is increased by an occupation like the longshoreman's, which involves such constant risk that a man becomes "work hardened" or indifferent to the dangers around him. The "close shaves" he takes day after day finally so accustom him to his danger that he rarely gives it a thought. Yet the slight slips and errors which occur in ordinary work with little or no result, may be fatal to the longshoreman.

In the newly awakened interest in industrial accidents, the factory, the mine, elevators, machinery, boilers, engines, and electrical apparatus all are receiving attention. The danger of the sailor's life has become a truism. But the extreme hazard attending the longshoreman's work has been overlooked. Statistics concerning hazards of the industry in England and Germany are available, but in the United States there is an absolute dearth of such data.

In the search for information regarding accidents it was thought possible that longshoremen's organizations might have kept records of the deaths and of the injuries which had happened to their members while at work. But no records could be found, although sporadic attempts to keep such lists had been made by individual members.\* The neglect of the unions is evident. They have rarely paid other than burial benefits and these benefits are paid whether a man dies a natural death or is killed at work. Their records therefore do not show the cause of death. Few facts could be elicited from the steamship companies and

\* One man during twenty years of labor along the North River had known personally 31 men who had been killed while at work.

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their representatives. They are inclined to minimize the number of accidents and injuries.\*

The longshoremen themselves differ widely in their estimates of the risk of the work and the length of a man's working life. All, however, agree that the risk is at all times great, and that the strain and disease due to the work tend to shorten life. They know that they labor in constant danger. "When you go to work in the morning," they say, "you never know what hour you are going to be carried out. Somebody's got to get hurt, and that's all there is to it. Some lad may swing a draft against you, topple you down the hold, and snuff you out." Yet in the midst of all this it is a matter of pride with the longshoreman that he should not show fear nor evade necessary danger.

Another bar to information from the longshoreman himself is his curious idea of what constitutes an accident or an injury. A man may have been laid up for two or three weeks with an injury and yet not consider it serious enough to call it an "accident." One man who said that he had never been hurt, was reminded by his daughter that his toe had been cut off while he was at work. Another asserted that the only hurt he had ever received was a slight injury to his hand. But after his memory had been refreshed by his wife, he finally recalled that he had been laid up five weeks with a hand crushed by a draft; six weeks with a finger crushed by a case of goods; eight weeks with an ankle hurt by a skid, and seven weeks with a foot hurt by a skid,—a total of about six months. Other men, who showed deeply scarred hands or finger stumps, said that they had never been hurt, for "jammed" hands and fingers, a common type of injury, are not counted as accidents, even though they are serious enough to cause a "lay up."

It is indeed rare to find a longshoreman who has never suffered from an accident. Even those who have themselves met

\* It is considered good business policy not only to keep silence about the number of injuries that have taken place but also to permit as little disturbance as possible over an accident when it occurs. An injured man is removed as quickly and quietly as the crowded state of the ship and pier will allow, so that his fellow workers shall not be "rattled" or distracted by the mishap. In case of instant death, where the coroner must be called, or if the ambulance fails to respond quickly, the victim may lie for some time in the sight of his fellow workers. Ordinarily, if a man is injured in one hatch those working in the next hatch know nothing of it.

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with no serious injury have had many narrow escapes and have seen many casualties. One man had worked for twenty-eight years as a longshoreman without serious accident. Then in a period of eighteen months he received three severe injuries—a broken and crushed jaw, a fractured arm, and a badly injured spine. Another was injured five times in one year. Moreover, there are casualties the effects of which at the time do not seem serious but which later, even after the cause has been forgotten, result in serious disablement. Men who know the waterfront spoke of certain longshoremen who years before had suffered from a blow on the head, or been badly knocked about and bruised in a longshore accident, who had later become subject to fainting spells. These effects may not appear till months or even years have elapsed.

Such, then, are the general impressions of the risks of the trade to be obtained from the persons most directly concerned,—the workers themselves. In view of the entire lack of statistical material regarding longshore injuries and the vagueness of all information as to the actual number of injuries which occur, the task of obtaining accurate facts was not an easy one. The method adopted was the only one possible under the circumstances. It meant searching out with great labor and patience every accident whose details could be secured by word of mouth from the victim, or his fellow workmen, or from some form of official record. The results have, to a great extent, the vividness of firsthand impressions.

To tap the most immediate source of information, many of the longshoremen were visited in their homes or at their work, and were led to tell of injuries which had befallen them or their fellow workers. A number of the more intelligent and observant ones were asked to keep lists of current accidents or set down from memory such facts as they could recall concerning accidents during recent years. By this method, data were secured regarding 149 cases of injury and death. A Hoboken longshoreman, an officer in one of the unions, during the year 1910 kept a record book of such waterfront accidents as came under his personal observation or within his knowledge. This record covered the important accidents occurring on the Hoboken piers during a period

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of about seven months. Fairly complete data regarding some 20 accidents were thus obtained.

To obtain official records it was hoped that the city hospitals might be a fruitful source. But, on account of the difficulty of determining the exact trade or occupation of the patients, it was discovered that the records of only one hospital could be used. This one it is thought cares for more longshoremen than any other. It supplied a list of 94 cases of injured longshoremen who had been treated within a period of a little over a year. This list did not include all the longshoremen treated, as many had minor hurts dressed at the dispensary and were not registered as longshoremen. Nor does this list represent the full number received within the hospital during this period, for there can be no doubt many longshoremen were entered under the general head of laborers.

The bureau of industries and immigration of the New York state department of labor takes account of industrial injuries happening to immigrants, with special reference to the compensation received. The bureau records were examined and data secured regarding a dozen injured longshoremen who were foreign born.

The final source of information as to the number of men killed at longshore work along the North and East Rivers was the record of the Manhattan coroner's office for the years 1910 and 1911. In not a few instances the record was so meager or even contradictory that it was impossible to tell in what work, if any, the man was engaged at the time of his death. It is obvious that the word "laborer," which appears very often on the records, might cover many specific occupations, yet in a certain number of cases where a man is so registered the circumstances of his death made it perfectly evident that he was a regular longshoreman. The records gave 11,109 deaths from all causes for the two years mentioned. All these were examined. There were 5,141 violent deaths. After a thorough reading and sifting of these records, only 34 could be unmistakably identified as cases of longshoremen who died while at work or as a result of injuries received while at work. In several instances the coroner's jury censured the employers either for not providing proper safeguards or for not taking proper precautions. It is by no means to be inferred that these 34 deaths

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represent the number of longshoremen killed while at work along the Manhattan waterfront during the two years mentioned. They represent merely those which the records of the borough coroner, as they were kept in the years studied, warrant us in classifying under this head.

From all these sources some 309 authentic cases of accidents were collected—169 from longshoremen, 94 from hospitals, 12 from the state bureau of industries and immigration, and 34 from the coroner's records. All duplicates were eliminated. Of these cases, 96 were fatal and 213 non-fatal. The 34 coroners' cases were of course all fatal, the 94 hospital cases all non-fatal, and the other two groups each included both fatal and non-fatal cases.

It is evident that gathered as these data were, it was impossible save in a very few cases to obtain complete details, but as far as possible, they have been compiled to reveal the most significant facts; namely, (1) how and where the accidents occurred, (2) the nature of the injuries, (3) the average age and conjugal condition of the victims, (4) whether the accidents might have been prevented, and (5) what compensation, if any, was received. An estimate of the probable number of accidents in the port is also given.

As these accident records were gathered from so many different sources without reference to place, time, or type of injury, they may be regarded as representative. The majority occurred within the four years 1907-1911; a few only before 1901. They are well authenticated. In a few instances the name of the longshoreman is not known; in the hospital cases the name of the pier could not be ascertained. With these exceptions the name of the victim, the name of the pier, and the year are on our record. For obvious reasons the identification is omitted from this report.

### I. HOW AND WHERE ACCIDENTS OCCURRED

The ways in which a man may meet death at longshore work are many and varied. He is in constant danger of falling or being violently thrown over the hatch coamings into the hold; he may, for instance, be hit by a swinging draft and lose his balance, or he may slip at the edge of the hatchway. Of the 94 fatal cases





**Two gangs are being worked in this hatch. Drafts have reached the hatch coamings at the same time and the hookers-on have just caught them with the hooks of the burton falls. The working of two falls in the same hatch is one of the things most dreaded by longshoremen**

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where it is known just how the accident occurred, 49 may be grouped as follows:\*

Twenty-eight men were knocked or fell into the hold from the upper deck; 5 men lost their footing while reaching out with their hooks from lower decks to pull in a draft and fell to their death; 16 men were hit by swinging drafts with fatal result.

The remaining 45 fatal accidents can be grouped in small classes, thus:

In four cases a heavy log or case rolled over and caught the men. Two men were overcome by the heat. Four were caught in the cog wheel of a winch or pulled around the drum end by the rope fall. Four were killed by the breaking of a boom or block. A sling thrown down the hatchway dragged two men from one of the decks to the lower hold. In two cases a draft on a lower deck became entangled, and as the power of the fall loosened it, it swung around in a circle and caught a man. While drafts were being dragged across one of the lower decks by the fall, they caught and crushed three men. Loads coming down with a rush, swung a little too far and struck four. In four cases a piece of spiegel iron or other cargo fell from a tub and killed the men. The insufficient foothold of ladders built too close to the bulkhead caused three men to fall. Where the vessel's rail was unshipped opposite the hatch, slight blows sent four men overboard. Two men were pulled off the deck by mooring ropes, or caught in a rope coil and dragged from the pier loft. The side door of the pier loft slipped and knocked two workers to the lower deck of the pier. In two cases a hand truck collided with a wagon and blows from the truck handles killed the men. Drums of chemicals exploded with dire result for two men. While a gangway man was leaning over the hatch coamings a box of tin slipped from a draft above and cut off his head.

In the great majority of the cases cited death was probably instantaneous or occurred within a few hours. Generally, when men fell a long distance into the hold, the body or limbs were crushed and mangled, the neck and spine were broken, the skull was fractured, or the brains were dashed out. In a few cases the man lived a week or more. Only two lived any length of time after the accident. The longest survivor was a gangway man. After several weeks in the hospital he returned to work as assistant foreman but was obliged to re-enter the hospital, where he died several months after the accident occurred.

\* The cause of the accident in a of the 96 fatal cases could not be ascertained.

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The circumstances which cause minor hurts or disablement are even more varied than those which result in death. In 113 cases, that is, over one-half of the non-fatal cases, the way in which the injury occurred is definitely known.

Slipping or rolling pieces of cargo or gear caused 29 accidents: 18 men were injured by the dropping of a whole or part of a draft, and 14 by falling into the hold from one of the decks. Ten men were injured by swinging drafts. Five were hurt by falling from the ladder in the hold or from the ladder on the ship's side.

The remaining injuries occurred in various ways.

Two men were scalded by steam escaping from the pipes leading to the winches. Two were caught in a coil of rope or rising sling, and thrown over on their heads or hands. Two were knocked from the loft to the pier below. A slippery deck or pier floor caused one to fall. Three men caught their fingers under the turn of the rope on the drum end or in the cogs of the winch. In two cases the hands were "burned" by the rapidly slipping rope. One man fell under the wheels of a wagon or truck on the pier. Three were knocked overboard. Two fell from the rigging while putting up the gear. Two were struck by falling objects. Heavy packages or cases of machinery toppled off from trucks and crushed two men. Two walked into unlighted hatchways. Three attempted to turn on their own steam at the winch, and as they leaned over, coat sleeve or glove was caught in the cog wheels. Two were hit by empty nets or slings and knocked down the hatchway. In four cases bars of metal, cases of goods, or barrels of oil fell on the hands or feet. In two cases a skid slipped and bruised foot and ankle. Parts of drafts, such as iron pipe, bar and railroad iron, clashed together and snapped off the fingers of two men.

A few concrete cases are given to illustrate more clearly the innumerable ways in which longshoremen face the risk of injury and violent death.\*

James Morey, a hold man, was assisting in discharging cargo. An iron drum of glycerine, weighing 1,400 pounds, was being lifted from the hold. As the drum reached the hatch coamings, the rope fell, although it was a new one, broke, and the drum fell, landing on the tunnel. Thence it bounded across the hold and hit Morey, who was standing several feet back from the square of the hatch. He was crushed to death.

\* The names are fictitious.

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Mahogany logs were being discharged from the lower hold. A snatch block had been rigged to the bulkhead and the up-and-down fall was run through this, so that the logs could be dragged along the lower deck to the hatchway. As a log was being dragged, it caught. Daniel Regan was attempting to pry the end loose when orders were given on deck to "go ahead." The power of the fall pulled the log loose and it caught Regan and tore off his leg. He lived only forty-eight hours.

John Kester was on the 'tweendeck, standing on the narrow strip between the refrigerator wall and the hatchway. The gangway man tossed an empty sling down the hatch. This struck him and knocked him into the lower hold, a distance of about 20 feet. He lived only four days.

One evening Patrick Dillon was going down the ladder to begin work in the hold. It was dark, but the lamps had not yet been lighted. In this ship the ladder was built so close to the bulkhead that it was not possible to get a good grip on the rungs. Owing to this and to the lack of light he fell some 35 feet into the hold and died two days later. He left a wife and five children.

Phil Maclean was a hold man working in the square of the hatch. A draft had been hooked on and was being hoisted. Four men were employed on the deck instead of five. The gangway man, who should have been watching this draft, was also doing the work of a hooker-on and was engaged in lowering another draft on the pier. The rising draft consisted of 19 pigs of tin, each weighing 112 pounds. It swung against the hatch coamings and caught. The chain sling loosened and the pigs suddenly fell back into the hatchway. They struck Maclean across the back and neck. He died in a few hours.

Jack Diehl was helping to stow merchandise on the orlop deck. To save the time and trouble of placing on and taking off the hatch covers, one-half the covers of the orlop deck had been left off. Near this open hatchway Diehl was pulling at a bale of goods, in order to shift it into place. His hold gave way and he toppled backward through the hatchway opening into the lower hold. As a result of his injuries he was unable to work for two years.

A ship was being worked "short-handed" at one of the North River piers. No winchman was employed to turn on the steam. Maroney, a drumend man, attempted to turn off the steam from his winch with one hand while holding the fall in the other. While making this long reach, he was caught in the slack of the fall and twisted around the drum end. He was instantly killed.

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Bag sugar was being slung up from a lighter, six bags to a draft, each bag weighing about 320 pounds. Henry Jordan was working on the inshore side of the lighter. As he was stooping over to reeve the sling through the "bite" of a draft, another draft was going up from the offshore side. One of the bags had been punctured, and as the sugar escaped, the sling slackened and allowed another bag to slip out. The draft was then 18 or 20 feet above him. The bag struck Jordan and broke his arm in two places. Though he lost seven or eight weeks' time, he neither asked for nor received compensation.

Jerry Hughan was working on a lighter, helping to sling up iron pipe 15 feet in length. The work was going on between two cone-shaped piles of pipe. A shenango was helping the regular longshoremen. The foreman called out to this man to roll down a pipe, which he did without paying attention to Jerry, who stood below. The pipe rolled onto his foot and crushed it. This injury kept him from work for about seven weeks.

A ladder had been hung from the ship's side to give access to a lighter offshore. George Hart was descending this ladder. When he reached a broken rung his hold gave way and he fell a distance of about 10 feet, landing on the railing of the lighter. Two ribs were broken and his left kidney was bruised. He was laid up for about five weeks.

The exact places where the accidents happened were ascertained in 191 cases. The largest number were in the hold, the next largest on deck, and relatively few on the pier or lighters moored alongside.

TABLE 3.—PLACES ABOUT VESSELS OR DOCKS WHERE 191 ACCIDENTS TO LONGSHOREMEN OCCURRED

Place where accident occurred	Accidents resulting in		All accidents	
	Death	Injury	Number	Per cent
Hold . . . . .	27	50	77	40
Deck . . . . .	37	29	66	35
Pier . . . . .	12	17	29	15
Lighters . . . . .	9	10	19	10
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>100</b>

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The relative proportions of accidents in the various places shown in the table are corroborated by statements of longshoremen. Yet it must be remembered that although the majority of accidents are reported as occurring in the hold, it is not always the hold men who are hurt. The deck men may be thrown down the hatchway. It is questionable whether they or the hold men are the most exposed of the entire hatch gang.

### 2. NATURE OF THE INJURIES IN NON-FATAL CASES

The injuries cited cover a wide range, from a crushed toe to a fractured skull. There is practically no part of the human frame that is not in danger of fracture, laceration, or contusion. Very often the fractures were complicated by lacerations of the muscles.

In the following enumeration, which includes 210 of the 213 non-fatal accidents, none is included unless the victim was laid off for at least three weeks. The leg and the foot were most often hurt.

There were 10 Pott's fractures\* and 32 other fractures and lacerations of the leg. There were 37 more or less serious injuries to foot and ankle. Of injured hands and fingers there were 27 cases. Six men had their skulls fractured and 14 others were hit in the head with more or less serious results. Thirty-four men were hurt in the back, spine, collar bone, shoulder, ribs, or hip. In 40 cases of contusion, the injured part was not designated. Five men received internal injuries. Five cases of injury from heat exhaustion, concussion of the brain, hernia, steam scalds, and acid burns complete the 210 cases.

The large proportion of serious injuries is indicated by the number of skull and Pott's fractures which result, to some degree at least, in permanent disablement. Although these men survived their injuries, many were maimed and crippled.

The loss of time in non-fatal accidents was serious. While some injuries kept men from their work for from three to seven weeks, others laid the victims off for months or even years. The records of the hospital cases were more reliable as to time lost than were the records secured from other sources. In these 94

\* A fracture of the fibula or splint-bone of the leg, with rupture of the internal lateral ligament of the ankle, involving an outward displacement of the foot.—*New Standard Dictionary*.

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cases the average time spent in the hospital was twenty-five days. This, of course, does not at all represent the actual loss of time before the men were fit to return to work. It was two years or more before five of the men went back, and several were so badly injured that they never again were able to do regular longshore work. Often recovery was not complete; the victim was lamed or he was left with a weakened constitution which more easily succumbed to the ordinary hardships of the work.

### 3. AGE AND CONJUGAL CONDITION OF MEN INJURED OR KILLED

The men injured were for the most part in the prime of life. The average age of a group of 56 whose ages were learned was thirty-nine years. The oldest man in this group was fifty-eight, and the youngest eighteen years old. Of the 153 men whose conjugal condition was ascertained, two-thirds were married.

The 96 men whose injuries resulted in death also were in possession of their full working capacity. The figures as to age are almost the same; the average age of a group of 76 of those whose ages could be ascertained was found to be forty years. Approximately two-thirds of the whole group were married.

### 4. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ACCIDENTS

An attempt has been made to classify the accidents cited to determine whether they were due to the carelessness of employer, victim, or fellow workman. Accidents are classed as fortuitous if neither the men nor their employer appear to have been at fault; as, for instance, if a drum of chemicals explodes while in transit and does injury.\* But if a part of a draft slips out and strikes a man the accident may be assumed to be preventable, since a more secure method of hoisting the cargo could have been adopted.

The responsibility for accidents clearly lies upon the employer if he allows a gang to work short-handed with subsequent

\* The remarkable results obtained where the "safety first" principle has been put into practice, and through teaching men better methods of work, make one hesitate to call any accident non-preventable. This is especially true in longshore work, where the most elementary precautions have thus far been neglected. For further discussion of preventable causes see Section III of this chapter.

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danger to the whole gang, or if he fails to provide proper safeguards, such as perfect winches, or ropes and other gear and appliances which have been tested.

As a result of a careful classification of 65 fatal cases, the circumstances of which were ascertained, not one accident was placed under the head of carelessness of the victim himself. Three were attributed to the carelessness of fellow workmen; 30 were classed as due to defective equipment or faulty methods. Thirty-two deaths resulted from sudden dangers which could not be foreseen by the men, which goes far to prove the extra hazardous nature of this occupation.

Of 97 non-fatal accidents studied, at least 56 were obviously preventable. Ten of these were due to the carelessness of fellow workmen and only four to the carelessness of the person injured,— a small proportion of the whole number.

### 5. COMPENSATION IN THE CASES STUDIED\*

It is extremely difficult to discover the compensation given to dependents when a longshoreman is killed at work. Our information is therefore not complete but rather indicative of the amounts usually paid. In the 96 cases of death regarding which careful investigation was made, there are only five in which it is positively known that compensation for death was given. The amounts ranged from \$400 to \$1,000. In 27 instances, or almost 30 per cent of all the deaths, there is evidence that no damages were paid; in 64 instances it was impossible to learn whether or not payment was made, but the men who related the facts believed that in the majority of cases no compensation had been given.

The same difficulty was met in ferreting out the amount of compensation given when the accidents were not fatal. The percentage of cases known to have been compensated is higher, probably because the payment for minor injuries is meager. Moreover, the victim is on hand to further his own claim. Indemnity of one sort or another ranging in amount from a wooden leg to \$1,000 was given in 20 cases. Five suits were still pending at the

\* For further discussion of the attitude of the employers and of the need for legislation, see Section V of this chapter, and Section IV of Chapter X, p. 173.



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time the information was secured. The wooden leg was given to a man whose leg was "chewed off" in the cog wheels of a winch. The accident occurred many years ago when compensation for industrial accidents was rare and the wooden leg was thought fully to meet the obligation.

In seven instances amounts varying from \$25 to \$75 were paid for fractures or other severe injuries when the victims through no fault of their own had lost from one to four months' time. It is almost unnecessary to call attention to the extreme inadequacy of all such compensation. It does not in any case cover the wages lost, and takes no account of extra expenses due to illness. Sometimes an even less adequate attempt at restitution is made. For instance, the sons of three victims were given employment on the piers where their fathers were killed, but no financial compensation was paid.

In striking contrast to the employers' indifference in these cases is the generous response of the workers to the need of their fellows. For about a third of the deaths cited above collections were taken. One amounted to \$100. The specific amounts of a number of collections for the benefit of injured men ranged from \$40 to \$78. But collections are rarely taken for more than one man on pay day. Accordingly, if more men are hurt on one pier than there are weekly pay days, the extra men are placed on a waiting list. Some of them are back at work before their turn for a collection has come.\*

\* The New York Compensation Law (passed December, 1913) provides for compensation to be paid for injuries sustained, or death incurred by employes, in all branches of longshore work. This is defined as "the loading or unloading of cargoes or parts of cargoes of grain, coal, ore, freight, general merchandise, lumber or other products or materials, or moving or handling the same on any dock, platform or place, or in any warehouse or other place of storage."—Workmen's Compensation Law, Chapter 816, Laws of 1913, Section 2.

"Most of the claims [presented by longshoremen during 1914] have been conceded by employers to come under the law and have been paid promptly. Even in some cases where appeals have been taken the amount of the award has been paid, upon an understanding that it does not affect the right of the employer to have the question at issue tested. The following cases are now on appeal:

Walker vs. Clyde Steamship Co.

Burns vs. The Southern Pacific Railroad Co.

Jensen vs. The Southern Pacific Railroad Co.

"In the Walker case the accident happened on board a foreign vessel and it is claimed by the employer that the Compensation Law has no application, by reason of the fact that the accident happened upon a vessel lying in the navigable

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One seldom finds a longshoreman carrying accident insurance. Some of the accident companies will not insure them. They carry about the same amount of industrial life insurance as men of other trades who have approximately the same earning capacity. This is taken out chiefly by the wives of longshoremen, and there seems to be little, if any, advance in rates on account of the occupation of their husbands.

In the struggle for her rights, the widow of the longshoreman is at a greater disadvantage than the wife of a man in almost any other trade. She too is handicapped by the current misconception of her husband's calling which has been discussed in an earlier chapter.\* Any accident from which he suffers is almost certainly put down to drink. She shares his disgrace and so is unjustly deprived of the help and sympathy accorded to others similarly situated.

### 6. ESTIMATED NUMBER OF ACCIDENTS IN THE PORT OF NEW YORK

In the absence of all statistics it is impossible to fix with even approximate accuracy the number of accidents occurring in the port of New York. It is certain that the number is large. Superintendents and time keepers, police officers stationed along the waterfront, and others who come in daily contact with the work, have offered estimates ranging from 5,000 to about 8,000. These estimates have no positive value; but the fact that nothing better can be presented emphasizes the need of adopting some plan for recording accidents as they occur.

waters of the United States over which the Admiralty Courts have exclusive jurisdiction under the Maritime Law. In this case I understand that Walker has been paid compensation notwithstanding the appeal. Had the accident happened on the dock in this case there probably would have been no question as to his right to receive compensation.

"In the Burns case, and in the Jensen case, the additional point is raised that the vessel was being operated in connection with a railroad, that claimant was employed in interstate commerce and that any remedy which he might have should be pursued either in the Admiralty Courts or under the Federal Employer's Liability Act. In the Burns case the accident happened on the dock and in the Jensen case the accident happened on the gang plank between the boat and the dock.

"There are a few other cases in which notices of appeal have been served, but these are the only three test cases which will be argued."—Statement of Jeremiah F. Connor, Counsel to the Commission, January 13, 1915.

\* See p. 18.

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### III. VARIOUS PREVENTABLE CAUSES OF ACCIDENTS

For greater clearness, we shall discuss preventable causes under three heads:

1. Accidents due to defective gear or appliances where the danger comes from lack of proper inspection.

2. Accidents due to the failure to provide proper safeguards for the workers.

3. Accidents due to careless practices which could largely be prevented by improved methods of work and by proper supervision.

We shall not touch upon the questions of long hours of work and speeding up, as they have already been discussed.

#### 1. LACK OF INSPECTION

First, then, as to defective gear and machinery. There is practically no part of the tackle and machinery for loading and unloading cargo—spans, falls, hooks, slings, nets, blocks and sheaves, chains, winches, cranes, and even masts and booms—which does not need to be tested at regular intervals.

Manilla ropes soon wear out when they are constantly used for heavy loads. The breaking of a single rope, as we have seen, may cause a disaster. The draft may be too heavy for the fall, especially if the rope has already had the strain of enormous loads. In "breaking out" tightly stowed goods and dragging heavy loads, the rope is tugged very taut, and unless it is equal to the strain, it may snap with dire result in the confined space of the hold.

Slings are often made from worn out rope falls. When a fall gets slightly worn at either end the order may come to "boot for shoe" it; that is, to turn it end for end. The men realize that this is a dangerous economy and have been known deliberately to cut a fall so that it could not be used again. A spliced rope is often the first to give way if the splicing has been done in the haste usual on the pier.

If chains are used for a long time they become unsafe on account of molecular changes in the metal. They should regularly be withdrawn from use, carefully tested, and if necessary annealed. On some English docks each chain is numbered and a

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register kept of its history and strength. Wire rope is sometimes used for falls. It is safer than chain in some respects, as weak spots in the wire are quickly noticeable.

When the winches are old and worn they should be closely inspected. One cog may break and cause the others to strip and the whole winch to get out of gear at a critical moment. Or the lever for throwing the winch in gear may get loose and fail to push the cogs together closely. When the power comes on and the load starts, the cogs will strip, which may mean loss of control of the draft. The steam pipes leading to the steam winches should be kept tight, for men have been scalded by steam escaping from leaky pipes.

### 2. LACK OF ADEQUATE SAFEGUARDS

There are a number of simple safeguards which are conspicuously absent. For instance, as the men can not work in the hatchway and at the same time be on the lookout for descending drafts, they often trust to the sound of the winch on the deck above to give them warning that a draft is being lowered. Where the old style English winch is used, the rattle is nearly always sufficient warning; but the new American winch makes much less noise, and sometimes unexpectedly a draft comes down upon the men. Obviously this danger might be avoided by the use of a signal. Again, steam winches are not supplied with brakes, but are regulated by turning the steam on or off. This does not permit a nice adjustment of speed, and at a critical moment in the handling of a draft a winch may "get away." Several winches may be turned off at the same moment, causing a rush of steam to one or two still in operation, and for a few moments they may be beyond control.

Winches are generally set on a low bed and the working parts are at about the height of a man's hand. There is often too little clearance between the bed plate or frame work and the engine, and too little protection or covering of these parts and pinions. Especially should all cog or spur wheels be fenced or covered. The men using the winches have to work around and over them. Often a glove, a coat sleeve, or trouser leg is caught in the cogs; before the steam can be turned off some part of the body may be mangled or a limb may even be torn from the body.

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Ladders lead up from the hold, and they are also hung from the ship's side to give access to the lighters. Many a man has lost his footing and plunged into the hold on account of various defects in the adjustment or construction of the ladders. They may be insecurely fastened or they may have a broken or missing rung. In the hold they are often very narrow, or the first rung may be so deeply recessed under the hatch coamings that too long a step is needed to reach it. If the ladders are built too near the bulkhead or if the cargo is stowed too close to them, there is not enough room for a man to pass his fingers entirely around the rung and thus secure a firm hold.

When work is done at night, it is important that the entire ship and pier, especially around hatch openings, should be well lighted; and some device should be used to illuminate the water in case a man should fall overboard.

"Sanding" on deck and pier should be required in wet weather to prevent slipping which sometimes results in serious injuries.

As we have already explained, a man who is hit by a swinging draft is likely to be thrown over the hatch coamings. The coamings are usually entirely too low, frequently not more than 8 or 10 inches high, whereas for safety they should be approximately 3 feet high, including the railing.

### 3. TYPES OF NEGLIGENCE

The "carelessness" which characterizes the work is partly due to the hurry of the work but even more to the lack of adequate supervision. How elementary, for instance, would seem the requirement that hatchways should be closed securely at night so that men cannot fall through them! The large hatch openings ordinarily have two thwart-ship beams—that is, beams which run across the width of the hatchway—and three "fore and afters." The center of these three is the midship beam, sometimes called the "strong back." These crossing transoms are for the purpose of supporting the different sections of the heavy hatch covers. When the ship is at sea and all the beams are in place the hatch covers are well supported. But while the ship is being worked in port, often only the midship beam is put in place at night to sup-



A draft of four crates has been raised from the ship's hold. In the center the gangway man is seen looking down the hatchway, giving the signal with his hand for the raising of another draft from the hold



Three winches in operation. A chain sling is used in lifting the draft of bar iron. The draft is now high enough to be swung athwart the ship and lowered onto the pier. Note the unprotected hatchway

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port the hatch covers. At some piers only five minutes are allowed for "putting on hatches" at night. At others the whistle is blown at 6 o'clock and the deck and hold men have to stay later to put on the hatch covers. They naturally hurry through the job, and often leave the covers insecure. The beams or transoms of the hatch must be fitted into their own places in order to hold up the covers properly. In the hurry of leaving, a man may get one "wrong end first," leaving all the rest of the beams and covers insecurely fastened. They may later fall, if they are moved or stepped upon.

Frequently when a man tries to fit into the groove of the midship beam a cover which is worn short, it will fall into the hatchway and carry him with it. These covers become worn not only through ordinary use, but through being used as deck skids. This not only wears the edges ragged, but frequently breaks off the ringbolts with which they are lifted. If a ringbolt is missing the longshoreman will sink his hook into the cover and use it as a handle. The cover may pull loose from the hook, fall into the hold, and jerk the man with it.

One of the most culpable types of negligence is that where gangs are compelled to work shorthanded. It is not unusual to find four men working in a deck gang where five are needed. In the morning a man may be detailed to turn on steam, but after the winch is "warmed up" and everything is in good working order, he will be taken off and the drumend man be left to turn the steam on or off. He must hold his rope fall with one hand and reach over with the other to open or close the valve. If he is caught while making the reach, there is usually no one near to turn off the steam and he is likely to be badly hurt.

When the work is rushed, and often even under normal conditions, two and sometimes three gangs will be worked in one hatch. They may be busy on one or more of the lower decks, one gang over the other. Two or more drafts will then be going up or down the hatchway at the same time. Any one of the workers may be struck by a passing draft. So much is this practice dreaded by the men, that the union in formulating working rules in 1910 (which, however, they never have been able to enforce) stipulated that if a hatchway is less than 12 feet long, alternate drafts should

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be the rule; namely, that not more than one draft should be going up or down a hatchway at any one time.

The men generally unship the vessel's rail opposite the hatchway while the ship is worked. They do this even where a burton fall is used, as the gangway man can more easily see over the edge of the ship, and can work a little faster. But if a man should be touched ever so lightly by a draft, should he slip or make a misstep, there is nothing to prevent him from falling off the vessel and landing in the water or on the pier. Thus the removal of the rail increases the danger of the work unjustifiably.

The obvious responsibility of the employers and of the public for the continuance of evils pointed out in this section is discussed in the concluding chapter of this study.

### IV. EXPOSURE AND DISEASE

To one who looks merely on the surface, it may seem that the work of the longshoreman is healthful, combining as it does activity and fresh air. This conception is correct for certain parts of the labor and during certain portions of the year. But longshore work is carried on in all kinds of weather. The hot glare of the summer sun, causing a blinding reflection on deck and stifling, furnace-like heat in the hold; the chill rains of autumn and early spring; and the cold bleak winds, the snow, the sleet of winter—with freezing limbs, numb fingers, and icy floors and tackle to add to the risk—increase immeasurably the difficulties under which the longshoreman does his work.

In any consideration of the various risks of this occupation the three divisions of the work must be kept clearly in mind—the work on the pier, on the deck, and in the hold. Health conditions in these three divisions differ materially. On the pier, which is usually covered with a shed, the work may be performed with the least risk to health. But even here the men are exposed in bad weather to icy draughts, especially when the doors have to be kept open on both sides of the pier. Moreover, on some of the newer piers which have concrete floors the unevenness of the material allows shallow pools of water to collect. When this pavement is wet, a man may slip under a heavy load and strain himself severely in attempting to recover his balance.



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On deck, the men are subjected to all the rigors of the weather. Those working about the winches sometimes put up tarpaulins to protect themselves temporarily from the blasts of wind, the rain and snow, or from the hot sun, but the gangway man and the hooker-on must take what comes. When they have worked a day and night consecutively in cold or rainy weather, they become chilled to the bone. In summer time, the heat and glare on the upper deck are extreme, and prostrations are not uncommon.

In the hold, the men work in close, cramped quarters, much of the time bent over, tugging at weighty loads or carrying heavy bags upon their backs to the points of stowage. Often during rainy weather or when the sides of the steel ships "sweat," the lower decks, especially the lower hold, become damp and slippery, fit to be compared to a coal mine. The hold is usually badly ventilated and poorly lighted, and in hot weather it becomes close and ill-smelling.\*

Certain cargoes give off dust, the breathing of which is dangerous to the health. The shipping of bulk grain, for instance, is extremely trying work. The method of loading is to run the grain into the ship's hold through a pipe from a floating elevator.† The dust arising from it is so heavy that longshoremen working on the decks above the lower hold often have to leave off work, while the grain trimmers are frequently compelled to wear wet sponges or cloths over their nostrils.

Longshoremen working in the hold also suffer from the fumes arising from various cargoes. Bales of rags, sacks of potatoes, bags of bone dust, bags of sugar, boxes of lemons, and cargoes of flower bulbs, give off gases or fumes which are sometimes injurious. Occasionally they are strong enough to overcome the men. As the gangs can endure work in the hold only a few hours at a time when a large cargo of one of these articles is being handled, they are frequently shifted during the day. The fumes from potatoes

\* It is said that during the strike of 1907, the longshoremen, knowing the conditions under which the work was carried on, looked forward to the coming of summer to help them win the strike. They felt sure that the raw strikebreakers would not be able to endure the intense heat on deck and in the hold.

† See p. 43.

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have been known to cause death. The vapors arising from a shipment of wood alcohol and other spirits are also poisonous.

There are many other articles which, after being confined in the hold for days, give off disagreeable odors and injurious gases. A few years ago bleaching powder was more largely handled in this port than it now is. The fumes, especially if the bleaching powder had been loaded during the rain, were sometimes so strong as to make it almost impossible for the men to enter the hold; they had to take turns in going below. After slinging up a 2,100 pound cask, they were obliged to go to the upper deck for air. Sometimes hold men demanded and received a dollar a cask to sling it up and there were times when they would quit work rather than handle it.\* The fumes were so powerful that they affected the men even after the cargo was landed on the pier.

The hands of a longshoreman are frequently cut and bruised by the sharp corners of boxes, the chimes of barrels, or bales of dried hides or barbed wire and other similar freight, and there is always danger that blood poisoning will result from such wounds. The men especially fear dried hides, which inflict cuts considered very dangerous. Bone dust also is dreaded.†

The rigors of the weather, as we have seen, do not put a stop to longshore work. The long hours of waiting to be taken on, often in the cold rain or biting wind of the waterfront, have been described. After being called, a longshoreman may be set to work in a part of the vessel where only thin clothing is necessary, and suddenly be sent to an exposed position where he needs to be more warmly clothed. Where there are two hatches to one bulkhead, the men in the hold may be exposed to draughts; or while in a heated condition, they may be knocked off for the meal hour or because of lack of work, in which case they are obliged in winter to go at once into the cold, raw air. Facilities for a change of clothes, such as are provided in many mills and factories, are unheard of on the piers.‡

The exposure both within and without the vessel renders

\* Old longshoremen have been seen whose hands had gradually become misshapen from handling casks of caustic.

† A common remedy for these minor hurts is the application of the ever-ready "cud" of tobacco.

‡ See p. 21.

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the workers peculiarly susceptible to certain diseases, such as pulmonary and bronchial troubles and rheumatism. According to the statements of the men themselves, there seems to be an undue prevalence of tuberculosis, pneumonia, and bronchitis. It is rare to find a longshoreman who has worked at the trade long who has not at some time had pneumonia, or who does not complain of rheumatism. There are no statistics of occupational diseases in this country by which to judge, but as will be shown later in this chapter,\* the European figures fully confirm the testimony of the men, that their occupation fosters the diseases mentioned.

The irregular work on the piers leads to irregular meals, and in their haste the men bolt down their food with the result that digestive disorders are common. In bad weather the longshoreman's only refuge during intermissions is, with the one exception already described, the waterfront saloon. Meals are eaten in cheap restaurants or at the free lunch counters in the saloons. While the food which he obtains may be good enough in quality, the exposure he has suffered, or the exhaustion due to long hours of work, lead to an indulgence in liquor which is undoubtedly detrimental to health.

### V. EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY INSURANCE

The situation discussed in this section has been altered by the enactment of the Workmen's Compensation Law in 1913. Yet, in view of appeals that have been taken by employers (see footnote, p. 144) and the amendment passed in April, 1915, the effects of which are feared by labor men and the sponsors of the original bill, the status of the longshoreman under the law cannot yet be looked upon as permanently secured. The amendment permitting direct settlement between employer and employe may, it is believed by its opponents, eventually open the way to a return to power of the casualty companies. It seems proper, therefore, to discuss briefly the practice with reference to indemnity when settlement of claims was left entirely to liability insurance companies.

With few exceptions, all the leading steamship lines, as well as the larger stevedoring companies, carry employers' liability insurance to insure themselves against possible accidents

\* See pp. 159 ff.

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to their employes. This form of insurance is a sore point with the longshoreman. He believes with reason that if he is ever pitted against the lawyer of one of the great insurance companies, his cause will fare ill. When sooner or later the almost inevitable accident happens that may maim him for life, his precarious earnings come to an end. It must be a flagrant case of negligence on the part of the steamship company if he is given voluntarily any indemnity for his injury and loss of time.

Before the passage of the compensation act, the procedure was usually as follows: Whenever an accident resulting in an injury to one of the workers occurred, the liability company's representative was summoned at once to the pier. He noted all the details and the names of possible witnesses. While still in the hospital, the injured man might receive a call from a lawyer employed by the insurance company. In fact, if his claim was incontestable the lawyer sometimes insisted upon seeing him at the first possible moment, when he was still dazed and in pain and so at a disadvantage in making an agreement. If his claim was less clear, the lawyer did not go to him, but as soon as he was able to get about the longshoreman himself usually applied to the steamship company. He was told to go to the insurance office "downtown." Here he faced a shrewd lawyer experienced in these matters, who finally assured him that his claim would be investigated. The investigation and the attendant forms of delay dragged on till the man was worn out. If in the end anything was paid him, it often took the form of partial wages for the time spent in the hospital, or it might be a small lump sum. This, however inadequate, he feared to refuse, for he remembered the failures of other men when they tried to "fight the Company." Reluctantly, therefore, with resentment and a deep feeling that he was being wronged, he accepted and "signed papers."

Nor did the matter always end with the payment. In cases where a man had claimed fair remuneration, even when on the advice of a superintendent or foreman he had finally accepted the sum offered by the insurance company, he sometimes found that he could no longer obtain work at the pier where he had been injured. He was made an example for the "moral effect" on others who might be tempted to trouble the insurance companies.

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If, tired of waiting for a settlement, an injured man or his family decided to fight the company, the chances were little better. Since neither the man nor his dependents had money to pay a fee, the lawyer would take the case "on shares," and in the event of a favorable verdict retain 50 or 60 per cent of the amount recovered. It was seldom that a longshoreman secured a lawyer able to cope with the superior ability of the liability company's counsel. Often, too, his workfellows, fearing that they would no longer be employed by a steamship company if they gave damaging evidence, failed him at the critical moment. Or, if his companions were paid by the steamship company for the hours they spent in court, they could hardly be expected to give impartial testimony. Their own welfare was at stake.

If the jury returned a verdict in the longshoreman's favor, the company usually appealed to a higher court, and technical delays postponed the decision. In the meantime, the longshoreman or his family were probably struggling to pay their debts. The possibility that he would ultimately win was small; liability companies fight to the last ditch. Longshoremen, therefore, were convinced that it was futile to bring suit against a company. They had good grounds for this belief. "It is said, by well informed persons, that of the money paid by employers for liability insurance in the United States only from 20 to 40 per cent reaches the injured workers."\*

The daily hiring and constant change of men allows little personal contact between the longshoreman and his employer. When a man was injured the liability insurance company stepped in and widened this breach. The steamship company carrying such insurance was not permitted to deal with an injured employe. The men believed they would have received better treatment if they had dealt directly with their employers. There are on record instances of unexpected generosity. For instance, a large stevedoring firm working at the Bush Terminal piers employed a man who was, through no fault of his own, crushed to death. The liability company prepared to deny his widow's claim on purely

\* Schwedtmann, F. C., and Emery, J. A.: *Accident Prevention and Relief: An Investigation of the Subject in Europe with Special Attention to England and Germany*, p. 47. Published for the National Association of Manufacturers, 1917.

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technical grounds, but the stevedoring firm, recognizing the justice of her demand, persuaded them to settle with her for \$500, and later gave her \$500 more on their own account. But such generosity is most unusual.

### VI. LIABILITY INSURANCE COMPANY RATINGS

#### 1. AMERICAN RATINGS

For evidence of the relative risks of any trade the liability insurance rates form perhaps the most valuable source. What light, then, do these rates throw upon the dangers of longshore work? Do they confirm our belief, based upon observance and experience, that longshore work is an extra hazardous occupation? While the American ratings throw some light on the subject, they are, as will be seen, still largely experimental and contradictory; therefore we shall be obliged in order to reach definite conclusions, to supplement with European statistics the tables giving rates in New York state.

Life insurance has been in existence for nearly two centuries and the rates are now reckoned from actuaries' tables with scientific accuracy. But employers' liability insurance is far more recent and dates back only about fifty years. It was first written in the United States about 1896, less than twenty years ago. The rates have been largely a matter of guess work, and there has been no accepted method for levying them. If a certain class of risk did not pay at the rate quoted, the rate was raised. Not until the last three or four years have attempts been made to put these rates on a scientific basis. There is at present an informal conference of liability companies, but it has as yet accomplished but little standardization of rates. The quotations vary with the different states according to the employer's legal liability.

We give in Tables 4, 5, and 6 various insurance rates in the state of New York, covering workers in several occupations rated as more or less hazardous. While the figures by no means agree as to the risks of longshore work compared with other occupations, they are the only American data which give the slightest clue to the degree of danger under which the longshoreman works.

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 TABLE 4.—EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY INSURANCE RATES ASSESSED ON EVERY \$100 OF THE PAYROLL, IN SELECTED OCCUPATIONS. NEW YORK STATE, 1901, 1904, 1911<sup>a</sup>

Occupation	Premium rate per \$100 of payroll		
	1901 May	1904 December	1911 July
Coal miner—anthracite; shaft, drift, and tunnel . . . . .	\$1.50	\$2.90	\$2.00
Coal miner—bituminous; shaft, drift, and tunnel . . . . .	1.20	2.30	2.00
Gold and silver, iron and general miner . . . . .	1.50	3.60	3.50
Iron miner—shaft and tunnel . . . . .	..	3.60	4.50
Quarrier . . . . .	3.75	5.40	3.00
Machine shop worker, in shop only . . . . .	.90	1.10	.60
Boiler maker, in shop only . . . . .	1.11	2.40	1.50
Lumber yard employe . . . . .	1.20	1.80	1.00
Saw mill worker—in the mill . . . . .	1.87	3.25	1.80
Carpenter, construction . . . . .	4.50	4.50	2.50
Painter, away from shop . . . . .	3.00	3.00	2.25
Electrician, employed in wiring buildings . . . . .	3.00	3.00	2.00
Electric light and power company employe (construction work exclusively with erection of poles) . . . . .	6.00	11.90	4.00
Elevated railroad employe . . . . .	1.87	4.30	3.50
Floating grain elevator employe. . . . .	1.50	1.80	1.00
Railroad—steam—any employe . . . . .	4.50	5.75	7.50
Railroad construction employe (earth work—no blasting) . . . . .	4.50	5.05	3.50
Stevadore or lumper (general freight, ore and coal, on sea-going and lake vessels) . . . . .	1.50	3.60	2.00
Roustabout, on river and sound steamboats . . . . .	1.50	1.80	1.00
Bargeman and lighterman . . . . .	1.50	3.60	1.60
Wharf employe, stevedore, and freight handler . . . . .	1.50	3.60	2.00
Rigger, ship or boat . . . . .	3.00	3.00	1.75

<sup>a</sup> Data from manuals of liability insurance rules and rates for the state of New York issued by various liability companies. The limit of risk is \$5,000 for injuries to one person, and \$10,000 for one accident regardless of the number hurt.

TABLE 5.—RISK CLASS AND LIMITS OF RISKS FOR ACCIDENT POLICIES IN SELECTED OCCUPATIONS. NEW YORK STATE, 1900\*

Occupation	Risk class	Limit of risk
Telegraph operator (male), no other duties	Select	\$3,000
Painter (house)	Medium	3,000
Canal boatman	Special	2,000
Bridge painter	Special	2,000
Conductor on street railway	Medium	2,000
Brakeman on passenger train	Medium	2,000
Motorman on elevated railway	Medium	2,000
Stationary fireman	Medium	2,000
Coke charger or drawer	Medium	2,000
Policeman	Medium	2,000
Carpenter (house)	Hazardous	2,000
Fire department employe	Hazardous	2,000
Teamster (not in woods)	Special	1,500
Driver of truck or heavy team	Special	1,500
Lineman (telegraph or telephone)	Special	1,500
Cornice setter	Hazardous	1,500
Roofer	Hazardous	1,500
Celluloid maker	Hazardous	1,000
Stevedore	Hazardous	1,000
Wharf laborer	Hazardous	1,000
Wharf or dock builder	Hazardous	1,000
Pile driver employe	Hazardous	1,000
Fisherman, sea or off shore	Hazardous	1,000
Street cleaner (laborer)	Hazardous	1,000
Bridge builder	Extra hazardous	1,000
Lifesaving station member	Extra special hazardous	500

\* Data from the manual of a large accident insurance company.

TABLE 6.—LIFE INSURANCE RATES ON WHOLE LIFE PL AT AGE OF 30 IN SELECTED OCCUPATIONS. APPLICABLE IN NEW YORK STATE, 1900\*

Occupation	Premium rate per \$1,000 at age 30
Fisherman on the high seas and Great Lakes	\$31.63
Engineer on freight or mixed trains	31.63
Trolley wire repairer	31.63
Dock laborer or builder	31.63
Bridge builder and painter (large structures)	31.63
Longshoreman	23.60
House wrecker	23.60
Street cleaner	23.60
Wireless telegraph operator	23.60
Teamster or trucker (cities and large towns)	23.60
Subway motorman	23.60
Roofer	23.60
Pile driver	23.60
Gas maker or stoker	23.60
Engineer on passenger trains	23.60
Cornice setter	23.60
Canal boatman	23.60
Brakeman on passenger trains	23.60
Policeman	20.71
Stationary fireman	20.71
Surfman, lifesaving service	20.71
Fire department employe	20.71
Conductor on passenger trains	20.71
Celluloid maker	20.71
House carpenter or painter	19.08

\* Data from the rate sheet of —



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In Table 4 longshore work is rated on a par with coal mining, which has always been recognized as a hazardous trade. But even this fairly high rating is not so high as our study of the subject leads us to expect. These facts make it clear that on the whole the seriousness of the danger is not appreciated in this country. That it is more fully realized in other countries, the ratings of European liability companies offer abundant proof.

### 2. EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE

#### *A. Accidents*

In the older and more carefully supervised ports of Europe, the greater precautions used to safeguard life and limb might be supposed to have reduced the dangers. Yet even under such improved conditions the conclusion is forced upon us that the hazards in this trade are exceptional. In the scientifically prepared ratings of the English and Continental insurance companies, waterfront work heads the list or is a close second among all the hazardous occupations quoted.

Information for purposes of comparison is available from three countries,—England, Italy, and Sweden. Immediately following the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1897, one of the leading English companies charged the following premium rates per \$100 of wages paid: for stevedores (excepting Liverpool and Clyde), \$3.50; the same for bridge building and for railway and general contracting; dock service, loading, and unloading, \$3.00; saw mills, \$3.00; lightermen on the dock, \$2.50; quarries and mines, \$2.25; builders and building trades, \$1.87½; and steel rolling mills, \$1.50.\*

The premium rates charged by another large English insurance company, under the workmen's compensation acts of 1897 and 1900, shows a similar high rate for stevedores;† namely, \$3.00 to \$5.00. This is the highest rate in a list of 92 occupations and is marked, "Special quotations will be given." Other trades follow: Riggers, \$2.50; ship repairing, \$1.50; saw mills, \$1.50; fire clay works, \$1.25 and upward; iron works (smelting and rolling), 75 cents and upward; quarries, 75 cents and upward.‡

\* Annual Report of the United States Commissioner of Labor (1909). Workmen's Insurance and Compensation Systems in Europe, Vol. II, p. 1549.

† For definition of this term as used in England, see footnote in Introduction.

‡ Annual Report Commissioner of Labor, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 1545-1546.

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In Italy rates are given for combined collective insurance including employers' liability insurance. These rates were approved December, 1903. The risk class, as well as the premium rate in lire per 100 lire of wages, is given in Table 7. For comparative purposes the Italian rates are given for several industries and occupations selected to approximate as nearly as possible the ones given in the American list. (Table 4, p. 157.)

TABLE 7.—RISK CLASSES AND INSURANCE RATES FOR INSURANCE AGAINST ACCIDENTS OF WORKMEN IN SELECTED INDUSTRIES IN ITALY<sup>a</sup>

Industry	Risk class	Premium rate in lire per 100 lire of wages
Installing and maintaining telephones with work on roofs and poles	XXV	7.5
Loading and unloading ships, and ferrying . . .	XXIV	6.5
Building; work executed at a considerable height, or with incomplete scaffolding or on roofs, cupolas, etc., or work mainly connected with tearing down, construction of towers, belfries, smoke stacks, placing of lightning rods, etc.	XXIV	6.5
Sulphur mining, including working up of the mineral . . .	XXIV	6.5
Stone quarrying with underground work . . .	XXIII	5.5
Wood sawing (lumber, etc.) with power saws, including circular saws . . .	XXIII	5.5
Manufacturing boilers for industrial uses . . .	XXI	4.5
Building; work executed altogether or mainly upon scaffolding or with frequent use of blasting or with a certain amount of tearing down of buildings . . .	XXI	4.5
Constructing and maintaining subterranean aqueducts, including work in galleries or at a certain depth and with frequent use of blasting . . .	XXI	4.5
Carpentering and cabinet making; work on scaffolding or staging . . .	XXI	4.5
Constructing and maintaining iron bridges . . .	XX	4.0
Metal mining, including smelting . . .	XX	4.0
Hard and soft coal mining . . .	XIX	3.5
Iron and steel rolling . . .	XIX	3.5
Railroad work; traction and manœuvring . . .	XIX	3.5
Installing and maintaining electric power conduits or electric light wires . . .	XVI	2.3

<sup>a</sup> Annual Report of United States Commissioner of Labor (1909), Vol. II, pp. 1761-1767.

<sup>b</sup> Occupations in Italy were classified in 1903 in 32 risk classes with a sliding scale of annual premiums per 100 lire of wages paid, ranging from .25 lire in occupations in Class I to 30 lire for those in Class XXXII.

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In Sweden the various industries are grouped into "danger classes" according to the frequency and nature of accidents. A few industries standing highest in the "danger classes" have been selected for quotation. In point of danger, loading and unloading ships leads 111 industries and stands in a class by itself.

TABLE 8.—RISK CLASSES FOR INSURANCE, ACCORDING TO THE LAW OF 1901, AND FOR ADDITIONAL INSURANCE FOR SICK RELIEF BEFORE THE SIXTY-FIRST DAY FOLLOWING AN ACCIDENT IN SELECTED INDUSTRIES, SWEDEN <sup>a</sup>

Industry	Risk class for <sup>b</sup>	
	Insurance according to law of 1901	Additional insurance for sick relief before sixty-first day following accident
Loading and unloading ships . . . . .	XI	XI
Iron smelting in works (not mines) . . . . .	III	X
Stone quarrying . . . . .	IX	IX
Ore mining . . . . .	IX	IX
Coal mining . . . . .	IX	IX
Granite cutting (in works) . . . . .	IX	IX
Firewood sawing (in mills) . . . . .	IX	IX
Work in lumber yards . . . . .	VIII	VIII
House building . . . . .	VII	VII
Harbor building . . . . .	VII	VII
Work in large saw mills . . . . .	VI	VII
Railroad traffic work . . . . .	V	V
Work in iron foundries. . . . .	V	VIII

<sup>a</sup> Annual Report Commissioner of Labor, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 2389.

<sup>b</sup> In Sweden occupations are classified, in ascending order of hazardousness, in 13 risk classes (A, B and 1-XI), with premiums ranging from \$.064 in Class A to \$3.795 for Class XI.

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To show even more clearly the relative risks in five hazardous industries, Table 9 has been compiled from the compensation paid in 1908 for accidents and industrial diseases in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

Obviously, work on the dock is by far the most dangerous of these five occupations. Indeed, measured by the number of accidents per 1,000 employes, it is 19 per cent more hazardous than the trade next in the list, mining, which is popularly believed to be the most perilous.

Table 10 shows the mortality from industrial accidents and from all causes in England and Wales for all males, for dock and wharf laborers, and for men in certain other occupations in which there are exposure and hard physical labor, for two periods—1890-92 inclusive, and 1900-02 inclusive. The statistics are from the report of the Registrar-General of England and Wales.

The table shows mortality figures for a "standard population." This is a device for rendering comparable mortality figures for different localities or for different occupations which, on account of varying age and sex distributions in the populations, cannot be compared in the form of crude death rates per thousand living. A "standard population" is the number of persons, distributed by age in the same proportion as is the general population, among whom, at the death rates prevailing in the general population for the different age periods, 1,000 deaths would occur annually.\*

In computing a "standard population" for use in comparing the mortality of males in different industries in England and Wales, only males from twenty-five to sixty-five years of age are considered. The standard population for this group was 61,215 for 1890-92 and 71,005 for 1900-02. In order that the figures for the two periods might be properly comparable, the standard population for the later period was used by the English statisticians in computing the figures presented in Table 10.

In 1890-92 the corrected mortality figure for accidents

\* A full explanation of the method by which such a figure is obtained, and of the use made of it, is given in the report referred to in the note to Table 10.

TABLE 9.—EMPLOYES AND NUMBER AND COST OF CASES OF ACCIDENT AND INDUSTRIAL DISEASE IN FIVE INDUSTRIES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM FOR WHICH COMPENSATION WAS PAID IN THE YEAR 1908<sup>a</sup> UNDER THE WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT OF 1906

Industry	Employees	Accidents						Compensation for diseases and accidents	
		Fatal		Non-fatal		Fatal and non-fatal		Total	Per employe
		Number	Number per 1,000 employes	Number	Number per 1,000 employes	Number	Number per 1,000 employes		
Dock work . . . . .	67,929	156	2.30	10,591	155.9	10,747	158.2	\$ 422,062	\$6.21
Mining . . . . .	1,047,862	1,301	1.24	137,622	131.4	138,923	132.6	4,094,946	3.91
Quarrying . . . . .	85,473	88	1.03	5,284	61.8	5,372	62.9	169,344	1.98
Construction work on: Railways, trainways, canals, harbors, docks, bridges, tunnels, water works, sewers, roads . . .	527,106	119	.94	6,805	53.5	6,924	54.5	252,708	1.99
Railway work . . . . .	396,884	458	1.15	20,649	32.0	21,107	53.3	732,462	1.85

<sup>a</sup> Statistics of Compensation and of Proceedings under the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1906, and the Employers' Liability Act, 1880, during the year 1908, pp. 8-11. London, 1909.

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TABLE 10.—MORTALITY OF MALES 25 AND UNDER 65 YEARS OF AGE FROM ALL CAUSES AND FROM ACCIDENTS, FOR ALL MALES, FOR DOCK AND WHARF LABORERS AND FOR MALES IN OTHER SELECTED INDUSTRIAL GROUPS. ENGLAND AND WALES, 1890-92 INCLUSIVE, AND 1900-02 INCLUSIVE<sup>a</sup>

Industrial group	Deaths in a standard population of 71,005 <sup>b</sup>	
	From all causes	From accidents
<b>1890-92</b>		
All males	1,155	65
Dock and wharf laborers	2,114	188
Bargemen, lightermen, and watermen	1,386	257
Bricklayers, masons, and builders	1,157	62
Coal miners	1,068	162
Seamen, etc., merchant service	1,564	233
Stone and slate quarriers	1,359	138
<b>1900-02</b>		
All males	1,000	59
Dock and wharf laborers	1,481	106
Bargemen, lightermen, and watermen	1,333	234
Bricklayers, masons, and builders	906	52
Coal miners	885	123
Seamen, etc., merchant service	1,646	257
Stone and slate quarriers	939	100

<sup>a</sup> Drawn from the supplement to the 65th report of the Registrar-General of Births, Deaths and Marriages in England and Wales, Part II, Table IV. London, 1908. The figures for 1890-92 refer to the "occupied only" in each industrial group; those for 1900-02, to the "occupied and retired."

<sup>b</sup> For an explanation of the "standard population," see the report of the Registrar-General.

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among dock workers was nearly three times that for all males. The figures for a decade later show a great improvement. While the mortality of dock laborers was still high it was less than double the figure for all males. Or, to put it differently, there has been a decrease of 44 per cent in mortality from dock accidents, while the figure for accidents for all males had fallen only 9 per cent.

In Table 10 data are presented for but six occupations. Examination of additional material appearing in the report of the Registrar-General shows that while, in 1890-92, only seamen and bargemen were more liable to death by accidents than longshoremen, in 1900-02 there were at least eight other occupations in which death from injury was more probable than among dockers. It is evident, from the figures of Table 10 and from the other statistics in the Registrar-General's report, that the decrease in mortality was not confined to dock laborers but occurred in many of the groups dealt with. Whereas in 1890-92 the mortality from all causes among dockers was nearly twice the standard rate for all males, in 1900-02 it was not quite 50 per cent higher. Formerly only innkeepers and innkeepers' servants had a higher mortality than dock laborers, but in 1900-02 no less than 11 other occupations had a higher figure. The decrease in the rate of mortality among dockers was 30 per cent.

The docks had been under government supervision for practically six years previous to 1900-02. On the first day of 1896 the amendment to the British Factory and Workshop Act bringing docks under observation went into operation. It seems probable that the remarkable improvement in the mortality record, both from accidents and from all causes, among dock laborers, and in the other occupations dealt with, was due in great part to the protection afforded by the act. It seems probable also that the act tended not only to decrease fatal accidents, but, by preventing the minor injuries which often ultimately lead to death, tended to decrease the death rate from all causes.

### *B. Statistics of Mortality from Disease*

The English statistics are equally clear as to mortality from specific causes other than accidents. Such statistics are given for 105 occupational groups. The mortality from phthisis, pneumonia,

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and bronchitis is shown in Table 11 for dock and wharf laborers and for five other industrial groups, namely, bargemen, lightermen, and watermen; bricklayers, masons, and builders; coal miners; seamen; and stone and slate quarriers—occupations in which there is hard physical labor and exposure.

TABLE 11.—MORTALITY OF MALES 25 AND UNDER 65 YEARS OF AGE, FROM PHTHISIS, PNEUMONIA, AND BRONCHITIS, FOR ALL MALES, FOR DOCK AND WHARF LABORERS, AND FOR MALES IN OTHER SELECTED INDUSTRIAL GROUPS. ENGLAND AND WALES, 1890-92 INCLUSIVE, AND 1900-02 INCLUSIVE<sup>a</sup>

Industrial group	Deaths in a standard population of 71,005 <sup>b</sup>			
	From phthisis	From pneumonia	From bronchitis	From phthisis, pneumonia, and bronchitis combined
<b>1890-92</b>				
All males . . . . .	224	123	101	448
Dock and wharf laborers . . . . .	377	254	329	960
Bargemen, lightermen, and watermen . . . . .	194	131	131	456
Bricklayers, masons, and builders . . . . .	260	128	125	513
Coal miners . . . . .	113	141	131	385
Seamen, etc., merchant service . . . . .	265	125	90	480
Stone and slate quarriers . . . . .	313	168	142	623
<b>1900-02</b>				
All males . . . . .	186	90	57	333
Dock and wharf laborers . . . . .	308	187	137	632
Bargemen, lightermen, and watermen . . . . .	168	133	73	374
Bricklayers, masons, and builders . . . . .	194	80	65	339
Coal miners . . . . .	89	86	79	254
Seamen, etc., merchant service . . . . .	262	137	58	457
Stone and slate quarriers . . . . .	190	100	60	350

<sup>a</sup> Drawn from the supplement to the 65th report of the Registrar-General of Births, Deaths and Marriages in England and Wales, Part II, Table IV. London, 1908. The figures for 1890-92 refer to the "occupied only" in each industrial group; those for 1900-02, to the "occupied and retired."

<sup>b</sup> For an explanation of the "standard population," see the report of the Registrar-General.

It will be noted that both in 1890-92 and in 1900-02 the



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mortality from each of the three diseases, phthisis, pneumonia, and bronchitis, was greater for dock and wharf laborers than for any of the other occupational groups dealt with in the table. In 1900-02 the comparative mortality figure among longshoremen from the three diseases combined was, in fact, more than twice that of coal miners and only slightly less than twice that of stone and slate quarriers and of bricklayers, masons, and builders.

If there existed in this country returns which showed the occupational death rate in the leading industries, there can be no doubt that in view of the conditions of longshore work in the port of New York, the American figures for this occupation would resemble those here quoted from English reports.

## CHAPTER X

### CONCLUSION

#### I. THE MAN

**L**ET us review the salient points brought out in the preceding pages, in order to see the longshoreman of the port of New York from as many sides as possible, and form a true estimate of him and of his industrial condition.

The first fact that calls for notice is the extraordinary dearth of information about him. National and state bureaus, libraries, and economists are alike futile as sources of information. To the ordinary business man he is a rough fellow, a thriftless, drinking man, unreliable, casual in the very make-up of his nature. But it is necessary only to visit the waterfront to become suspicious of such confident ignorance and such easy generalizations. No public can afford to ignore a body of more than 30,000 of its adult members.

The longshoreman is not only misrepresented by the popular picture called by his name; he is not and can not be represented by any one picture. Variety is as characteristic of the worker as it is of the cargoes he handles. Irishman, Scandinavian, German, Italian, Polack, and Negro jostle one another on the piers of New York. And the impact is not physical alone. The clash of race, temperament, language, industrial and personal traditions, flare up in disagreements, more or less violent, or are smothered by the exigencies of the trade and overcome by time. Most often, good-natured indifference does duty for real toleration and the work proceeds. Always there is the shifting of races with the gradual increase of the less efficient types of worker; the substitution of the southern and southeastern European for the older, more easily assimilated Celt and Saxon.

The longshoreman as such can no more be characterized industrially or personally than racially. Foreign commerce hand-

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lers, coastwise men, banana handlers, shenangoes, stand each for a different kind of work and for a different type of man. At his best, the longshoreman is a fair sample of humanity,—honest, generous, interesting and individual, and a skilled worker; at his worst, he is all his critics accuse him of being. But blame for drinking, to which he must plead guilty, falls largely on the conditions of his work. As a man the longshoreman compares well with other workers in the semi-skilled or the so-called "unskilled" occupations.

### II. WORK AND EARNINGS

Tradition is an important factor on the waterfront. Changes in methods of work have not kept pace with the growth of commerce and the increasing size, speed, and equipment of ships. Man power is still used where machinery is avowedly more efficient. Moreover, methods which at some piers have been discarded as obsolete are still in use at others. There are no standards.

Longshore work is not, as is commonly supposed, unskilled labor. The men who hold the various positions on ship and pier as well as those who handle special cargoes are to only a limited extent interchangeable. The work requires knack and experience throughout. In the superior positions judgment and self-control as well as skill are indispensable.

In the hiring we come at once face to face with the most conspicuous characteristic as well as the most far-reaching evil of the work—its irregularity. The first hiring for work on a ship depends on the weather and other conditions of ocean traffic. This may occur at any hour of the day. Longshoremen have no way of knowing exactly when a ship will dock. Their only surety of being on hand for the hiring is to hang about, sometimes for hours, until the ship arrives. Having taken this precaution there is then no certainty of being taken on, nor is there any guarantee that the work will be permanent when obtained. Men are knocked off without pay whenever a delay occurs. In such cases they may be obliged to wait around for many hours before they are again needed.

Over against the periods of unemployment and the frequent

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lay-offs are long periods of work lasting thirty or forty hours. When such stretches of work are to be had men dare not refuse them, for they are the only means of bringing up their earnings from the low average due to the periods of enforced idleness.

The irregularity both of hours of hiring and of duration of work is necessarily reflected in the incomes of the workers; and the instability of earnings in this trade has been aggravated by fluctuations in the rates of wages paid. The stability of income necessary to maintain any settled standard of living whatever, does not exist in longshore work. Although a small number earn good incomes, they do so only because they are superior workmen and rarely fail to get taken on when they appear at a shape. But in order to make good incomes these men are obliged to work for abnormally long stretches to balance the days when they too are out of employment. For the majority the earnings are low as well as uncertain.

The estimated average of earnings among foreign commerce men, \$10 to \$12 a week, is probably somewhat too high. If the earnings of the men who work on the coastwise piers and in the local traffic are included the average will be less. Yet \$11 a week is only \$572 a year as against the minimum \$800 or \$900\* necessary in New York City to support a family of normal size in decency. The thousands who earn less than this must be without families or partially dependent on the earnings of wife and children or on outside aid for support.

### III. EVILS OF CASUAL WORK

Hanging about the piers in the hope of obtaining work and being frequently turned away without it tend directly to encourage irregular habits and drinking. The long irregular stretches of work result in chronic ailments and help to bring about early disability. Low and uncertain earnings make thrift impossible. Inevitably, the irregularity of longshore work tends to the demoralization of the workers.

On account of the great oversupply of labor in the port of

\* Chapin, Robert Coit: *The Standard of Living among Workingmen's Families in New York City*. Russell Sage Foundation Publication. New York, Charities Publication Committee, 1909.

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New York, employers to a large extent occupy the position of dictators. That men should be engaged and knocked off arbitrarily becomes a matter of course. Oversupply, moreover, keeps down the rate of wages. The unions oppose the reduction of the surplus labor by any method of eliminating surplus workers. Yet it is clearly of the utmost importance in the solution of the problem of casual labor that the oversupply be reduced.

Another serious evil in longshore work is the maladjustment of the available labor force. Notwithstanding the general oversupply, local shortages can and do continually exist. There is no pooling of labor along the waterfront. This is a defect in business organization. It results from the lack of co-operation among employers. In the hiring as in the work, each pier is a world unto itself.

The significance of the irregularity of longshore work in New York is reinforced by the study of unemployment in other trades. English and American findings are identical. Irregularity of employment means for many unemployment or chronic underemployment. These in turn produce ultimately a class of unemployables.

Of even greater significance than the effect of casual labor on the employer and the employe is the burden it casts upon society. In England the seriousness of this social waste is very generally recognized. A special study of English dock labor in relation to poor law relief was made. The report, published in 1908, makes it clear that "the regular dock labourer is no more a burden on the rates than any other regular workmen."\* It is the casuals, whether at the docks or elsewhere, who constitute the burden which has been attributed to the docks—the underemployed "who are, year in and year out, week by week, continuously in a state of partial destitution of the necessities of life owing to their chronic failure to get a full week's work."† Complete pauperization is the almost inevitable result for those who survive. "The great bulk of applicants to Distress Committees are men earning

\* Local Government Board. Report on Dock Labour in Relation to Poor Law Relief, p. 23. London, 1908.

† Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws and Relief of Distress (Minority Report), 1909, p. 1144.

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perhaps fair daily wages, but getting on an average only two or three days' work in a week or two or three weeks in a month."\*

Among the underemployed of these English casual workers "privation, exposure, and the insanitary conditions of their dwellings lead to an excessive prevalence of diseases of all kinds. It is, to an extent, quite disproportionate to their actual numbers, they who fill the hospitals and infirmaries, and keep the city's death rate at high figure." The personal and industrial character of the men is undermined. The women sometimes drink; sometimes they are forced to go to work. The children lack health, food, and the "necessary minimum of home care." It is not surprising that when they reach maturity they have no outlook or ambition save to become such as their parents were before them.

Thus there is in process, as a result of underemployment, "constant manufacture of paupers." By the breakdown of his health, the deterioration of his character, and his inability to keep himself or his family from want, the casual laborer represents a burden on society out of all proportion to his numerical importance or his industrial value.

The conclusions of the Wainwright Commission in New York are the same.† Children enter the industrial field handicapped by their father's failure to get work. "But even more striking is the immediate effect of unemployment—the demoralization and degeneration of the workman who is out of a job. He walks the streets in search of work, hopeful at first but as time goes on becoming more and more discouraged. The odd jobs he picks up bring in an uncertain and very insufficient income. His whole life becomes unsteady. From undernourishment and constant anxiety his powers—mental, moral, and physical—begin to degenerate. Soon he becomes unfit to work. Finally he gives up in despair, his family is demoralized, pauperism and vagrancy result. In a large number of cases this is inevitable. The casual demand for labor brings into existence the casual worker. From being unable to get steady work a man becomes unable to do steady

\* Report of the Royal Commission, etc. *Op. cit.*, p. 1150.

† Report to the Legislature of the State of New York by the Commission appointed under Chapter 518 of the Laws of 1909 to inquire into the question of employers' liability and other matters. Third Report, Unemployment and Farm Labor, 1911.

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work—unreliable, inefficient, 'good-for-nothing.' During long periods of unemployment, good workmen degenerate into tramps. They become habituated to a life of idleness and uncertainty, so that when at last employment is once more to be had, they are unfit for continuous labor. The merely *unemployed* have become unemployable."

It must not be thought that the picture drawn here of the demoralized casual laborer represents the New York longshoremen as a class. As we have seen, there are many grades and differences among them. But we wish to emphasize the fact that every regular longshoreman runs the risk of falling to the casual class. While he may be independent and self-respecting, the conditions of his employment constantly endanger his industrial stability.

The failure to distribute labor along the waterfront where it is needed is undoubtedly the feature which at present reacts most unfavorably on the whole trade. How a better distribution could be obtained will be discussed in subsequent sections on English and continental ports,\* where there have been put into operation experiments which promise success in preventing the greatest of industrial evils—irregularity of employment and unemployment.

## IV. NEED FOR PROTECTIVE LEGISLATION IN THE UNITED STATES

In the face of the excessive mortality among longshoremen, the question at once arises as to the provision made for their protection. The answer is not far to seek. The United States has the unenviable reputation of being practically the only nation with a large foreign commerce which has absolutely no regulations for the protection of men engaged in longshore work. To illustrate the extent to which safety regulations have been adopted in certain foreign ports, we print in the Appendices the full text of the Statutory Rules and Orders of 1904 and the Revised Accident Prevention Regulations of the Accident Insurance Association of the Stevedoring Industry for 1905,† governing the work in English ports; and the Regulations for the Prevention of Accidents issued by the Harbor Inspection Department of Hamburg.‡

\* See Appendices B to E of this study, pp. 188 and 210 ff.

† See Appendices G and H, pp. 233 ff.

‡ See Appendix I, p. 245.

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The few precautions observed on the New York piers are required by the insurance companies to protect their financial interests. Save that the cog wheels of some winches are covered, it does not appear that the safety of life and limb has been considered. In recent years there have, indeed, been improvements in the machinery, but they have tended chiefly towards increased efficiency so that the work may be done with greater rapidity and on a larger scale. The greater pressure under which the men work makes more urgent the need for regulation and inspection from some outside authority.

Even at the risk of some repetition, a résumé of the causes of the most common accidents cited in the chapter on Risks of the Trade will be given here. The remedy suggests itself in the mere recital of some of the hazards. To secure protection from other dangers, radical changes are necessary.

First and most important in the list of causes, because in the very fact of their existence the evidence of community responsibility is particularly clear, are the lack of proper inspection of gear and machinery, and the absence of proper safeguards which the steamship companies should be required to provide.

In New York, inspection of piers and vessels is left to the various foremen or gangway men. Because they share the danger they are supposed to take proper precautions. But these men are not held to account as inspectors. Many seem to count the moments spent in testing gear and looking after appliances as time wasted. They need protection from their own carelessness. There can be no assurance that the greatest measure of protection has been secured unless certain men can be held responsible for the close testing of all the gear and appliances on ship and pier.

Unquestionably regular inspection and standardization by some public authority of all machinery and appliances are as necessary in longshore work as in industrial establishments.

Such inspection would do much to decrease the risks. But far more radical changes are needed. Better safeguards must be provided and careless habits of work prohibited before it can be asserted that rational care is being exercised. Many accidents which are usually charged to the "carelessness" of the men have been shown to be due to lack of adequate supervision, to speeding





Two falls are being worked in this hatch. The winches for this hatch are on the deck above. The low coamings are dangerous



Two drafts have just cleared the hatch; one a draft of bar iron and the other a box draft. Note again the hatchway unprotected by coamings

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up, and to culpable economy by the companies in employing fewer men than are needed to perform the work with speed and safety.

The high risk of longshore work renders it imperative that every pier should have an emergency room similar to those provided by many factories for the use of injured employes. It should be furnished with hot and cold water and with necessary medical and surgical supplies. The ambulance service of the hospitals to most of the piers is good, though there is always a wait of fifteen to twenty minutes during which the injured man could be cared for in the emergency room rather than be exposed on some improvised stretcher. Here, too, drowning persons could be resuscitated and minor injuries not requiring a surgeon could be treated.

That official installation and supervision of safeguards and remedies for the risks mentioned in this section, and many others, have been found to be requisite for reasonable safety in longshore work is clearly shown in the rules and regulations adopted in foreign ports where longshoremen form a large and important industrial group. It hardly needs the experience of England and Germany, however, to prove that such control is urgently needed in the United States. The methods of work on the two sides of the Atlantic do not radically differ. The same remedies are applicable here.

## V. POSSIBILITIES OF BETTERMENT

Longshoremen's unions have existed since the middle of the last century. They have had an active and stormy history. But the slight advantages won after strikes have usually been lost again. The unions have never been strong enough to exact their demands from the employers, nor have they been sufficiently united in spirit and purpose to maintain any consistent policy. Poor judgment, stubbornness, dishonesty among the leaders, jealousies, antagonisms among the men and between locals have prevented any effective use of the power at their disposal.

The record of betterment from outside their ranks is even more meager. Employers have never made more than sporadic or inadequate attempts to remedy those evils for which they are responsible. In most cases they have failed to recognize them. The state has hardly done better. Not only has there been no

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legislation which applies directly to this large body of men;\* there are no statistics on which such legislation could be based. State care for the longshoreman has been a negligible factor.

Failure has been the almost invariable result of attempts to better the condition of longshoremen. Seldom has the attempt even been made. The longshoreman has not had the sympathy of his employer or of the public. Yet as man, as citizen, and as an important link in the chain of national prosperity, he deserves intelligent consideration. His personal worth, his numerical importance, and his economic significance call for recognition.

Suggestions, founded on a certain measure of success, come to us from other ports and reinforce the lessons of failure. The higher average of industrial and personal character among the longshoremen of Boston† results partly from the industrial and social conditions which characterize the city, partly from the close organization of the men. The unions have been strong enough to exact a certain measure of respect from the employers and from the public. In matters concerning the port they are a factor to be reckoned with; and they have used their power directly to win more favorable conditions of work. But the great achievement of Boston longshore organizations is a signed wage scale. Good results there have reacted on the character and standing of the men. And just here two facts must be noted. All these advantages have been gained through the efforts of the men and almost without the serious interruption of business. The Boston longshoremen have had only one important strike in their history.

In the English ports that have been studied the case is entirely otherwise.‡ The great achievement of the unions there is that they have enlisted public interest. We shall see how the Great Strike of 1889§ in London awakened interest in the condition of the dock laborer. That interest resulted in public and private investigations and these in turn stimulated both employers and government to practical effort toward reform. The great attainment of the employers has been the decasualization

\* As has been shown in Chapter IX, *Risks of the Trade*, the Workmen's Compensation Law passed in 1913 has provisions relating to dock labor, but several cases have been appealed by ship owners in order to test the law.

† See Appendix A, p. 181.

‡ See Appendices B to C, pp. 188 ff.

§ See p. 190.

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of labor by the establishment of preference classes and by the pooling of labor over a large area. The ticket system of the London and India Docks Company,\* when consistently carried out, has undoubtedly proved to be to the advantage of the company as well as to that of the men. The result of government investigation has been the official recognition of dock labor as a dangerous trade and the enactment of a series of laws to safeguard the men from risk and to compensate them for injuries.†

The Liverpool scheme for decasualization‡ was the outcome of the experiment already tried in London and of the general interest in unemployment focused by the Labor Exchange Act of 1909. Labor is pooled under the auspices of the government by means of the machinery of the national labor exchanges and along the whole line of the docks.

The Liverpool scheme is, therefore, the last word of England on decasualization. For though much has been done along these lines in other ports, the great outstanding advantage of the Liverpool scheme is the unity of action of state, employers, and men. The principle of goodwill has entered as an important factor into the scheme. In Hamburg the employers' association and the union are antagonistic and, when possible, oppose one another's interests,§ while in Liverpool both elements have recognized their joint interest in a better adjustment of labor.

If England offers us a method for reducing the irregularity of longshore work, Hamburg shows the application of ideals of efficiency and organization.\*\* In the extensive and effective substitution of machinery for hand labor, in the selection of most efficient methods of work, in the detailed plan and management of her central pooling system carried out through the labor exchanges, in the enactment and enforcement of regulations for the prevention and compensation of accidents, Hamburg is preëminent. However, the system under which contract laborers are employed is arbitrary and oppressive. The hostility between the contracting parties is to be regretted. The real accomplishment of Hamburg

\* See pp. 192 ff.

† See Appendices F and G, pp. 228 ff.

‡ See Appendix C, pp. 199 ff.

§ See Appendix E, p. 226.

\*\* See Appendix E, pp. 210 ff.

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is not, however, to be minimized by a recognition of these weaknesses of detail.

What has been done can be done again. In attempting to solve the problems of the New York waterfront we are not therefore seeking our way blindly through a trackless forest. There may be a conflict of interests and there undoubtedly are serious difficulties in any scheme of betterment; but our line of advance is clear. England and Germany have blazed a trail which is of immense service in pointing the direction our own progress should take. This direction is toward increased goodwill, greater cooperation of supposed conflicting interests, an enlarged sense of legislative responsibility, and a more far-seeing application of the principle of efficiency throughout all phases of the industry of the port.

Nor is this mere theory. It is a practical program. The men have already shown a disposition to help themselves. They have exhibited, along with other less promising traits, determination, perseverance, self-restraint, and the capacity to deny themselves for the sake of fellow workers whose names even are unknown to them. It is a basis on which to build. The modern business man, too, is fast outgrowing the earlier stages of industrial individualism and developing a social conscience. His extension of outlook is one of the most promising signs which point toward a peaceful outcome to our economic embarrassments.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

### SOME ASPECTS OF LONGSHORE WORK IN BOSTON

A NEW YORKER who knows anything of waterfront work in Boston can hardly fail to be struck with the greater regard in which the longshoreman of that city is held. Of all ports of the United States, Boston ranks second to New York, both commercially and as an immigration station. It is separated from it geographically by a few hundred miles of seaboard. There is no fundamental difference of national or industrial organization. What then is the explanation of this different attitude?

Possibly some association in the public mind with the fisherman has raised the status of the longshoreman, for in New England the fisherman has always been held in high esteem. However this may be, even a superficial observation of the denizens of the waterfront gives evidence of the soundness of the popular judgment.

The group of foreign commerce men is composed of industrial types which in New York are classed as superior. About 85 per cent are Irish or of Irish descent; the remaining 15 per cent is made up of Swedes, Norwegians, Germans, a few of the older Portuguese, and a scattering of other nationalities. Boston, as regards its foreign commerce, is strictly a union port. As the unions will not admit Italians or Negroes to membership, it follows that there are practically none of these people employed in foreign commerce work. The coastwise men, much less important as a class, are unorganized and of a somewhat different racial composition. Among them are Portuguese, Polacks, Italians, Negroes, and a few Irish. But the unions have been able to prevent the influx of foreigners which has occurred in New York. The result is that in Boston many native-born Americans still enter the foreign commerce work.

The close organization has increased the self-respect of the men and given them a certain standing with their employers and among other workmen. Directly and indirectly it has raised their status. It has obtained for them a higher wage, more regular hours, more stability, and less risk in their work. The saloon, though by no means out of sight, is less frequented than in New York. Many Boston longshoremen are total abstainers.

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The nature of the work, too, in that it tends toward stability, reacts favorably on their personal and industrial character. Many ships stop at Boston to discharge a portion of their freight, and go to other ports to finish their discharging and to load. There is therefore more discharging than loading in the port, and more steady work for the longshoreman while it lasts, for discharging usually proceeds without a break, while in loading, delays in the collection of freight cause halts in the work and layoffs for the men.

All these conditions tend to raise the personnel of the Boston longshoreman. It is claimed that a given amount of work can be done with fewer men in Boston than in New York. On account of certain restrictions in the methods of work made by the Boston unions, it is less easy than in New York for an urgent job to be rushed through, but in straight day work the Boston longshoremen have the record for efficiency. This efficiency comes about from two causes: the personal characteristics of the men already mentioned, partly due to union influence, and the fact that there are practically no floating workers. Most of the longshoremen belong to the port and do its work regularly. Being familiar with its methods they lose no time bungling, but do exactly what is expected of them. The shenango who tarnishes the good name and lowers the industrial average of the New York longshoreman finds no place in Boston. The small amount of lighterage is done by the same men who work on the large ships.

### I. THE WORK

Though in the main the working gear of the two ports is the same, there are numerous differences in the way it is used. Variations also exist in the dialect of the two ports. Terms familiar enough in one are not understood in the other. Though in Boston the men are engaged much as in New York, the word "shape" is unknown there. The group of men assembled for hiring is called a "pick-up" or "ring." In New York, turns are taken by the fall around the drum end of the winch; in Boston, the fall is usually fastened to the cylinder or central drum. The Boston longshoreman, therefore, refers to New York as a "winch-end town."

In discharging, loads or "sling loads" are landed on deck and either "struck over" the side by another fall or trucked directly from deck to pier along skids.\* These skids are called "stages" because in certain forms of discharging they are used as stages with railings, and so keep the name throughout.

\* See also Appendix K, p. 252.





Discharging jute from an East Indian steamer at a Boston pier. Note the use of skids, or "stages," and the arrangement of booms and gear



Cranes on a coal wharf, Boston harbor, unloading coal from a barge by means of clam shell scoops



Loading at a Boston pier. The skids, or "stages," extend to the verge of the open hatchway. In the background lies the "Kronprinzessin Cecilie" interned during the war

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Unloading by stages is mainly used where cargo is to be discharged on to the second deck or loft of the pier, or where bulk cargo is to be dumped into lighters. With small ships—as for instance sugar ships—the stages are often extended directly from the ship to the lower deck of the pier. At low tide such a vessel is low enough for a stage to be run back on a gradual incline to the pier. In case this just fails to reach the pier a small, bevelled gang plank or “shoe” is used to connect the end of the stage with the pier.

The gangs are smaller than in New York. In discharging usually five men are worked in the hold,—two on a side and a hooker on. On deck, three or four men are worked,—a hatch man, a winch man, the man at the engine on the pier, and sometimes an assistant hatchman to “strike over.” From six to eight pier men are employed. In loading there are eight in the hold, two or three on deck, and from six to eight on the pier. Six men usually constitute a pier gang in both discharging and loading, but for certain cargoes extra men are required. In addition there is the hourly foreman. Hatch gangs as a rule vary from 16 to 18. The gang of 20 sometimes used on the Cunard Line is the largest known in Boston. It will be remembered that a gang of 23 is common in New York. Usually there is one gang to a hatch, but there may be two or even three.

Though individual foremen vary in their treatment of the men under them, there is little driving and abuse. The compact organization of the men makes them more independent as to the treatment they will accept. With the exception of the head foreman or “walking boss” the foremen are members of the union and engaged by the hour. When they are unable to find employment as foremen they do the actual cargo handling without loss of prestige. In interest and sympathy therefore they are closely allied to the men who work under them.

## II. THE UNIONS

But the great point in any comparison of these two ports is organization. In New York there are two unions, unsympathetic to one another, each blocking the activities of the other, making for discord, and counting in their membership but a small minority of the longshoremen of the port. In Boston practically the entire labor force of the foreign commerce division is one united body.

The history of Boston's longshore organizations does not show the same vicissitudes as does that of the New York unions. In 1847 the Boston Longshoremen's Provident Union was formed under a charter from the state. Originally this was a benevolent organization, but it

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gradually became a regular labor union,—the first longshore union in the country. In 1882, while the Provident Union was still the organization of the port, a strike for higher wages occurred. The men were receiving 30 cents an hour for day work and 40 cents for night work. They demanded 40 cents for day work and 50 cents for night work. After several weeks a compromise was effected. This is the only important strike in which the longshoremen of Boston have been involved.\*

About 1886 the longshoremen of Boston were organized by the Knights of Labor, and formed three assemblies which belonged to the District Assembly No. 3.† With the Provident Union, which had a membership of between 500 and 600, they comprised the entire organized body. In the early part of 1912 these three assemblies, together with the Provident Union, came under the jurisdiction of the American Federation of Labor. Today there are three locals working under charters from the International Longshoremen's Association.

### III. THE WAGE SCALE

Undoubtedly the most definite accomplishment of the unions has been the establishment of a wage scale. Before 1909 all work had been performed under a verbal agreement. During that year a dispute arose over the number of men per "tub"‡ employed in the hold in discharging bulk cargo. Eight men had been employed to discharge five tubs. As two men were required for each tub the fifth tub was an extra and was sent down while every couple was engaged in filling its own tub. There was no one to watch the extra tub and accordingly accidents were frequent. The men asked that for every tub used there should be two men employed. Committees were appointed representing the employers and the longshoremen. Their conferences resulted in a signed wage scale, which was to take effect September 14, 1909, and to last one year. Besides establishing a standard rate of wages, the agreement established the rule requested by the men that there should be two to a tub in handling bulk cargo, and fixed certain other rules for the work.

\* In 1903, when the teamsters of the city were on strike, the longshoremen went out in sympathy and remained out for three days.

† These three assemblies, in the order of their importance, were: O'Connell Assembly Number 7174; Noddle Island Assembly Number 5789; and Eureka Assembly Number 9623. The freight handlers are affiliated with the same district organization. If a freight handler desires to do longshore work he can obtain a transfer from his assembly to a longshore assembly.

‡ A bucket, or tub, of wood or iron, with iron handle, used for the handling of bulk cargo, such as coal, ore, chalk, sand, and so on.

## SOME ASPECTS OF LONGSHORE WORK IN BOSTON

This was the first wage scale ever signed in Boston, and the first longshore wage scale signed on the Atlantic Coast. Probably the employers were willing again to sign the same scale, but at the time of this investigation the men were holding off. They claimed that their wages should be increased to keep pace with the higher cost of living. In the meantime, by a sort of tacit agreement, all work was done under the old scale. In February, 1913, a new wage scale was adopted providing for somewhat higher rates of compensation.

The main provisions of this scale follow.

On general cargo for day work (7 a. m. to 6 p. m.) 33 cents an hour is paid; for night work (8 p. m. to 12 m. and 12:30 a. m. to 5 a. m.) the rate is 50 cents an hour; on Sundays and holidays, both day and night, the rate is 60 cents an hour.

On certain kinds of cargo which are dangerous or unusually heavy, the rate even for day work is higher. For instance, on bulk cargo and nitrate in bags the day rate is 35 cents an hour; on glucose and syrup in shipments of over 400 barrels, sugar, molasses, oranges and lemons, the day rate is 40 cents and the night rate is 50 cents per hour from 8 p. m. to 12 m. and 60 cents from 12:30 a. m. to 5 a. m.; on grain the day rate is 50 cents and the night rate (8 p. m. to 12 m. and 12:30 a. m. to 5 a. m.) is 60 cents. On "fire jobs" and work on wrecked and stranded vessels, the day rate is 50 cents, the night rate 60 cents, and the Sunday and holiday rate one dollar per hour.

For work during meal hours, and for each succeeding hour until relieved, double the prevailing rate is paid.

If ordered out for a half or a whole night's work and laid off sooner, men receive pay for the time for which they were engaged. When working on vessels in the harbor, they are paid from the time they leave the wharf until they return. When wanted for Sundays and holidays they are hired in gangs the evening before. The scale contains also specifications regarding the number of barrels which shall constitute a sling or truck load.

A number of unwritten rules have been worked out under this wage scale. No truck load may weigh over a half ton. At some piers, when the work is heavy, the men have the right to drop out singly or in small groups for refreshments in the middle of the morning and afternoon. If night work is to be done on a pier where work has been going on through the day, the night work must be given to those who have done the day work; the foreman may not engage fresh men. Yet very long stretches of work are rare and hours generally are shorter than in

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New York. On certain piers if the men work over seven minutes beyond the hour, they are paid for a quarter of an hour. On the whole, the rates of pay are distinctly higher than in New York for certain classes of work, overtime, and for specially hazardous work.

There is no legislation in the state of Massachusetts regulating the work of longshoremen or affording them special protection. Two hospital emergency stations are conveniently situated on the waterfront, where injured longshoremen may be taken for first treatment.

### IV. EARNINGS

It is as difficult to ascertain the earnings of longshoremen in Boston as in New York. Though the number of men is smaller and their industrial character higher, it is even harder to find accounts on which to base estimates. Probably the average of weekly earnings is the same as that of New York—from \$10 to \$12. If the rate of pay per hour is slightly higher and the oversupply much less, there is little overtime to make "big weeks." The balance between the amount of work to be done and the number of men who do it is fairly even.

### V. SHELTERS

In Boston little has been done for the longshoreman by the city or by private philanthropy. A longshoreman's exchange was started in 1884 by the Associated Charities of Ward VI, and run by the Oriental Coffee House Company. It was fitted with a coffee and lunch counter, a tobacco stand, reading facilities, telephone connections with the wharves, and desks for stevedores, at which men could be paid. The average weekly attendance during the last two months of its existence was 274. In less than a year after its foundation the place was discontinued. It was said there was little patronage in the summer; that no appreciable profit was to be made from the coffee and lunch stand; and that the saloon keepers opposed it. In return for money loaned from time to time to the stevedores the saloon keepers expected the paying off to go on, according to custom, in or near the saloons.

The next recorded effort occurred nearly twenty years later. The Concert Hall of the Sailors' Haven at Charlestown was thrown open for the use of longshoremen from October till June. Here reading matter and games are provided. In addition the longshoremen are allowed to attend the weekly concerts. During some seasons their average daily attendance has been 300.

## SOME ASPECTS OF LONGSHORE WORK IN BOSTON

### VI. SUMMARY

It is clear that the longshoreman of Boston is a step higher in the industrial scale than his fellow worker of the greater city. His work is more regular. A compact organization has added to his general industrial advantages and secured for him a signed wage scale. Owing to the greater care in the work and the greater efficiency of the men, the number of accidents is probably slightly less; but nothing has been done directly to reduce them and little to compensate. If the social and industrial environment in which the longshoreman works is better in Boston than in New York, it is so rather as the result of circumstances than of intelligent effort on the part of the community directed toward that end. For systematic attempts to improve the conditions of waterfront work it is necessary to study the more progressive ports of the old world.

## APPENDIX B

### DOCK LABOR IN LONDON

#### I. THE PORT OF LONDON

In attempting to solve the labor problems which have arisen on the New York waterfront, one must not make the mistake of neglecting the experience of foreign ports. London, for instance, has been a shipping center for many centuries. To those accustomed to the port of New York with its breadth of water surface and its extensive shore line the limited area provided by the River Thames must seem an insurmountable obstacle to the harboring of a world commerce. Yet in the year ending December 31, 1911, the total net tonnage of vessels entering and leaving the port of London "with cargoes and in ballast from and to foreign countries and British possessions and coastwise" was 39,179,153 tons. The value of the total imports and exports (excluding coastwise goods) for the same year was £368,202,536 (was \$1,793,146,350.32), an amount differing but slightly from the corresponding amount for the port of New York.\*

These results have been made possible by the construction of what are technically known as docks, built from the land surface by heavily capitalized dock companies at enormous expense. These docks are entered by narrow passages and contain basins which are adapted to the accommodation of sailing vessels or great passenger vessels, as the case may be. A wharf differs from a dock in that it is a structure "extending from the shore to deep water, so that vessels may lie close alongside." A quay is a solid artificial landing place made for convenience in loading and unloading vessels, and may be at the side of any natural waterway or within a dock.

The special feature of the docks which makes them available for large ships is the lock. By closing the lock gate, the water is retained and the ship kept afloat during the fall of the tide. Some of the docks are more than a century old; others are modern in construction and equipment. The Royal Victoria and Albert Docks—the largest and most

\* Third Annual Report of the Port of London Authority for the year ended March 31, 1912, pp. 1-2.



## DOCK LABOR IN LONDON

modern in London—contain a water area of 183 acres and berths for 60 large vessels besides quay accommodations for many smaller ships.

### II. EMPLOYERS, METHODS, AND DIVISION OF MEN

Employers of labor in London can be divided into four classes: dock companies, wharfingers, shipowners, and master porters or stevedores. The last three of these classes are formed of individual units which act independently. With the dock companies, however, there has been a steady consolidation, until at the present time there is practically only one in the port,—the Port of London Authority. This employs about 34 per cent of the labor of the port; the wharfingers about 41 per cent; the shipowners about 13 per cent; and the stevedores about 12 per cent.

The Authority has power to administer and improve the port and almost absolute freedom of action in so doing. Its Board consists of a chairman, a vice-chairman, and 28 members. Of these, 18 are elected and represent the shipping interests, while the remaining ten are appointed and represent various organizations, including labor unions. Yet notwithstanding its official power and representative management, the Port of London Authority is an individual employing body competing with other employers for the trade of the port.

The work in London differs in many details from the work in New York. The use of railways on docks and wharves is almost universal. The demand has been that goods should be brought as near to the vessel as possible. Frequently, where special classes of goods are shipped, the loading is from the freight cars directly to the vessel's hold. Sometimes when it is not convenient to place the goods on board immediately, they are temporarily stored in transit sheds.

But though differences exist, the actual labor required of the men is similar to that required in New York. There are the trucking on the quay, the slinging by fall or hauling by skid, the signaling to and by the gangway man, the manipulation of winches and cranes, and the stowing in the hold. There is also a similar conservatism of method—a dependence on hand labor and dearth of mechanical appliances.\*

The division of the men differs. The distinction of pier men, deck men, and hold men does not exist in London. There are two great divisions of dock workers. The skilled men, corresponding to the skilled longshoremen of New York, who do the actual loading (and of late years unloading) of vessels, are called stevedores. These men work usually in gangs and are employed by master stevedores, by the owners of the ships

\* There has been considerable increase in the use of mechanical appliances during the past few years, and this increase is likely to continue.

or their representatives, and a small proportion only are employed by the dock companies. They transfer the cargo between the quay or wharf and the vessel's hold. The ordinary "dockers" or "dock labourers"—the casuals—who compose the major portion of the "wages staff" of the dock companies, handle the goods on the quay or wharf and transfer them to or from the warehouses and sheds.\*

With this last distinction in mind, a brief consideration of the efforts of the dock companies, and of their successor, the Port of London Authority, to improve the conditions of dock labor, may throw some light on similar problems in New York.

### III. METHODS OF EMPLOYMENT BEFORE THE STRIKE OF 1889

Such difficulties as irregularity of employment, low wages, bad health conditions, and risks have been as characteristic of London dock labor as of the longshore work of New York. What is even more important for the present investigation, there has been for twenty years a lively public interest in the English docker. The attention of official and philanthropic England has been steadily fixed upon him, with the end of improving his condition kept consistently in view. And this has been not without effect.

The condition of dock and wharf laborers in London before the Great Strike of 1889, and indeed during the succeeding decade, has been characterized as beyond adequate description. The docks and wharves included in their labor force a great conglomeration of men from various trades and different classes of society. They were the industrial and social dust heap of the city. The following, written in 1897, accurately sets forth the conditions which had prevailed:

"At taking-on time at certain wharves, where the foreman would come and stand at the iron gates of the wharf entrance, there would usually be a crowd of from two to three hundred men. Probably seventy or eighty would be required, and those at the back of the crowd would climb on to the heads of their fellows, and roll over and over their heads to reach the foreman to get from his hand the metal ticket admitting

\* "After the dock strike of 1889 the dock companies practically ceased discharging and loading ships, and this work is now almost entirely controlled by ship owners, wharfingers, and master stevedores."—London Charity Organization Society. Report of Special Committee on Unskilled Labour, 1908, p. 208. Testimony of Fred Scrutton, of Scrutton Sons and Co., ship owners and West India merchants.

"It is necessary to point out that the dock companies' work is confined to warehousing work, which is far less skilled than the work of either loading or unloading, and that they have given up the loading and unloading previously undertaken by them." Report to the president of the Local Government Board on Dock Labour in relation to Poor Law Relief, by Gerald Walsh, p. 4.



*Courtesy Port of London Authority*

**The St. Katharine Docks, London, opened in 1828. The old warehouses which adjoin the quay contain some of the most valuable articles of produce which enter the port of London**

## DOCK LABOR IN LONDON

them to work. The scrambles were frightful."\* Such scenes are described by eye witnesses. Casual labor was at its worst.

The interest aroused in dock labor by the Great Strike gave rise to a series of investigations both individual and official. The result—a slow but material improvement in the conditions of dock labor—has expressed itself mainly along two lines: in the partial regularization of the employment and in legislation directed toward the elimination of accidents and compensation for injuries due to the work.

Before the strike the system of employment by the dock companies varied only slightly from dock to dock. Laborers were employed in gangs, either directly by quay or warehouse foremen in the employ of the companies, or by contractors to whom the work was let out. The quay and warehouse foremen took orders from the warehouse keepers and their deputies. The warehouse keepers were responsible to the superintendent of the dock and his deputy who, in turn, received instructions from the officials at the Dock House in the city.

Laborers were either permanent men who were sure of work all the year with a weekly wage of about 21s. (\$5.11),† or casuals, who were employed by the hour at a wage of 4 d. (8 cents), 5 d. (10 cents), and 6 d. (12 cents). Usually the wage was 5 d. Yet in certain sections 2 s. 6 d. (60 cents),—less than 4 d. per hour,—was commonly paid for a day of eight hours. Among the casuals were preference men who were all taken on before the others had a chance, and at some docks they were given tickets entitling them to preference in the hiring and were called ticket men. Sometimes the distinction was less sharply drawn and amounted merely to a tacit understanding between the foreman and certain casuals who were called "royals."

Under the contract system the dock companies bound the contractor to pay his laborers at a minimum rate. This rate was 6 d. (12 cents) an hour for the London and India Docks Joint Committee. Sometimes there was a "plus" system, where by division of the "plus" or bonus, men drew more than the minimum wage.

\* Mann, Tom: *The Position of Dockers and Sailors in 1897 and the International Federation of Ship, Dock, and River Workers*, p. 2. London, The Clarion Press, 1897.

† The real value of English as compared with American money is much greater than the nominal value. Computed on the basis of its buying power in food and rent—the two chief items in a workingman's budget—it is 52 per cent greater. If carfare and clothing be added the difference is certainly no less. See *Cost of Living in American Towns*. Report of an Inquiry by the Board of Trade into Working Class Rents, Housing and Retail Prices, together with the rates of wages in certain occupations in the Principal Industrial Towns of the United States of America. General Report LXXVI, London, Darling and Son, Ltd., 1911.

## THE LONGSHOREMEN

The work of the wharfingers,\* the keenest rivals of the dock companies, was organized on a similar plan. Labor was taken on by quay and warehouse foremen, who were directly responsible to the wharfingers. There was no class of preference men.

The export trade commanded a higher and better organized class of labor than the import trade. Stevedores—the men who loaded the cargoes into the holds of vessels—were skilled men engaged by master stevedores, who provided the necessary gear and contracted directly with shipowners and their agents. Stevedores could earn as much as 36 s. (\$8.77) a week.

The Thames lightermen and watermen loaded and navigated the heavy barges by the aid of which vessels discharged and loaded their cargoes overside. These men earned from £2 (\$9.74) to £3 (\$14.61) a week, and were a compact, close corporation which held the key to the situation in a strike, since it could paralyze the commerce of the river.

### IV. CHARLES BOOTH AND THE TICKET SYSTEM

The first man to make a thorough investigation of the dock laborer in London was Charles Booth. His *Life and Labour of the People* contains several chapters dealing with the riverside workers.† In his testimony before the Royal Commission on Labor, Transport, and Agriculture in 1892, he outlined a system for improving the conditions under which the docker works which has not as yet been superseded; which, in fact, furnished a basis for the efforts toward regularization of dock labor in the twenty years which followed.

Mr. Booth suggested the perfecting of a list system already in use. There should be, he said, a clearing between different departments at the docks so that those departments which were short of men might be supplied by those where there was a surplus. Managers know each afternoon approximately how much labor they will require on the following day. The men, therefore, when leaving work, should apply for information as to where they would be needed in the morning. Each manager should in turn apply to a central clearing department. A clearing with other trades was another feature of the program. For instance, the building trade is busy in summer, the slack season at the docks, and slack in winter, the busy season at the docks. An interchange of labor between

\* A wharfinger is a person who owns or who has charge of a wharf or premises where accommodation is provided for vessels or goods; one who makes a business of letting such accommodation.

† Booth, Charles: *Life and Labour of the People in London*. Vol. VII, Part V, Chapter I, pp. 392-432. London, Macmillan, 1903.

## DOCK LABOR IN LONDON

the two would be to the advantage of each. For the delay and danger due to the terrible fogs, Mr. Booth offered no remedy.

The main difficulty in the situation at the docks is, as has already been indicated, the large floating reserve of labor, far too great even for the maximum demand. The ticket system of the London and India Docks Company, a development of the principles laid down by Mr. Booth, was the first serious effort toward the regularization of dock labor and the elimination of casual employment. It is a system which carried the weight of twenty years' experience. For the sake of the light it may throw on the problems of longshore work in the port of New York, it is worth while to give brief consideration to the main features of the system. The data presented in the remainder of this section are based on portions of the testimony of a staff inspector of the London and India Docks Company before the Special Committee on Unskilled Labour of the London Charity Organization Society.\*

For the purposes of employment the entire system of the London and India Docks Company was divided into five controls which were subdivided into 45 departments. Each control had its own superintendent. The four classes of employes composing the labor force were, (1) the "permanent" laborers, with a guaranteed weekly wage; (2) the registered, or *A*, men, also with a guaranteed weekly wage; (3) the preference, or *B*, men, with a guaranteed wage per hour; and (4), casual men, employed as needed at the same rates as the *B* men. Other details, as to overtime pay and vacations, were adjusted according to the grading of the men. A small bonus was also paid according to the amount of work done.

From the laboring boys, who are trained to the docks from an early age, and from the "A" or registered men, were recruited the ranks of the permanent men. The registered or "A" men were chosen from the preference men (the *B* list) as needed, in order of priority. The *B* or preference men were taken from the steadiest and most efficient of the casuals.

As men of the permanent class became less robust they were drafted into some special work where experience counts more than physical strength. At the age of sixty-five years, and after at least fifteen years of service, they were pensioned. A permanent man of any age who after fifteen years' service was incapacitated for work by accident or illness was also pensioned. Besides the permanent laborers a number of preference (*B*) men received allowances in case of illness or disablement, and

\* London Charity Organization Society. Report of Special Committee on Unskilled Labour, pp. 114 ff. London, 1908.

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## THE LONGSHOREMEN

in some cases a small pension. The tickets issued to the B men were signed by the superintendent of the dock and renewed every quarter. There was little change from one quarter to another in the personnel of the lists.

A certain number of B men estimated on a basis of 40 or 45 per cent of the men usually at work, were detailed to each department of a dock or town warehouse.

"Every afternoon the head of each department forwards to the office of the Superintendent of the dock a labour indent form attached, which gives an estimate of the number of men which will be required on the subsequent day. The form also shows the number of weekly men actually employed on the date of the indent. By comparing the number of weekly men employed on the current day with the requirement for the following day, the prospective surplus or deficiency is ascertained, and at the foot of the form instructions are inserted by the Superintendent's clerk as to how the surplus is to be disposed of, or the deficiency made up. The forms are then returned to the department.

"When the requirements exceed the available number of weekly men, which is usually the case, forms are issued to the departments, showing not only the number but the registered numbers of the preference men needed in order of priority, and these forms are posted in conspicuous positions at each department in order that the preference men may learn how many will be required, and where they are to attend for work next morning. If next morning it is found more men than were indented for are wanted the department is at liberty to engage additional preference men from its own list; but the numbers must be called strictly in the order in which they appear on the list. When a department has exhausted its own list it is the rule for the officer to engage further men only in the order in which the numbers appear on a special list, which is arranged to give sets of 10 per cent of the men of each other department in the order of their priority. It is arranged thus in order to ensure the distribution of the excess work of any one department amongst the men highest on the lists of the other departments."\*

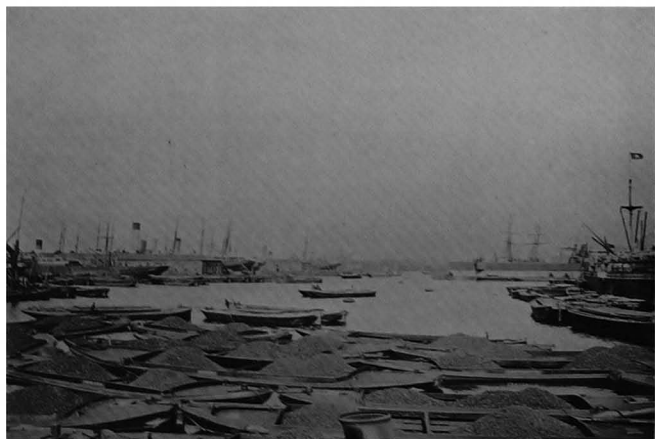
"The question may now arise as to what is done if any one of the controls has not sufficient work in its own departments to employ the whole of its weekly labourers. The answer is that when the day's returns are put together in the superintendent's office, and it is found that a number of weekly men will not be required, the superintendent of each of the other controls is telegraphed or telephoned to, and he is offered the sur-

\* Report of Special Committee on Unskilled Labour, pp. 135-136.



*Courtesy Port of London Authority*

Scene in the Royal Victoria and Albert Docks, London



*Courtesy Port of London Authority*

View from the western end of the Royal Victoria Docks, London. The Royal Victoria and Albert Docks form one system, the largest under the control of the Authority



*Courtesy Port of London Authority*

Scene at the Tilbury Docks, London



*Courtesy Port of London Authority*

View at the Tilbury Docks, London, showing the temporary storage sheds, the hydraulic cranes, and the railroad tracks on the quay. The very large ships of recent construction which sail to London use the Tilbury docks

## DOCK LABOR IN LONDON

plus men. He is bound to take the weekly men offered in lieu of employing his own preference men, which he would otherwise do."<sup>\*</sup>

Briefly, "a taking-on foreman can only engage preference men in the following order: first, his own departmental preference list must be called; secondly, the preference lists of other departments within his own control are to be taken; and thirdly, preference men from other controls have to be engaged before local or any other casuals are booked."<sup>†</sup>

### V. DISCUSSION OF THE TICKET SYSTEM

By some a ticket system such as that just outlined has been offered as a solution for the evils of casual employment. Though a smaller number of men obtain work, a larger proportion have steady employment. With regular pay they can establish a standard of living and maintain it. Their physical condition improves. Familiarity with the methods of a particular dock makes better work possible. If, as it has been objected, the list system makes the elimination of unfit individuals difficult, the casual system tends to force the employer to a selection almost exclusively from the unfit. Moreover, steady work with piece-work rates and a bonus furnishes as great stimulus to effort as the most unrelieved competition. Men who can not or will not earn their share in piece-work will soon find that their companions refuse to carry them. Men, on the other hand, working at time rates can be controlled more effectively by one authority which holds a record of their industrial character than by many who have no such record. The improved quality of the work done more than covers the additional expense of maintaining a permanent staff.

Yet it must be recognized that, with the exception of the Liverpool scheme, to be discussed in the following Appendix, no other British company or companies have attempted to apply the principles of the ticket system on a large scale, and that it has been strongly opposed by shipowners, ship brokers, and trade unions. The shipowners and brokers object to it on the ground that it diminishes competition and increases the expense to the employer, that the weekly wage makes it more difficult to get rid of the inefficient, and that supervision of men can be much closer when they are under foremen engaged by private firms than when they are under foremen in the employ of a large company. Shipping companies and contractors do, as has been indicated, work on a preference system which, though loose, gives the work a flexibility that a more rigid system might destroy.

The objections from the side of the men to such a system for the

<sup>\*</sup> Op. cit., p. 136.

<sup>†</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 137.

## THE LONGSHOREMEN

decasualizing of labor as that established by the London and India Docks Company have been stated as follows: (1) It would reduce the standard rate of wage. (2) It would introduce excessive driving under the bonus system. (3) No two hatches of a ship are of the same carrying capacity. If a gang was discharged from one hatch, which was not finished, to make room for preference men who had finished at the hatch where they were working, the men who were discharged would not come back another time. (4) By instigating the casual to make every attempt to get on a preference list it would increase the jealousy among the men and the bribery and corruption of the foremen. (5) Such a system might work at the London and India Docks Company where the work is practically uniform, but it would be impossible to apply it throughout the port where the work is varied and much of it is skilled. (6) "Above all," the men say, "we cannot recognize how any suggestion of decasualization which does not make provision for the man crushed out to get work is going to benefit the casual labourer; but, on the contrary, it makes his position infinitely worse than at present."\*

Yet when all has been said that can be said against the system, the fact remains that by means of it a step was taken toward the solution of the problem of casual employment. The graded classes of workers, each drawing from the best of the class below it and discarding its unfit into that class, must necessarily keep up the standard of character and work, and act both as a steadying influence and an incentive to the men. Employment by a single authority sets an economic value on the personal and industrial character of the men, which comparatively regular earnings enable them to realize.

It was the original purpose of the London and India Docks Company to raise the percentage of weekly men to 75 per cent and reduce that of the extra men to 25 per cent by the ticket system outlined. This result was attained in the year 1902. An additional increase in the relative percentage of weekly men during the three years following is to be explained by the leanness of trade during that period. The company was obliged to keep its agreements with the weekly men, but, work being short, took on comparatively few extras.

### VI. THE DEVONPORT AGREEMENT AND THE STRIKE OF 1911

In 1909 the Port of London Authority succeeded the London and India Docks Company, and on the twenty-seventh of July, 1911, the so-called Devonport agreement was made between the employers of dock

\* Local Government Board. Report on Dock Labour in Relation to Poor Law Relief. Letter from Mr. James Sexton, p. 32. London, 1908.

## DOCK LABOR IN LONDON

labor and the Transport Workers' Federation. By the terms of the agreement pay was to be raised 1 d. (2 cents) per hour for day work and overtime, making day work 7 d. (14 cents) and overtime 9 d. (18 cents) an hour. The case of workers already earning 7 d. (14 cents) was left to arbitration.

While the question of augmenting the weekly staff and extending the ticket system to those of its docks which had not been under the control of the London and India Docks Company was under consideration, a controversy arose. Owing to a misunderstanding of the terms some of the 7 d. (14 cents) men expected an immediate raise. A strike organized by the National Transport Workers' Federation and involving some 100,000 work people was the result. The shipping of the port was at a standstill. The strike was made an excuse for each body of workers to press its special demands, and the National Transport Workers' Federation took its stand on the principle that no section of the riverside workers that it had called out should return to work until the demands of all were granted. So far as the London dock laborers were concerned the matter was settled August 18, 1911, at a conference of shipowners and representatives of the National Transport Workers' Federation. Material gains resulted in nearly every branch of riverside labor. The position of the dock laborer remained substantially as it was under the previous agreement.

From the point of view of the value of the ticket system as carried out in London as an influence in increasing the industrial stability of the dock labor force, it is of interest to note that twice during the year 1911 and once at the beginning of the strike of 1912 the men threw up their agreement and went out. Whether or not this action of the men was justifiable need not be discussed here. The point which requires emphasis is that by going out without the notice agreed upon the men forced their employers to recognize the fact that the assurance of regular work with privileges at the end of a long term of service was no guarantee that they could be depended on in time of stress. This action of the men caused the Authority to doubt the value of the agreement and to question whether an expensive system which broke down under the least pressure was satisfactory. Nevertheless, the men were twice reinstated with full privileges in 1911.

During the years 1911 and 1912 there had been an unusually full volume of work. In consideration of the circumstances outlined the extra work was given to casuals. Consequently the relative percentage of extra men increased at the expense of the weekly men. After the strike of 1912 the permanent and registered men who had gone out were taken

## THE LONGSHOREMEN

back as B men. They not only forfeited their regular work and their privileges but were placed on the B list below the efficient men who had taken their places during the strike.

In spite of discouragements, however, the experiment in decasualization of labor undertaken by the largest employing body in London is valuable. If the "ticket system" as carried out by the Port of London Authority, developed from that of the dock companies, has been under existing labor conditions only partially satisfactory it has certainly been to some degree a success. It has strengthened into conviction what was until the experiment had been tried merely a well reasoned belief, that dock labor—the most uncertain of all casual labor—can be decasualized, but to this end unity of action throughout a sufficiently large area of employment is necessary in order that the labor supply of that area may be pooled.



**Floating crane "Samson," Liverpool. Capable of dealing with loads up to thirty tons in weight**



## APPENDIX C

### AN ATTEMPT TO DECASUALIZE DOCK LABOR IN LIVERPOOL

#### I. THE DOCK LABORER OF LIVERPOOL

Liverpool though a younger port than London is not far behind the latter in importance. In the year 1911 the import and export trade amounted to £336,439,017 (\$1,638,458,012.79),\* against £368,202,536 (\$1,793,146,350.32) for London during the same year. As might be expected, the problem of the Liverpool dockers is of more recent growth. The clearing house scheme devised in 1912 to meet this problem, though following even more closely than the ticket system of London the lines laid down by Charles Booth in 1892, is believed by some to be an additional step forward in the regularization of casual labor.

The dock laborers of Liverpool are divided as in London, but stevedores go by the name of shipmen and dock laborers proper are called porters. There are also subdivisions within these classes, founded as in New York on the subdivisions of the work.

Employers are (1) master stevedores and master porters who contract with shipowners and merchants; (2) shipowners who do their own stevedorage or portorage or both; (3) merchants who do their own portorage; and (4) the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board which employs labor in six closed docks.

Before the adoption of the clearing house scheme practically all dock labor was casual. Certain firms, such as the White Star, the Cunard, and Messrs. T. and J. Harrison, had a system of "preference" men or "low numbers," but the system was by no means general. There has, however, always been a rough preference for men who "followed" certain firms and were known to the foremen.

#### II. THE NEED OF ORGANIZATION

In April, 1912, a paper on the Liverpool Docks Problem† was read before the Liverpool Economic and Statistical Society by Mr. R. Williams,

\* Third Annual Report of the Port of London Authority, 1912, p. 2.

† Williams, R.: The Liverpool Docks Problem. Liverpool, The Northern Publishing Co., Ltd., 1912.

## THE LONGSHOREMEN

Divisional Officer for the North Western Division of Labour Exchanges.\* A study of statistics gathered in the port had convinced Mr. Williams that labor at the Liverpool Docks was sadly in need of organization; that all the characteristic evils of casual employment were at work toward the demoralization of the docker and the consequent reduction of his efficiency. The reserve of dock labor above the maximum demand was estimated at 7,000 men; yet during the month of January, 1912, there was, except during four days, a shortage of labor at certain docks, while at the same time every day showed a surplus for the port. On the eighteenth of the month the shortage in one section amounted to 1,092 men, and the same day showed a surplus in other parts of the port of 3,582 men. The problem of regularization was evidently to reduce the reserve to the lowest possible proportions. To this end two preliminary results had to be attained: (1) the total labor supply of the port had to be pooled; and (2) absolute mobility of labor must be attained.

### III. THE CLEARING HOUSE SCHEME

The scheme drafted by Mr. Williams in The Liverpool Docks Problem is an attempt to solve the problem of casual dock labor in Liverpool along these lines. It is known as the Clearing House Scheme† and went into effect in that port July 14, 1912, under the auspices of the Labour Exchanges. It is supported by the Board of Trade and by contributions from shipowners. It is given here as it has been adapted to practical conditions in Liverpool, and as nearly as possible in Mr. Williams' own words.‡

For the purpose of the clearing house system the port of Liverpool

\* A system of labor exchanges was established in 1909 by Act of Parliament. These exchanges are conducted by the Labour Department of the Board of Trade. Their expenses are paid out of Parliamentary funds. For the purpose of administration the country is separated into "divisions," each under the control of a divisional officer, who is a subordinate head of the labor department, and whose office acts as a clearing house for the transfer of workers.

† Any application of the principles underlying the Clearing House System would, of course, require modifications in the practical details to meet local conditions. For instance, one complication of the system peculiar to British ports is due to the insurance contributions which under the National Insurance Act must be deducted weekly by the employers from the pay of the men. These, in addition to contributions from the state and the employers, constitute a fund, publicly controlled, for compensation in case of accident or illness. Dock labor is not included among the trades listed in the section of the act which deals with unemployment. The fact that the clearing house system relieves the shipowners and other employers of the onerous duty of collecting and registering these contributions is probably one reason for their ready acceptance of the scheme.

‡ Williams, R.: *First Year's Working of the Liverpool Docks Scheme*. London, P. S. King and Son, 1914.

## AN ATTEMPT TO DECASUALIZE DOCK LABOR IN LIVERPOOL

is divided into six clearing house areas, each with its own local clearing house. A central clearing house for the management of general affairs and the clearing of wages is established in a location convenient to all areas. Each clearing house area has its own committee, and a Joint Committee\* of employers and workmen from all the areas acts as a final referee in matters of dispute.

Dock laborers assemble at stands where foremen select those they wish to make up their gangs. Under the Clearing House Scheme the ordinary stands are supplemented by "surplus stands." Two or three of these surplus stands are conveniently located in each area for the use of men who fail to secure work in the ordinary way. A surplus stand is a small hut in charge of one or two officials of the Board of Trade who have had dock experience. All the surplus stands in one area are connected by telephone with the local clearing house, which is in turn connected with the central clearing house. Notice can, therefore, be given almost immediately along the whole line of the docks of a shortage or surplus of labor at any point, and the labor distributed accordingly. Nearly all the firms are also connected directly by telephone with the clearing house of the area in which they are situated. By this system considerable progress has already been made toward overcoming the anomaly of a local shortage and a local surplus existing in the same port at the same time.

The clearing houses deal with six matters relating to dock labor, four of which will be described in detail.

1. *The Registration of the Men.*—This was effected in the following manner:

Between July 1 and July 13 every man working as a docker was required to present himself at the stand of the employer for whom he usually worked. There he received a slip which entitled him to a "tally."† Slips were divided into two blocks.

(1) Slips numbered consecutively were given out in numerical sequence to the more regular men, in order of preference as far as possible.

(2) Slips without any number on them were given to casual or irregular men in any order whatever. Each slip clearly showed at what clearing house the man was to register. A slip was given to any man who applied for it provided the firm could identify him as a man who had worked for it previously.

These two divisions correspond respectively to the classes of

\* Appointed under the so-called White Book Agreement of 1911, between employers and dock laborers.

† The tallies are small metal discs bearing letters and figures indicating the various areas in which they work and their numbers on the lists of the firms by which they are employed.

## THE LONGSHOREMEN

"company's" men and "clearing house" men. Men belonging to the first class are in reality preference men and are hired first at the stands of the particular firm whose tallies they bear. It is the intention of the founders of the system that other privileges shall be attached to the tally held by the company's men.

II. *The Payment of Wages.*—The procedure with regard to the payment of wages has called for considerable modification since the scheme was originally drafted. Each firm is now supplied with official wage sheets. These are of two kinds. Wage sheets containing tally numbers printed in sequence are supplied to the large firms. Sheets in which the tally numbers have to be written without fixed order are given to the smaller firms. All wage sheets of each clearing house area are of a color distinctive to that area. Firms which have drawn their labor supply from several areas must use wage sheets of as many different colors as there are areas from which the men have been drawn.

Each clearing house area is allotted a certain letter by which its tallies can be recognized, and each firm is given a definite block of numbers, always starting at an even hundred. Quay-porters and shipmen have different blocks of consecutive numbers. Each firm is allotted to a certain clearing house and the men belonging to that firm must register and always deal with that clearing house. They are, however, free to apply for work outside their clearing house area.

The scheme went into effect on July 14, 1912. On and after that date a taking-on foreman was obliged to satisfy himself that every man he engaged was in possession of a local clearing house tally. When a man is taken on, a record must be made both of the clearing house number and of the firm's tally number allotted to him. During the week the firm can deal with him under its own tally number. When wages are made up he must be identified not by the firm's tally number but by the clearing house number. Each firm is required to get duplicate sets of private tallies of its special color and clearly marked with its own letter or cypher; for each man is required to hand over his firm's tally to the clearing house as a receipt when he receives his wages, and these tallies cannot be returned to the firms in time for the Monday morning hiring.

Every firm is required to lodge pay sheets at the clearing house to which it is attached before midnight on Friday, the wages made up to 5 p. m. Friday. Firms are also obliged to pay a check covering their wage account into an agreed bank before 11 a. m. on Friday.

The clearance of wages takes place Friday night at the Central Clearing House, and the process occupies practically the entire night. The clerical staff of each area is accommodated in a separate room. When

## AN ATTEMPT TO DECASUALIZE DOCK LABOR IN LIVERPOOL

the wage sheets are received they are sorted by color and apportioned to their respective areas. First their numerical accuracy is verified; after this has been done they are divided among the clerks and each item of wages is transferred to pay-sheets containing printed numbers corresponding with those borne by the men. The object of this is to make sure that in case a man has worked for two or more firms his earnings will be brought together, his insurance contribution deducted, and the net total due him clearly shown in one sum. Thus a man who has worked for several firms or in different areas gets his whole pay in the local clearing house of the area in which he is registered, whereas formerly he was obliged to collect it from individual firms often far removed from one another.

The pay sheets are distributed by the dock managers to the local clearing houses early Saturday morning, with the sum of money necessary to pay the men. The amounts are divided among the various pay clerks according to the sheets with which they have to deal. The clerks count out their money and deposit each man's wages in small vertical trays or pigeon holes which bear the appropriate tally numbers. By this method of balancing the cash before paying off begins, the risk of error is reduced to a minimum. The paying off of the men begins at 10 a. m. Each clerk pays from 600 to 700 men. In order that the men may find their way easily to their pay windows their tally numbers are printed outside the pay huts.

Firms which wish to pay their workmen themselves may have special windows in their local clearing house. In such a case a man registered in the "A" area who bears the letter "A" on his tally must be paid at the "A" clearing house whether or not he has worked outside that area. Thus although a firm has a window in the "A" clearing house it will only pay men there who are registered in the "A" area. Men registered in the "C" area must, in case this firm has no window in the "C" clearing house, be paid there by the Board of Trade.

There are three methods of payment:

(1) A man who receives pay only from those firms which pay through the Board of Trade presents himself at the proper window and receives his pay from all firms in one sum, less his insurance contribution.

(2) In the case of a man who receives his pay only from a firm which pays its own wages the procedure is the same.

(3) The man who receives his pay both from a firm which pays only through the Board of Trade and from a firm that pays directly has obviously to attend at two windows in the local clearing house of the area in which he is registered. The insurance deduction is made at the pay window belonging to the private firm; while amounts due from other

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firms are paid in full by the Board of Trade. This arrangement requires firms paying directly to render to the Central Clearing House on Friday night a list of tally numbers of those men whom they intend to pay. Against these numbers on the Board of Trade sheets the letter "P" is inserted in the insurance column. The wages appearing on those sheets are then paid in full.

In case a man disputes the amount paid to him he is paid the amount shown on the wage ticket and moved on to a special dispute window. Here he receives a dispute form which he takes to his employer. If unable to settle the dispute with him, he may lay his case before the Clearing House Committee.

A voucher is given by the firms to any man who has worked for them during the current week and who, wishing to work outside the docks, applies for one in order to get his insurance card from the clearing house. The voucher is accepted as authority to stamp the card. If a man has not been employed inside the scheme during the current week, he simply deposits his tally at the Clearing House and receives his insurance card (unstamped) in exchange.

III. *The Fulfillment of Employers' Obligations under the Insurance Act.*—This is discussed on the following page.

IV. *Weekly Meetings of the Clearing House Committees.*—A clearing house committee is composed of five representatives of the employers and five representatives of the men registered within each area. In case of a deadlock a dispute is referred to the Joint Committee.\* The manager of the local clearing house acts as secretary of the committee of his area, but has no vote and takes no part in the proceedings. The clearing house committees deal with (1) the issue and withdrawal of tallies; (2) the adjustment of disputes in connection with work done at the clearing house; (3) the consideration of matters affecting its area referred to it by the Joint Committee; (4) advice to the Board of Trade with respect to the appointment of the indoor and outdoor staff of the clearing house; and (5) suggestions for the improvement of the machinery.

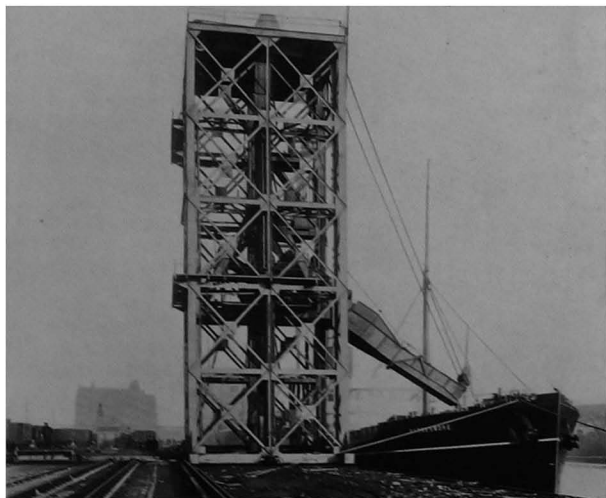
On the Joint Committee, employers and men have equal representation. It meets once a month when the proceedings of the clearing house committees are submitted to it for confirmation. The Divisional Officer of Labour Exchanges or his deputy is present but has no vote. In case of continued disagreement of the Joint Committee the matter is left to be provided for by the consent of the parties disagreeing.

The clearing house committees practically control the labor supply of the port. They draft the detail working of the clearing house and it is

\* See p. 201.



**Hydraulic moveable coaling crane, Liverpool. Capacity thirty tons. The latest coaling device**



**Hydraulic moveable coaling hoist, Liverpool. Capacity thirty tons**



Roof crane for discharging goods from vessels, Liverpool. Capacity thirty cwt.



## AN ATTEMPT TO DECASUALIZE DOCK LABOR IN LIVERPOOL

their function to modify or improve the system as experience shows its weak points. They must decide when the labor supply of the port needs augmentation. It has been suggested that some system could be devised by which respectable boys drafted in for some of the lighter jobs would subsequently be given preference tallies and thereby improve the status of dock work.

In addition, these committees, formed as they are of masters and men, should promote good feeling and the recognition that there are two sides to every question. Thus they should in time be a powerful factor in abolishing sectional disputes.

V. *The Provision of Post Office Savings Facilities.*—The depositing of money is made as convenient as possible in order that dockers may be encouraged to save.

VI. *The Dissemination of Information.*—Through the clearing house, for instance, the men are notified of irregularities in the times or places where stands are to be held or where they will be needed on the following day.

In case of trade disputes between employers and men the machinery provided in this agreement lapses in the area affected, except in so far as its continuance may be necessary for the payment of wages and of contributions under the Insurance Act.

### IV. DISCUSSION OF THE CLEARING HOUSE SCHEME

Several characteristics of this scheme deserve mention. It is based on the idea of federation of employers and men rather than on the idea of a partial monopoly by employers, as is the ticket system of London. Liverpool is strictly a union port. No man but a union man can be employed at the docks. The scheme is supported by the unions. Although a large body of the workers, through misunderstanding of the scheme, struck at the time of its inception, they did so contrary to the orders of their union.\*

It has already been suggested that the National Insurance Act was a very useful lever in inducing employers to agree to the scheme. The Board of Trade, by taking over the liabilities of the employers with respect to the stamping of the dockers' books and the collection of contributions, saves them considerable work, worry, and inconvenience. In addition, the pooling system of dealing with employers' contributions is so framed as to induce them to decasualize. For instance, every docker has to pay a contribution for National Health Insurance for every week during which

\* Williams, R.: *One Year's Working of the Liverpool Docks Scheme*, pp. 7-8.

## THE LONGSHOREMEN

he is employed. The employer has also to pay a contribution for every individual he employs. If the clearing houses pay 20,000 men in a given week, the employers pay 20,000 contributions. These contributions are debited to the individual employers in proportion to the actual number of men they employ. Consequently the employer who employs a large number of individuals very irregularly has to pay much more in contributions than the one who, though he may be doing the same amount of work, employs fewer men more regularly.

Tallies were given to all men working at the docks at the time the scheme was put into effect. It was not intended that the reserve should be immediately reduced. But with the added difficulty of obtaining work at the docks the inflow from other trades will be discouraged and there will be no chance for stray workers passing through or stranded in Liverpool to obtain temporary employment as dockers. In other words, no one is squeezed out of employment, and therefore one of the main objections to decasualization is removed.

The Liverpool scheme has been carefully thought out and promises well. It contains some new features and some adaptations of old principles. The fact that in it the men, the masters, and the government all are represented is its strongest point. There is no party of opposition.

## APPENDIX D

### ATTEMPTS TO IMPROVE THE CONDITIONS OF DOCK LABOR IN ENGLAND BY LEGISLATION

The development of a body of laws regulating dock labor has already been referred to as one of the effects of the strike of 1889 and of the public interest to which that strike gave rise. During the last ten years especially, the pressure of the labor party in Parliament toward labor legislation has been a factor of increasing importance. These laws have built up a body of obligations and penalties which have materially reduced the risks of the trade and softened the economic hardship of accidents.

In the year 1889 the Lancet Special Commission had found so many evil conditions in the work at the docks that the state was called on for some law "to prevent the loss of life and limb that undoubtedly results from excessive competition in the rapid loading and unloading of ships." Some of the evil conditions noted were "the insufficient pay, the irregularity of employment, the long hours wasted waiting in the cold and the wet at the dock gates." But the main stress was laid upon the number of accidents and injuries which were "for the most part preventable." The leading causes assigned for these were: the reckless haste and speed with which the work was done; the pushing and urging of the men by the "gangers" (foremen) until they were rendered so nervous that they made mistakes; the often hasty and careless slinging of the drafts; the slipperiness of the ground on which they worked, causing the men to fall and be crushed by the heavy loads they were carrying; the insufficient number of men employed to do the work. The gear was often defective and faulty and breaks caused injuries. Although all this was more than twenty years ago, in England, it sounds like an echo of present-day conditions in the port of New York.

Accordingly on July 6, 1895, Parliament passed "An Act to amend and extend the law relating to Factories and Workshops," so that "The provisions of this Act with respect to the power to make orders as to

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dangerous machines, shall have effect as if—every dock, wharf, quay and warehouse, and, so far as relates to the process of loading or unloading therefrom or thereto, all machinery and plant used in that process . . . were included in the word factory. . . . ”\* This Act came into operation January 1, 1896.

In 1899 dock accidents were exhaustively investigated by two of H. M. Inspectors of Factories who had had special experience of docks, and who were appointed by the Secretary of State for the purpose.† Their report made it clear that many of the dock accidents were preventable. It was sent to dock owners and others who might be interested throughout the country. The circular letter which accompanied it, addressed to occupiers and others, stated that “the occupation of a dock labourer is one of the most dangerous of those that come within the scope of the Factory Act.” A little later, the same inspectors made another report on the same subject. On September 30, 1902, the process of loading, unloading, and coaling any ship was certified, in pursuance of section 79 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901,‡ to be dangerous. Accordingly in July, 1903, the Secretary of State transmitted to occupiers of docks and others, a tentative draft of regulations proposed for docks, and so on. These regulations were issued for consideration. Objections could be made in writing, by the employers, the work people, or by any persons affected by the regulations, these objections later to be the subject of inquiry. Objections were made and in January, 1904, public hearings began. On October 24, 1904, Statutory Rules and Orders No. 1617 were promulgated, containing regulations for docks, wharves, and quays. These had been carefully considered and were full and comprehensive.§

Under the Factory and Workshop Act there was a requirement, passed August 17, 1901, that any accident which caused loss of life or such bodily injury as to prevent work for three consecutive days following the injury should be reported forthwith by written notice to the inspector of the district. Fines for failure to observe any of the provisions of this Act were prescribed, these fines to be applied for the benefit of the injured person if the Secretary of State so determined. The section (19) of this Act relating to the reporting of accidents was superseded on De-

\* See Appendix F, p. 228.

† These inspectors (J. S. Maitland and Sydney Eraut) made a “Special Report upon the Causation and Prevention of Accidents at Docks, Wharves and Quays,” published in full in the Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories and Workshops for the year 1899.

‡ Regulations for Dangerous Trades under Section 79 of the Factory and Workshop Act of 1901.

§ See Appendix G, p. 233.

## ENGLISH LEGISLATION FOR DOCK WORKERS

ember 21, 1906, by the Notice of Accidents Act,\* which provided that written notice should at once be sent to the inspector of the district of any accident occurring in a factory or workshop. The accidents were classified. Those occurring in a certain manner were to be reported even if there were only the loss of one day to the injured. In ordinary work the accident must be reported if there were disablement for more than seven days.

On December 21, 1906, was passed "An Act to consolidate or amend the law with respect to compensation to workmen for injuries suffered in the course of their employment." This Act greatly widened the field of compensation and reduced the period of disablement from a fortnight to one week.† The Secretary of State directed that returns should be made for mines, quarries, railways, docks, and so forth, of the number of injuries in respect of which compensation had been paid, the amount of the compensation, and such other particulars as might be required.

Laws have also been enacted which bear directly on the problem of unemployment and decasualization. The Labour Exchanges Act of 1909 has already been referred to in connection with the Liverpool scheme for the decasualization of dock labor.‡ The act has made it possible for the Board of Trade to set up the machinery for centralizing labor and for actually putting the demand in touch with the supply.

These exchanges have already been of great service to employers and workmen. For instance, for the month of November, 1912, there were 81,853 applications on the registers of the exchanges. The number of situations filled was 60,219. Without the Labour Exchanges it would be impossible to carry out the organization of dock labor or of any kind of labor whatever.

Part II of the National Health Insurance Act applies directly to dockers. It has already been shown to have been very useful in inducing employers to agree to the scheme for the decasualization of dock labor in Liverpool.

\* "An Act to amend the law relating to Returns and Notifications of Accidents in Mines, Quarries, Factories, and Workshops, and under the Notice of Accidents Act, 1894."

† Statutory Rules and Orders No. 17, dated January 15, 1908.

‡ See Appendix C, pp. 199 ff.

## APPENDIX E

### THE HARBOR WORKERS OF HAMBURG

England is not the only country which has attempted to improve the industrial condition of the dock laborer and to reduce the risks to which his occupation subjects him. Hamburg, the greatest seaport of Continental Europe, has for many years been systematically attacking the problems of its waterfront. It already possesses the finest docks in the world, and extends to its harbor workers the same state care that prevails throughout the industrial system of the Empire. But its unique achievement is the widespread use of labor-saving machinery.\*

#### I. THE PORT

Hamburg lies on the bank of the Elbe, 86 miles from the North Sea, and is a free-city state, financially independent and self-dependent, a sovereign member of the German Empire. Her ocean commerce almost equals that of New York in value; in Europe it is surpassed only by that of London. The harbor is the last word of science applied to the shipping industry. Modern engineering has dug the channel to the sea which makes it possible for the largest of modern ships to dock in the great basins of the port, and has created the great quays and basins, fitting them with the most effective mechanical appliances yet devised for handling cargoes.

The first impression one receives of the harbor is not so much of size as of intense activity. The great basins are full of ocean vessels moored to the quays and mooring posts, of canal boats, huge river barges, tugs, lighters, coal barges, launches, and harbor steamers. The canals between the basins are choked with motor boats and barges. Beside it the harbor of New York with its widely separated traffic centers and broad rivers seems quiet—almost unimportant.

Like the docks of London and Liverpool the basins of Hamburg are cut out of the land. They are, however, open to the river, without gates, for their entire width. There are about 20 great basins in the port with a surface area of over 700 acres. Their size can best be appreciated by realizing that the Hamburg American Line requires only three for its

\* Clapp, Edwin J.: *The Port of Hamburg*. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1912.



Plan of Hamburg Harbor, 1910. Scale 1 to 10,000



**Cross section of the Crown Prince quay, Hamburg**



## THE HARBOR WORKERS OF HAMBURG

entire fleet of more than 150 ships. The largest basin is 3,500 feet long (two-thirds of a mile) and about 1,000 feet wide. The quays and basins are constructed by the state, which practically means the city of Hamburg, as we have seen, and the entire harbor is its property. Down the center of the larger basins there are double rows of mooring posts, to which ships can tie up. The high dues of the state quays force many ships, especially tramp steamers and regular liners carrying bulk cargo, to use these mooring posts. Little but package freight is loaded at the piers. The three largest ocean steamship companies (Hamburg-Amerika Linie, Woermann und Deutsche Ost-Afrika Linie, Deutsche Levante Linie) lease their piers from the city. These three lines are known in Hamburg as the Pachtbetriebe, or leasing companies. The smaller lines and the European lines with smaller ships use the state quays and pay quay dues for their use.

The equipment of the Hamburg quay is, as has been said, far more complete than that of the New York pier. On practically every quay in the harbor there are railroad tracks, over which goods are transported to distant markets, as well as roadways for drays, which carry the local traffic. The arrangement of the newer quays deserves a detailed description. A few feet from the edge of the pier usually is a railroad track. Above this track stands a row of "half-portal" electric cranes.\* Next comes the raised platform of the quay shed, then the huge shed itself. Beyond the inside shed platform is another railroad track, flush with the roadway which extends along the quay, leaving a broad grass-covered space in the center. On the other side of the quay, which also faces the water, this arrangement is repeated.

Cargo is handled with much ease and simplicity by means of various types of traveling cranes† which are placed about 100 feet apart along the edge of the quays. These cranes are operated by electricity furnished by one of several central power houses. The fact that they are movable makes it possible for all hatches of a ship to be worked at once. The regulations of the state quay department declare that it is the duty of the department to furnish, wherever practicable, one crane for every hatch,

\* This type of crane is constructed and operated as follows: A single rail runs along the edge of the quay, and the vertical leg of the crane support stands on this rail. The horizontal arm of the support runs on a rail halfway up the wall of the quay shed. The arch thus formed leaves room so that a freight car may be run on a railroad track below. On the outer end of the horizontal arm of the support is the platform, which is both the support for the motor and the cab for the operator. From this platform rises the boom of the crane itself. The angle of the boom is fixed so that it has only a circular motion. The entire crane, however, can run on its two rails along the edge of the quay.

† See illustrations opposite pp. 214, 215, and 218.

## THE LONGSHOREMEN

together with an adequate number of workers.\* There are a few floating cranes for handling iron beams and other cargo too heavy to be lifted by the ships' winches or the quay cranes. Features of loading from and discharging into lighters in mid-stream and the handling of grain and coal need not be entered into here.

If a cargo needs no sorting, the crane may place the drafts directly into a freight car waiting on the track under the crane; if it requires sorting the drafts are carried over the track and dropped onto the shed platform. After the cargo has been discharged it may be removed in one of several ways. Lighters may tie up to the pier after the ship has gone, and the traveling cranes may again be used for loading. A freight car may stand on the track on the inner side of the quay shed, and to this the goods may be trucked directly. A dray may draw up on the roadway, close to the inner platform, and heavy goods may be lowered into it either by small cranes or by winches located on the quay.

When a liner is to discharge and take on cargo, it is sometimes moved from one shed—often from one quay—to another for the two operations. This, together with the highly developed mechanical equipment of the Hamburg piers, makes loading and discharging far more systematic and simple than in the United States. It seems, on the surface, as though it must also be more rapid. Steamship company officials, however, deny this. They admit the superiority of the equipment in Hamburg, but claim that it takes less time to get out a ship in New York. The greater prevalence of night work and the custom of speeding up the workmen in the latter port account in part for this greater rapidity of work. During the past few years, however, Hamburg has increased its ability to handle traffic rapidly by building larger and larger quay cranes. A bridle is often used on the fall, by means of which three or four drafts can be handled at a time instead of one or two. Yet so great are the precautions taken in the work that the risk of accidents is by no means correspondingly increased.

## II. CLASSIFICATION OF THE WORKERS

Since the commerce of Hamburg is so great, it requires the services of many men to handle it. In August, 1912, careful estimates placed the number of fairly regularly employed harbor workers or *hafenarbeiter* at about 22,500 to 23,000. This number was divided according to the branches of the work approximately as follows:

\* Betriebs- und Gebühreordnung für die Kaianlagen (Hamburg), 1907, p. 8.



**View of the Jonas basin, Hamburg**

## THE HARBOR WORKERS OF HAMBURG

### HARBOR WORKERS IN HAMBURG IN 1912, ACCORDING TO BRANCHES OF THE WORK

Branch of work	Harbor workers according to estimate of	
	The director of the Hafenbetriebs-Verein	The chairman of the Hamburg branch of the German Transport Workers' Union
Schauerleute (Deck and hold men)	6,000	6,000
Kaiarbeiter (Pier men)	7,000	7,000
Ewerführer, etc. (Lightermen, bargemen, etc.)	2,500	3,000
Kohlenarbeiter (Coal handlers)	1,500	1,500
Schiffsreiniger (Ship cleaners)	1,300	1,300
Kesselreiniger (Boiler cleaners)	400	400
Speicherarbeiter (Granary workers)	1,200	600
Lagerhausarbeiter (Warehouse workers)	600	1,200
Binnenschiffahrt (Workers in harbor shipping, etc.)	800	800
Hafenschleppschiffahrt (Workers in harbor tugging, etc.)	600	600
Harburgarbeiter (Workers in Harburg)	550	550
Total . . . . .	22,450	22,950

The men who actually load and unload vessels are divided into two instead of three classes as in New York. The schauerleute are the deck and hold men. The kaiarbeiter are quay workers or pier men. These classes are regarded as distinct branches of harbor workers. They are hired separately, paid different wages, and join the union as separate branches, as will be shown in the following section.

It will be noticed that after the two groups of longshoremen proper (schauerleute and kaiarbeiter) the lightermen are next in number and importance. The approximately 4000 harbor vessel, tug, barge, lighter, and canal boat workers are to be accounted for by the tremendous amount of lighterage necessitated by the river traffic and the reshipment trade. The 1,800 granary and warehouse workers are required because of the importance of the warehouse work in the free port district.\*

\* When Hamburg entered the German Customs Union in 1882 it had a well-developed reshipment trade which it desired to strengthen. It therefore stipulated that a certain part of its harbor and waterfront should be excluded from the Union and set aside as a Freihafengebiet or Free Port District. Today the free port is

## THE LONGSHOREMEN

### III. ORGANIZATIONS OF MEN AND EMPLOYERS

#### I. THE UNION

The distinguishing feature of the labor situation of Hamburg is the organization of both men and employers. With few exceptions the harbor workers are Germans, and the great preponderance of one nationality makes for unity of feeling and concerted action. Fully a third are members of the union. As matters of employment and conditions of labor are closely bound up with these organizations, a brief account of them is essential.

The history of the building up of the Hamburg union is a story of monumental patience, devotion to a cause, and ceaseless effort. In the year 1890 the union of harbor workers of Germany was founded. In Hamburg the members did not belong to a local organization, but to separate branches of the main organization according to their occupations. Each branch was independent and had a separate governing board and a separate treasury. There were continual conflicts between the several branches and the strong employers' organizations, and gradually the men realized that greater strength would be attained by unity. Finally, in February, 1908, the branches united into one association. On July 1, 1910, this association joined the German Transport Workers' Union as a harbor workers' section.

The union membership in Hamburg in 1911 was 11,050.\* This total includes a few groups not strictly harbor workers but included with them for convenience of organization. The proportion of lightermen, harbor boatmen, coal trimmers and handlers, and similar groups who are organized, is very large. On the other hand, only 2,813 schauerleute out of an estimated total of about 6,000,† and 730 kaiarbeiter out of an estimated total of about 7,000, are union members. This is easily accounted for. Almost a third of the schauerleute are under contract with the employers' association,—the Hafetriebes-Verein (Harbor Industries As-

one of the most important factors in Hamburg's commerce. It has an area of 2,508 acres of land and water, and includes a section of the main channel of the Elbe, with several of its side arms and branches. The Elbe River traffic is not impeded by the Freihafengebiet, for there is a belt canal which enables vessels to go around the district without entering it. Goods are brought up the river under the care of a pilot, who is also a custom officer, and taken directly to the piers, where they are unloaded, sorted, and reshipped on coastwise vessels or stored in the great free port warehouses, all duty free. It is only when they are to go inland that they must pay the regular German duties.

\* Jahresbericht der Ortsverwaltung, Hamburg, Deutscher Transportarbeiter Verband, 1911, p. 5.

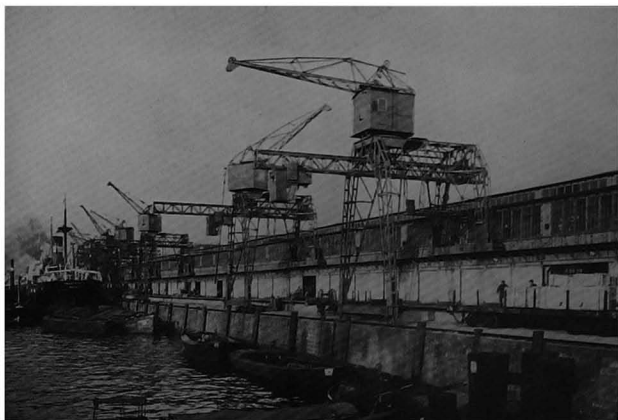
† For estimated numbers in all groups, see list on p. 213.



Moveable electric cranes on the Versmann quay, Hamburg



Electric trolley cranes on the Kaiser quay, Hamburg



**Moveable cranes at the Australia quay, Hamburg**



**Moveable cranes, showing railroad tracks beneath and platform of the pier shed. Along the wall of the shed and at the edge of the pier are seen the tracks on which the cranes are moved**

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sociation) described in the following pages,—and the terms of their contract make it difficult for them to join the union. Further, most of the *seiarbeiter* are state employes working under a contract with the quay administration department of the State of Hamburg, to which the quays belong, whose contract also practically prevents their becoming members of the union. Considering these handicaps the growth of the organization is remarkable.

The great power of the union lies in its control of so large a part of the labor market. This has brought about its practical recognition by the employers. All wage agreements or tariffs are signed jointly by the employers' association and the union. They apply not only to union members but to all workers in the same branch of work and of the same degree of regularity. The union has a protection and intercourse commission which presents recommendations to the harbor inspection department, the various companies, and other authorities. These recommendations have reference to all sorts of matters affecting the comfort and safety of harbor workers, such as fixing lights to dangerous mooring posts, providing better workmen's waiting rooms, safe store rooms for bicycles, and so on.

### 2. THE EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION

The *Hafenbetriebs-Verein*, or Harbor Industries Association, was founded in 1906 to unite "the employers engaged in harbor industries in Hamburg-Altona and Harburg, for the purpose of maintaining and furthering peaceful relations between employers and employes, and warding off struggles tending to disturb these relations. The means to attain this end are: Organization of the labor market by employment exchanges; adjustment of working conditions by means of wage tariffs, by installing contract workers in the establishments of the members, by welfare 'arrangements' for the benefit of the workers, and other regulations."<sup>\*</sup>

When an employer joins the association he becomes party to a contract with it, binding him to obedience. Thus the association can bring legal pressure to bear upon its members whenever it may be necessary for the enforcement of its decrees. Every member is pledged to hire his workers solely through the employment exchanges conducted by the association, to pay the wages established by the tariffs, and to act in all other ways, in his dealings with his employes, according to the regulations laid down by the association. Difficulties arising from these regulations must be settled by the court of arbitration of the association. Disobedience or failure to fulfill his obligations makes a member liable to a fine imposed

<sup>\*</sup> *Satzungen des Hafenbetriebs-Verein in Hamburg E. V.*, 1912, p. 3.



## THE LONGSHOREMEN

by the board of directors. The power of this association in the port is shown in the following section.

### IV. METHODS OF EMPLOYMENT

The same causes for uncertainty and irregularity in longshore work exist in Hamburg as in other ports. The ocean is there as elsewhere the capricious master of the ships it bears. In addition the port has one disadvantage attributed universally to London but not generally realized as characteristic of Hamburg—the prevalence of fog. Hamburg has been known to have 126 foggy days in one year. With such a climate accurate shipping schedules are manifestly impossible. Notwithstanding, Hamburg has gone a long way in organizing its labor market. This has been brought about by a system of labor exchanges, conducted by the Harbor Industries Association; and by the classification of workers according to regularity of employment.

We shall consider the system as it applies to the two main branches of harbor workers, schauerleute and kaiarbeiter. Each of these branches is divided according to regularity of employment into three classes: kontrakt or feste arbeiter (contract or permanent workers), hilfsarbeiter or kartenarbeiter (assistant workers,—generally called card workers), and gelegenheit-arbeiter (casual workers). Although these three divisions are not analogous to the weekly men, preference men, and casuals of the London and India Docks Company, there are many points of resemblance between them, and they represent a similar attempt to establish graded classes of workers according to ability and regularity.

The contract workers are hired by the week. The contract schauerleute (the deck and hold men) are paid by the individual companies or stevedores for whom they work, but in most cases their contract is with the Harbor Industries Association. The contract kaiarbeiter (or quay workers), as has been stated, are employed directly by the quay department of the State of Hamburg, or by one of the three leasing companies.\*

The assistant or card workers are employed by the day, half day, or three-quarters day. The card schauerleute are hired only through the Harbor Industries Association, while more than half of the card kaiarbeiter are hired by the state. The others work for the three great leasing companies but are supplied to them by the Harbor Industries Association.

The casual schauerleute are employed by the same association, which also hires about half the casual kaiarbeiter for the three leasing companies, the other half being hired by the state. No casual worker in

\* See p. 211.

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either branch receives work till the supply of contract workers and card workers is exhausted.

The Harbor Industries Association now includes every one of the 53 stevedoring firms and steamship companies doing stevedoring work, and through this organization they hire the men for practically every branch of harbor work. It has 10 offices at various points, for the employment of different branches of workers or to furnish laborers for different sections of the harbor. The successful organization of these labor exchanges has been the most effective means of lessening the amount of casual work. As their service has been greatest in supplying work for schauerleute, the card worker of that branch will serve to illustrate the method of employment.

When a man first decides to become a schauerleute and to earn his living regularly at that trade, he applies at the central bureau of the Harbor Industries Association for a yellow work card.\* This bears a number and his name. He is then a registered card schauerleute. Before he is accepted he must declare his last previous occupation and show proofs that he is twenty-one years of age, of good character, and a member in good standing of a recognized sickness insurance society and an invalidity insurance institute. Cards are issued according to the demand for workers. They can be withdrawn if a worker refuses to do work given him or to work with other men; if he fights with or threatens other workers or foremen; or if he is in any way seriously neglectful of his duty.

Schauerleute are assigned work in any one of five of the exchanges. They are taken on between 5:30 and 9:00 in the morning, between 11 and 1 at noon, and between 5 and 7 at night. An employer may order the number of men he wishes by telephone or in writing, or by coming himself or sending his representative to hire them. The men gather in a large room which has a small platform extending out into it. An official of the exchange stands on this platform and selects the men. If the employer or his representative is present he may stand beside him and point out the men he wants, but the official does the actual hiring. Often representatives of several companies are waiting and have to be supplied in rapid succession.

When a man is taken on, he hands to the exchange official his work card and receives in return a slip bearing the name of the company for which he is being hired. The official registers the numbers of the work cards and hands the cards to the employer. The latter then collects his men outside the office, gives them further instructions, and takes them

\* As early as 1898 a card system was introduced for the hiring of schauerleute by the Stevedores' Association of the port.

## THE LONGSHOREMEN

with him or sends them to the ship where they are to work. They hand in the slips bearing the employer's name as evidence that they have been chosen. They may work for several days on the same ship or for the same employer without being rehired. Not until the job for which they were hired, or their part in it, is done, do they receive from the employer their work cards as a sign of dismissal. They are then expected to report promptly at one of the exchanges for a new job.

By giving up his work card and accepting a job, the schauermann pledges himself to appear at the time and place directed and to do the work expected of him, whatever it may be. If he refuses to do any work required of him, his work card may be forfeited or temporarily withdrawn. A workman is expected to be orderly and to obey the house regulations while he is waiting in an exchange. The hiring of drunk or disorderly workers is forbidden.

If an employer does not wish to have a certain workman sent to him, he may notify the exchange to this effect. Unless such notification has been given, however, an employer is pledged to accept any workers assigned to him. A record of all workers employed must be kept by each employer and sent once a week to the central bureau. Under no circumstances may an employer belonging to the Association hire workers directly or in any way except through an exchange, nor may he give work to men who have been excluded from its list. Before the tenth of every month each schauermann must come to the central bureau, bringing his sickness insurance society book to show that his dues are paid up. His work card is then stamped for the month.

All the exchanges are connected by telephone. If the demand for workers is too great for the supply at one office and the supply too great for the demand at another, a launch or small harbor vessel promptly transfers the requisite number of men from the exchange where there is a surplus to the place where they are needed. Until the supply of card workers has been exhausted, no casual workers may be employed. These casuals have no work cards. They receive a ticket good only for the single job for which they are hired. In consequence the bulk of the work on the ship always falls to a picked body of men, who can be shifted about from one point in the harbor to another as they are needed.

The following table shows the proportion of work done by the three classes of schauerleute engaged through the Harbor Industries Association in 1911:\*

\* Jahresbericht des Hafensbetriebs-Verein, 1911.



**Seventy-five ton crane at the Kaiser Wilhelm Basin, Hamburg**



**Moveable electric cranes on the Kuhwärder quay, Hamburg**



**Looking into the Baaken Basin, Hamburg**

## THE HARBOR WORKERS OF HAMBURG

**SCHAUERLEUTE ON THE LIST OF THE HAFENBETRIEBS-VEREIN AS CONTRACT AND PERMANENT WORKERS, CARD WORKERS, AND CASUAL WORKERS; AND DAYS WORKED BY MEN OF EACH SPECIFIED CLASS, 1911**

Class of workers	Average number of schauerleute on list		Days worked by schauerleute of each specified class	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Contract and permanent workers . . . . .	1,806	27.8	508,209	36.5
Card workers . . . . .	3,843	59.2	831,046	59.8
Casual workers . . . . .	841	13.0	52,674	3.7
Total . . . . .	6,490	100.0	1,391,929	100.0

This table makes it clear that the contract and card schauerleute together do 96.3 per cent of the work, while the casu- als do only 3.7 per cent. If all the card workers applied for work every day and took the work offered them, no casual workers would be employed and there would be a constant surplus of card workers. However, for many reasons all the card workers are not constantly available. After doing night work they seldom report the next day. Some find other work to do when cargo work is slack, and do not at once come back to the harbor when the demand increases. There are always a few incapacitated by illness. The supply cannot therefore always be made to correspond exactly to the demand. In 1911 the average number of contract and card workers employed each working day was over 80 per cent of the total average number registered with the Association. In the course of the year the exchange filled 78 per cent of the applications for work which they received from the card workers.

The quay work is less skilled and more poorly paid than the work of the schauerleute, and the workers are more irregular. The casual quay workers are described as "recruited for the most part from the genuine casual workers of a large city, who look for work now in this trade and now in that, in the harbor and in the city; and to a large extent also from new arrivals, who try harbor work at first and often disappear again, particularly in the summer months."\* Sometimes there is a surplus of labor, sometimes the demand exceeds the supply.

On the quays, 81 per cent of the workers were, on the average, con-

\* Jahresbericht des Hafensbetriebs-Verein, 1911, p. 19.

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tract or card men, and only 19 per cent casuals. The regularizing has been due to the hiring, as weekly employes, of contract men who constitute 61 per cent of the entire force. Another 20 per cent of the workers are card men. The relatively high proportion of casuals on the quays indicates a less perfect system of employment than has been put in effect for schauerleute. But even this proportion shows a marked advance toward the regularization of the work.

### V. CONTRACTS AND WAGES

Yet the system is not without its limitations. Permanent or contract workers, both schauerleute and kiarbeiter, are hired under a form of contract which is far from perfect. Each employer in the Hafentriebs-Verein is pledged to hire through it as many contract workers as he can supply with steady work. Every worker signing the contract pledges himself to do any work demanded of him in the harbor or on the lower Elbe, and also to work at night, and on Sundays and holidays when necessary. He receives a wage of 32.40 marks\* (\$7.71) per week, payable on Wednesday for the week ending with the preceding Saturday. This wage is payment for ten hours' work on week days and five hours' work on holidays falling during the working week. An extra wage of 8 pfennigs per hour is paid for daytime work on phosphates, saltpeter, cement in sacks, loose grain, salt hides, and so on. Night and Sunday work and work during lunch hours is paid at the rate of 50 pfennigs per half hour. This rate applies also to all work done after the first five hours on holidays falling on week days. For Sunday work a minimum wage of 3.50 marks is guaranteed. Interruptions not due to the fault of the worker are paid as if work had gone on. In most particulars the terms of the contract agree with the tariff of the card men, which will be given below.

Another important condition of the contract with the employers' association binds the schauerleute to contribute to the savings and benefit fund of the schauerleute of the association. The interest on a member's contribution reverts to the fund till his contribution reaches 200 marks. The benefits are paid largely from the interest on this capital. After the 200 marks have been paid in, interest is allowed on any sum contributed over and above that sum. The regular weekly dues are subtracted from a member's wages as long as he remains a member of the fund, no matter how large his account has become. In order to close out his account a member must resign as a contract schauerleute of the Hafentriebs-Verein, giving four weeks' notice of his intention. If he gives up his work

\* 1 Mark (M. 1)—about \$0.238, or roughly, 24 cents.

1 Pfennig (M. 0.01)—1-100 Mark, or about  $\frac{1}{4}$  cent.

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without due notice, or if for any punishable act he is discharged, the directors of the *Hafenbetriebs-Verein* may order that his entire account up to 200 marks shall revert to the use of the bank and that only his balance over and above 200 marks shall be returned to him.

The contract *schauer*mann has been described as "bound hand and foot." It is true that he is sure of slightly higher pay than most of the card *schauer*leute. He has regular work in one place and does not have to go to an exchange to be hired. In return for this, every week of his employment binds him more irrevocably. He must never lose his temper or get into a fight, never displease a foreman. Above all, it is useless for him to join the union. He cannot strike without forfeiting part of his insurance fund, possibly a month and a half's wages. This is a plain case of conflict between the interests of the employers and those of the union. It is to the interest of the employers of Hamburg to have a large body of *schauer*leute whom they can rely upon at all times and who practically cannot strike. It is to the interest of the union to have every harbor worker enrolled in its membership and willing to strike or be locked out if need arises. So from the union standpoint, the contract system of the *Hafenbetriebs-Verein* is utterly hostile to the interests of the harbor workers as a whole.

The permanent *kaiar*beiter of the state quays and the Hamburg-American Line (over 3,000 in all) are organized in what are known as *akkords*-corps or piece-work gangs. A gang has charge of a certain section of a quay. Each member of a gang is guaranteed a daily wage of 4.20 marks. In addition a certain sum is paid per ton of goods moved by the gang. The number of tons is recorded by the quay foremen. At the end of every four weeks (a "wage period") the total number of tons moved by each gang is computed and multiplied by the premium per ton. This sum is divided equally among the members of the gang. This system encourages industry and speeding up, as every bonus and piece-work system does. It is, however, unsatisfactory to the workmen because they themselves have no means of estimating the amount due them and have to rely on the quay foremen for the accuracy of the premium. They are said therefore to work in "blindem accord," or blind agreement. The card men and casual men who work with them are comparatively few in number. They receive a certain stated daily wage and have no share in the premium. It is to the interest of the gang, of course, that those helping them should do as much work as possible. So the card and casual workers are affected by the general speeding up process without deriving any benefits from it.

An even less admirable system developed in 1911. In order to



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satisfy the demands of the quay workers' representatives, a small wage increase (of 20 pfennigs, or about 5 cents a day) was granted to part of the card workers and to the casual workers by the three leasing companies and by the state quay department. But this latter department decided that the 20 pfennigs per day should be subtracted from the piece-work premium due to gang members. As the transport workers union report\* remarked, it was a case of raising wages without having to pay out anything. The state quay bonus fell appreciably and naturally this arrangement intensified the speeding up of the gang members. The Hamburg American Line followed suit. In consequence the premiums for the Hamburg American piece-work gangs fell so low that the line was forced to raise the premium rate, and even then the bonus was found to be much lower than it had previously been. One scarcely wonders that the report issued by the union advises the quay workers to "fear the Greeks when they come bearing gifts and the Hamburg American Line when it raises wages 'voluntarily.'"

The advantage to the state and to the leasing companies of this system of employment is obvious. The guaranteed wage is so low that the gang members are sure to do their work as rapidly as possible and so increase their monthly bonus, while the speeding up, as we have seen, applies to many workers to whom no premium of any sort is paid. There are also certain advantages for the workers. First and foremost, they are sure of steady work. Most of them are employes of the state, and this seems to them an added inducement. Moreover, the piece-work system, however complicated and "blind," does raise their wages to a point well above those of the card quay workers.

Grievances of workers in the various branches in regard to hiring, discharge, wages, and so on, are passed upon by commissions, consisting usually of representatives of the union,—or at least of the workers,—and of the *Hafenbetriebs-Verein*. The contract *schauerleute* have such a commission; the card *schauerleute* a separate one. The quay workers elect a committee which presents demands and complaints to the state quay department or appeals above this to the deputation, or board of trade, navigation, and industry of the state government.

## VI. WAGES, HOURS, AND EARNINGS OF NON-CONTRACT WORKERS

The wages and hours of all the *schauerleute* except those under contract, as already described, are determined by a wage tariff agreed to

\* *Jahresbericht der Ortsverwaltung, Hamburg, 1911. Deutscher Transportarbeiter Verband, p. 110.*



**Ships at the mooring posts in the Kuhwärder Basin, Hamburg**



**Bird's-eye view of the basin set aside for coal ships in the port of Hamburg**

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jointly by the Hafenbetriebs-Verein and the union. This is published in convenient card form by the union so that every schauermann in the port may be familiar with its terms.

Most of the working conditions for men not under contract, including hours of work, are the same for kaiarbeiter and for schauerleute. The wages of the former are, however, slightly lower.

It is evident from the stipulations of the tariff that the harbor worker of Hamburg is comparatively free from the physical strain of inordinately long periods of work alternating with days of inactivity. The separate day and night shift is not always rigidly adhered to, but it is at least assumed that if a man has worked all day he ought not to work all night too. The harbor inspection department helps to carry out this principle by insisting that a man's hours must be limited so that he may not because of over-fatigue endanger the safety of himself or others. Stretches of work of thirty or more successive hours, which occur even today in New York, are now unheard of in Hamburg. The regulations of the state quay department and the port regulations allow "a limited amount of night work" to be done on the quays and in the holds of ships when notice is given to the proper authorities by those in charge of the work. All night work in the holds of vessels must be done under the supervision of the harbor police.\* An extra fee must be paid for the use of the quays for every hour of the evening or night in which work is even begun. These regulations forbid Sunday and holiday work on the quays except in "especially urgent cases," and an extra fee is exacted for all work done on these days.† Needless to say these extra fees discourage night, Sunday, and holiday work.

In comparing the Hamburg tariff with the wage scale in New York, two points are to be noted. In Hamburg the wage per hour is far lower than in New York, namely about 0.58 mark (14 cents) per hour for deck and hold men instead of 33 cents per hour. If the wage per hour alone is considered, the New York longshoreman appears to be far better off than the Hamburg schauermann. It is true that the cost of living is lower in Hamburg than in New York, but the difference in the cost of living is much less than the difference between 14 cents and 33 cents.

The other point to be noticed, however, is that in Hamburg there is practically no payment by the hour. A man cannot be hired for less than half or three-quarters of a day. If the machinery breaks down, the men cannot be laid off while it is being repaired and taken on an hour or

\* Port Regulations as amended to July 31, 1907. No. 12.

† Betriebs- und Gebühreordnung für die Kaianlagen, Hamburg, 1907, pp. 11, 20.

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two later. The only hourly payment is for night, Sunday, and holiday work. Even then, except when night work is continued after a day's work, a minimum night wage is guaranteed. So the hiring of a man in Hamburg for a day's work assures him of a full day's pay. It must also be borne in mind that in 1911, 78 per cent of the applications of schauerleute for work were filled by the exchanges, and that the amount of unemployment is relatively small compared with that of New York.

### VII. ACCIDENTS, COMPENSATION, AND INSURANCE

The risk of longshore work in New York makes fatal and severe accidents seem commonplaces of the waterfront. Nowhere in Germany would such an attitude be possible. In the harbor work of Hamburg several forces combine to prevent accidents. There are several governmental authorities which have power to regulate the conduct of industry. Their work is supplemented by semi-private organizations of a very efficient sort. Every employer must belong to one of the trade accident insurance associations, in which he must insure every worker employed by him against accident. It is to the interest of these associations to lower the accident rate. They issue minute regulations, therefore, for the prevention of accidents, and enforce these by fines. An association must submit the rules it issues to the local police authorities, who in turn consult the association's experts in formulating their ordinances. Therefore all harbor work is covered by a code of careful regulations devised to lessen its dangers.

Moreover, the Hamburg harbor inspection department has drawn up a tentative code to supplement the regulations published by the accident associations. It issues its orders in individual cases in accordance with this code.\* The special achievement of Hamburg has been the creation of this harbor inspection department, which is a section of the political division of the state police department. It was established in 1897 by the state senate. After the harbor strike of that year both employers and unions had urged the creation of such a department.

Extensive police authority† is delegated to the harbor inspection department. In fact the department is practically supreme in its own field, and by its regulations and standards it has become a real constructive force. The harbor inspector has access at all times to all vessels lying in the port, as well as to all other points in the harbor where laborers are em-

\* See Appendix I, pp. 245 ff.

† Police powers are much broader in Germany than in the United States. To a small extent, our factory inspectors have such powers, but their authority is limited compared with that of the industrial and police inspectors of Germany.

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ployed.\* Any individual or organization may draw the attention of the department to conditions judged to be dangerous. The union does so frequently, and the department investigates such complaints as soon as possible.

The department makes specific regulations for harbor work. It gives directions concerning the lighting of quays or hatches, concerning life-saving apparatus, the guarding of winches and cranes, and so on. These rules are definite and practical. For instance, almost every crane in the harbor must have a safety hook of a simple and effective sort, which cannot catch under beams or hatch coamings. Hatches must be adequately lighted. Hold ladders must run in a straight line from the lower hold to the upper deck. The number of men permitted to work in a hatch at one time is limited according to the size of the hatch and the kind of cargo.

Other influences, not operative in New York, tend to make the accident rate low in Hamburg. The highly developed machinery and mechanical methods in Hamburg reduce the risk. Still more important is the limitation of the hours of labor with diminished danger from over-fatigue. Yet, in spite of these preventive measures, harbor work in Hamburg is still a dangerous trade.

Prompt treatment for accidents is given at an accident station established a few years ago at a central point in the harbor. It is open day and night, and a male nurse trained in first aid medical service is always ready to go by bicycle to injured men who cannot be brought to him. This station is connected by telephone with reporting stations located on most of the important piers. It is officially a branch of the Harbor Hospital which is located in the city near the waterfront.

Destitution, wreckage of family life, dependence on charity,—these are often the result of a severe accident to a New York longshoreman. In Germany no industrial accident can have such tragic consequences. Every workman must be insured against sickness, accidents, old age, and invalidity; and on his death his dependent survivors are pensioned.

Besides the sickness and accident benefits granted by the union and the *Hafenbetriebs-Verein* there are for harbor workers three kinds of insurance provided by three different types of organizations. Sickness

\* "The Harbor Inspector shall, whenever in his opinion life and limb of the workers in an establishment are endangered because of faulty methods of conducting such establishment, be authorized to give immediate orders for removing such dangers. . . . He may forbid the continuation of work until such dangers have been removed; his orders are however subject to cancellation or alteration by the Police Authorities. . . ."—An act concerning the appointment of a Harbor Inspector. Passed by the Senate, Hamburg, November 26, 1897.

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insurance is carried by the Krankenkassen, or sick funds; accident insurance by the Berufsgenossenschaften (employers' mutual trade associations) or accident associations; invalidity, old age and survivors' insurance by the Versicherungsanstalten or insurance institutes.\*

### VIII. WORKING AND LIVING CONDITIONS

Organization of the employers and organization of workers in Hamburg has undoubtedly brought about both unification on one side and greater strength and solidarity on the other. Especially has this been true during strikes or "wage movements." Employers have found it to their interest to join the Hafenbetriebs-Verein and work through it for the settlement of their difficulties. The workers in turn have found that their demands are much more likely to be granted if presented by a strong union, comprising a large proportion of the labor force of the harbor.

The relations between the union and the Hafenbetriebs-Verein have always been somewhat antagonistic, and have often reached a state of open warfare. Of late, however, the union officials have been inclined to look more favorably on the growth of the Hafenbetriebs-Verein. They realize that it is far easier to treat with an association including all the firms hiring harbor workers than it formerly was to deal with smaller trade associations or with individual employers. They also acknowledge the great improvement the association has brought about in regularizing harbor work. The Hafenbetriebs-Verein does not yet reciprocate this more friendly feeling. It still looks upon the union as an unpleasant necessity; a force to be reckoned with, but by no means encouraged.

On the whole, however, the general opinion seems to be that the relations between the two organizations are far more friendly than they were a few years ago. The greatly improved wage scales for several branches of harbor work have fostered better feeling. The situation has also been improved by the success of the employment exchanges.

In many ways the longshoremen's living and working conditions in Hamburg are superior to those in New York. The harbor worker can live like a human being. To begin with, there is not so much temptation to drink. Some years ago, the workmen of several different branches were hired by foremen or stevedores on or in front of the waterfront saloons. The employment exchanges have absolutely done away with this system, the hiring being done in the exchanges themselves. There are waiting rooms where men can wait for the hiring to begin. There is no necessity

\* For description of these organizations see the Reichsversicherungsordnung or Imperial Insurance Code of July 19, 1911. Translated by Henry J. Harris, Ph.D. U. S. Bureau of Labor, Bulletin 96.



**An employment exchange of the Hamburg Harbor Industries Association**



**A coffee house for harbor workers**

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for standing on street corners in the cold and rain, nor for frequent drinks to thaw a man out and make life bearable. Lunches are not eaten in saloons. Instead, there are coffee houses on the large quays, where the men can get food, coffee, tea, milk, soft drinks, and beer, but no "Schnaps" or whiskey or spirits of any kind. These houses are privately owned but subsidized by the state. The prices charged must have official approval. An excellent lunch,—for example, a hearty dish, such as stew and potato, bread, coffee, and pudding,—can be bought for 50 or 60 pfennigs (about 12 to 14 cents). The food is appetizing and the rooms are comfortable and well-kept. Hundreds of men use the "speisehallen" every noon hour. The newer piers have waiting rooms for the use of both quay workers and schauerleute. Practically all the quays have coat rooms and toilet rooms. All these things are excellent substitutes for the waterfront saloon, which formerly occupied almost as important a place in the Hamburg harbor workers' life as it does today in New York.

Transportation to and from work is a hard problem for the Hamburg harbor worker. The new Elbe tunnel helps those who work in some parts of the port. To reach most points, however, a man has to take a launch or harbor steamer. Workingmen's dwellings and apartments are now located in the suburbs of the city, and a trolley or subway ride of some length is required to reach them. This costs both time and money, but the dwellings are far more healthful than the old, nearby city tenements. There are not many of the latter left. They have gradually been bought by the government and the sites used for municipal buildings or markets. A Hamburg workman can now get excellent accommodations at a very moderate rent.

On the whole, the Hamburg harbor worker is freer from strain and anxiety than are our longshoremen, though his work is hard and exacting. The concentration of the work in the hands of regular workers means that a larger proportion of the men employed are steady and experienced than is the case in New York, where the system tends to casualize the labor force and to lower the industrial status of the workers. The down-and-out class is so small in Hamburg that it does not give a bad reputation to the calling as a whole. It is practically impossible for a harbor worker in Hamburg to suffer such misfortunes that he can become a complete dependent. Freedom from this danger adds greatly to the self-respect of the workers and raises the standard of their trade.



## APPENDIX F

### FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT OF GREAT BRITAIN, 1895

#### DOCKS, ETC.

23.—(1) The following provisions [see sections A to D on the succeeding pages], namely:—

- (I) Section eighty-two of the principal Act;
- (II) The provisions of the Factory Acts with respect to accidents;
- (III) Section sixty-eight of the principal Act with respect to the powers of inspectors;
- (IV) Sections eight to twelve of the Act of 1891 with respect to special rules for dangerous employments; and
- (V) The provisions of this Act with respect to the power to make orders as to dangerous machines

shall have effect as if—

- (a) every dock, wharf, quay, and warehouse, and, so far as relates to the process of loading or unloading therefrom or thereto, all machinery and plant used in that process; and
- (b) any premises on which machinery worked by steam, water, or other mechanical power, is temporarily used for the purpose of the construction of a building or any structural work in connexion with a building,

were included in the word factory, and the purpose for which the machinery is used were a manufacturing process, and as if the person who by himself, his agents, or workmen temporarily uses any such machinery for the before-mentioned purpose were the occupier of the said premises; and for the purpose of the enforcement of those sections the person having the actual use or occupation of a dock, wharf, quay, or warehouse, or of any premises within the same or forming part thereof, and the person so using any such machinery, shall be deemed to be the occupier of a factory.

#### A. FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT, 1878

82. If any person is killed or suffers any bodily injury in consequence of the occupier of a factory having neglected to fence any machinery required by or in

## FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT OF GREAT BRITAIN, 1895

pursuance of this Act to be securely fenced, or having neglected to maintain such fencing, or in consequence of the occupier of a factory or workshop having neglected to fence any vat, pan, or other structure required by or in pursuance of this Act to be securely fenced, or having neglected to maintain such fencing, the occupier of the factory or workshop shall be liable to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds, the whole or any part of which may be applied for the benefit of the injured person or his family, or otherwise as a Secretary of State determines:

Provided that the occupier of a factory shall not be liable to a fine under this section if an information against him for not fencing the part of the machinery, or the vat, pan, or other structure, by which the death or bodily injury was inflicted, has been heard and dismissed previous to the time when the death or bodily injury was inflicted.

## B. FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT, 1878

### (7) ACCIDENTS

31. Where there occurs in a factory or a workshop any accident which either—

- (a) causes loss of life to a person employed in the factory or in the workshop, or
- (b) causes bodily injury to a person employed in the factory or in the workshop, and is produced either by machinery moved by steam, water, or other mechanical power, or through a vat, pan, or other structure filled with hot liquid or molten metal or other substance, or by explosion, or by escape of gas, steam, or metal, and is of such nature as to prevent the person injured by it from returning to his work in the factory or workshop within forty-eight hours after the occurrence of the accident,

written notice of the accident shall forthwith be sent to the inspector and to the certifying surgeon for the district, stating the residence of the person killed or injured, or the place to which he may have been removed, and if any such notice is not sent the occupier of the factory or workshop shall be liable to a fine not exceeding five pounds.

If any such accident as aforesaid occurs to a person employed in an iron mill or blast furnace, or other factory or workshop where the occupier is not the actual employer of the person killed or injured, the actual employer shall immediately report the same to the occupier, and in default shall be liable to a fine not exceeding five pounds.

A notice of an accident, of which notice is required by section sixty-three of the Explosives Act, 1875, to be sent to a government inspector, need not be sent to the certifying surgeon in pursuance of this section.

32. Where a certifying surgeon receives in pursuance of this Act notice of an accident in a factory or workshop, he shall with the least possible delay proceed to the factory or workshop, and make a full investigation as to the nature and cause of the death or injury caused by that accident, and within the next twenty-four hours send to the inspector a report thereof.

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The certifying surgeon, for the purpose only of an investigation under this section, shall have the same powers as an inspector, and shall also have power to enter any room in a building to which the person killed or injured has been removed.

There shall be paid to the said surgeon for the investigation such fee, not exceeding ten nor less than three shillings, as a Secretary of State considers reasonable, which fee shall be paid as expenses incurred by a Secretary of State in the execution of this Act.

### C. FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT, 1878

68. An inspector under this Act shall for the purpose of the execution of this Act have power to do all or any of the following things; namely,

- (1) To enter, inspect, and examine at all reasonable times by day and night a factory and a workshop and every part thereof when he has reasonable cause to believe that any person is employed therein, and to enter by day any place which he has reasonable cause to believe to be a factory or workshop; and
- (2) To take with him in either case a constable into a factory in which he has reasonable cause to apprehend any serious obstruction in the execution of his duty; and
- (3) To require the production of the registers, certificates, notices, and documents kept in pursuance of this Act, and to inspect, examine, and copy the same; and
- (4) To make such examination and inquiry as may be necessary to ascertain whether the enactments for the time being in force relating to public health and the enactment of this Act are complied with, so far as respects the factory or workshop and the persons employed therein; and
- (5) To enter any school in which he has reasonable cause to believe that children employed in a factory or workshop are for the time being educated; and
- (6) To examine either alone or in the presence of any other person, as he thinks fit, with respect to matters under this Act, every person whom he finds in a factory or workshop, or such a school as aforesaid, or whom he has reasonable cause to believe to be or to have been within the preceding two months employed in a factory or workshop, and to require such person to be so examined and to sign a declaration of the truth of the matters respecting which he is so examined; and
- (7) To exercise such other powers as may be necessary for carrying this Act into effect.

The occupier of every factory and workshop, his agents and servants, shall furnish the means required by an inspector as necessary for an entry, inspection, examination, inquiry, or the exercise of his powers under this Act in relation to such factory and workshop.

Every person who wilfully delays an inspector in the exercise of any power under this section, or who fails to comply with a requisition of an inspector in pursuance of this section, or to produce any certificate or document which he is required

## FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT OF GREAT BRITAIN, 1895

by or in pursuance of this Act to produce, or who conceals or prevents a child, young person, or woman from appearing before or being examined by an inspector, or attempts so to conceal or prevent a child, young person, or woman, shall be deemed to obstruct an inspector in the execution of his duties under this Act: Provided always, that no one shall be required under this section to answer any question or to give any evidence tending to criminate himself.

Where an inspector is obstructed in the execution of his duties under this Act, the person obstructing him shall be liable to a fine not exceeding five pounds; and where an inspector is so obstructed in a factory or workshop, the occupier of that factory or workshop shall be liable to a fine not exceeding five, or where the offense is committed at night, twenty pounds; and where an inspector is so obstructed in a factory or workshop within the meaning of section sixteen of this Act, the occupier shall be liable to a fine not exceeding one, or where the offense is committed at night, five pounds.

### D. FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT, 1891

#### SPECIAL RULES AND REQUIREMENTS

8.—(1) Where the Secretary of State certifies that in his opinion any machinery or process or particular description of manual labour used in a factory or workshop (other than a domestic workshop) is dangerous or injurious to health or dangerous to life or limb, either generally or in the case of women, children, or any other class of persons, or that the provision for the admission of fresh air is not sufficient, or that the quantity of dust generated or inhaled in any factory or workshop is dangerous or injurious to health, the chief inspector may serve on the occupier of the factory or workshop a notice in writing, either proposing such special rules or requiring the adoption of such special measures as appear to the chief inspector to be reasonably practicable and to meet the necessities of the case.

(2) Unless within twenty-one days after the receipt of the notice the occupier serves on the chief inspector a notice in writing that he objects to the rules or requirement, the rules shall be established, or, as the case may be, the requirement shall be observed.

(3) If the notice of objection suggests any modification of the rules or requirement, the Secretary of State shall consider the suggestion and may assent thereto with or without any further modification which may be agreed on between the Secretary of State and the occupier, and thereupon the rules shall be established, or, as the case may be, the requirement shall be observed, subject to such modification.

(4) If the Secretary of State does not assent to any objection or modification suggested as aforesaid by the occupier, the matter in difference between the Secretary of State and the occupier shall be referred to arbitration under this Act, and the date of the receipt of the notice of objection by the Secretary of State shall be deemed to be the date of the reference, and the rules shall be established, or the requisition shall have effect, as settled by an award on arbitration.

(5) Any notice under this section may be served by post.

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(6) With respect to arbitrations under this Act the provisions in the First Schedule to this Act shall have effect.

(7) No person shall be precluded by any agreement from doing, or be liable under any agreement to any penalty or forfeiture for doing, such acts as may be necessary in order to comply with the provisions of this section.

9.—(1) If any person who is bound to observe any special rules established for any factory or workshop under this Act acts in contravention of, or fails to comply with, any such special rule, he shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding two pounds; and the occupier of the factory or workshop shall also be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding ten pounds, unless he proves that he had taken all reasonable means, by publishing, and to the best of his power enforcing, the rules to prevent the contravention or non-compliance.

(2) A factory or workshop in which there is a contravention of any requirement made under this Act, shall be deemed not to be kept in conformity with the principal Act.

10.—(1) After special rules are established under this Act in any factory or workshop, the Secretary of State may from time to time propose to the occupier of the factory or workshop any amendment of the rules or any new rules; and the provisions of this Act with respect to the original rules shall apply to all such amendments and new rules in like manner, as nearly as may be, as they apply to the original rules.

(2) The occupier of any factory or workshop in which special rules are established may from time to time propose in writing to the chief inspector, with the approval of the Secretary of State, any amendment of the rules or any new rules and the provisions of this Act with respect to a suggestion of an occupier for modifying the special rules proposed by a chief inspector shall apply to all such amendments and new rules in like manner, as nearly as may be, as they apply to such a suggestion.

11.—(1) Printed copies of all special rules for the time being in force under this Act in any factory or workshop shall be kept posted up in legible characters in conspicuous places in the factory or workshop where they may be conveniently read by the persons employed. In a factory or workshop in Wales or Monmouthshire the rules shall be posted up in the Welsh language also.

(2) A printed copy of all such rules shall be given by the occupier to any person affected thereby on his or her application.

(3) If the occupier of any factory or workshop fails to comply with any provision of this section, he shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding ten pounds.

(4) Every person who pulls down, injures, or defaces any special rules when posted up in pursuance of this Act, or any notice posted up in pursuance of the special rules, shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding five pounds.

12.—An inspector shall, when required, certify a copy which is shown to his satisfaction to be a true copy of any special rules for the time being established under this Act for any factory or workshop, and a copy so certified shall be evidence (but not to the exclusion of other proof) of those special rules, and of the fact that they are duly established under this Act.

**APPENDIX G**  
**STATUTORY RULES AND ORDERS, 1904, No. 1617**

**FACTORY AND WORKSHOP**

**DANGEROUS AND UNHEALTHY INDUSTRIES**

Regulations, dated October 24, 1904, made by the Secretary of State, in respect of the processes of loading, unloading, moving and handling goods in, on, or at any dock, wharf, or quay, and the processes of loading, unloading or coaling any ship in any dock, harbour or canal.

Whereas the processes of loading, unloading, moving and handling goods in, on, or at any dock, wharf, or quay, and the processes of loading, unloading and coaling any ship in any dock, harbour, or canal have been certified in pursuance of Section 79 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, to be dangerous:—

I hereby, in pursuance of the powers conferred on me by that Act, make the following Regulations for the protection of persons employed in the processes or in any of them, and direct that they shall apply to all docks, wharves, quays, and ships as aforesaid.

These Regulations shall come into force on the 1st of January, 1905, except that so much of Regulations 6 and 8 as require structural alterations shall come into force on the 1st of January, 1908.

Nothing in Parts II to VI inclusive of these Regulations shall apply to the unloading of fish from a vessel employed in the catching of fish.

The Secretary of State may by order in writing exempt from all or any of the Regulations and for such time and subject to such conditions as he may prescribe any docks, wharves or quays in respect of which application for such exemption shall have been made to him by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland or by the Congested Districts Board for Ireland.

**DEFINITIONS**

In these Regulations:—

“Processes” means the processes above mentioned; or any of them.

“Person employed” means a person employed in the above processes or any of them.

“Shallow canal” includes any of the following parts of a canal, canalised river, non-tidal river, or inland navigation:—

(a) Any part having no means of access to tidal waters except through a lock not exceeding ninety feet in length;

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- (b) Any part not in frequent use for the processes; and
- (c) Any part at which the depth of water within fifteen feet of the edge does not ordinarily exceed five feet.

### DUTIES

It shall be the duty of the person having the general management and control of a dock, wharf, or quay, to comply with Part I of these Regulations; provided that if any other person has the exclusive right to occupation of any part of the dock, wharf, or quay, and has the general management and control of such part the duty in respect of that part shall devolve upon that other person; and further provided that this part of these Regulations shall not apply to any shallow canal.

It shall be the duty of the owner, master, or officer in charge of a ship to comply with Part II of these Regulations.

It shall be the duty of the owner of machinery or plant used in the processes, and in the case of machinery or plant carried on board a ship not being a ship registered in the United Kingdom it shall also be the duty of the master of such ship, to comply with Part III of these Regulations.

It shall be the duty of every person who by himself, his agents, or workmen carries on the processes, and of all agents, workmen, and persons employed by him in the processes, to comply with Part IV of these Regulations.

It shall be the duty of all persons, whether owners, occupiers or persons employed, to comply with Part V of these Regulations.

Part VI of these Regulations shall be complied with by the persons on whom the duty is placed in that Part.

#### PART I

1. The following parts of every dock, wharf, or quay shall, as far as is practicable having regard to the traffic and working, be securely fenced so that the height of the fence shall be in no place less than two feet six inches, and the fencing shall be maintained in good condition ready for use.

- (a) All breaks, dangerous corners, and other dangerous parts or edges of a dock, wharf, or quay.
- (b) Both sides of such footways over bridges, caissons, and dock gates as are in general use by persons employed, and each side of the entrance at each end of such footway for a sufficient distance not exceeding five yards.

2. Provision for the rescue from drowning of persons employed shall be made and maintained, and shall include:—

- (a) A supply of life-saving appliances, kept in readiness on the wharf or quay, which shall be reasonably adequate having regard to all the circumstances.
- (b) Means at or near the surface of the water at reasonable intervals, for enabling a person immersed to support himself or escape from the water, which shall be reasonably adequate having regard to all the circumstances.

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3. All places in which persons employed are employed at night, and any dangerous parts of the regular road or way over a dock, wharf, or quay, forming the approach to any such place from the nearest highway, shall be efficiently lighted.

Provided that the towing path of a canal or canalised river shall not be deemed to be "an approach," for the purpose of this Regulation.

PART II

4. If a ship is lying at a wharf or quay for the purpose of loading or unloading or coaling there shall be means of access for the use of persons employed at such times as they have to pass from the ship to the shore or from the shore to the ship as follows:—

- (a) Where a gangway is reasonably practicable a gangway not less than 22 inches wide, properly secured, and fenced throughout on each side to a clear height of two feet nine inches by means of upper and lower rails, taut ropes or chains, or by other equally safe means.
- (b) In other cases a secure ladder of adequate length.

Provided that nothing in this Regulation shall be held to apply to cargo stages or cargo gangways, if other proper means of access is provided in conformity with these Regulations.

Provided that as regards any sailing vessel not exceeding 250 tons net registered tonnage and any steam vessel not exceeding 150 tons gross registered tonnage this Regulation shall not apply if and while the conditions are such that it is possible without undue risk to pass to and from the ship without the aid of any special appliances.

5. If a ship is alongside any other ship, vessel, or boat, and persons employed have to pass from one to the other, safe means of access shall be provided for their use, unless the conditions are such that it is possible to pass from one to the other without undue risk without the aid of any special appliance.

If one of such ships, vessels, or boats is a sailing barge, flat, keel, lighter or other similar vessel of relatively low freeboard the means of access shall be provided by the ship which has the higher freeboard.

6. If the depth from the top of the coamings to the bottom of the hold exceeds six feet there shall be maintained safe means of access by ladder or steps from the dock to the hold in which the work is being carried on, with secure hand-hold and foot-hold continued to the top of the coamings.

In particular such access shall not be deemed to be safe:—

- (a) Unless the ladders between the lower decks are in the same line as the ladder from the main deck, if the same is practicable having regard to the position of the lower hatchway or hatchways.
- (b) Unless the cargo is stowed sufficiently far from the ladder to leave at each rung of the ladder sufficient room for a man's feet.
- (c) If there is not room to pass between a winch and the coamings at the place where the ladder leaves the deck.
- (d) If the ladder is recessed under the deck more than is reasonably necessary to keep the ladder clear of the hatchway.



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7. When the processes are being carried on between one hour after sunset and one hour before sunrise (a) the places in the hold and on the decks where work is being carried on and (b) the means of access provided in pursuance of Regulations 4 and 5, shall be efficiently lighted, due regard being had to the safety of the ship and cargo, of all persons employed and of the navigation of other vessels and to the duly approved By-laws or Regulations of any authority having power by statute to make By-laws or Regulations subject to approval by some other authority.

8. All iron fore and aft beams and thwart ship beams used for hatchway covering shall have suitable gear for lifting them on and off without it being necessary for any person to go upon them to adjust such gear.

### PART III

9. All machinery and chains and other gear used in hoisting or lowering in connection with the processes shall have been tested and shall be periodically examined. All such chains shall be effectually softened by annealing or firing when necessary, and all half-inch or smaller chains in general use shall be so annealed or fired once in every six months.

If the chains are part of the outfit carried by a seagoing ship it shall be a sufficient compliance with this Regulation as regards softening by annealing or firing of half-inch or smaller chains, that no such chains shall be used unless they have been so annealed or fired within six months preceding.

As regards chains, the safe-loads indicated by the test, the date of last annealing and any other particulars prescribed by the Secretary of State, shall be entered in a register which shall be kept on the premises, unless some other place has been approved in writing by the Chief Inspector.

10. All motors, cog-wheels, chain and friction-gearing, shafting and live electric conductors used in the processes shall (unless it can be shown that by their position and construction they are equally safe to every person employed as they would be if securely fenced) be securely fenced so far as is practicable without impeding the safe working of the ship and without infringing any requirement of the Board of Trade.

11. The lever controlling the link motion reversing gear of a crane or winch used in the processes shall be provided with a suitable spring or other locking arrangement.

12. Every shore crane used in the processes shall have the safe-load plainly marked upon it, and if so constructed that the jib may be raised or lowered, either shall have attached to it an automatic indicator of safe-loads or shall have marked upon it a table showing the safe-loads at the corresponding inclinations of the jib.

13. The driver's platform on every crane or tip driver by mechanical power and used in the processes shall be securely fenced, and shall be provided with safe means of access.

14. Adequate measures shall be taken to prevent exhaust steam from any crane or winch obscuring any part of the decks, gangways, stages, wharf, or quay, where any person is employed.

## STATUTORY RULES AND ORDERS, 1904, NO. 1617

### PART IV

15. No machinery or gear used in the processes, other than a crane, shall be loaded beyond the safe-load; nor a crane, unless secured with the written permission of the owner by plates or chains or otherwise.

No load shall be left suspended from a crane, winch, or other machine unless there is a competent person actually in charge of the machine while the load is so left.

16. A boy under 16 shall not be employed as driver of a crane or winch, or to give signals to a driver, or to attend to cargo falls on winch-ends or winch-bodies.

17. Where in connection with the processes goods are placed on a wharf or quay other than a wharf or quay on a shallow canal:—

(a) A clear passage leading to the means of access to the ship required by Regulation 4 shall be maintained on the wharf or quay; and

(b) If any space is left along the edge of the wharf or quay, it shall be at least three feet wide and clear of all obstructions other than fixed structures, plant and appliances in use.

18. No deck-stage or cargo-stage shall be used in the processes unless it is substantially and firmly constructed, and adequately supported, and, where necessary, securely fastened.

No truck shall be used for carrying cargo between ship and shore on a stage so steep as to be unsafe.

Any stage which is slippery shall be made safe by the use of sand or otherwise.

19. Where there is more than one hatchway, if the hatchway of a hold exceeding seven feet six inches in depth measured from the top of the coamings to the bottom of the hold is not in use and the coamings are less than two feet six inches in height, it shall either be fenced to a height of three feet, or be securely covered.

Provided that this Regulation shall not apply during mealtimes or other temporary interruptions of work during the period of employment.

And provided that until the 1st of January, 1908, the fencing may be the best the circumstances will allow without making structural alteration.

Hatch coverings shall not be used in connection with the processes in the construction of deck or cargo stages, or for any other purpose which may expose them to damage.

20. No cargo shall be loaded by a fall or sling at any intermediate deck unless a secure-landing platform has been placed across the hatchway at that deck.

### PART V

21. No person shall, unless duly authorized, or in case of necessity, remove or interfere with any fencing, gangway, gear, ladder, life-saving means or appliances, lights, marks, stages or other things whatsoever, required by these Regulations to be provided.

22. The fencing required by Regulation 1 shall not be removed except to the extent and for the period reasonably necessary for carrying on the work of the dock or ship, or for repairing any fencing. If removed it shall be restored forthwith at

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the end of that period by the persons engaged in the work that necessitated its removal.

### PART VI

23. No employer of persons in the processes shall allow machinery or gear to be used by such person in the processes that does not comply with Part III. of these Regulations.

24. If the persons whose duty it is to comply with Regulations 4, 5, and 7 fail so to do, then it shall also be the duty of the employers of the persons employed for whose use the means of access and the lights are required to comply with the said Regulation within the shortest time reasonably practicable after such failure.

25. The certificate of the ship's register and any other certificate or register referred to in these Regulations shall be produced by the person in charge thereof on the application of any of H. M. Inspectors of Factories.

A. AKERS-DOUGLAS  
One of His Majesty's Principal  
Secretaries of State

Home Office,  
Whitehall,  
24th October, 1904.

## APPENDIX H

### ACCIDENT PREVENTION REGULATIONS FOR THE STEVEDORING INDUSTRY

#### WAREHOUSING ACCIDENT INSURANCE ASSOCIATIONS OF GREAT BRITAIN

Extracts from Edition of 1905

##### I. REGULATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS

1. The members of the association are pledged to keep the places of work and the apparatus, as well as the passage ways, stairways, entrances and exits, belonging to their establishments clean and in good condition.
2. In all places in which annoying dust, harmful gases, vapors, fumes, etc. collect, there shall be ample provision for the adequate removal of these impurities by the installation of exhausts, ventilators, etc. when necessary.
3. Dangerous places in and near the establishment, especially pits, holes, wells and other deep places, shall be covered, or barred off, by secure barriers, and in general they shall be guarded so that, when ordinary care is used, they can offer no danger.

4. Movable platforms, fixed stairs, hatches, elevators, and similar places of traffic are to be provided with secure railings, breastworks, or fences.

During work, such protections may be in part or wholly removed when this is necessary for carrying on the work.

The hooks, from which the hatch covers or doors hang, are to be provided with such safety appliances that the covers or doors can not come unhooked.

On hatches when it is necessary for the workers to lean out, handrails or grips shall be attached in every case.

When hatches, etc. . . . are not being used adequate safety appliances shall be placed around them consisting of fences or covers.

5. All places of work and traffic are to be adequately lighted whenever work goes on in them, when there is insufficient daylight or at night, in so far as they are regularly used as thoroughfares for purposes of work.
7. All gear apparatus and machinery is to be kept in condition proper for work. Unusable or defective articles are to be changed at once.
8. All ladders, movable stairs, slides for timber, which are used must be carefully guarded against slipping and sliding, either at the top by hooks or rings, or at the bottom by points on soft ground or claws on hard. Separate booms, not bound together, must not be used as slides or slides for timber.

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Ladders leading into hatches, in warehouses or ships, must project above the hatch half the height of a man (about 80-90 cm.), if no other means of support is provided.

9. Running boards and planks, loading bridges—must have sufficient breadth, and strength proportioned to their length. They are to be supported and secured in such a way that when they are stepped or walked upon it will be impossible for them to tilt or slide off.
10. Piles of goods, especially piles of sacks, are to be stowed on even and firm ground and must be closely packed together. No samples may be taken out of the under sacks.
19. All lifting apparatus with crank or hawser or chain power is to be provided with an effective catch (stopping arrangement) unless they are self-stopping. If a load is let down solely by its own weight, a reliable brake must be provided, so contrived that the workers in managing it, cannot be endangered by the crank.
20. If the height of the ascent (step) to the cranes is more than 1 M., firm railings or handles are to be provided for it.
21. The permissible carrying capacity of all hoisting gear shall be determined by an expert; the result shall be plainly marked on the apparatus.
28. All machine and driving gear parts, especially fly wheels and cog wheels, likewise piston rods, belt gearing, strap wheels, driving belts, cables, chains, etc. lying in the region of traffic, are to be suitably fenced in or covered over.
29. All appliances which serve to bring machinery to a standstill, must be easily reached and so constructed that they work as fast and as securely as possible.
30. On belt gearing, strap wheels, and couplings all projecting parts (screw heads and nuts, etc.) are to be avoided or appropriately cased in.
31. Driving belts, cables or chains must either be entirely removed or else firm supports must be provided for them. So arranged that the straps, etc. cannot come in contact with moving parts of the belt gearing.

Driving belts of more than 30 mm. breadth, as well as cables or chains, which run with greater speed than 10 m. per second, and also more slowly running belts of more than 60 mm. breadth, may not be put on or thrown off by hand while they are in motion.
33. The carrying out of work which demands technical skill shall only be entrusted to people who are familiar with the appliances in question.

Dangerous loading done by several persons at the same time is to be under the oversight of a man thoroughly familiar with such work, who shall be responsible for it.
34. Drunken persons shall not be allowed to remain at the places of work.

People who are known to be subject to epilepsy, cramps, vertigo, or fainting may not be employed at machines or at work which is especially dangerous.
36. On work which is especially dangerous to the eyes or to the organs of breathing the use of suitable guards shall be instituted; these are to be provided by the employers.

## REGULATIONS FOR STEVEDORING INDUSTRY

37. For work with wet and dry hides and pelts, etc. ample washing facilities shall be provided.
39. On every establishment provision must be made for ample bandage material, protected against contamination, and notice shall be given as to where the bandages are kept.
46. At the close of loading or discharging or at nightfall, all the hatches of a vessel must be covered.
47. If for special reasons the vessel remains open, wholly or in part, after darkness comes on, the deck must be adequately lighted, so that the vessel can be entered without danger.
48. When stairs, built into a ship, do not lead exactly perpendicularly down to the hold, warning signs must be fixed in an easily visible place, with prominent lettering, which shall give warning against missing the stair.  
When the built-in hold ladders of a vessel can no longer be used, because of the stowing that has been done and the like, provision shall be made for other safe connection, with the ship's hold.  
In addition, good gangways shall be attached outwards on the ship.
49. On steam winches, the escaping steam shall be so conducted away, that there will be no possibility of a person's being burned either by the escaping steam or by condensing water.
50. All the vessels used in the establishments of the members of the Warehousing Accident Association—motor launches as well as row-boats—which serve for the transportation of workers to their work, must be examined as to the greatest permissible number they can carry, by an official ship surveying Institute, whenever there are such surveying officials in the neighborhood of the establishment, or at such a distance from it that the measurement could be made without excessive expense. Corresponding to this measurement, every vessel must be worked on the outside in an easily visible spot, in indelible letters, "Carrying Capacity to Persons," and must be marked also with a line to show the load permitted. The carrying of more persons and a larger load than the carrying capacity allows, is absolutely forbidden.  
Vessels used for carrying people must always bear brightly burning lanterns at night.

## II. REGULATIONS FOR EMPLOYEES

52. Employes must make themselves familiar with the contents of the Accident Prevention Regulations.
53. Every worker is bound to see to it, from the beginning of the work on, that the apparatus and tools entrusted to him for carrying out the work, as well as his own, are and remain in good order and in usable condition.  
He must correct faults of all sorts at once, or, in case this is not practicable, report them immediately to his foremen.
54. Removal of existing protective appliances is strictly forbidden.
55. Resting or sleeping by fire places, by hatches or in the immediate neighborhood

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of draught animals, running machinery, pits, tracks, brick work, around boilers, roofs, high scaffolding, and wagons in motion is forbidden.

56. Drunken workers must leave the places of work upon demand.
57. Workers who are subject to epilepsy, cramps or occasional fainting and vertigo, must report this to their foremen when they are taken on, and they must do no work at machines or other dangerous places, and must in general keep away from the latter.

When orders are given, the carrying out of which would mean special danger to such workers, the workers must call their foremen's attention particularly to their condition.

58. During the night the workers must, as far as possible, remain only where they have their work to do.
59. Entering unlighted places of work and dark hold or rooms is permitted only with light, in so far as the nature of the industry permits illumination.
60. Stacking or taking down a pile of any sort of goods must be done with necessary caution. Taking down must be done in layers from the top.
62. Throwing down chains, slings, claws, hooks, and other heavy objects is forbidden. Lowering is only permissible after warning is given.
63. Workers are required to make copious use of facilities provided for them, in working with wet and dry hides, pelts and the like.
64. During work which is especially dangerous to the eyes and to the organs of breathing, the guards supplied by the employers are to be used.
66. The maximum load marked on hoisting gear may in no case be exceeded.
67. On using hand cranes, winches, the workers must put the stops and catches into action so that a recoil of the winch handle or a sudden drop of the load may be avoided.

Detachable, loose cranks must be removed during the lowering of loads, or secured, by some contrivance against flying off.

68. Raising and lowering persons by means of cranes, winches or such contrivances is strictly forbidden; likewise letting oneself down on cables and climbing up on rods and the like.
69. All goods raised by hoisting gear must always be carefully secured against falling.
70. Staying under hanging loads is forbidden.
71. The machine tenders must, before the machine is set in motion, assure themselves that it is in good order, and must under all circumstances correct all faults found, which might endanger the safety of the work, before the machine is started. If they cannot do this, they must give notice to the foremen at once.
72. The prescribed sign must be given every time before the motor is started or stopped.
73. The moving parts of machines and all driving gear, belts, gearing, etc. may be lubricated while in motion only when this can be done, by means of suitable contrivances, without danger. Lubricating and oiling while the machine is

## REGULATIONS FOR STEVEDORING INDUSTRY

in motion may only be done by the machinist or by some one authorized by him.

Cleaning of machine parts may only be done while the machine is standing still.

Explosion motors which are provided with a contrivance for starting them to turn, must not be started by the fly wheel.

74. Workers employed at tending and watching motors and belt gearings must wear closely fitting clothing.
75. Driving belts of more than 30 mm. breadth, as well as cables and chains, when they run faster than 10 m. per second, and likewise more slowly running belts of more than 60 mm. breadth, may not be put on or thrown off by hand while in motion.
76. Driving belts, cables and chains which are thrown off must either be entirely removed or hung up on firm supports in such a way that they cannot come in contact with moving parts. The same precautions are to be taken in sewing joining and repairing the belts.
77. Taking off, putting on, and keeping pieces of clothing in the immediate neighborhood of driving gear is forbidden.
85. In raising goods out of and lowering them into the ship's hold by means of chains, hooks or claws, the greatest care is to be employed, so that the goods do not strike against hatch doors, and hatch edges. The chain parts are to be pulled tight, the hooks or claws securely fastened, so that the rising or descending goods cannot fall out.

On hoisting coal, etc. in baskets, strict care is to be taken that the baskets are not filled above the rim with coal etc. so that pieces of coal, etc. cannot fall out when the baskets are hoisted.

Goods packed in different ways may only be slung up in one sling when they fit together in an orderly way. The foreman in charge is obliged always to examine carefully to see whether the load in the sling is slung up in the proper way and will hold together well, otherwise the draft must not be let down into the hold. The foreman is required to see to it that the hold is clear for the lowering of the draft.

Hooks and claws should hang from two pennant ends; interlaced at a suitable distance above the piece of freight to be taken up, so that in catching this they will be able to hold sufficiently tight. Loading chains must not be used as slings.

As soon as goods to be raised or lowered by hoisting gear begin to rise or descend, the workers busied near by are to step aside as far as possible.

86. Fore-and-afters and thwart-ship-beams must be removed from hatch openings and during loading and unloading; if however several gangs of workers are working in the same hatch, on different decks, then fore-and-afters and thwart-ship-beams, in so far as it is necessary for them to remain lying, shall be secured by bolts or in some other suitable way, so that they cannot be moved out of their position by a rising draft.



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### III. PROVISIONS FOR ENFORCEMENT AND PUNISHMENT

88. Employers are obliged to direct and superintend the enforcement of the Accident Prevention Regulations issued by the Accident Insurance Association.

All the Accident Prevention Regulations are to be hung up, in placard form, in the work rooms accessible to the workers, so as to be brought to the notice of the workers insured. If this is not practicable, the regulations are to be brought to the attention of the workers in some other suitable form.

91. Every injury received at work is to be reported by the injured person, as soon as he is in condition to do so, to the proper authority.

The worker must see to it that every wound, however insignificant it may appear, is cleansed at once, and carefully guarded against the penetration of dust and other impurities. As long as the injury is not protected, at least by an emergency bandage, the injured person must stop work.

92. Injured persons who have had medical care for accidents which caused incapacity for work for more than three days, may not be taken on again for work till the physician gives a certificate that their capacity for work is restored.

**APPENDIX I**  
**REGULATIONS FOR THE PREVENTION OF ACCIDENTS,**  
**HAMBURG, GERMANY**  
**HARBOR INSPECTION DEPARTMENT OF HAMBURG**

**Extracts**

1. Gang planks
  - (a) Must be broad and strong enough and have a railing on at least one side.
  - (c) Must be lighted at night and strewn with something to prevent sliding when slippery.
6. Wires
  - (a) Winch wires which run three blocks, must not be made of two pieces spliced together.
8. Hand and steam winches (anchor) capstans—
  - (a) All movable and running machine parts, which lie in the region of traffic, are to be covered by guard plates. Shaft ends, etc. which project are to be avoided or securely cased in.
  - (b) If the winches stand so near the hatch coamings, in front of the hold ladders that the approach to them is narrowed, then the cranks of the winches are to be provided with guard plates. The same must be done when the winches stand so near the hatch coamings that the revolving cranks do not leave a sufficient space between themselves and the hatch coamings, so that men working in the hold can, when necessary, take hold of the hatch coamings for support with their hands, without danger.
  - (f) The position of the winch man shall be such that he has as free a view as possible of the field of work.
  - (g) For loading and unloading, open hooks must not be used. They must have fixed guards which cannot catch under hatch coamings, thwart-ship beams, etc.
  - (i) All steam conductors in the region of work must be covered so that it will be impossible for persons to burn themselves upon them.
9. Loading and Unloading Apparatus
  - (a) The loading and unloading apparatus is to be examined thoroughly once a year, and the result of the examination is to be recorded in the ship's log.
  - (b) A statistical estimate of the power of the whole loading gear shall be made by an expert or by the builder, so that those responsible for the

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ship are exactly informed concerning the carrying power of the gear, and so can avoid overburdening it.

- (c) All chains, chain links, and eye bolts are to be renewed when a third of the diameter of a link is worn away; if they are worn away less than a third, their lessened carrying capacity shall be taken into consideration.

### 10. Loading and Bunker Hatches

- (a) The coamings of loading and bunker hatches shall be at least 80 cm. high above the deck.
- (b) If they are lower, a suitable railing shall be constructed, consisting of iron posts, which shall stand in sockets which are at most 2 m. distant from each other. Thru these posts shall be stretched ropes, wires, or chains to insure a firm inclosure.
- (d) If the coamings are more than 80 cm. high, a climbing iron or step shall be fixed to the outside of the coamings, 70 cm. from the upper edge, in front of the hold ladder, as an approach to the hold ladder.
- (e) Inside against the hatch coamings, above the hold ladder, there shall be a sufficient number of climbing irons attached, at the same distances as the rungs of the hold ladder. Special care shall be taken that the lowest climbing iron is not placed too high above the topmost rung of the hold ladder.
- (f) The resting place for the hatch covers on the coamings can only be regarded as safe when it has a minimum breadth of 40 cm.

### 11. Hold Ladders

- (a) In every hatch there shall be at least one hold ladder, fastened above and below, which runs in a straight line from the deck to the bottom of the hold.
- (b) Interrupted or folding hold ladders are not permitted.
- (d) In building the hold ladders, care shall be taken that the approach to them on the upper deck, etc., shall not be blocked by winches or other fixed objects, as well as that the lower decks can be reached from the ladders without danger.
- (e) If, on old ships, the winches stand so near the hatch coamings that the approach to the hold ladders is blocked, there the latter are to be moved.
- (i) The use of free-hanging loose rope-ladders shall be regarded as unsafe and therefore not permitted.
- (o) Hold ladders are to be fastened to bulkheads in such a way that the rungs are at least 100 mm. away from the bulkhead.
- (p) The hold ladders must be fastened to the hatch coamings as nearly as possible in a straight line with the coamings so that the hold ladders are not drawn back under the dock more than is absolutely necessary.

### 12. Thwart-ship beams and fore-and-afters

- (a) Thwart-ship beams and fore-and-afters of all upper deck and between deck hatches are to be provided with proper fastenings so that they can be placed without anyone climbing out onto them. For this purpose the thwart-ship beams are to be provided at each end with holes of at

## REGULATIONS FOR ACCIDENT PREVENTION, HAMBURG

- least 30 mm. diameter, shackles, ringbolts, or falling links, the fore-and-afters, at each end with hand ropes with large eyes or with stops.
- (b) Iron thwart-ship beams of the upper deck and between deck hatches are to be so arranged, that when circumstances make it necessary for them to remain in place in the hatchway, they are to be fastened securely by bolts to the coamings, so that they cannot be moved out of place by rising drafts, etc. Similarly the fore-and-afters are to be secured by bolts when they need to remain in place.
  - (c) The projecting edge or groove for the hatch covers on the wooden fore-and-afters must be at least 50 mm. and must always be kept sharps edged. If this becomes narrower by being worn off, the margin shall and as long as the beam is otherwise still safe, be increased to the required width by fastening to it a border.
- (1) The lower edges and corners of the hatch coamings must not be left sharp. They must be provided with a half-round band or be constructed so that in unloading, wires shall not be cut nor shackles or hooks get caught under the edge of the coaming.
13. Lengthwise and hatches
- (b) Wherever possible, all hatch ways shall be of equal length and the hatch covers shall be made of equal breadth, so that it will not be necessary to mark the hatch covers as they are all of equal size, and putting them on, especially at night, will thereby be made very simple and easy.
14. Hatch covers
- (a) The hatch covers themselves are always to be kept in good condition, with their edges sharp, and provided with safe handles.
15. Railings and Lighting
- (b) All stairs, and breast-rail passageways 1 M high or over must have at least on one side a firm, secure railing.
  - (d) Lower deck hatches with low coamings, which lie in the common region of traffic, must, when they are kept open, be securely railed in or barred off.
  - (e) During darkness, all places of work as well as open spaces and passages used for traffic are to be amply lighted.
17. Platforms
- (c) When the lower hold is empty and the between decks are being loaded or unloaded, a sufficient number of hatch covers with the thwart-ship beams, or sufficiently strong platforms are to be laid on.
  - (d) If work is going on in the between decks and in the lower hold at the same time, an adequate barrier of planks or stretched-out nets, is to be made, across the entire hatch and along the brink of the open hold, so that neither persons nor freight can fall or be knocked into the lower hold.
19. Cranes
- (a) Where the platforms for the crane drivers go close by open hatches or

## THE LONGSHOREMEN

lower-lying decks, then a secure railing, built hip-high is to be placed around the platforms.

- (b) If when the cranes turn, they are close to coamings or bulkheads, and therefore there is danger that persons may be crushed between them, a secure barrier shall be installed.
- (c) On all cranes and winches in the region of traffic, all projecting shaft ends, as well as projecting nuts, screw heads, belt-gearings, couplings, shafts, etc., shall be avoided altogether or securely cased in.

### 23. Noisy work

Very noisy work in the neighborhood of hatches which are being worked must not be carried on during the loading and unloading, since it makes it impossible for the workers to understand the hatch foremen in charge of the work, and for the hatch foremen to understand the winchmen.

### EXTRACT FROM LETTER OF HERR SIEGNUND, CHIEF HARBOR INSPECTOR OF HAMBURG

Ordinarily two and more gangs are permitted to work in one hatch at the same time in Hamburg. How many gangs are allowed in one hatch varies in different cases, sometimes according to the size—especially the length—of the hatch and sometimes according to the kind of work. It goes without saying that the loading and discharging of bulky goods requires more room in a hatch than the loading and discharging of sack goods and such small objects. In discharging bulk cargo (such as coal, grain, etc.) one hatch 8 m. long at the side, can be worked by four gangs; one counts accordingly on 2 m. of hatch length for each gang. It depends also, naturally, on how many people are working in one gang in the hold. Here one counts on five men at the most in the hold in one gang. In this way, the discharging of bulk cargo has been carried on for years with good results for the safety of the workers. These standards have been set by the Warehousing Accident Insurance Association together with the Harbor Inspection Department.

## APPENDIX J

### DEARTH OF DATA CONCERNING LONGSHORE WORK

Supplementing the facts stated in the Introduction with regard to the futility of searching for published information concerning longshoremen, the following notes are of interest:\*

The annual reports of the New York bureau of labor statistics contain a few figures in regard to the numbers and membership of longshoremen's unions, the wages and the hours of the men, but these returns come from only part of the unions. Even if every union made full returns, however, the figures would still be worthless as a basis of information on longshoremen of the entire port. Less than 20 per cent of the men are organized, and as it is optional with the unions whether or not to make returns, it is evident that no finality can be claimed for the figures. The inaccuracy of the conclusions of the report regarding average earnings is self-evident.

In the sixteenth annual report of the United States Bureau of Labor, 1901, a summary is given of all the strikes and lockouts which occurred in the United States before 1881.† This summary is by years, and records a few details concerning each strike. In the year 1874 a strike of 35 mule spinners in Chicopee, Massachusetts, which lasted two weeks, is duly recorded; yet no mention is made of the longshore strike (or lock-out) in the port of New York which began in the latter part of 1874, involved 10,000 men, and lasted about eleven weeks. During part of this time the traffic of the port was almost at a standstill. This omission seems incomprehensible.

In the libraries one looks up "stevedores," "docks," "shipping"—any heading that might smuggle in facts about this large class of men, but in vain. Reluctantly and by degrees the searcher realizes that the dearth of references is not due to the carelessness of the cataloguer. No information is registered because no book treating of any phase of the life of the American longshoreman as such is contained in the libraries.

\* A list of American and English publications found and consulted will be found in the Bibliography, pp. 267 ff.

† The history of strikes and lockouts after that year is embodied in a series of statistical tables from which details are omitted.

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Indexed under "longshoremen" in Commons' Documentary History of American Industrial Society there is one reference, a clause contained in a letter referring to the ten-hour strike of 1835: "The laborers on the wharves of Schuylkill were out on strike several days previous." It is manifestly impossible to embody in a documentary history documents which are not in existence. The meagerness of material in this case is in accord with the meagerness in the government reports and in the miscellaneous literature of the libraries.

In July, 1910, the eighteenth annual convention of the International Longshoremen's Association took place in New York City. It was comprised of about 100 delegates who represented some 35,000 men in all parts of the United States and Canada. These men transacted the business of the convention for six days, and carried on their deliberations in a vigorous, intelligent, and orderly manner. The proceedings were marked by a decorum and by a respect for one another's rights not always found in conventions. Yet the leading papers of the city did not give it a line.

When all these lines of approach have been followed in vain, one turns to other possible sources. Innumerable books have been made out of the romance, danger, and hardship of the sailor's life; surely the hardship and danger of the man who handles the cargo after the ship has docked can not have been entirely overlooked. Accordingly, one writes to or visits sociologists and men of affairs who have knowledge of the waterfront. Their replies are strikingly uniform. They know of no literature on longshoremen, but offer to supplement this deficiency with information concerning seamen.

An attempt is next made to obtain directly from the bureau of labor and the bureau of the census at Washington data which have not appeared in their published reports. The reply makes it clear that these bureaus possess no data concerning the wages, hours, or conditions of employment of longshoremen.

Through all these and other agencies we have been able to discover the little material published in this country on longshoremen. This comprises a short pamphlet by Professor John R. Commons, on *The Longshoremen of the Great Lakes*; two pamphlets written and privately published by longshoremen on special labor problems in New York; and two or three magazine articles, one only on the port of New York and that one making no pretense of being more than a literary snapshot. The associations of waterfront workers have published accounts of the proceedings of their annual conventions. Constitutions and by-laws of the unions are issued and working rules and wage scales for a few ports have been printed. *The Longshoreman*, a monthly journal, is edited at Buffalo by the presi-

#### DEARTH OF DATA CONCERNING LONGSHORE WORK

dent of the International Longshoremen's Association and published in Erie, Pennsylvania. It deals chiefly with the affairs of the Association and its locals. Mention of conditions of labor in the different ports is only incidental.

In England the material is fuller. The English have for a score of years taken dock labor into serious consideration. Articles and pamphlets on various aspects of the work have been published. Books dealing with the labor situation contain chapters devoted to "dock labourers." The government has attempted to better conditions by investigations of parliamentary committees which have led to legislation. Yet the problems of this occupation are by no means solved. It is only in comparison with the much greater deficiency in America that the attention given the subject seems adequate.



## APPENDIX K

### DEVELOPMENT IN METHODS OF WORK SINCE 1860

Very gradually the methods of handling cargoes have been improved. Prior to the Civil War piers were uncovered, and when it was necessary to leave goods on the pier all night they were covered with tarpaulins. Certain firms made a specialty of renting out these tarpaulins. By 1862 there were a few pier sheds on the North River, which at first were mere skeleton sheds—tin roofs with sides of canvas; but by 1876 practically all the large piers on the North River were shedded. On the East River there still remained some open piers.

Ships of that time had sometimes only two, but for the most part three hatches. On a three-hatch ship about 50 men would be employed,—eight in the hold, two on deck, and six on the pier, for each hatch. As the ships had no bulkheads—walls which separate the compartments on modern ships—the cargo at any point could be discharged from any one of the hatches.

A primitive type of up-and-down fall and burton was used. A span of rope and chain ran from mast to mast, the short section over the hatch being of chain. To this was fastened an iron block—the gin. Through this block and through a block made fast to the pier the up-and-down fall was rove, and horses were attached to it. By leading the horses backward and forward drafts were raised and lowered. When the drafts were particularly heavy they were raised by capstans on the pier, to the bar of which the horses were hitched. For this work horses were often hired by the hour from "histers" who made the renting of them a business.

The burton was attached to a derrick stepped from the ship's side, and was run by man power. A longshoreman took turns with the fall around a lowering spar which was lashed at right angles to the foot of the derrick mast and was used as stationary drumend. By means of the horses the draft was raised from the hold till it was abreast of the hatch coamings. The burton was then fastened on and the load raised nearly to the gin—a distance, perhaps, of about 20 feet. The burton man and the gangway man took a purchase on the fall around the lowering spar and because of the height of the draft were able to swing or "drift" it clear of the rail. The rope around the lowering spar was then slackened and the

## DEVELOPMENT IN METHODS OF WORK SINCE 1860

draft allowed to land. If the draft had not been raised high enough, or if the men lacked skill, it sometimes descended to the deck instead of going over the side. In loading, the draft was dragged up a skid.

Vessels were not then so high as they are now; the distance the draft had to travel was shorter. Nevertheless the men who received it had to be careful. If, for instance, when man power was used, the men who were lowering the draft did not take proper turns around the lowering spar, the load might get beyond their control and come down with a rush.

As steam vessels came into use, they were supplied with steam winches for the up-and-down fall. Steam winches were first used on the North River. In 1865 the only place on that side of Manhattan where horses were still used was at the foot of Spring Street, and by that time they were in use on the East River. At about the same time steam engines called donkey engines located on the piers were gradually introduced for handling the cargoes of sailing vessels, or used as auxiliaries to the steam winches on board; but not until a number of years later was steam power applied to the burton.

One method of handling cargoes which may be called a transition, was by means of two skids and a fall. One skid was laid athwart the deck from the rail of the hatch coamings to the edge of the ship. This gave it a slight slope. A second skid ran from the edge of the ship to the pier. The fall brought up the draft from the hold and landed it on the first skid near the hatch coamings, and two longshoremen shoved the draft along the skid. The sling was then thrown off and the goods run over the edge of the second skid. Down this second skid they shot with neither hand nor fall to guide them. They were received and trucked away by the men on the pier. This method did not go out of general use till a few years ago. It is still occasionally found.

About 1890 there was a change in the burton at some piers. Derrick poles were fastened upright at regular intervals along the pier,\* and through a ring bolt at the top of each there ran a span of wire rope. To this was fastened a block for the burton fall. Steam power instead of hand power was used. But for something less than a decade after its introduction this steam burton was used only for discharging. Loading was still done by means of skids.

In this style of loading the up-and-down fall was fastened to the draft and dragged it up the skid. It was about 1900 that, in the use of the steam burton, skids were dispensed with and the draft was directly raised

\* On a few of the new piers, notably those of the Chelsea Improvement, derrick poles and a span are no longer used to support the burton. Instead, the iron framework of the pier shed is carried up to the necessary height and the burton is made fast to an iron beam built especially for it.

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from the pier by aid of the burton which was attached to the up-and-down fall.

In the "old style" of loading by skids, one skid is placed or hung against the side of the vessel. The fall made fast to the draft drags it up the inclined skid till it is clear of the ship's edge. It is then landed on and hauled along another skid to the hatch coamings. There it is the duty of the gangway man to steady it as it is lowered into the hold. This method may be slower, but its slowness is partially compensated for by its safety.

Sometimes one fall drags the draft up the skid from the pier and lands it on the deck. The fall is then unhooked and returned for another load, while another fall, which is hooked on to the draft on deck, lifts it over the hatch coamings and lowers it into the hold. One or the other of the methods just mentioned is still much used in handling the cargoes of "outside" and tramp ships.\*

In an old method of discharging which is still very largely used, the up-and-down fall brings the draft abreast of the hatch coamings, where the burton fall is hooked on. The draft is swung or "burtoned" across clear of the ship's rail. At this point the gangway man unhooks the up-and-down fall, and swings it back to the hatchway. It is then lowered into the hold. The burton fall lowers the draft onto the pier, where the pier man unfastens the sling and gives the burton a swing as it goes back with the empty sling. The hooker-on catches it with a long stick to which a crosspiece is lashed. This method is used only where the ship lies close to the pier. If she is breasted off for any distance the up-and-down fall goes ashore with the burton.

\* Strictly speaking, "outside ships" are those which have no regular sailings; tramp ships those which have neither regular sailings nor a regular place to dock. But the terms are loosely used.

## APPENDIX L

### AIMS AND DATES OF ORGANIZATION OF LONGSHORE UNIONS

Alongshoremen's U. B. (United Benefit) Society. March 15, 1853. (Certificate of incorporation filed with the secretary of state and the clerk of the county of New York.)

The chief objects of this society were charitable and benevolent relief to members suffering from "accidents or sickness," and assistance "in the burial of deceased members." Although this society was incorporated as a benevolent organization, it is reported in 1854 as having already taken on some of the functions of the labor union. In March of that year a meeting of the society was held for the purpose of bettering conditions.\* A strike was threatened in case employers refused to grant their demands.† But if the Alongshoremen's U. B. Society ever had any power as a labor union, this had died out by 1860, for old longshoremen agree that in the early sixties, there was no active labor union in the port.

American Seamen's Protective Union Association, New York City. July 3, 1863. (Certificate of incorporation filed with the secretary of state.)

The purpose of this association was benevolent. Though the specific business of the incorporators is not disclosed, it is evident from a full reading of the certificate as well as from a consideration of the list of trustees that this was a longshore organization. The names of several of the trustees are known to old men about the port as those of longshoremen.

The Alongshoremen's Union Protective Association of the City of New York. April 20, 1864.‡ (Chartered by act of legislature.)

\* The men complained of the high rent and the high cost of living generally, of irregularity of employment which kept their earnings down, and of the risks which made their trade precarious. Their average weekly earnings, on a basis of four or five days a week, did not exceed \$7.00. They therefore demanded an increase in the rate from 12 shillings (\$1.50) to 14 shillings (\$1.75) a day, and \$2.00 a day for holidays.

† The *New York Daily Tribune*, Saturday, April 1, 1854.

‡ This does not fix the date of the first organization of the Longshoremen's Union Protective Association. It is the date of the granting of its charter. Talks with old longshoremen make it possible to fix the date of its organization as early as 1862 or 1863.

## THE LONGSHOREMEN

The purposes of this association were "for mutual aid, protection and support and for the promotion of social intercourse and the private and general interests of the members thereof." As far as could be ascertained, none of the incorporators named in the charter are living, but their names indicate to old longshoremen that this was probably the beginning of the famous "L. U. P. A."\* It is reported to have met at 47 West Street.

Longshoremen's Mutual Benevolent and Protective Society, No. 2 of Brooklyn. April 14, 1865. (Chartered by act of legislature.)

As far as the session laws disclose, the Longshoremen's Union Protective Association and the Longshoremen's Mutual Benevolent and Protective Society, No. 2 of Brooklyn, are the only organizations of longshoremen ever granted charters by the state legislature.

Longshoremen's Union Protective Association, No. 2 of the City of New York. June 9, 1866. (Certificate of incorporation filed with the clerk of the county of New York.)

This was a local that met in St. James Hall, Roosevelt Street. The association had among its purposes that of "regulating and protecting our interests, wages, and the manner and time of employment, and the burial of the dead of our society." This is the first case discovered in which mention is made of the intention to regulate the wages or the manner and time of employment. The benevolent association had begun to give place to the labor union as we know it today.

Longshore Lumber Handlers' Union Protective Association, No. 1 of the City and County of New York. October 12, 1866. (Certificate of incorporation filed with the secretary of state.)

Little can be learned of this association, though the certificate of incorporation is very full. It was to be located in New York City.

Longshore Seamen's Benevolent Association, New York City. May 25, 1868. (Certificate of incorporation filed with the secretary of state.)

The title indicates that the incorporators were probably both sailors and longshoremen. Several new objects are mentioned; namely, to contribute to the social and moral elevation of its members, to maintain good standing and interchange of good offices.

\* See pp. 114 ff. No. 1 is not attached to the official name—other branches not having been foreseen—but this is evidently the union referred to throughout the port as L. U. P. A. No. 1. From its inception the name took its present popular form, L. U. P. A.

## AIMS AND DATES OF ORGANIZATION OF LONGSHORE UNIONS

Longshoremen's Independent and Benevolent Association of the Eighth and Ninth Wards of the City of New York. May 9, 1873. (Certificate of incorporation filed with the secretary of state and in the county clerk's office.)

This was really a benevolent order and did not confine its membership strictly to longshoremen.

Longshoremen's Union Protective Association No. 4. March 1, 1881. (Charter received from the secretary of state.)

Very little in regard to this union can be discovered, evidently because of minor importance.

Longshoremen's Union Protective Association No. 3, New York City. December 22, 1885. (Certificate filed with the secretary of state and in the county clerk's office.) It has been almost definitely ascertained that this union was first formed about 1879 and met at Canal and Varick Streets, but it was without a charter for a number of years. In 1885 it had a membership of 2000. This union is said to have moved to St. Anthony's Hall on VanDam Street and still later to have met at the corner of Houston and Hudson Streets.

Longshore Seamen's Benevolent and Protective Association of the Port of New York. January 30, 1886. (Charter received from the secretary of state.)

This was not, strictly speaking, a labor union but rather a secret and benevolent order. It was made up chiefly of deck men known as "longshore sailors." The members held their membership in the regular longshore union. They were popularly known as "Gold Badge Men" from their custom of wearing a gold badge on state occasions as the insignia of their order.

Longshoreman's Independent Protective and Benevolent Association, No. 1 of Brooklyn and New York. April 1, 1887. (Charter received from the secretary of state.)

The headquarters of this union was in Brooklyn, and the men because they wore a brass button for a badge were known locally as the "Brass Button Men." The membership was made up mainly of oil handlers. It was short-lived.

Longshoremen's Social Club. November 9, 1896. (Charter received from the secretary of state.)

This club was formed for the purpose of recreation and cultivation

#### THE LONGSHOREMEN

of acquaintance among the members thereof. Its meeting place was ...  
Brooklyn.

Longshoremen's Union Protective Association No. 2. April, 1898.  
(Certificate filed in the county clerk's office.)

The Longshoremen's Union Protective Association of Greater New  
York. September 29, 1898. Certificate on file in the county clerk's office.  
This association had the original charter of the present L. U. P. A.  
and it succeeded Edward McHugh's American Longshoremen's Union.

United Longshoremen's Union Protective Association. December  
12, 1906.

This association was made up of Italian longshoremen in Brooklyn.

## GLOSSARY



## GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN LONGSHORE WORK

- AFT:** The stern of the vessel.
- ALL OVER MAN:** See *Juniper*.
- ALL OVER HATCH:** See *Hatch*.
- AMBULANCE:** See "*Fruit box*."
- BANANA FIEND:** A longshoreman who unloads banana boats.
- BARREL:** Sometimes the center drum or spool of a winch is called the barrel.
- BEND A SKID:** To place a skid in position to work.
- BILGE AND CONTLINE (CUNTLINE):** The method of loading barrel oil by which the barrels are fitted in chines against the bulge or the ends against the center.
- BIT:** Share of the work. "A new man thinks he is able to do his bit."
- BITE:** The short loop of a sling.
- BITE:** The friction of the fall on the drum of the winch, which gives control of the fall.
- BLIND HATCH:** See *Hatch*.
- BLOCK:** "A system of one or more pulleys or sheaves, so arranged in a frame or shell as to multiply the power applied to the rope passing around them, or change the direction of its action."
- BOOM:** A long pole or spar used to extend the sail of a ship at its base.
- BOOT FOR SHOE:** End for end; to reverse. When one end of a fall is worn the other is put in its place—boot for shoed—to take the hard wear.
- BREAK OUT:** To lift cargo from its place; e. g., bananas from the hold.
- BREAKER OUT:** Used in banana handling for a man who first lifts out the bunches from the hold.
- BREAST OFF:** To hold off, e. g., to hold off the ship from the pier side with spars.
- BREASTING OFF SPAR:** A spar used in breasting off.
- BROWNIES:** Men who sweep off the piers.
- BUDDY:** A temporary partner in the work.
- BURTON OR BURTON FALL:** See *Fall*.
- CA'CANNY:** Scotch term meaning "hold back" or "go slow" in the work.
- CAPSTAN:** "An upright drum or cylinder revolving upon a spindle, and worked by bars or levers."
- CASE HOOK:** Truckman's hook, also called loader's hook.
- CHECKER:** A man who keeps tally; e. g., of men, or of cargo. In banana handling the checker keeps tally of the bunches as they are loaded into freight cars.
- CHOCK:** To brace; e. g., to chock the cargo in with dunnage.
- COAL CONVEYOR:** A large tower-like structure, similar to a grain elevator, used for coaling ships.
- COAL DIGGER:** A mechanical contrivance for scooping and lifting coal.
- CORNER:** Longshoremen call the far side of the street opposite the pier where they hang around to await the hiring the "corner."
- COTTON HOOK:** The hook used by longshoremen.
- CRANE:** "A machine for raising and lowering heavy weights." Cranes are operated by steam, electricity, or by hydraulic power.
- DAGO:** An Italian.
- DECK:**
- Orlop deck:* The first deck above the lower hold.
  - Upper orlop:* The next deck above the orlop deck.
  - 'Tween deck:* The next deck above the upper orlop.
  - Stowage or main deck:* The next deck above the 'tween deck.
  - Poop deck:* A deck raised above the after part of a vessel.

## GLOSSARY

- DECK MAN:** A man who works on the deck,—a winch man, gangway man, hooker-on, etc.
- DERRICK:** An apparatus for hoisting heavy weights. The word is loosely used on the waterfront, and a boom or spar is often called a derrick.
- DOCK:** Strictly an enclosure in connection with harbor or river for the reception of vessels. In this port loosely used for the space between piers or as a synonym for pier or wharf.
- DOCK MAN:** A man who works on the pier, a pier man.
- DOUBLE PURCHASE:** See *Purchase*.
- DRAFT:** The load.
- DRIFT, n:** The distance the cargo has to be dragged in the hold before reaching the hatch openings.
- DRIFT, v:** To swing; e. g., the draft.
- DRUM:** A spool; e. g., the drum of a winch.
- DRUMEND:** The end spool or drum of a winch about which the fall is wound.
- DRUMEND MAN:** The man who controls the fall by taking turns about the drumend.
- DUNNAGE:** Pieces of wood used to protect and brace cargo.
- FALL:** A rope used in handling the draft.  
*Burton or burton fall:* The fall which carries the draft athwart the ship.  
*Up-and-down fall:* The fall which raises and lowers the draft.  
*Midskip fall:* The up-and-down fall.  
*Rapid transit fall:* The third fall used in the method of discharging called the rapid transit.  
*Extra fall:* The rapid transit fall, commonly called the trolley fall. See *Rapid Transit*.  
*Hurry up:* The rapid transit fall.
- FARM, THE:** The open space in front of a pier where goods are piled.
- FATHOM:** A nautical measure equal to six feet.
- FLOOR OFF:** To place the first layer of goods over the bottom of the hold as loaded.
- FORE:** The bow of the vessel.
- FORE AND AFTERS:** The transoms of the hatchway running fore and aft.
- FRUIT BOX:** A wooden box attached to the fall in which small boxes or packages are placed for loading and discharging. It is sometimes called an "ambulance" because it is used to take injured men ashore.
- GAFF:** The name given to a horizontal spar lashed to a mast and used as a crane—mast and gaff.
- GANGWAY MAN:** A specialized deck man who has control of the raising and lowering of drafts and gives the signals. He works near the gangway.
- GIN:** An iron block.
- GINNY (pl. ies):** An Italian.
- GRAB:** A coal digger or steam shovel.
- GRAB-WINCH:** A winch worked by hand power, mostly used on lighters.
- GUY OR GUY ROPE:** A rope or chain to hold steady or swing a heavy body.
- GUY, v:** To make fast or steady; e. g., to guy the booms.
- HAND:** A layer or growth of bananas around the stem. It is used in banana handling.
- HAND LEATHER:** A piece of leather fastened at the wrist and worn by winch men.
- HANGER:** A platform or shelf on which bananas are tossed during the process of unloading.
- HATCH:** An opening in the vessel from the hold up. An all-over hatch is carried through all the decks; a blind hatch is not.
- HIGH WATER:** The hour for "making a lap," i. e., getting light refreshments.
- HISTER:** A man who in former days rented out horses for the power to work the fall.
- HOIST:** To raise.
- HOLD:** That part of the vessel in which the cargo is stored. The lower hold is the first hold from the bottom—the "skin of the ship."
- HOLD MAN:** A man who works in the hold.

## GLOSSARY

- HOLD TURN, v:** To work a drum end; to hold in place after taking a turn with a rope end.
- HOOKER-ON:** The man who hooks a fall to the load after it has been raised to the deck level.
- HOUSE, v:** To furnish with a cabin; e. g., barges are housed.
- HURRY UP:** See *Fall*.
- JUMPER:** An "all-over man." A longshoreman who does not attempt to get steady work at one pier but works all over the port.
- KNEE:** To give a slightly leaning position; e. g., to a bunch of bananas in loading.
- KNOCK OFF:** To quit work.
- LANDER:** A man who aids in landing the draft on the pier.
- LASH:** To tie or bind with a rope.
- LEAD:** A guidance; e. g., of a rope or fall to avoid an object or to clear a path.
- LOADER'S HOOK:** See *Case book*.
- LONG AND SHORT QUARTER:** Before the Civil War the first half day from 7 to 12 was divided into quarters of unequal length—seven to nine and nine to 12.
- LONGSHOREMAN:** A workman employed in discharging and loading the cargoes of vessels and in trucking them back and forth on the pier.
- LOWER HOLD:** See *Hold*.
- LUMPER:** A small stevedore who takes contracts for a lump sum.
- MAIN DECK:** See *Deck*.
- MAKING A LAP:** Going out to get light refreshment or a drink during the work period; e. g., from nine to ten or three to four.
- MID-SHIP FALL:** See *Fall*.
- MOOR:** To fasten a ship in place; e. g., by anchor or to the pier.
- NET:** When many small articles are handled a net is used instead of a sling.
- ORLOP DECK:** See *Deck*.
- OUTSIDE SHIPS:** Those ships which have no regular sailings.
- PENNANT:** The free end of the up-and-down fall below where the burton is permanently made fast.
- PIER MAN:** A man who works on the pier; a dock man.
- PLATFORM:** A frame work of timber or boards, sometimes closed at the ends, on which a draft of small boxes or packages is carried.
- POLACK:** A term used by longshoremen to designate any of the people from Central Europe or the Balkan Peninsula.
- POOP DECK:** See *Deck*.
- PURCHASE:** The arrangement of pulleys and gear for lifting drafts. "Double purchase" means extra gear used for heavy loads.
- QUAY:** A solid artificial landing place on the edge of harbor, river, etc., used for loading and discharging vessels. The term is rarely used in America.
- RAPID TRANSIT OR HURRY UP:** A method of discharging in which three falls are used, an up-and-down and a trolley fall which is spliced to the burton fall.
- RAPID TRANSIT FALL:** See *Fall*.
- REEVE (past, *rove*):** To pass through; e. g., to reeve the fall through the leads or the longer loop of the sling through the shorter.
- RIDE:** For one turn of a rope to climb on top of another; e. g., on the drum of a winch.
- RIDING:** The hauling away of brick or similar material. "The riding is good" means that large quantities of the material are being hauled away.
- RINGBOLT:** An iron bolt with a ring through the eye. The ringbolts on hatch covers are used as handles.
- SAVE ALL:** A net hung from ship to pier to prevent the draft from falling into the water. Also a sail cloth placed for protection between different kinds of goods.
- SELECTOR:** The man who grades the bananas when they are loaded into trucks or cars.
- SHAPE, OR SHAPE UP, n:** The assemblage of men in front of the pier for the hiring.

## GLOSSARY

- SHAPE, or SHAPE UP, v:** To shape or shape up is to collect or assemble in front of the pier for the hiring.
- SHEAVE:** A grooved wheel in the block over which the rope runs.
- SHENANGO:** A longshoreman who does the odd work on lighters and barges.
- SHORT QUARTER:** See *Long and Short Quarter*.
- SKID:** Timber or boards generally used to protect the sides or deck of a vessel. The gangway for loading is sometimes called a loading skid.
- SKIN OF THE SHIP:** The floor of the lower hold next to the bottom of the ship.
- SLING:** A circle of rope with ends spliced used to hold together the parts of a draft.
- SLINGER OR SLINGER UP:** The pier man who adjusts the sling about the draft.
- SLINGING PLANK:** The plank on which the draft is laid preparatory to slinging.
- SPAN:** A rope fastened at both ends to any objects; generally to the masts. It is used for the up-and-down fall.
- SPAR:** A general term for mast, boom, and gaff.
- SPARDECK:** The upper or main deck.
- SQUARE OF THE HATCH:** The space at the bottom of hatch.
- SQUARE-HEADS:** Norwegians, Swedes, or Danes.
- STACKER:** Used in banana handling; the man who piles the bananas in the freight cars.
- STEEVAGE DECK:** Main deck.
- STEP:** To step is to fasten; e. g., to step a mast from the ship's side.
- STEVEDORE:** A man who takes contracts for loading and discharging ships. The term is sometimes applied to a head foreman. It is loosely used for longshoreman.
- STOOL:** A pile of bags or packages in the square of the hatch on which drafts are landed.
- STOW:** To pack a cargo; e. g., in the hold.
- TAKE THE HOOK:** To return to longshore work after an absence.
- TAKE THE TIME:** To set down the hour when longshoremen go to or come from work.
- TARPAULIN:** A waterproof piece of canvas used for covering the hatches.
- TELL TALE:** A mark on the up-and-down fall to guide the drumend man.
- THWART SHIP BEAMS:** The transoms of the hatchway running athwart the ship, transversely to the fore and afters.
- TOTER:** The old name for a header.
- TRAMP SHIP:** A ship which has neither regular sailings nor a regular place to dock.
- TRUCKMAN'S HOOK:** See *Case book*.
- TUB:** A bucket, or tub, of wood or iron, with iron handle, used for the handling of bulk cargo, such as coal, ore, chalk, sand, and so on.
- TUNNEL:** The covered way in the lower hold through which the propeller shaft runs.
- 'TWEEN DECK:** See *Deck*.
- UP-AND-DOWN FALL:** See *Fall*.
- UP-AND-DOWN MAN:** A man who handles an up-and-down fall.
- WARP:** To tow or move a vessel by ropes; e. g., to warp her in to the pier.
- WHARF:** An erection on the shore of a harbor, river, etc., for taking in and landing cargoes or passengers.
- WINCH:** An engine which furnishes the power for moving cargo.
- WINCH MAN:** A man who works a winch.
- WING:** The corner or side of the hold next to the "skin of the ship."
- WOP:** A newly arrived immigrant who does work which requires the lowest grade of skill.
- YANKS:** A term used among Irish longshoremen to designate the American-born Irish.

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