



WILEY

Review

Author(s): E. C. Cleveland Stevens

Review by: E. C. Cleveland Stevens

Source: *The Economic Journal*, Vol. 25, No. 99 (Sep., 1915), pp. 431-432

Published by: Wiley on behalf of the Royal Economic Society

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2221906>

Accessed: 26-06-2016 20:27 UTC

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at

<http://about.jstor.org/terms>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Royal Economic Society, Wiley are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to
The Economic Journal

throughout its pages the author points out numerous pitfalls of a kind which are not always successfully avoided even by those most skilled in the collection and in the use of statistics.

Chapter IV., on the classification of the members of a nation, will probably attract most attention at the present moment, and it should be invaluable to those who wish to know how the members of a nation should, and should not, be classified. Chapter VIII., on the standard of living, will also be of general interest; while the book as a whole should be most useful to all who are beginning the study of social problems. It should provide a wholesome corrective to those who are inclined to use statistical data for the establishment of conclusions which statistics alone cannot support; and also for others who are inclined to underrate the value of statistical methods as a means of adding to our knowledge.

The author's hope for the book is that "the result of the examination will be to appraise, if indirectly, the value, relevancy and reasonableness of the general existing stock of statistical results, and to suggest some lines of further progress" (p. 13), a hope that should certainly be realised.

H. SANDERSON FURNISS

Railway Conductors. A Study in Organised Labour. By EDWIN CLYDE ROBBINS. Columbia University Studies. No. 148. Vol. LXI. No. 1. (New York: Longmans, Green and Co. Agents, London: P. S. King and Son, 1914. Pp. 183, with Index.)

THIS study is an important contribution to the history of trade unionism.

It sets forth clearly and in careful detail the rise of a great society, the Order of Railway Conductors of America, its government, trade regulations, and beneficiary features.

The subject is an interesting one, for in many ways the Order of Railway Conductors stands out as an exception to the ordinary trade union, for example, in its special system of insurance, in its claim to jurisdiction outside the United States (in Canada and Mexico), and in its prolonged opposition to a policy of trade regulation.

The last point is of great interest. The Order began as "a temperance and benevolent society in which fraternal and ritualistic features were emphasised." From its formation in 1868, right up to 1890, when the members totalled 14,453, it held

aloof from labour controversies, at times actually expelling members who took part in them, and encouraging members to fill places vacated by strikers. This policy was expected to popularise the Order with the railway managers, but it is hardly necessary to say that the latter misunderstood the aims of the Order. As early as October, 1868, the Superintendent of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad declared that the influence of the "conductors' union" was hurtful, and that conductors who did not leave the association would be dismissed from the railroad's service.

Nevertheless, in spite of suspicion without and the constant opposition of an active minority within, the Order long discountenanced strikes. In 1877 the chief Grand Conductor referred to intemperance and strikes as the two great evils of the railroad labour world, and five years later the Grand Secretary and Treasurer of the Order wrote these words:—"I venture the assertion that there is not a striker in the United States that is not poorer on account of his connection with a strike."

When at last, in 1890, the Order found itself compelled to adopt a protective policy, it acted with great prudence and conservatism, and as a result the power to strike has been used sparingly. The number of members, however, has been more than trebled since that year, and 90 per cent. of all the conductors in the United States now belong to the Order. This increase is partly due to good management and the attractions of the Order as a friendly society, but it is also due to the fact that conductors appreciate the protection afforded them by the Order.

E. C. CLEVELAND STEVENS