

Workers in the Industrial Age  
p. 565-569

1. Describe how factory workers paid the price for economic progress. (pay, hours worked, days per week, etc.)
2. What is a sweatshop?
3. Why do you think so many women and children entered the workforce?
4. What is a labor union?
5. Why did labor unions form?
6. Who were the Knights of Labor and how/why did they form?
7. What did the AFL fight for?
8. What is collective bargaining?
9. What turned public opinion against unions?
10. Describe what happened at the Triangle Shirtwaist Company.
11. What caused many workers to strike in the 1870s and 1890s?
12. What are strikebreakers?
13. Explain the Haymarket Square Affair.
14. Describe the Homestead Strike.
15. Describe the Pullman Strike.

## networks

There's More Online!

- ✓ **BIOGRAPHY**
  - Samuel Gompers
  - Mary Harris Jones
- ✓ **CHART/GRAPH** The Fair Labor Standards Act
- ✓ **GRAPHIC ORGANIZER** Strike Causes and Effects
- ✓ **MAP** Labor Action 1877–1914
- ✓ **PRIMARY SOURCE** Jones and Gompers on Labor
- ✓ **VIDEO** The Struggle for Rights



### Lesson 4

## Workers in the Industrial Age

**ESSENTIAL QUESTION** *How does technology change the way people live and work?*

### IT MATTERS BECAUSE

*Industrialization created a large group of workers and also difficult working conditions. The result was the beginnings of the labor movement.*

## The Industrial Workforce

**GUIDING QUESTION** *How did working conditions change during the Industrial Age?*

Industrial growth created jobs. Yet factory workers paid a price for economic progress. They generally worked for 10 or 12 hours a day, six days a week. They could be fired at any time for any reason. Many lost their jobs during business downturns. Immigrants willing to take lower pay drove down wages.

People often worked in unsafe and unhealthful conditions. Steelworkers suffered terrible burns. Coal miners died in cave-ins. Garment workers toiled in crowded and dangerous urban factories known as **sweatshops** (SWEHT • shahps).

By 1900 more than 1 million women had joined the industrial workforce. Women generally earned about half of what men did for the same work. Hundreds of thousands of children under 16 also worked in industry. Many states passed child-labor laws that said children working in factories had to be at least 12 years old and should not work more than 10 hours a day. Employers, however, widely ignored child-labor laws.

### ✓ PROGRESS CHECK

**Calculating** How many hours a week did industrial laborers typically work?

### Reading HELPDESK

#### Taking Notes: Determining Cause and Effect

As you read, use a chart like this one to record the reasons events occurred and what happened as a result.

Event	Reason	Outcome
Haymarket Riot		
Homestead Strike		
Pullman Strike		

#### Content Vocabulary

- sweatshop
- labor union
- collective bargaining
- strikebreaker
- injunction

## WORKERS' WAGES AND EXPENSES 1903



Industrial workers in the early 1900s found that it was not easy to earn enough money to meet expenses.

Average Hourly Wages*
Bricklayers: 50¢
Plasterers: 50¢
Newspaper compositors: 36¢
Machine woodworkers: 25¢
Construction workers: 17¢
Metalworkers: 16¢

(\*in Chicago 1903)

Average Expenses*
Rent: \$4–10 per month
Butter: 22¢ per pound
Milk: 6¢ per quart
Bread: 5¢ per loaf
Rib roast: 13¢ per pound
Postage: 2¢ per ounce

(\*in Chicago 1903)

**1 CALCULATING** How many hours would a machine woodworker have to work in order to pay rent of \$8 in Chicago in 1903?

**2 CRITICAL THINKING**  
*Speculating* What other expenses, besides food and housing, would a typical worker have?

## The Growth of Labor Unions

**GUIDING QUESTION** *Why did workers form labor unions?*

Dissatisfied workers organized into groups—**labor unions**—to demand better pay and working conditions. Earlier in the 1800s, skilled workers in certain trades or crafts had formed unions. These trade unions represented only one trade, however, and had too few members to have a wide impact. By the mid-1800s, as working conditions worsened, labor leaders looked to include larger numbers of workers in their unions.

In 1869 garment cutters in Philadelphia founded a trade union known as the Noble and Holy Order of the Knights of Labor. At the time, employers could fire workers who joined labor organizations. For this reason, the Knights met secretly and used special handshakes to **identify** one another.

Under the leadership of Terence V. Powderly, the Knights of Labor became a national labor organization in the 1880s. Unlike most unions, the Knights recruited people who were usually not allowed to join trade unions. For example, they encouraged women, African Americans, immigrants, and unskilled laborers to join their union.

The Knights of Labor grew to more than 700,000 members by 1886. Its links to several violent acts turned public opinion against it, however. The Knights lost power in the 1890s.

### Reading **HELPDESK**

**sweatshop** a shop or factory where workers work long hours at low wages under unhealthy conditions

**labor union** organization of workers who seek better pay and working conditions

#### **Academic Vocabulary**

**identify** to show or prove who someone is; to recognize someone or something

# BIOGRAPHY

## Samuel Gompers (1850–1924)

Born in London, England, Samuel Gompers went to work making cigars at the age of 10. After moving to the United States with his family, he became involved in the labor movement. He helped organize and lead the American Federation of Labor from its founding in 1886. He believed strongly in collective bargaining. "The individual workman is as weak against the combination of wealth as would be a straw in a cyclone."



## Mary Harris Jones (c.1837–1930)

Mary Harris "Mother" Jones was born in Ireland and trained to be a teacher. She married a union organizer, and after her husband and four children died in a yellow fever epidemic, she got involved in the movement herself. Mother Jones traveled the country to organize workers and to support strikes. "There are no limits," she insisted, "to which powers of privilege will not go to keep the workers in slavery."



## The American Federation of Labor

In 1886 a group of national trade unions joined together to form the American Federation of Labor (AFL). The AFL represented skilled workers in a large number of trades and crafts.

Jewish immigrant, Samuel Gompers, the practical-minded president of the Cigar Makers' Union, led the AFL. The organization pressed for higher wages, shorter hours, and better working conditions. It also sought the right to **collective bargaining** (kuh•LEHK•tihv BAHR•guh•ning)—when unions represent a group of workers in talks with management over wages and other matters.

Union involvement in violence turned public feeling against workers and unions in the late 1880s. Yet the AFL survived. By 1904, it claimed more than 1.6 million members and remained a significant force in industry.

## The Rights of Working Women

Many unions would not admit women. That did not keep women from playing a role in the labor movement. Mary Harris "Mother" Jones spent 50 years fighting for workers' rights. She was especially active in the drive to organize mine workers—virtually all of whom were men.

Women also formed their own unions. In 1911 fire broke out at the Triangle Shirtwaist Company, a New York sweatshop located on the top three floors of a 10-story building. Workers, mostly young immigrant women, were trapped. Survivors reported that some of the doors leading out were locked.

### ► CRITICAL THINKING

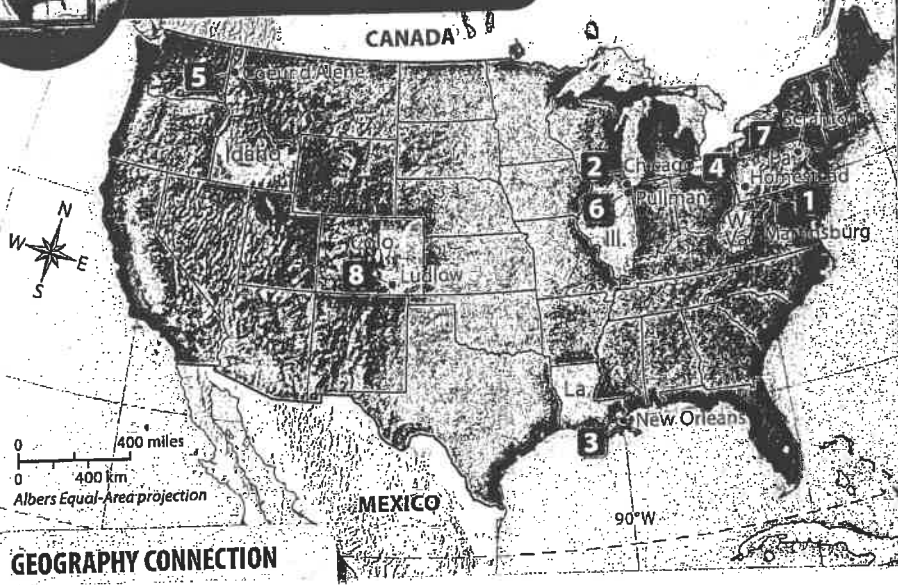
**Comparing** What is one feature both Gompers and Jones share in common besides their involvement in labor organizing?

**Analyzing** How did Gompers and Jones view the employers of the workers they hoped to organize?

**collective bargaining** discussion between an employer and union representatives of workers over wages, hours, and working conditions for the union membership as a whole



## Labor Action 1877–1914



- 1 1877 Great Railway Strike**  
Workers protest pay cuts
- 2 1886 Haymarket Affair**  
Labor rally ends in violence
- 3 1892 New Orleans**  
Workers from 42 unions demand shorter hours and better pay
- 4 1892 Homestead Strike**  
Steelworkers protest wage cut
- 5 1892 Silver Mine Unrest**  
State jails hundreds of striking workers
- 6 1894 Pullman Strike**  
Federal troops end riots
- 7 1902 Anthracite Coal Strike**  
Miners strike to win union recognition
- 8 1914 Ludlow Massacre**  
State militia burns striking miners' tent colony

### GEOGRAPHY CONNECTION

Workers organized many strikes and protests, some of which led to violence.

- 1 REGION** Based on this map, what industrial operations existed in the far West?
- 2 CRITICAL THINKING**  
*Analyzing Visuals* Based on this map, which industries were especially troubled by serious strikes?

Nearly 150 workers died, many after jumping from the windows. The disaster led the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) to push for a safer working **environment**.

### The Unions Take Action

Economic depressions in the 1870s and the 1890s hit working people hard. After a financial panic in 1873, for example, many companies cut costs by forcing workers to take pay cuts. In some cases, they fired workers. Unions responded with large strikes that sometimes sparked violence.

In July 1877, angry railroad strikers in several locations burned rail yards, ripped up track, and destroyed property. Railroad companies hired **strikebreakers** (STRYK • bray • kuhrs) to replace the striking workers. Federal troops restored order.

Another bloody clash occurred between police and strikers in Chicago's Haymarket Square in May 1886. Workers from the McCormick Harvester Company had been striking in favor of an eight-hour workday. Several were injured when the police broke up a labor rally. The next day, a crowd gathered in protest. As police ordered the crowd to break up, an unidentified person threw a bomb. The blast touched off a riot. When it was over, seven police officers and several civilians were dead, and 60 people were injured. Afterward, many Americans linked the labor movement with violence and disorder.

### Reading HELPDESK

**strikebreaker** person hired to replace a striking worker in order to break up a strike

**injunction** a court order to stop something from happening

#### Academic Vocabulary

**environment** a person's surroundings

In 1892 workers went on strike at Andrew Carnegie's steel plant in Homestead, Pennsylvania. In an attempt to weaken the union, plant managers had cut workers' wages. In response, the union called a strike.

Homestead managers hired nonunion workers and brought in 300 armed guards to protect them. A fierce battle followed in which at least 10 people died.

Pennsylvania's governor Robert E. Pattison sent the state's militia to restore order. The plant reopened with nonunion workers. After the failure of the Homestead Strike, membership in the steelworkers' union dwindled.

In 1894 when the company cut their wages, employees of the Pullman railway-car plant went on strike. Pullman responded by closing the plant. Workers in the American Railway Union then refused to handle trains that included Pullman cars. The union's action paralyzed rail traffic across the nation.

Pullman and the railroad owners persuaded U.S. Attorney General Richard Olney to obtain an **injunction** (ihn • JUHNK • shuhn), or court order, against the union for "obstructing the railways and holding up the mails." When union leader Eugene V. Debs refused to end the strike, he was sent to jail.

President Grover Cleveland sent in federal troops and the strike ended. The failure of the Pullman Strike dealt another blow to the union movement. Despite these setbacks, workers continued to organize to campaign for better wages and working conditions.

#### PROGRESS CHECK

**Explaining** Why were there growing anti-labor feelings in the late 1800s?

## LESSON 4 REVIEW

### Review Vocabulary

- Use the terms below in a sentence that illustrates how the terms are connected.
  - labor union
  - collective bargaining
- Examine the two terms below. Then write a sentence explaining what the terms have in common.
  - strikebreaker
  - injunction



On May 4, 1886, a crowd gathered in Chicago's Haymarket Square to protest police violence. As the meeting was breaking up, someone threw a bomb. The exchange of gunfire that followed left several police officers and civilians dead.

#### ► CRITICAL THINKING

**Analyzing** What effect did the Haymarket affair have on the labor movement?

### Answer the Guiding Questions

- Describing** What were working conditions like for many workers in the Industrial Age?
- Explaining** How did workers hope that labor unions would help to improve their lives?
- EXPOSITORY WRITING** Explain why so many women and children worked in the industrial labor force, and describe the treatment they received.