

"The railroad men who take the corn from the farmers are unionized. So are the steamboat men, the longshoremen, freight handlers of all classes, the elevator men, the teamsters and all other labor concerned with its transportation. To defend itself against the cutters that menace it, every element of this labor demands the right to fix its own profits, its wages. This right to defend itself against the cutters whom it call 'scabs' is now generally acknowledged. As the corn goes into a manufactured article, let us say corn flakes, every element of labor, including even the printers of its advertising matter, has the power to combine, and does combine to fix, and does fix its own profit on the corn, by fixing its own wage.

"And did you ever hear of any association of jobbers or manufacturers being afraid to meet organized labor to fix prices, profits, wages, on anything with which labor is concerned? Ever hear them use the Sherman law spook on wage earners as they do on retailers?

"In the various sales of the corn, from the farm to the consumer, every price, every profit is fixed by combination. Brokers, elevator men, commission men, millers, bakers, manufacturers, all fix their profits on corn in their exchanges, boards, of trade, milling associations, and so forth. True, some of them are called 'trusts,' some are said to violate that Sherman spook, but as far as actual stoppage of any of their price-fixing is concerned—it's a joke.

"I said that every price, every wage, every profit is fixed. As a matter of fact, within or without the law, and with the favor of the actual majority of American citizens, every profit coming from the corn, from planter to eater, is practically, although not entirely satisfactorily fixed by the people making the profit, *except in one case.*

"The retail grocers who sell the canned corn or the corn flakes are not allowed to fix their wages, their profits. There the chain breaks, there is the missing link!

"The labor union of girls who fill the boxes with corn flakes can meet their employers, demand a meeting and fix their profit, their wage, and neither public sentiment nor law says nay. But let the same manufacturer dare to meet with retail grocers to fix their profits, their wages, and lo, and behold, the majesty of the law, the power of Government steps in—and keeps the chain from being consistently linked up."

The question is no longer one for academic discussion by trade associations, but has become one of practical politics, and the contest for fair and honest competition has been transferred from the courts to the floors of the state and national legislative bodies.

The cause of the retailer is so just and reasonable that it needs only to be presented clearly and forcibly in order to win legislative approval. It is now up to the retailers of every class to see to it that those who make the laws are fully informed on the subject, and duly impressed with the earnestness and political force of those who make the law makers.

J. H. BEAL.



THE PRESENT STATUS OF THE HUGHES-BACON BILL.

THE annual report of the Surgeon General to the Secretary of War makes a strong plea for the increase and improvement of the status of the Army Hospital Corps. This report has just been published. We quote from it the following:

"I can not in transmitting this, my last, annual report fail to call your attention to one particular in which the Medical Department is unprepared to fulfill its responsibilities to the Army and the Nation. It is one which has been the sub-

ject of frequent communications from this office in the last few years and has been pointed out for several years in the annual reports—this is the great deficiency in number of the Hospital Corps; so that when the tactical divisions of the Regular Army take the field they can have not more than one-fourth of the sanitary units required for the medical service and called for by the Field Service Regulations. In fact the first division stationed in the Eastern Department has not a single sanitary unit. No action by Congress is necessary to remedy this defect, since Congress, in order that such deficiency might be avoided, has placed in the hands of the President the responsibility for providing a sufficiently numerous Hospital Corps to care for the sick and wounded, and has specifically stated that they shall not be counted as a part of the strength of the Army. It is believed that Congress has thus shown the intention that our Army shall have an adequate medical service proportioned to its strength, and this is what I have repeatedly urged. It is also believed that if the Secretary would recommend to Congress the reorganization of the Hospital Corps, which is asked for in this report, it will be easily obtained and will much facilitate the recruitment of suitable men for this relatively unattractive service.

“The authorized strength of the Hospital Corps is as follows:

Sergeants, first-class	300
Sergeants	362
Corporals	50
Private, first-class and privates	2800
Total	<u>3512</u>

“The number of sergeants, first-class, is fixed by law, the total strength of the Hospital Corps and number in the various other grades is determined by Executive order.

“In service June 30, 1913

Sergeants, first-class	295
Sergeants	336
Corporals	38
Acting cooks	190
Privates, first-class and privates.....	2560
Total	<u>3419</u>

“It will be observed that the Hospital Corps is over 2½ percent. below its authorized strength. It has been found impossible to keep this corps at its normal strength by enlistments, or by voluntary transfer from the line. On four occasions during the year requests have been made to the Adjutant General for the transfer of unassigned recruits from the various depots to fill vacancies, and these requests have been complied with in so far as practicable. About 225 men have been transferred to the corps as a result of this policy. It has not resulted, however, in obtaining the most desirable class of men for service with the sick.

“The authorized strength of the Hospital Corps (3,512) is inadequate for the needs of the service, and does not provide the number of men prescribed by Army Regulations for duty with the Army as now constituted. When the allowance of 3,500 men was fixed for the Hospital Corps, the strength of the Army was less than 76,000. Its present authorized strength, exclusive of Hospital Corps and Philippine Scouts, is about 84,810, and a corresponding increase in the Hospital Corps would bring that organization up to 3905.

“As previously stated in this report, it has been impossible to keep the Hospital Corps filled up to its authorized strength by enlistment and reenlistment, and there has been a constant drain upon it by the transfer of desirable men to

the line and to other staff corps. This is interpreted to mean that the relative desirability of service in the Hospital Corps has lessened since the organization of the corps.

"In his annual report for the fiscal year 1911-12, the commanding general, Central Division, alludes to this condition of affairs in the following terms: 'The discipline and work of the Hospital Corps has been excellent. There has been some difficulty in keeping the detachments up to their authorized maximum strength, as the Hospital Corps does not offer sufficient inducements to make men desire to transfer to it from the line.'

"When the Hospital Corps was organized in 1887, it was recognized that its members would be required to do work that was not attractive to enlisted men and which required special qualifications. To secure a suitable class of men to do such work, non-commissioned officers of the Hospital Corps were given pay considerably in excess of most non-commissioned officers of the line. At a later date the pay of privates was likewise proportionately increased. This principle was lost sight of in the legislation of 1908, when the pay of the line was increased. In the meantime special grades of non-commissioned officers have been made in other branches of the service and various ratings established whereby the opportunities for promotion of intelligent men have been increased and opportunities for a substantial increase of pay have been provided. Opportunities for extra-duty pay are provided in other branches of the service, but are denied to Hospital Corps soldier.

"Bills are now pending in Congress which provide the following grades and rates of pay for the Hospital Corps: Sergeants major (new grade) 30, at \$75 per month, with the increased pay for service as now authorized for sergeants, first-class; sergeants, first-class, 300, pay to be increased from \$50 to \$65 per month; sergeants, pay to be increased from \$30 to \$36 per month; corporals, \$24 per month, (no increase); privates, first-class, pay to be increased from \$18 to \$21 per month; privates, \$16 per month, (no increase.)

"These bills were proposed and introduced without any prompting on the part of this office, but are in accordance with its ideas, and it is believed that if the measure were given the support of the Secretary of War it would become a law.

"Such a law would undoubtedly be for the benefit of the service by increasing the desirability of the Hospital Corps and attracting thereto a better class of men; and the additional higher grade contemplated would provide a more adequate compensation for a limited number of specially skilled men, such as pharmacists of exceptional ability, X-ray experts, anesthetists, and others of a class who can now command in civil life a higher rate of pay than is afforded them in the service.

"In consideration of the special functions of the mobile organizations, there is required for duty with them a certain number of men having qualifications different from those generally required for Hospital Corps soldiers. I therefore recommend that there be allowed for each ambulance company 1 horseshoer at \$30 per month, and 1 farrier, 1 saddler, and 15 wagoners, each at \$21 per month." and for each field hospital 1 artificer and 8 wagoners, each at \$21 per month."

In explanation of the last paragraph it should be said that the Army organization provides field service, hospitals and ambulance companies which have as important accessories, ambulances and other wagons with the necessary horses and mules. Organizations of the line provided with similar transportation, have farriers, horseshoers, wagoners, etc., who receive higher rates of pay than the privates. We believe that members of the Hospital Corps who perform similar duties with our field organizations should receive similar rates of pay. It is our

intention to make provision for these in the Hughes-Bacon Bill as reintroduced at the regular session of Congress and our committee is working toward that end.

In this connection it is of interest to quote from the annual Report of the Brigadier General Tasker H. Bliss, U. S. Army, Commanding the Southern Department :

“The condition of the Hospital Corps at the present time is a matter of very serious concern. The number of men present for duty is altogether too small to permit the efficient performance of the work that regulations, orders and customs of the service seem to require to be done. The service is so arduous for the really good men, and so unattractive, and the pay is so small that the application for transfer to the Corps of a superior man is now an extremely rare occurrence. There are very few applications for authority to re-enlist, while there is a constant depletion due to desertions and discharges.

“The medical and sanitary service could be performed in a much more satisfactory and creditable manner than at present were the hospital quota increased by fifty percent. and its quality could be improved by offering a larger stipend.”

Our committee scarcely expected any action at the special session of Congress recently closed, fully realizing that the tariff and currency legislation would preclude the consideration of our bills. We have promise of a hearing early in the present regular session and we urge upon all pharmacists the importance of calling the attention of their representatives in Congress both Senators and Representatives to the national importance of the Hughes-Bacon Bills as bearing upon the efficiency of our Army and the need for the prompt passage of this legislation.

W. B. DAY.