

be made to secure the services of the unemployed. If that fails they will resort to convict labor.

Davis brought home some new truths to these men of the business world. It was something strange to them. None of them had ever before considered the itinerant worker as anything except a tramp.

"There's nothing to be ashamed of in being a hobo," said Davis. "Look at all these rich men here and the state officials and the learned engineers; they seated me as delegate, didn't they? They're not ashamed of me. The gold miners of California were hoboes. Columbus was a water-hobo. Every man that has gone into the unknown without a definite object is a hobo. All discoverers are hoboes.

"Tramps? It's the tramps that want to work. The hobo does want his own. And don't forget there are 300,000 of us. We want good roads so we can find work easier."

It made the bankers and the state officials ponder deeply, this problem of the unemployed. Three hundred thousand men, all out of work! And here they were seated in convention demanding that convicts be forced out on the highways to take away this work from those 300,000.

"Why do we call our organization the 'Hoboes of America?' Yes, there's a reason. For many years men who traveled from place to place were called hoboes and were not distinguished in the public's eyes from tramps and bums. Gradually as their number increased and they met each other on the road, they learned to distinguish the traveling working-men, or the man willing to work, from the tramps who simply loafed over the country, and they saw that there was genuine consideration for a man willing to work but who had to keep moving. The necessity of separating themselves from the nomad criminals caused the respectable class of men to cling together. Soon they learned that by observance of the law in the various communities through which they passed, keeping themselves clean and working when they could, they were corresponding respected as a class.

"It was no crime to travel and they broke new laws, so why should the fact that they had come to town in a boxcar, or on the trucks, be a cause for discrimination against

them. It was when their numbers had grown that certain political agitators tried to use them for their own purposes. Politicians, anarchists and others thought they saw in the hoboes a large body of men who could be added to their own ranks. The hoboes, however, were too smart for these and kept aloof from them."

Davis divides the travelers into three classes. "The common bum we don't consider," he said. "There are no young bums. A bum is an old man, usually, in whom the fire of ambition has died out. His only aim is to eat and sleep. He wouldn't work if he could, and, in many cases, couldn't if he would. He is utterly useless. 'Tramps' we know as men who travel over the country, or the globe, in pursuit of some object. It may be literary, artistic, political or religious. "We recognize all actors as fellow 'boes.' Not many of them are tramps. There are men who travel to get material for literary purposes. There are others who travel for political purposes. The religious tramp is not much known in the North, but he flourishes in the South. He will preach on a soap box and pass the hat when he is done. This is true of the political tramp, also. The literary tramps gets his graft out of the sale of his books. But the real hobo scorns to use his travels for grafting purposes. He travels from place to place to get work and works when he gets it.

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