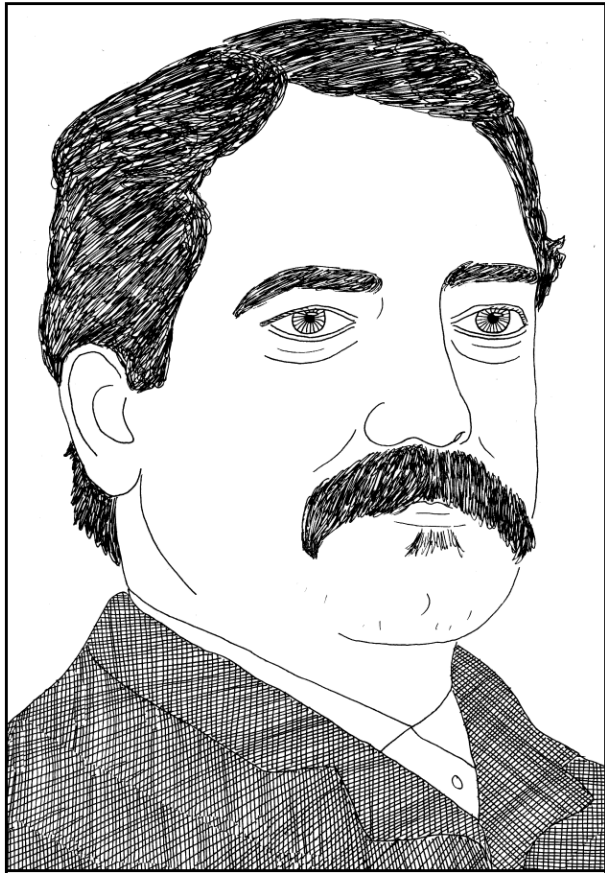


LABOR DAY FIRST MONDAY IN SEPTEMBER



"Our movement is of the working people,
for the working people, by the working people."
– Samuel Gompers

A nation's well-being depends on those who work to provide the goods and services that allow its citizens to lead productive and healthy lives. Often throughout history, societies have been divided into different classes, with one class typically having to do much of the work that keeps that society running. Employers and governments have not always treated the working classes well – often workers had to work long hours, in hazardous conditions for little pay.

The labor movement arose in Europe during the Industrial Revolution in the 18th and early 19th centuries, beginning with working people organizing into groups called labor unions and trade unions. With strength in numbers, workers had a better chance to convince employers and governments to treat them more fairly. The movement met with great resistance from the privileged classes. But by the late 1800s it began to grow into a worldwide movement after Pope Leo XIII advocated reforms for the working class, including the elimination of child labor, the right for workers to organize into unions, to have shorter work days and liveable wages.

Although some workers are still forced into sweatshops and other inhumane working conditions, the labor movement has won numerous victories that many of us take for granted, such as the 5-day work week, 8-hour work day, paid holidays and the end of child labor.

Labor Day is a US Holiday celebrating America's labor force. It is a time to honor the contribution American workers have made to the health and well-being of the nation, and a time to reflect on the basic right of workers to earn a livable wage and to work in safe conditions. Labor Day was first celebrated in 1882 in New York City. The idea of a workingman's holiday spread quickly as the labor movement grew, and in 1894 Labor Day became a national holiday, celebrated on the first Monday in September. Much of the rest of the world celebrates May 1 as a day dedicated to workers.

Do One Thing for a Better World

1. Find out more about historical labor leaders, labor victories, and ongoing labor injustice
2. Hold an event to raise awareness about sweatshops & other violations of workers' rights
3. Support organizations working to defend workers' rights

Labor Links

- AFL-CIO (aflcio.org)
- Fair Labor Association (fairlabor.org)
- International Labour Organisation (ilo.org)
- Jobs With Justice (jwj.org)
- LaborNet (labornet.org)
- National Labor Committee (nlcnet.org)
- US Dept of Labor (dol.gov)

DO ONE THING

The Emily Fund - Education, Mentorship, Inspiration, Leadership, Youth for a better world

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