

Out of this furnace by thomas bell

Literature



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Lecturer: Out of This Furnace by Thomas Bell Out of This Furnace by Thomas Bell is set in Braddock Pennsylvania and was published in 1941. Bell talks of steel companies that were present during that time. The novel is based on his family and its generations from 1881, steel workers and their struggles. The steel companies that were operational during that time made huge profits by engaging in a number of activities. First, a steel company had to have a good cost accounting system. This would enable the company to balance between its expenditures on workers and other operations and the earnings that it made from the steel business. After defining the costs needed to run the business, the companies would increase the flow of production in the system, to increase the volume of steel production. This is exactly what Carnegie did in his steel company called Keystone Bridge Company. He ensured that the company provided for a cheap supply of iron beams and plates. This was done by recycling used steel. He also instilled measuring scales in the mills to ensure that there was no wastage (Bell 19). To ensure that the steel companies maintain a quick flow of production, they made workers work for 24 hours throughout the week. Workers performed their duties in shifts of 12 hours every day. Some workers came during the day while others worked at night. They should exchange so that a worker would work during the day for a week and work during the night the next week.

Dobie was different from his father, Mike Dobrejczak in several ways. First Dobie was born in the US meaning that his values, beliefs and life were influenced by American culture and way of life. In comparison, Mike Dobrejczak migrated to the United States of America when he was 14. Dobie's father was not involved much in politics and the labor union as compared to <https://assignbuster.com/out-of-this-furnace-by-thomas-bell/>

Dobie. Mike worked as a diligent man and was a believer in labor unions. He knew the potential value that the labor unions had on workers. However, he did not actively participate or demonstrate his support for labor unions (Bell 120).

On the other hand, Dobie openly and actively demonstrates his support for the labor unions by acting as a leader. He learnt the negative consequences of passive support from the previous generation. Dobie acts as a politician and he does this by actively advocating for the union and reveals the threats laid on him by his employers. This is clear when Dobie tells a co-worker that, "... but if we stay how do we know they wont change the rates again without saying anything... wait until we see the big shot tonight. If he does not give us any satisfaction, we wont work." (Bell 265). This shows that Dobie is proactive as compared to his father, Mike.

In conclusion, Thomas bell informs the reader of the ways in which the steel companies engaged in their business in the nineteenth century. He also shows the suffering that workers went through to enable the companies gain huge profits.

Multiple choice questions

1. The initial owner of the Homestead and Braddock mills was Andrew Carnegie.
2. Dubik was killed in a furnace explosion.
3. Mike Dobrejcek registered as a Republican but voted for Eugene Debs, the Socialist.
4. Kracha opened a butcher shop.
5. The Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO) promoted the union organization of all workers in mass production.

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Work cited

Bell, Thomas. Out of this furnace. Pittsburgh : University of Pittsburgh Press, 1976. Print.