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The Thanksgiving season is an appropriate time to remind the people of their prosperity. Those who are prosperous will appreciate it, and those who are not will think themselves the unfortunate exceptions to a general rule.

But the Chicago prosperity touters have strained a point or two. They tell us that the demand for labor is greatly in excess of the supply. This is calculated to excite the suspicions of men, of whom there are plenty, who seek work day after day and find no place. When the demand for labor really exceeds the supply, no one has to seek work, for in those circumstances work seeks him. And when figures are exploited to verify the assertion that labor is scarce, while laborers find themselves in fact redundant, it is difficult to avoid repeating the aphorism that while figures won't lie liars will figure.

A strong sidelight is thrown upon this dazzling statistical prosperity by the statement that stenographers are particularly scarce. When it is noted that good stenographers can be secured in Chicago for \$20 a week, and poorer ones down to \$6 or \$7, the brilliancy of the prosperity begins to fade. It seems, at best, to be a kind of prosperity which stimulates demand mainly for underpaid labor.

One thing that makes it possible to show an excessive demand for labor when in fact there is much lack of opportunities for employment, is that special temporary demands arise in

certain directions and for certain purposes and are pressing. When these cannot be promptly filled they go to swell the statistics of unsupplied demand for labor. For illustration, 3,000 railroad hands are wanted quickly and temporarily. There might be twice 3,000 men out of work, yet not half 3,000 able to do this work or willing to surrender their little stake at home by going as day laborers far away. So the statistics will show a large unsupplied demand for labor, though the demand was in fact not large, nor for permanent employment, nor general, nor the supply of labor in general at all scarce.

Another thing that makes these prosperity statistics misleading to all who do not examine them in detail is the fact that demand for women and children inflates the statistics. The experience of the Chicago Y. M. C. A. is referred to as an example of excessive demand and deficient supply. For the months of August, September and October the applications for work through this agency amounted to only 681, while the applications for workers were 759. Here is an apparent excess in demand over supply of 78—not a large excess, but an excess nevertheless. Yet when the details are looked into, the excess is shown to be made up altogether of demands not for men but for boys. Only 182 boys had applied for work, while 339 applications for boys had been made—an excess in demand for boys of 157. Regarding men, however, the excess was the other way. Applications for work had numbered 499, while applications for workers were only 420—an excess in supply of 79. Is it, then, an indication of prosperity when the demand for boy workers is greater than the supply, while the

demand for men workers is less than the supply? Or does it mean that men are being displaced by boys?

Properly enough Pennsylvania employers have not kept places in their establishments open for employes who went into the coal regions as militiamen. Vague threats are made against them for not having done so. It is urged, for instance, that penal laws ought to be passed to meet such cases. But upon what theory? Why should any business man bear the burden of supplying soldiers for the protection of the coal trust? If young men wish to belong to the militia that is their right. If they are then ordered into the field it is their duty to go. But if in consequence they lose their jobs, they have no just claim, neither has the State, against their employers. Losing one's job under such circumstances is part of the sacrifice that militiamen should expect to make. And in these times of statistical prosperity it is not much of a sacrifice. What if a man does lose his job? Aren't other jobs fairly yawning to swallow him up? The prosperity statistics make it so appear. Why, then, should any one, militiaman or not, worry over such a trifle as loss of a job?

President Elliot, of Harvard, has responded to the criticisms of his speech on trade unionism. He is not opposed to the organization of laborers for the purpose of benefiting their condition. He only opposes their methods. Much that he says in this connection is quite sound, or would be if he had coupled it with a frank recognition of the fact that the objectionable methods of labor organizations are incited by worse methods practiced against workingmen by organized society under the sanction of its predatory laws and institu-