

after all that fighting and arguing and almost-fighting, everything seemed just like it was before.

And then a funny thing happened.

A few guys in the gang used to work as "turn men"—that is, a millwright, repairman and repair helper would work together on the day turn, then a week three to eleven, and then a week on eleven to seven. On the afternoon and midnight shifts they would be the only repairmen on duty.

Usually they wouldn't work too hard, but they often fixed some important emergency breakdown. Once in a while the breakdown would involve pipe work, and they would phone back to the shop for the pipefitters, who also had a couple of guys on "turn." But the pipefitters would often take another fifteen or twenty minutes to get to the breakdown and sometimes even longer if they were out on another job already.

So the company thought of the bright idea of making the turn repair crew each carry a pipe wrench along with their other tools when they went out on a job.

Naturally, the mechanics didn't like the idea of carrying the extra wrench or doing the extra work. And naturally, they made themselves look good by saying they were thinking of the pipefitters and didn't want to put one of them out of work. And of course the company—in the person of Bob Fallon—swore up and down that no pipefitter would be displaced.

Anyway, although it seemed like a small thing, it got hotter and hotter when Fallon just laughed at the grievance and John Hill hardly listened either. The gang was steamed up enough to walk out, although you wouldn't think they'd want to lose a day's pay or more over a couple of men carrying or not carrying a pipe wrench.

Jimmy Burns wondered if all the big talk really amounted to anything, especially when he remembered how hard it had been a year earlier to get the gang to walk out a half hour ahead of quitting time to demonstrate for the eight-hour instead of the eight-and-a-half-hour day.

But it was serious. And as a matter of fact, the victory over the eight-hour day was in everybody's memory, too. Only they remembered the victory better than they remembered how nobody walked out at first.

So there they were, ready to walk. But the company was ready, too. The company could get enough foremen to take care

of repair emergencies for a single day. And it was all set to bring extra repairmen over from the open hearths and the shops if the stoppage lasted more than a day. And the top union leadership might sanction that, if it wasn't done too obviously. There sometimes wasn't a clear line between the shopmen's work and the repair gang's work. And the shopmen could easily say they weren't scabbing.

But a walkout was a walkout, and it would be a good demonstration, regardless. That's the way the guys looked at it. They were so burned up by this time that they almost didn't care if they won the beef or not. They just wanted to express themselves.

So Jimmy, Arnie and Johnny and a couple of others were organizing it and talking it up. And so the furnace workers heard about it, too.

And when Jimmy was doing some repairs on old H Furnace (which one time had the world's record for production of cast iron, but wasn't about to win any new ones), Henry said:

"Say, why didn't you tell *us* about the walkout?"

"Why, what do you mean?" asked Jimmy, just as he was getting the idea of what Henry did mean.

"Maybe we might walk out, too," said Henry.

Jimmy looked at Henry and grinned. Then he whistled. "Do you think all the furnaces would go?" he asked.

"Why not?" said Henry.

Now Jimmy hadn't even thought about the idea of asking the furnace men to back up the repair gang, but not because he was worried about what had happened in the case of Willie Brainard. He figured that the furnace men liked what had happened all right.

But he knew very well that the furnace men didn't think much about a grievance on carrying an extra wrench that might weigh five pounds at the most. He could see the great double-length, double-thick iron crowbars they used every day. In fact he had done turns as blacksmith-helper and hefted these bars when the blacksmith sharpened and re-tempered them and he had a healthy respect for anybody who could work half the day over red-hot iron with them.

He had seen big, barrel-chested men grunting and heaving as they worked with these bars, prying the just-hardened iron puddles out of the runners. And he often saw the third helpers