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Labor Age



TAKING *the* **MACHINE**
When Unions Own Industry

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Presenting all the facts about American labor—Believing that the goal of the American labor movement lies in industry for service, with workers' control.

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TAKING THE MACHINE—When Unions Own Industry

"INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY"—as all over the world—is the overshadowing issue in after-the-war America.

"Industrial Democracy"—as defined by the heads of the rail unions in their endorsement of Plumb's book, and by the hard coal miners, in their latest declaration—means the destruction of the regime of the Profit Maker and Investment Banker, and the introduction of group control.

In the Middle Ages the workers had possession of their tools. Through their guilds they cooperatively managed industry. But the coming of the Industrial Revolution—with its big factory and machine system—placed the workers, first in the hands of the individual employer, and then under control of the Banker.

In this country, after the war, the attacks of the Open Shop interests drove Labor to an offensive policy. The unions found they must be more self-sufficient. They must get control of their own credit power. They must work for control of the machine by the organized workers.

Out of this realization has come the movement for cooperative production. This has not merely taken in the demand for public ownership of public utilities, with workers' participation in control. It has also shown itself in the increased activities of workers in "consumers cooperative" undertakings, and in the discussion of the possibilities of "producers cooperation." The latter means

ownership and management of factory or mill by the workers of that establishment. The farmers have used this method effectively—in their cooperative creameries, cheese factories, etc.—in almost every country of the Western World. The organized workers have followed it successfully in certain countries and in certain lines of industry. In the United States the international unions have begun to reach out to carry on big industrial undertakings.

Can the organized workers gain control of the machine, as they formerly controlled the hand-tool? Through one method or another, they are moving in that direction. The Italian workers show what "producers' cooperation" can accomplish. The British workers, what "consumers' cooperation" can do. The Cooperative Movement in England is the biggest of that country's businesses. It is the Steel Trust and the Henry Ford of Great Britain—devoted to service instead of profit. The recent American experiences indicate what international union action can achieve.

All of them are offensive drives against the Profit Maker. Among them, producers' cooperation—particularly considered in this issue—deserves consideration. It has drained swamps, built roads and bridges, and erected monuments and public buildings in Italy. It represents one wing of the drive against the Profit System, and for the capture of the machine for democratic and social purposes.

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Labor Age



American Unions Move For “Tool Control”

Foundations Under Our “Castles in the Air”

By LOUIS F. BUDENZ

HARD COAL
MINERS
DEMAND
“DEMOCRACY”



Cooperative
Production
—By Workers,
Managers and
Government

Keystone Photos

I. P. E. U. 524

“YOUR castles are in the air?” wrote that great and lovable American, Henry Thoreau, a number of years ago. “That is where they should be. . . . Now put the foundations under them.”

American labor unions during the past year have been driving piles for the foundations of industrial control. They have been reaching out for a fuller share in the management and ownership of the tools with which their members work. They have begun to think in terms of “cooperative production.”

The other day Mr. Harding’s Coal Commission was handed an interesting document. It is to be hoped that they will read and digest it.

It is called “The Anthracite Monopoly,” and was prepared by the hard coal miners. It shows that both miners and consumers are being fleeced by the hard coal combine. As a remedy it proposes a uniform and accurate accounting system for the operators’ books, so that the people may know the exact facts in anthracite, and public ownership of the coal mines—with three party control. These three parties to come in as the new housekeepers in the hard coal household are the miners, the technical managers and the “public.” They are to succeed the Investment Banker, who has done such a bad job in attempting to run the industry.

“Come in and join with us in doing this thing

right," say the miners, in effect, to you and me, the consumers. "The two of us—with the technicians—can mine coal for our own good, and no longer for that of the Culm Coal Operator and the Banker, who stands back of him."

Poor Eliza

The beautiful revised version of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," which the operators have thrown on the screen regularly each year, thus goes up in smoke. No longer can they show themselves as the saviors of poor Eliza (the Public) as she rushes across the ice. No longer can they pit the miners in the role of the bloodhounds of Legree. The insincerity of their propaganda cry about the public is revealed by this counter-demand: "This public industry for the public service only"—with the workers participating in control.

The rail unions stand for an extension of American Democracy into the railroads, along similar lines. The keystone of the Plumb Plan is this triple control—of workers, technicians and the "public." The King idea is dead in government. The beginning of its end has now come in industry. Out of the experiments into which the "Open Shop" campaign has forced them, the unions have learned that group ownership and control can and will supplant individual control—in banks, factories and mills.

They know there is no one royal road to this democratic goal. The demand for government ownership is heard only in the basic industries. Such industries are so vast, and are so interwoven into every part of the social fabric that they mean almost as much to all the workers—as consumers—as they do to those actually employed in them. Banks for the workers, the unions have decided to own themselves. That is the form of organization being adopted by all the rapidly increasing labor banks. By this means the unions will be able to control, at least, the credit power in their own funds—hitherto used so freely by their enemies. By an alliance with similar farmers' banks, they may be able to wrest a major part of credit control from out of the hands of Wall Street. The Danish farmers have freed themselves, through their cooperative banks, from need for the private banker. Their own collective funds are able to finance all their undertakings. The Danish farmer, when he arises in the morning for his daily work, can look over acres which pay no toll to the Profit Maker. Is it surprising that his brother in our own Northwest, of the same blood

and vocation, should determine to obtain a similar freedom—after the heavy tribute which has been levied on him by the Grain Trust and its banker allies?

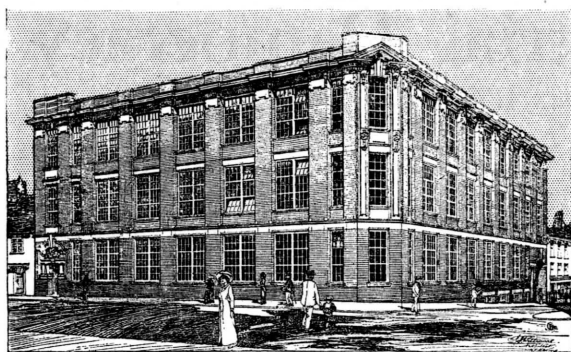
The Dane

The Dane has covered his land with cooperatives of all kinds—cheese factories, creameries, elevators, packing houses—and in that way has made his land happy and self-sufficient. It has become the form of business of the country. Private enterprise there realizes that its day is almost done. The Dane's cooperatives are largely "producers' cooperatives"—as distinguished from "consumers' cooperatives," flourishing so extensively in Great Britain and in other countries. The producers—the farmers—own and run these enterprises themselves. They do not secure the finance or other assistance of other members of the community—the folks who buy their goods.

Out in our own Western farm country "producers' cooperatives" are flourishing and increasing in numbers. The Jobbers' Association of the Kansas Farmers' Union has even entered the field of hay and grain marketing. It owns two seats on the Kansas City Board of Trade and one on the Kansas City Hay Exchange. It sells its hay and grain in large quantities both to the Kansas market and to markets in other states. The California fruit growers have adopted the Danish system—of a producers cooperative formed through a binding legal contract. Today their annual volume of sales totals upward of \$75,000,000.

American Efforts

Can the workers make use of this method to any advantage? Can the Machinists' Union, for example, establish a factory, finance it by sale of stock to its members on a one-man, one-vote basis and succeed? The American unions have not answered that question as yet. There have been no real attempts to secure cooperative production in that way. There have been several attempts to secure it in somewhat similar ways. The International Association of Machinists did make a try at conducting a large ship repair shop at Norfolk, Va. It was during the strike of five years ago. The union purchased a plant, and put in it the best mechanics in the port. That is a great asset in ship-repairing; for the captains of certain vessels get to know the mechanics whom they can depend upon. But the new venture, with this auspicious feature, ran into one great obstacle. This was a boycott



NEW FACTORY FOR LADIES' TAILOR-MADE COSTUMES. KETTERING CLOTHING MANUFACTURING SOCIETY LTD.

I. P. E. U. 624

(The Story of Kettering is told by Mrs. Warbasse on page 10)

on ships patronizing the union's shop by the manufacturers of material needed for ship purposes. The boycott was successful, and the plant is now closed down.

The Amalgamated Clothing Workers began a clothing factory in Brooklyn during the war. It also "fizzled": due largely, it is believed, to the fact that it chose the retail instead of the wholesale market as the seat of its activities.

The Cooperative Glove Association of Chicago, owned largely by the union glove makers, has had a better career. It was started during the Open Shop drive of 1920, and is manufacturing gloves for union workers on the railroads and for the cooperative stores of the country. The doors are open for anyone to become a stockholder in this cooperative, however; on the Rochdale principle of one-man, one-vote. But the glove workers, as a matter of fact, run the institution.

American unions have been most successful up to the present time in carrying on cooperative production under the "consumers' cooperative" form of organization. The big Franklin Cooperative Creamery in Minneapolis, for example, is shared in by the consumers on the one-man, one-vote basis. But all the officers are employes of the company, members of the local teamsters' union. The employes are also overwhelmingly in the majority at the monthly and yearly meetings, and therefore determine the policy of the cooperative.

The Internationals On the Job

It is not unlikely to expect, however, a growth of all sorts of group enterprises—under different forms of organization, according to the circumstances of the different industries. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers has added coal mining and housing projects to the large banking business already engaged in so widely. Why not expect it, as a union, equally

as well to purchase a railroad, in which its own members work—except for the fact that this would perhaps better come under the Plumb Plan?

The building of public roads, the erection of buildings, even the conduct of metal factories, lend themselves to one-union control, without assistance from the outside. At least, so the experience of the Italian workers seems to show. It is very likely that in this country (where the fight against the "company union" will compel a strengthening of the internationals) there will be more efforts under union control and ownership than in some other lands. The tendency in banking is all in that direction. All of these banks, with the exception of the Federation Bank in New York and the Producers' and Consumers' Bank in Philadelphia, are directly or indirectly managed by international unions. Out of that will no doubt come other efforts to beat the Profit Maker at his own game through international union action; such as the Locomotive Engineers have begun.

Happily, the American unions have not tied themselves up to any "infallible doctrine" of how the fight for industrial democracy shall be carried out. They are committing themselves to the Plumb Plan, the Miners' Plan, the consumers and producers' cooperative efforts, as a result of their practical experiences in their hand-to-hand battle with the employers. They refuse to become whirling dervishes, so lost in their contemplation of some perfect social scheme that they cannot face the day-to-day problems which confront them.

They will make use of every method that experience shows to be wise, to push forward the movement for group control. In the basic industries and so-called "public utilities," it will be one method; in the food and distribution industries, another; in factory and mill, a third. But all are part of the big effort now in its beginning, for Labor to control its own money, its own labor power, the materials on which it works, the factories to whose upbuilding it contributes.

It is the big mark of the post-war period in this country, that Labor is thinking of production on a group basis. It is deciding, more and more, as it goes ahead, that the day of the Profit Maker must be ended. "Industry not for the profit of the few, but for the service of the many" is the motto, being forged out, slowly but surely, by American Labor.

The Key to Industrial Democracy

Cooperative Production Paves Way to Freedom

By ALBERT F. COYLE

THE world is in the midst of industrial unrest and conflict. Diplomats are holding conferences. Politicians are framing laws. Business organizations are passing resolutions. All, to bring back the "normalcy" that existed before the war. Several of our states, in order to restore the balmy days when contented cows gave profitable industrial milk, are laying violent hands on any man who dares to discuss current industrial conditions.

It is not a question of hours and wages. Hunger and suffering often compel men to start thinking. But once the process has started, a good meal now and then cannot stop it. Nor is the trouble due to a few "agitators." As Sir Charles James Napier remarked, "Idiots talk of agitators. There is only one such in existence—injustice."

The real trouble is that the workers are human beings, with human instincts and a divine desire for self-realization. Gradually and painfully, through centuries of toil and sweat and blood, the workers have increasingly freed themselves from abject slavery, from limited serfdom, from feudal bondage, from all the tyrannies that have sought to make brutes out of them—or at best mere chattel machines. One by one the shackles that have bound down the great mass of humanity have been broken asunder. Now only one remains. The last citadel of autocracy is in industry.

The plain truth is that the workers of America and Europe are no longer chiefly concerned with just bread and butter. They want something to say about the conditions and continuity of their employment. They want a larger share of control in directing the industry in which they have invested all that they have—their lives. These demands were given a big impetus by the World War. The workers were repeatedly told that they were fighting to make the world safe for democracy, and they took the propagandists at their word. The war utterly failed to secure political democracy for mankind. But curiously enough, it has quite unexpectedly done more to achieve industrial democracy than any single event since the invention of the steam engine.

Most business today is run on the basis of an absolute autocracy or at best a constitutional monarchy. One man or a small handful of men have complete control of the business. They determine whether it is to serve or to injure society, and whether the men whom they employ are to work or to starve. Gradually the law has been forced to recognize that certain great businesses are "charged with a public interest," and are therefore directly subject to government regulation. In the truest sense all business is charged with a public interest, since the only social reason for any enterprise is that it provides the people with the necessities and conveniences of life.

Paths to Industrial Democracy

Industrial democracy, like political democracy, may be reached by different paths. It may be based on geographical units or industrial occupation. Again it may be voluntary or compulsory. Cooperation is the pathway to voluntary industrial democracy, while state socialism would make democracy compulsory. Similarly, cooperation itself is divided as to the manner of representation in the new industrial order. Consumers' cooperation corresponds to representation by geographical units. Under producers' cooperation the control would be vested in occupational units.

We cannot wisely take a bigoted stand for or against any one of these means for achieving industrial democracy. Each may have its place, depending upon the industry to which it is applied. Thus, can anyone doubt that distributing the mail or furnishing a city's water and electric supply or providing police and courts and schools so vitally affect the welfare of all citizens that cooperation in these activities must be compulsory? In other words, such industries must be and largely have been socialized, as a matter of sheer necessity, for the protection of the public weal.

"Similarly," we may add, "it is not a question of whether we are to choose either consumers' or producers' cooperation." There is imperative need for both of them, one in the province of production and the other in that of distribution. Those who urge consumers' cooperation

upon us to the exclusion of producers' cooperation show as little logic as one who would urge a woman to love her son and spurn her husband—the son's father.

Father and Son

Yet, just as the father precedes the son, so cooperative production in an industrial democracy ought to be the parent of consumers' cooperation. We must produce goods before we distribute them. "The importance of the human producer's place in society," as Robert Halstead says, "is the measure of the difference between civilization and barbarism." **The salvation of humanity has not been brought about by men eating, but by men working.**

Producers' cooperatives and consumers' cooperatives ought to be so closely allied that no possible difference could arise between them. The one is the hands and brain, and the other the stomach of the industrial system. Neither can go ahead effectively without the other. Most of the failures of consumers' cooperation in every country can be traced directly to the fact that they had to depend for their products on private profit concerns. Similarly, where producers' cooperatives have failed it is because they have lacked a ready and sympathetic market.

"He Who Does Not Work . . ."

There is both a practical and moral side to the question which cannot be overlooked. Practically, we shall never have efficiently operated industry until the men who have invested their labor and their lives in a given industry are made responsible for its conduct and share in its control. This is not a matter of theory but of fact. Would the interest of the worker in his work be greatly different under absentee consumers' collective ownership than it is under the present absentee private corporation ownership? It is obviously impossible for a huge consumers' organization to elect a committee to conduct an industry nearly so efficiently as could the man actually engaged in that industry.

The moral sanction for producers' cooperation was voiced by St. Paul in his advice to the religious community at Corinth, which was trying to create a cooperative brotherhood: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat" is equally good gospel now. As a matter of fact, these very words of the first Christian statesman have been adopted as the motto of the new Russian Republic. Abraham Lincoln expressed the same

thing when he said: "What right has any man to eat his bread in the sweat of another man's brow?" The drone, the social parasite, the idle rich and the idolent poor have no moral claim whatever upon the goods produced by the workers. There is only one right to the consumption of goods, and that is to have aided in their making.

Achievements

The most successful form of cooperation in America is, of course, the farmer-producers' cooperative societies. The census of 1920 shows that the products of over one-half million farms valued at one billion dollars are handled through these societies. This comprises dairies, creameries, cheese factories, elevators, flour mills, meat packing plants, and all sorts of produce and live stock marketing agencies.

On the industrial side cooperative cigar factories, glove factories and coal mines are thriving in a number of localities. And the cooperative banks—founded by the Locomotive Engineers, the Clothing Workers, and other groups of producers—constitute by all odds the greatest achievement of American cooperation during the past two years.

In England and Wales there are around 100 thriving producers' cooperative societies, with over twenty-five thousand members, a joint capital exceeding 4 million dollars and an annual business of twenty-six million dollars. These producers' societies cover the textile, leather, metal, wood workers' and printing trades. They divide their earnings not only among the workers, but also make a refund to the purchasers of their goods, contribute large sums for charitable, social, and educational purposes, and lay up a reserve for unemployment, accident and old age pensions for the workers themselves.

In France workers' productive associations have existed for the past seventy-five years, with a record of greater stability than either private enterprise or consumers' association. Of the 215 cooperative productive societies existing in 1908 over one-half are still in business, despite the industrial havoc caused by the war. More than 200 others have since been successfully founded.

Doing It in Italy

To the Italian workers, however, belongs the credit for the greatest achievements in cooperative production. They own farms and ships and factories. They have constructed cooperatively

LABOR AGE

and operate a successful railroad. They are now building a great canal to connect Milan with the River Po. They have reclaimed huge tracts of wastelands, built and own irrigation systems, and founded several thousand successful producers' cooperative banks. Recently the strong Italian Federation of Metal Workers' Cooperative Societies has united the producers' cooperatives to purchase raw materials collectively, to standardize their products, and to market them in a socially useful manner.

In Germany and Austria producers' cooperatives have pooled their funds with those of municipalities and consumers' societies in order to acquire some of the largest industries of the nation. One producers' society of 3,300 workers has taken over what was formerly the greatest arms and munitions factory in Austria, and is now manufacturing machinery, railroad equipment and furniture on a large scale, distributing these products through consumers' cooperatives.

The textile workers and tailors of Saxony—supported by the state bank and the German Consumers' League—have taken over on a thirty-year lease the huge government clothing works at Leipsic, which produced soldiers' clothing during the war. The products of this plant are sold directly to the people through the Consumers' League without the intervention of a single middleman.

The success of cooperative productive societies in Russia is well known. Just recently an American labor organization, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, has taken over an important unit of the Russian textile industry on the cooperative basis. The Russian "koostar" industries extend into hundreds of thousands of home workshops throughout the country.

Difficulties and Safeguards

"Industrial democracy can never be achieved," some very contented people tell us, "because the workers are both too ignorant and too selfish, or else lack the necessary funds."

The fact that it has succeeded indicates that these obstacles are not insuperable. Nevertheless they cannot be ignored. An able and intelligent working class is the first essential for any step forward toward industrial democracy. Workers' education will aid greatly to make this objection meaningless.

But can producers' cooperation be saved from selfishness,—from the desire of one class of workers to exploit all of their fellows?

If all the industries of the nation were to be controlled by one small group of workers, this might well be a cause for alarm. But when various groups of workers produce the goods which they must exchange with each other, the possibilities of profiteering on the part of any one group becomes remote.

The difficulty of securing adequate credit for workers' cooperative enterprises is more to the point. There is an equal need of credit for consumers' cooperation. The solution, of course, is the "mobilization of the credit power" of the workers under their own control by means of their own cooperative banks. When one American labor bank can amass 23 million dollars in resources in less than two and a half years' existence, this difficulty is not unsurmountable. Those who control credit control industry. When other labor organizations follow the lead of the Locomotive Engineers, the Railway Clerks, the Telegraphers, the Clothing Workers, and similar progressive groups, a new day in industrial democracy will dawn.

The producer is going to be the cornerstone of any industrial democracy worthy of the name. He will give his attention to politics in order to democratize those basic utilities where compulsory socialization is necessary (in order to protect the existence of the social group). He will also give his attention to the problem of distribution, and create his own consumers' cooperative societies in order to exchange with workers in other crafts the goods which he produces. But he is first of all a producer—because he is a man, because the great and lasting satisfactions of life come not from filling our stomachs, but from giving free play to the divine genius of the human brain and hand. For these reasons the workers of America want something more than the husks of wages and hours. The railway workers want the Plumb Plan, which will make them partners with the public in the conduct of the transportation industry. The mine workers ask for public ownership of the mines with cooperative production as the basis for their operation. And so for the other industries. There will not, there should not be industrial peace, let alone industrial efficiency, until the men who do the hard, heavy work of the world secure democratic control over their lives and livelihood through some form of cooperative production.

The Farmer Fights Back

And His Big Stick Is "Producers' Cooperation"

By L. E. HERRON

OUR Western farm country is dotted with the producers' cooperatives of the tillers of the soil. Over one million farmers are now members of cooperative societies of one kind or another. The dairymen have led the way, and the fruit growers, tobacco growers and others have followed. So strong has this wave become, that the reactionary interests have been obliged, grudgingly, to say a good word for it; hoping thereby to capture it.

"HE had come to this part of Nebraska when the Indians and buffalo were still about, remembered the grasshopper year and the big cyclone, had watched the farms emerge one by one from the great rolling page where once only the wind wrote its story. He had encouraged new settlers to take up homesteads, urged on courtships, loaned young fellows the money to marry on, seen families grow and prosper, until he felt a little as if all this were his own enterprise."

Thus writes Willa Cather of Nat Wheeler, the Nebraska farmer, in her novel of the Western farm county—"One of Ours."

Nat Wheeler's early days were days of pioneering. He had lived to see great changes. The "growth of the soil" had taken place before his eyes. Machinery and Fords and community school houses took the place of old methods in wringing from the soil its harvest and of getting that harvest to the markets. But new problems have arisen for the farmer of 1923. The battle with the elements is now transferred to a fight against the Profit Takers. From the stock exchanges and chambers of commerce they have reached out to rob the farmer of the results of his toil—just as they have tried to rob the workers.

The American farmers have not been found asleep. Like the farmers of Denmark and other old-world countries, they have turned to cooperation, to reduce the extortion of dealers in handling farm products. And just so far as cooperation has been wholeheartedly applied, extortion has given way. Success has been in direct ratio to the loyalty of the farmers to their own cooperative associations.

Let me give a few examples of the achievements of cooperation among farmers in the Middle West, the region with which I am the most familiar.

By the most conservative estimate, the country grain elevators owned and operated by farmers all through this region are saving the growers 3 to 5 cents a bushel on their grain. Generally

the other elevators meet the prices paid by the cooperatives. But here and there, where no cooperative elevator has been established, a comparison can be made. In the total, the saving is enormous.

The Grain Trust

Twenty years ago in this region, the local purchasing of grain was controlled by what was called the "Grain Trust." This was an organization of elevator owners dominated by a few great corporations operating "line" houses. This combination, through committees, determined the prices that should be paid for grain at country points. The "margins" taken were outrageous.

The farmers became thoroughly exasperated, and began organizing their own elevator companies. It was uphill pulling for several years. At first, the railroad companies, being allied with the grain men, would not grant sites or trackage. It was the old, old story there. Most of the grain commission firms in the central markets would not handle the grain from farmers' elevators. Folk with less determination would have been utterly discouraged.

Gradually these conditions were overcome, partly by legislation, but more by perseverance. After 20 years, the farmers own an elevator at almost every country town. Line companies in recent years have been glad to sell their country houses to farmers. Wherever there is a farmers' elevator, the local grain prices are now the terminal market price minus a fair handling charge and the cost of transportation.

While the farmers have largely captured the outposts in grain marketing, the Profit Takers are still in control of the gateways, the terminal markets. Many of the same corporations that were in the old "Grain Trust" still handle the farmers' grain after it leaves the country elevators. Some progress is being made, however, in extending cooperative marketing to the terminals. An example of this is the grain commission agency operated in Kansas City, Mo., by the Kansas divi-

sion of the Farmers' Union. Several similar agencies exist, and others are planned. **The aim of the farmers is to handle their grain through their own agencies as far as possible along the road to the ultimate consumers.**

Onward March of Cooperation

All of the early farmers' elevator companies were simply joint-stock corporations, because there were no cooperative laws then. This was also true of the early creamery companies and other farmers' companies. After cooperative laws were put through in the different states, the new farmers' associations were organized along truly cooperative lines for one vote per member, restricted interest on share capital, and patronage dividends. Many of the older companies were reorganized to become truly cooperative.

These "Rochdale" elevator associations buy the grain from farmers, just as a dealer would do, and then sell it in the central markets. In the meantime, the association takes all the risks of ownership. If the price of grain goes down while the grain is in the elevator awaiting shipment, the whole association bears the loss. Profits made in handling grain are divided as in any cooperative society.

Good progress has also been made by farmers in the marketing of live stock cooperatively. Before the rise of farmers' cooperative shipping of live stock, farmers who had less than a carload of animals to sell at any time (and could not, therefore, secure a car and ship their own stock to the central market) were at the mercy of the local live stock buyers. These buyers took all the traffic would bear. In many places, cooperative shipping has done away with the local buyers. Farmers ship their own live stock, either in connection with a cooperative elevator, or through a shipping association. The effect has been to reduce "margins" to actual handling costs.

Cooperative Commission Houses

In 1917, the Nebraska division of the Farmers' Union established a cooperative live stock commission house in Omaha. Later in the same year, a similar house was opened in St. Joseph, Mo., and the next year one in Sioux City, Iowa. These houses were so successful that similar ones have been opened in practically all of the larger live stock markets of the country.

These cooperative commission houses charge the same commission rates as the old-line houses. But at the end of the year they return to the

shippers everything above the actual cost of handling the live stock. Last year, the Omaha house returned 65 per cent of the commissions received, the St. Joseph house 50 per cent, and the Sioux City house 44 per cent.

Of course, these efforts in the cooperative marketing of live stock have not broken the control of the big packers. That is something that remains to be done. A great many farmers look forward to cooperative packing houses owned by producers, such as the Danish farmers have been operating successfully for many years. Another possibility is cooperative packing houses owned by consumers, as in Switzerland.

Even though the packers still largely control the live stock markets, the cooperative live stock marketing agencies already established by farmers have greatly reduced the margin between the farm and packing house. The savings effected to farmers as a whole by the cooperative commission houses have been much greater than the above percentage figures indicate. For, the old-line commission men have been prevented from increasing their charges.

Hundreds of Creameries

Cooperative creameries, for the conversion of cream into butter, have existed in the intensive dairying states—such as New York, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota—for more than 30 years. Indeed, in many places in those states the first creameries were the cooperatives. In Nebraska, Kansas, and other states where dairying is less intensively practiced, the big "centralized" creameries, owned by corporations, were the first in the field. Here the farmers started creameries to stop extortion.

Just as in the case of grain and live stock, these creameries have reduced handling margins and profits. Farmers now receive more for their cream in relation to the Chicago and New York prices of butter. **The gain to Nebraska farmers by reason of their cooperative creameries is conservatively estimated to be 2 to 4 cents per pound of butterfat.**

The big centralized creameries have tried to put the farmers' creameries out of business by unfair discrimination. They pay higher prices for cream in the territory of the cooperatives than the butter markets warrant. Then, they make up their losses in territory where there are no cooperatives. When farmers have somewhat recovered from the present agricultural depression, they will undoubtedly go ahead and

build more creameries in new territory. This will make it harder for the old-line creameries to discriminate in this way.

In some parts of the country, the cooperative creameries are cooperating in the marketing of their output by maintaining joint sales agencies in the big cities. They are thus following their product one step nearer the consumer and to that extent eliminating profiteering.

Besides the associations for the cooperative marketing of the big staples discussed above, there are hundreds of cooperative associations for the marketing of fruits, vegetables, milk, and eggs. The object is the same in all of these associations—to secure for the producers the profits and tolls that have been absorbed by dealers and speculators, and reduce marketing charges to cost.

The "California Plan"

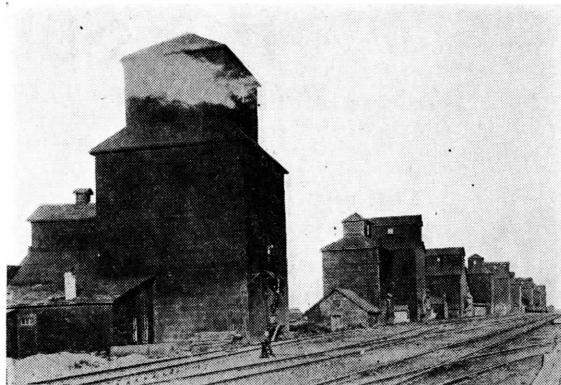
An article of this kind would not be complete without reference to what is known as the "California plan" of marketing farm products, which has recently come into rather wide use in the marketing of special crops. This plan is being used in the marketing of cotton, tobacco, wheat in the Pacific Northwest, and prunes and apricots in California.

In this plan, the marketing association may or may not own the facilities for handling the product, such as elevators and warehouses. Control of 75 per cent or more of the crop by the association is considered the vital thing. The members sign contracts to put all of their crop in a pool. An initial payment is made when the crop is delivered. Other payments may be made as the crop is sold. When the crop has all been moved, final settlement is made with the growers. Each grower receives the same return for the same class and grade of product, which is the average price received by the association, minus marketing costs.

The advantage claimed for this plan by its advocates is that it produces orderly marketing and stabilizes prices. Some of the more rash apostles of the plan have declared that by its use farmers could fix arbitrary prices for their products, as the Steel Trust does. The experience of the prune and raisin growers has shown, however, that what consumers will pay has something to do with prices.

Can't Be A Farmers' Trust

It is evident that with so many farmers, with so many substitutes for almost every food product grown on our farms, with the possibilities



Keystone Photos

I. P. E. U. 62½

The FARMER'S WEAPON
Cooperative Grain Elevator—Used to Fight the Grain Trust

of greatly increased production, and with the whole world to draw from, it is quite impossible to form a farmers' trust. If there were six million steel factories in the United States we would have no Steel Trust. The best that producers can expect from any form of cooperative marketing of farm products, I think, is to get the world price minus the actual costs of marketing.

"Pooling" has some things to commend it. It may become the prevailing system of marketing if applied in connection with existing cooperative agencies. But up to this time the pooling associations have been promoted without a solid foundation of cooperative spirit and education. They have been highly centralized and undemocratic in control. They have placed too much power in the hands of so-called experts more in sympathy with Big Business than with farmers. As a result, some of the pooling associations are having difficulties.

What is the relation of farmers' cooperative marketing to consumers? Does it make its gains at their expense? Up to this time what farmers have gained by cooperative marketing has been at the expense of dealers and middlemen. In only a few instances have farmers and consumers come face to face, and where they have there is no evidence that the consumers have been exploited.

Farmers are very much like other folk, and if they had the power to fix prices arbitrarily, they might use it. But as already pointed out, a farmers' trust is practically an impossibility. What farmers are trying to do is to rout the profiteers and extortioners who handle farm products. Farmers would earnestly like to see the laboring folk organize cooperative stores and other cooperative agencies and rout some of the Profit Takers at that end of the line.

It is Still a Mystery

Workers Have Not Made a Huge Success of Cooperative Production

By AGNES D. WARBASSE

“WE ALL wish them to succeed; these efforts of industrial workers in self-governing work-shops,” you may say to me. “Why don’t they?”

“Well, first let’s take a look at some of them,” I reply. “Then, let’s find out what’s the trouble. Let’s try and find out, why self-employment of the workers has ‘never gotten much farther than the experimental stage.’”

Consumers’ cooperatively owned factories are growing steadily larger in number and importance year by year. The total sales of the consumers’ in England amounted to over one billion dollars last year. The consumers’ movement in Great Britain has 4½ million members. It employs 186,000 workers. It has increased its membership 65 per cent in the last eight years. But in this same island, after almost a hundred years of experimenting, only 11½ thousand workers are employed in producers’ copartnership factories, and their membership has only increased 23 per cent within the last eight years. Why is it? We honestly want to know. The best way to find out probably is to go directly to the copartnership shops and seek the facts on the spot. This is what I did.

Before I tell you what I found, it is well to clear up in our minds—“**What we are not going to discuss**”. There are many forms of cooperation of producers. Each one is interesting. I’ll just mention them and pass by—they are “another story”.

Russia’s and Italy’s Workers

In Russia, there are thousands of peasant industries carried on in the homes, or in small nearby workshops. Whole families engage in handicraft work, with their neighbors during the winter months or slack seasons, when they can’t work in the fields. These “artels” or “kustars” are distinctly Russian. They offer us no example in seeking how to work out large scale cooperative industry.

In Italy and in many other lands, there are groups of artisans, “syndicates,” who pool their labor power. They jointly undertake large jobs requiring manual labor, both skilled and unskilled. They contract to drain swamps, har-

est crops, lay out roads, build bridges and public buildings. They work with skill and efficiency. They successfully outbid private contractors for big government undertakings. They use their collective labor power for their own and for the public good. These copartnership “syndicates” of laborers succeed where copartnership of industrial workers fail—even in Italy. Why?

Some of the reasons are these: They require little credit. No capital is needed for investment in property and plant, stock and industrial machinery. They need no trained managers. Copartnership labor “syndicates” cut industrial organization simply to the sale of the mechanical and manual power of the worker. It can compete and succeed in capitalist society today. There is no question about it.

But the same type of idealistic, intelligent Italian workers in copartnership factories do not succeed. We remember how they failed after taking over the metal industries in 1920. Very quickly they understood that their desires, and even their abilities, could not overcome the difficulties they had to face. They found that they were lacking three essential things, for the success of any manufacturing industry. These were: credits, raw materials and—the most important of all—a known market. Being realists, they “called it off” before they squandered their own and their union’s funds. Lots of other workers have not been so wise.

The Farmers’ Big Job

In every country of the world, one could almost say, the producers’ marketing associations of the farmers—the third type of “producers’ cooperation”—are making headway. Their methods of operation, however, offer no guidance for copartnership factories. Agricultural producers’ organizations, for one reason, need no collective capital. Each farmer owns his own land, and live stock. He merely disposes collectively of his privately owned products. Neither is credit a problem of the farmer in those countries, where cooperative land banks have long existed for agricultural loans. The forms of organization for the marketing collectively of grain, live stock, dairy products, cotton, tobacco, etc., are well worked out. They

have been tested by the experience of half a decade. With ordinary care and by sticking to the rules and contracts, cooperative marketing associations vastly improve the conditions of life of the farmer.

But, for all this, we must not lose sight of the fact that **these efforts of producers are forms of capitalism. In every case, the workers are producing for profit.** The more they can get for their products or their labor, the more they do get. **These producers' cooperatives are collective instead of competitive forms of profit making.** They are not developing the ideal of **production for service.** They are not changing the **motive of production one whit.**

The Story of Kettering

"But," you will ask, "what about the workers in self-governing workshops?"

I went first to Kettering, a little town in England, because it is the nearest to 100 per cent cooperative of any community in Great Britain.

The people of Kettering have their own stores, banks, building societies, bakeries and factories—a close-woven network of cooperation. The Kettering Clothing Manufacturing Cooperative Society has a long two-story red brick building, employing about 300 workers, making men's and boys' suits.

I went in the office, met the manager, and as we walked about, asked him many questions.

"Did the workers directly elect you to be the Manager?" I first asked, eager to find out about self-government. "Not exactly," he replied. "I am appointed by the Committee."

"Well, who are the Committee?" I asked.

"They consist of five representatives of the workers, two representatives of shareholding consumers societies and two individual shareholders."

"Why, I thought the workers owned the factory, that the workers were the only shareholders," I exclaimed.

"Well," he said, "the workers, you know, would never have enough money to buy a big plant like this and equip it with machinery and stock. They have to get most of the capital from friends and sympathizers. One third of it comes from rich people who believe in copartnership, one third from the local and national consumers' societies who want to help it along, and one third comes from the workers."

"The society was founded in 1897," he went on, "twenty-five years ago. The early capital came from outside sources. The workers could

become members by investing one shilling, but they must eventually own shares to the value of fifty pounds sterling (\$250). The way we get the workers to invest in the Society is like this: We take so much regularly out of their wages until they get paid up. They become shareholders automatically, as it were."

Like the Steel Trust

This sounded much like the Steel Trust to me, or like Wanamaker's Liberty Bond "free-will subscription." Was this "freedom in workshop"? I wondered. I soon found out the reason, when I went into the main work rooms. Most of the operatives were young girls.

"They don't stay in the shops long," the manager continued, "just until they get married. Of course it can't be expected that they will invest much, voluntarily. We have to take it out of their wages."

"Well, what do they have any say about—wages?" I asked.

"No," he replied. "The wages are all fixed by the Government Trade Board. It determines the wages for all clothing workers, in all the factories in the United Kingdom."

"What about employment or discharge?" I questioned.

"We never discharge our workers. We spread employment over the slack season, part time, share and share alike. In the rush some of the girls make 60 per cent over the regular wage rate, working overtime. Yes, we work piece-work. The girls do real well sometimes," he continued, "but the factory had bad losses when the hard times hit us. The Government would not allow us to cut wages. We had to depreciate 60 per cent on our stock of cloth, and 40 per cent on our finished goods. We were in a bad way. We didn't pay any dividends on wages or on sales that year."

"Oh! do you pay dividends on sales too?" I asked. "Yes," he said, "we divide our profits, when we have any, between our customers in proportion to their purchases, and to our workers, in proportion to their wages."

"How much interest do the workers take in the conduct of the business? Do they attend meetings?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied, "about a quarter of our workers come pretty regularly to the meetings, and that's about all who do come. Only about 5 per cent of the other shareholders ever come. It's a good thing," he said with a smile. "All

LABOR AGE

members have one vote each, you know. If the rest of the shareholders turned out, the workers would be in the minority."

Trade Unionism?

Changing the subject, I next queried about unfriendly competition. "What chance is there of your competitors gradually buying out the shareholders and getting control?"

"There's no danger of that," he replied, "for the by-laws provide that when a member dies, his shareholdings must be turned in to the Society. It buys them at par. This keeps the Society in our control, always."

"How do the trade unions regard the enterprise?" I asked, following up still another line of thought.

"Oh! we work right along with them. Our workers are required to be members of their respective unions."

Like many other compromises with capitalism, these "self-governing workshops" have an element of self-government, about as much as "shop committees" have in private factories. And they have profit sharing—so do many private enterprises.

There were, in addition, however, the sad characteristics of profit-making shops—ugliness, disorder, fatigue, hurry, noise, monotony, indifference of the workers. Added to that are the dread scourge of overtime and piece-work, arbitrarily fixed wages, and absentee ownership. When we look right into the organization of a large scale producers' copartnership factory we finally find that the individual power of the worker is so diluted that there is "little workers control" left.

But you stop me, saying: "Perhaps this factory is not typical. It may not be a fair example. It certainly is not what we believe a copartnership factory ought to be."

And I answer: "It may not be what our theories predict. But it is what the requirements of success from a modern business standpoint demand from any factory that is producing for profit and for a speculative market anywhere today. It is far better than some of the other copartnership shops I have visited."

Producers' copartnership has produced many ideals, but it has not produced a method that works.

"In the State of Denmark"

One of the ideals it advanced was to sell directly to organized consumers. When I

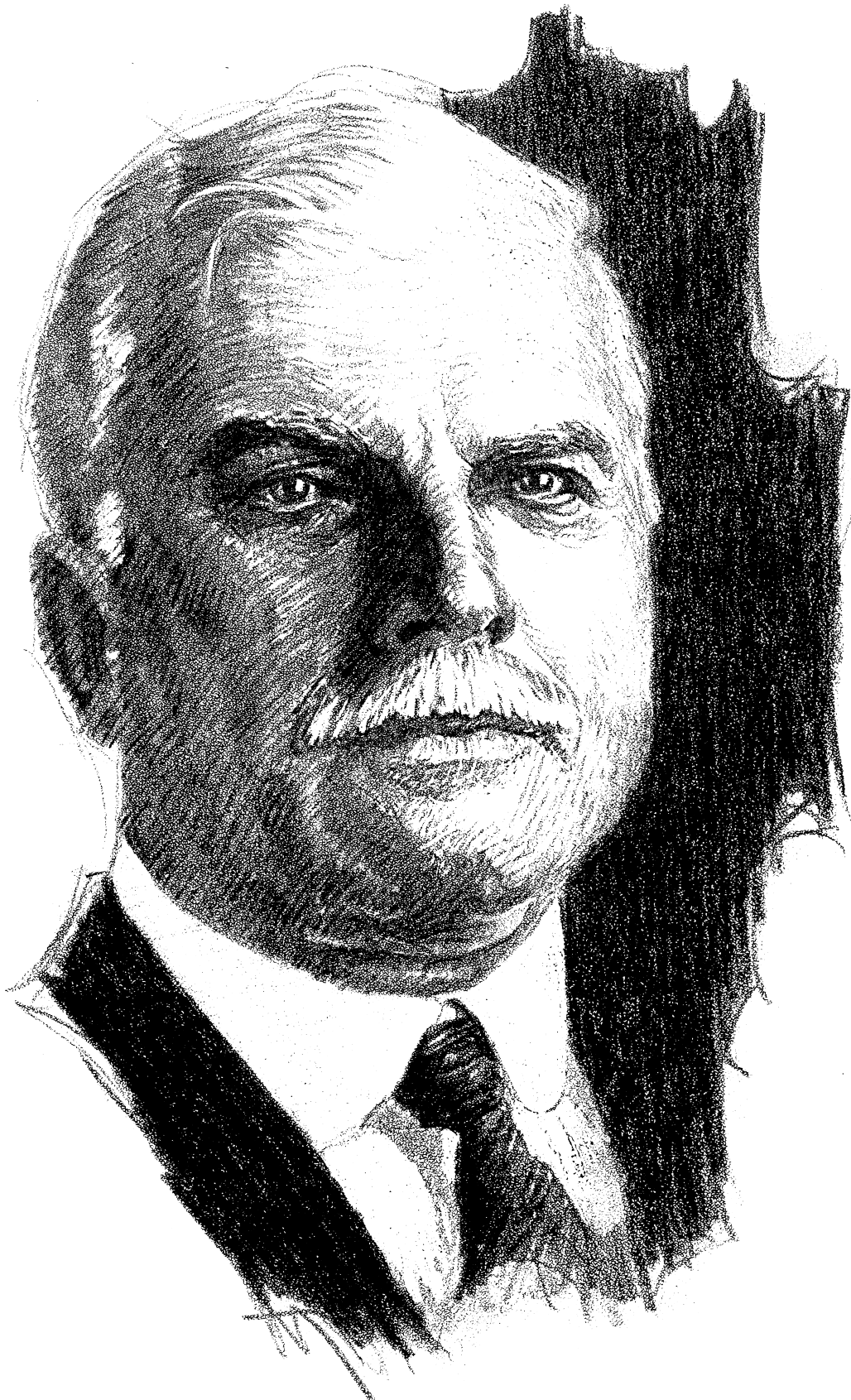
talked over this plan with different managers of producers' groups, I found that they always told me, "We have to sell where we get the best price, naturally." In Denmark upon inquiry, for instance, I found that the organized consumers' stores could not afford to buy the butter made in their own community. They were using butter substitutes—margerine, all through Denmark. Some Danish producers were exporting their dairy products wherever they could command the highest prices. Some others were selling their entire product to the large city hotels. The organized consumers seemed forgotten.

We find that original aims vanish, little by little, as prosperity or adversity (either is equally destructive to idealism) advance among producers' enterprises.

Another theory that has been advanced in regard to producers' factories, is that "all the different classes of workers will exchange the different products of their respective enterprises." We do not have to look very far to come to the conclusion that this is not practicable today. For, there are not enough producers' shops to supply the workers' needs, either in variety or in quantity. But even if there were at any future time a complete "syndicalization" of all the industries, does it not appear that several large classes of folks would be left out of this "exchange?" There are folks who surely have needs and deserve goods, but who never produce exchangeable commodities. I mean the domestic women, the children, the aged, and the intellectual worker. These large groups are not provided for under the producers theory of exchange. "They who do not work shall not eat." Consumers' cooperation, however, recognizes their contribution and gives them a place and a function.

"All Power to the Workers"

Consumers cooperation has not the ringing challenge in it that is held in the cry, "All power for the workers." We like the sound of "democratic control of industry by the workers." We forget that there is much that goes before, and comes after "control," that spells success or failure. It is this facing of facts, it is the gripping with actualities, it is the inclusive painstaking technique that the consumers' cooperative movement has mastered that makes it the ever-growing onward-marching thing that it is.



Drawn for LABOR AGE by Chumley

I. P. E. U. 624

WARREN S. STONE—LABOR BANKER



Drawn for LABOR AGE by J. F. Anderson of the Machinists

I. P. E. U. 624

JULY 4, 1923

GEORGE III (as Rip Van Winkle): "And this is the Freedom they got!"

The Toy Balloons Go Up

New Schemes for Inflation of Railroad and Coal Valuations and Profits

UNTIL COAL IS NATIONALIZED

A COAL CRISIS is again threatening. Consumers cannot get coal, and miners cannot get work. The United States Coal Commission is trying to find out the cause of the trouble. But equipped with the glasses it has, it will probably miss the point altogether. The hard coal miners, in no uncertain terms, have told the Commission what the solution is. They demand Nationalization—with joint control by management, workers and the consumers. As with the organization of steel, so with the nationalization of coal—LABOR AGE will run full reports of mining conditions and the possibilities of nationalization, until that program has become a reality and the miners are fully victorious.

JULY is a month of circuses, firecrackers and toy balloons.

It is a great month for the kids. And those innocent little darlings—the coal operators and railroad magnates—must have their playthings, just the same as the other “infant industries.” The high tariff has helped them all. Now, those faithful nursemaids—the Interstate Commerce Commission and the Supreme Court—produce a nice little toy balloon, or a number of them, for the owners of the rails. The “dear people” pay for it—and the cost will run into millions of dollars.

In last month’s LABOR AGE mention was made of the Supreme Court’s decision in the Bell Telephone Case. According to **Labor**, organ of the rail unions, if this ruling is “applied generally to all public utility property in the United States it will increase their value for rate-making purposes not less than \$25,000,000,000.” The decision of the Court was that the cost of labor, supplies, etc., at the time a valuation is being made, must be taken into consideration in the making of the valuation.

The decision comes just when the Interstate Commerce Commission is winding up the valuation of all the railroads in the country, which has been in progress for some years. During those years, and before, a struggle has been going on between the utility companies and those who stand for the interests of the people, as to the proper bases for utility valuation. It has been fought out before state commissions, the Interstate Commerce Commission and the Supreme Court itself. The fight might well be called: “Original Cost” vs. “Cost of Reproduction less Depreciation.” It is a fight of much more real interest to the American people than the Dempsey-Gibbons go at Shelby or the Willard-Firpo clash at Boyle’s Thirty Acres. If “Reproduction

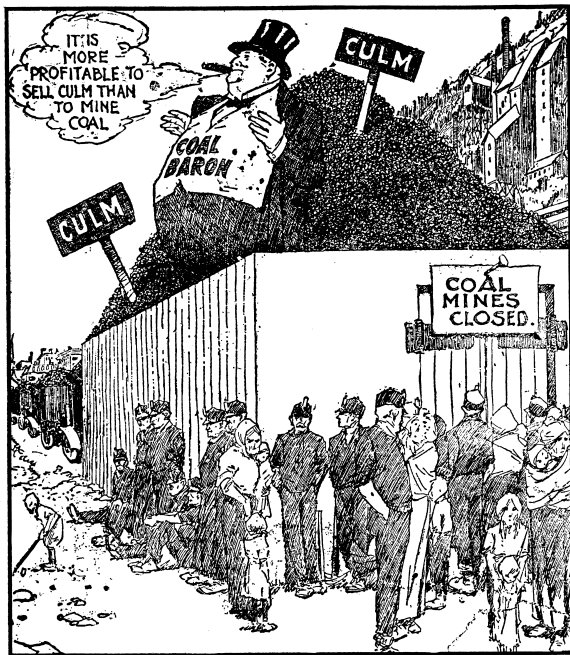
less Depreciation” wins, it means a knockout for their pocketbooks—high rates and low wages.

Let us introduce you to these two “gentlemen,” whose victory or defeat mean so much for us common folks. First, “Cost of Reproduction New” is arrived at by strong use of the imagination. The railroads and other utilities like it, because it may mean anything—and always a high “valuation.” As Donald Richberg says, in his Report to the **National Conference on Railroad Valuation**, held in Chicago last month, it “involves many assumptions contrary not only to fact but contrary to possibility; the assumption, for example, of the non-existence of a railroad and its terminals while yet assuming the existence of a community entirely dependent upon and developed largely through the agency of the railroad.”

“Original cost, on the other hand,” says Mr. Richberg, “is a fact and not an assumption.” The money has been paid out; the plant of the railroad—its rolling stock, stations, etc., are the evidence. That is the real way to arrive at the real value of the road. That means, of course, money “prudently invested”: not dishonest contractors’ profits, etc., which creep so easily into railway building.

The present valuation act, under which the Interstate Commerce Commission is acting, very liberally required that the commission should take into consideration both of these elements. But the Commission—on the ground that it could not find evidence of “original cost”—is placing all its reliance on “cost of reproduction new,” which is pure guesswork. No position could be more stupid, or intellectually dishonest!

To serve notice on the Interstate Commerce Commission that it must observe the law under which it is operating, Senator La Follette called



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WHILE THE MINES ARE WORKLESS

Will the U. S. Coal Commission solve this situation? It can only do so by giving one answer—Nationalization. That is the only answer that will meet the needs of consumers and workers.

the meeting at Chicago—now known as the National Conference on Railroad Valuation. The meaning of this conference for the farmers is thus given by Dante M. Pierce in the **Wisconsin Farmer**.

“The public should not permit the flood of propaganda which has been released by the railroads, with the evident purpose of discrediting the activities set under way by the first National Conference on Railroad Valuation held in Chicago on May 25 and 26, to deceive them into failing to recognize the importance of this meeting or the things the men who are in attendance are attempting to do in behalf of shippers, farmers, and in fact citizens generally.”

The whole railroad problem, Mr. Pierce says, “boils itself down to the simple question of valuation. If the Interstate Commerce Commission finally determines that the railroads are worth the present tentative valuation of \$18,900,000, or finds that even this valuation, which I believe highly exorbitant, is too low, there can be no hope of any material reduction of rates for many years to come.”

The Conference decided to organize permanently, for the following purposes: (1) To present to the Interstate Commerce Commission a demand that it act according to the law guiding it on

valuations; (2) To take legal proceedings, if the Commission refuses to heed this demand, to compel the Commission to obey the law; (3) To employ the necessary legal and engineering forces to make these decisions effective; and (4) To look into other phases of the transportation problem, and inform the public of the facts, for its protection.

The following officers were chosen: National Chairman—Senator Robert M. La Follette of Wisconsin; National Vice-Chairmen—Congressman George Huddleston of Alabama, Senator Robert Owen of Oklahoma, and Edward Keating of Colorado, Manager of **Labor**; Secretary—Congressman W. Turner Logan of South Carolina; Treasurer—William H. Johnston, President of the International Association of Machinists, Washington, D. C.

The need for such a permanent organization was emphasized, right on the heels of the conference, by the action of the Interstate Commerce Commission in the “Nickel Plate Case.” By a bare majority vote, the Commission O. K.’d the consolidation of the Nickel Plate, Clover Leaf, Lake Erie & Western, the Fort Wayne, Cincinnati & Louisville, and the Chicago & State Line roads. It authorized the Nickel Plate to float a \$105,000,000 stock issue—much of which is bound to be “water.” By this action the Commission clearly showed that the demand of the railroads for consolidations without regard to valuation will be heeded, even if the will of Congress must be overridden. This was pointed out by Commissioner Joseph B. Eastman in his dissenting opinion. (Eastman is the outstanding champion of the people’s interests on the Commission, and has been for years an outspoken advocate of public ownership. Sad to relate, he is the only Commissioner on whom the public can depend to defend its interests, in season and out. The rest were either always with the private interests, or have lately fallen by the wayside.)

Where will it all end? There was a day—before 1860—when the Supreme Court, and the rest of the Government upheld slavery by every device at their command. But slavery fell nevertheless. And the private ownership of the basic utilities is scheduled for a fall, likewise. As the **Milwaukee Leader** says, the hard-boiled policy of these utilities will only make the fall the harder. Here is the way the Leader sees it:

The only present solution of our railroad problem is a compromise by which the capitalists and the labor leaders recognize the necessity of mutual concessions and adjust their demands on one another in such a way that the

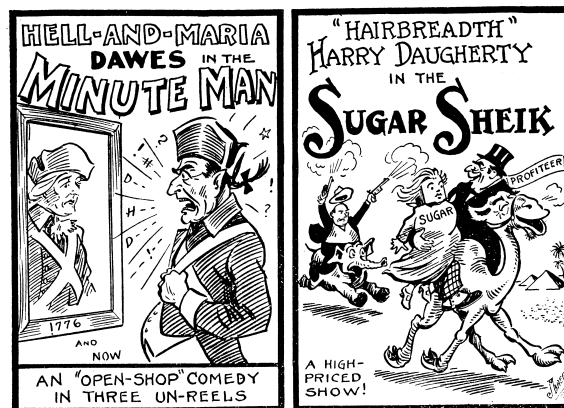
national and international requirements of the situation are satisfied. This cannot be a satisfactory solution, because it leaves both sides discontented and does not meet the requirements of "the public," either.

A more fundamental solution can be achieved only when the majority of the American voters understand that both the banks and the railroads are really public, not private institutions, and that in a clash between private owners and their employes the public welfare is paramount and must be asserted above all against the private owners rather than against their employes. This may sound like a biased pro-labor view, but it is essentially just, because capitalists have wronged "the public" more than labor has, and labor represents the interests of the vast majority and should prevail in a so-called democracy. And there is no doubt that it will prevail all the more emphatically, if the private owners continue to make a fighting issue out of this problem instead of making wise concessions while they still may yield with good grace.

The union miners agree to that solution for their own industry. The work of the Nationalization Research Committee, created by the last convention of the United Mine Workers, will be recalled—particularly their splendid series of pamphlets on the nationalization question. In the early part of the year President Lewis—through Ellis Searles, editor of the **United Mine Workers' Journal**—expressed dissatisfaction with the committee's work for nationalization. But now, a committee representing the hard coal miners before the U. S. Coal Commission—and assisted by Mr. Searles—again recommends nationalization of the mines as the only solution.

This committee—composed of the presidents of the three hard-coal districts, Thomas Kennedy, C. J. Golden and William J. Brennan—presented a brief to the Coal Commission early in June covering their viewpoint and plan. They called for the retirement of all anthracite coal stock by substituting bonds, which would be paid off in fifty years. They also took issue with the Commission's methods of "getting the facts." Instead of sending out a questionnaire to the companies—which will probably bring in inaccurate information—they demand that a proper system of uniform accounting be introduced. In that way, public and miners will be able to learn the exact condition of the industry—costs, profits, etc.—and not have to rely on the propoganda of the companies.

It is very doubtful that the Commission will pay any heed to these demands. It is apparently but little concerned with either the public welfare or the welfare of the miners. It is more than likely to follow the lead of the Supreme Court and the Interstate Commerce Commission in



American Federationist

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RECENT MOVIES

(Seen by Congressman-Cartoonist Baer)

favoring the railroads, by favoring consolidation as the great remedy in the soft coal fields and letting the situation stand as it is in hard coal. In the latter field monopoly already exists.

That such a "solution" is only begging the question is indicated by a careful study just made by Hilmar Stephen Raushenbush of the Bureau of Industrial Research. It is known as "**The Anthracite Question**," and will be available in book form in the fall. Mr. Raushenbush states that "the National Coal Association (operators) has just voted one-half million dollars publicly, and possibly more privately, to be spent in such public education as it finds desirable and necessary." The "public education" is undoubtedly to be in favor of "regional monopolies"—similar to the idea being pushed by the railroads and supported by Mr. Harding. Monopoly in hard coal has worked well for one group and one only—the hard coal operators. Neither miners nor the public have benefited by it, to any great extent. The interests of both lie along the path of Nationalization.

The **Illinois Miner**, organ of District 12, of the United Mine Workers, rejoices that there is now a solid front among the miners on this issue.

And **Justice**, organ of the International Ladies' Garment Workers, calls the plan "a step forward" in the movement for coal nationalization, "which is being steadily pushed by the mine workers' union and is backed by the entire labor movement of the country." To the following final judgment of this paper all Labor will agree:

The miners' plan contains a practical challenge to the Coal Commission which has been so far dilly-dallying with the nationalization question and attempting to put it in the background. It puts the question up squarely and will no doubt produce a marked impression on public opinion. It is business-like and comprehensive and offers the only rational solution for the present chaotic condition in the coal industry, both with regard to the mine workers and the great consuming public.

Three Schools and a "Schoolmaster"

Making Workers Education Real In Gopherdom

By MARIUS HANSOME

MINNESOTA'S Labor Movement is not merely busy electing Farmer-Labor Senators, and in gaining political control of the chief cities of the state. It has the most extensive cooperative movement in the country, as was recorded in the February LABOR AGE. In the new effort for workers' education, the home of "Main Street" has also pioneered. It is worth while telling about it now, when workers in other cities are laying plans for the coming autumn season. They can learn from Minnesota.

“WHAT is the shape of the earth?” asked the teacher of little Johnny. “Pop says it’s in a helluva shape,” was the instant response.

Surely this old clod is in a sad and solemn way, if we take the gloom dispensers seriously. This is the period of a dark-brown taste in pulpit, press and on the platform. A faith in human nature and the idealism of the future is now ranked among the unpopular causes. Despair and doom, decay and death, like dark clouds, enshroud a badly mangled civilization.

In these murky days it is hopeful to see that a new Renaissance is being born. In it, too,—better than all—the workers are to play a large part. Its beginnings can be seen in the widespread effort for workers education. And in this new attempt the Minnesota movement, as in so many other things, helps to point the way.

Holman

The story of what is being done in workers' education in the unions of the Twin Cities is inseparably linked up with the name of E. H. H. Holman. He is the chairman of the Educational Committee of the Brotherhood of Railroad and Steamship Clerks of the Twin Cities and Secretary of the Workers' College of Minneapolis. He has given all the drive that is in him to the task of making this form of education a reality in the Northwest.

“I have put in thirty years of my life trying to be of service in the labor movement and I propose to wind up in the harness” conveys something of the undaunted spirit of Holman. He believes that workers' education must develop a courageous leadership and an intelligent followership. “We are interested,” he says, “in discovering within the working class those who have mental power, who can grow into leaders of the workers so that the labor movement shall have a leadership thoroughly able to match wits

with the master class and to inspire and win the world for the workers.”

The college is now in its third year, having been organized January 1, 1921, under the auspices of the Minneapolis Trade and Labor Assembly. Its first enrollment was 180 students. Its curriculum consisted of six courses: English for Union Workers, Sociology, Public Speaking, Economics, Social Problems, and Current Events. At first the funds were obtained from student fees which ranged from three to five dollars per course and from contributions of local unions. During the second year several new courses featured the study program: The Cooperative Movement, The Steel Square and Blue Print Reading, Socialism and Economics, History of the Trade Union Movement, Estimating, Origin and Development of Industrial Society.

One Cent Per Member

Being part of the labor movement, the College Board of Control, composed of representatives from over thirty unions, proposed a new method of financing the institution: that every local union should contribute voluntarily every month a sum equal at least to one cent per member. The request met with generous approval, the Post Office Clerks responding first with two cents per member.

Last fall The Twin City Educational Council began a vigorous campaign of leaflet distribution. A resolution with an appropriation started the work. Here it is:

“Resolved, That the committee on education be increased to nine members, of which five will constitute a quorum. The Council shall provide \$100.00 for the committee to make up and circularize leaflets of an educational nature, with the proviso that before any material is printed or any expense incurred, same are to be approved by the Secretary of the Workers' Education Bureau of America, Spencer Miller, Jr., New York City.”

The entire labor movement of Minnesota, through the last convention of the State Federation of Labor, is committed to the support of the

W. E. B. of A. Delegates Tingle, Rood, and Soubam, representing the Teachers' Federation, introduced a resolution which authorized national affiliation, and which was adopted unanimously.

Mr. Holman—who writes trenchant, curt, and tabloid paragraphs—was asked to prepare a series of educational articles. Five such articles, each about the length of a Frank Crane editorial, appeared in the Annual Supplement of the **Minneapolis Labor Review** recently. He wrote one leaflet under the caption: "Use Your Head" that appealed so forcibly to the Twin City Council of the Railway Clerks, that on January 28, it was voted to appropriate funds for the printing of five thousand copies and an additional amount of fifty dollars to defray the postage. This is the leaflet in full:

Use Your Head

An animal will watch a fire burn out and freeze beside it. It never thinks of putting on fresh fuel.

A man will keep the fire burning and save himself from the cold. Therefore, men dwell in homes while animals still live in caves.

The earth has always been the same. Its resources have always been ready for man to use. Coal, iron, lumber, heat, electricity have been ever since man set foot upon the earth.

For a long time our early ancestors lived like animals in forests and caves. Man was afraid of nature. He thought the earth was full of evil spirits. He feared everything he couldn't understand. He was too ignorant to learn about these forces of nature.

Man has passed through that stage, partially at least. He has used his head so that he understands how to burn coal, build houses, send steamboats around the world, catch radio messages out of the air.

All the wonderful machinery, the railroads, the factories, the sky-scrapers, that compose our industrial system are the evidences of men who used their heads.

When people begin to think about things, they also progress.

War

We still have war. Why?

The workers do the fighting. They pay the bills. They make the sacrifices. They vote for men who "keep us out of peace." The workers are responsible. Think it over. Use your head. Just as soon as the workers begin to think for themselves about war, some way will be found to abolish wars.

Unemployment

We produce about twenty-five times the wealth per day's work our grandfathers did. Yet over a million workers are idle in "normal" times and six or eight million in panicky times.

Why? Use your head. It's the only way to find a solution of the problem and an equal opportunity to work.

Poverty

In the richest land on the earth we always have poverty. Why? Use your head.

There is no reason except the ignorance of the workers that permits poverty to exist. So in regard to all our social problems. Only in so far as the workers learn to solve their own problems will this world become a fit and decent place in which to live.

The University of Minnesota in some particulars ranks foremost in educational progress. Through its Extension Department, it invited

Organized Labor of the Twin Cities to a conference looking toward cooperation. When the Twin City Council announced its delegation, this gesture to labor became so weak that it finally ended in a fiasco. The Workers' College Classes have been barred from the campus, the regents refusing the use of its halls for the discussion of evolution—thereby placing themselves on a par with Kentucky, W. J. Bryan, and other anti-simians. It is alleged that the campus was used freely by reactionary anti-sons-of-an-ape from the outside to attack the theory of evolution. The Minneapolis Trades and Labor Assembly has instructed the Farmer-Labor members of the Minnesota Legislature, who are strong in the next Senate and Assembly, to refuse appropriations to the State University until it opens its doors and classrooms to students and teachers of the Workers' College. If the labor members carry out the request, a very important precedent will be established. It will also bring out the value of political action.

Education in Cooperation

The State University does give effective courses in cooperation at the present time—reflecting the spirit of the state. A recent questionnaire revealed the startling fact that universities serving farm populations were less responsive to courses in cooperation than schools located in large industrial centers. Columbia University, for example, was given second place to Minnesota in the consideration given to Cooperative Marketing, Farm Management, Consumers' Cooperation, Producers' Cooperation, etc. But Minnesota came first!

Through the encouragement of the Cooperative League of America, the big Franklin Cooperative Dairy Association of Minneapolis, opened a school in April with a six weeks' course, seven hours per day. This school offered both theoretical and technical courses: Cooperative Organization and Administration, cooperative Bookkeeping and Auditing, and Consumers' Cooperation. Three teachers devoted their entire time. Evening lectures were offered for the general public. Last year the same school gave a general theoretical course in cooperation that was attended by every employe in the establishment.

Thus, much of this educational and cooperative effort is, in the words of Mr. Holman, the result of an awareness "of the fact that the training which is offered by existing educational agencies is concerned mainly with such interpre-

A Play Worth While

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THE FOOL
Being "My Brother's Keeper"

DANIEL GILCHRIST was a minister of the gospel. He also was an idealist, wanting to tell the truth. Evidently, the two things do not always mix. The fashionable Church of the Nativity, of which Gilchrist was assistant rector, did not want to hear the truth. It did not wish to hear the Christ-view of the labor struggle.

The inevitable result occurred. The assistant rector was forced to resign. The social standing of his family could not save him. At first, he obtained a position as "buffer" between men and management for one of his former parishioners. When a strike occurred, he recommended concession to all the stirkers' terms. That ended his work there.

Finally, he returned to New York from the West Virginia coal fields—where he had attempted conciliation—and opened "Overcoat Hall," as a place of refuge for the down-and-outs of the big city. Thence his old friends pursued him, to try to make him change his mind. They threatened to jail him for insanity. They called him "a fool." They could not understand him. Even Clare, his rich fiancée, could not see the beauty of giving up "expensive clothes and servants and a big house." "To visit the sick and befriend the friendless" did not appeal to her. She cast him aside, rather than accept the life he chose to lead.

But in the end, a few at least came to see that he was right. They let him alone to carry on "his work."

The theme gives a good opportunity to bring out the human side of the Labor Fight. It is to be hoped that some day the playwright, Channing Pollock, will use his talent to center a play around the struggle of the workers themselves in their efforts for freedom. If he can do it as well as he has done in this production—dealing with one who seeks to "help" the workers—it will probably be a masterpiece.

tations of life as justifies things as they are instead of planning things as they should be."

St. Paul and Duluth

There are still two other Workers' Colleges deserving of mention: The St. Paul Labor School, and The Work Peoples' College at Duluth, Minn. S. S. Tingle is the moving spirit in St. Paul. He has secured the services of four Professors from Carleton University to give jointly a course in Economics. Carleton College, be it remembered, is sixty miles out of St. Paul, so that the cooperation from this source is intensely appreciated by the students of St. Paul Labor School.

The Work Peoples' College is a resident school located at Duluth. The school was orig-

inally a religious seminary, conducted and supported by the Finnish people. In 1907 it passed into the hands of the Finnish Socialists, who enlarged the school, the scope of its work, etc. In 1916, it changed control again, this time to the Finnish members of the Industrial Workers of the World, who still remain in control. Both under Socialist and I. W. W. supervision, the main emphasis has been laid in teaching economics, labor history, general history, sociology, and allied subjects, from the Marxian viewpoint.

Thus is the labor movement of Minnesota doing its share toward enlisting a larger and larger number of the workers in the ranks of those who can fight more effectively the battles of their class.

Let's Get Together

By PRINCE HOPKINS

ON the same day that this article arrived at our editorial office, there also came W. J. Long's latest book on the life and habits of animals.

No man living perhaps has spent more time than Dr. Long in studying the way in which the bear, the moose and other "wild" members of the Animal Kingdom act. The natural law which guides them, he declares, is not "survival of the fittest" through struggle and conflict. It is mutual aid within the group, through cooperation.

The human, he points out, is the only animal which has not learned clearly and completely the lesson of cooperation. And yet, if we read Kropotkin's "Mutual Aid," we learn what a decisive part cooperative activities have played in the progress of mankind. The latest developments in the study of psychology also shows the human value of cooperation.

A STRICT Marxian would look upon the Co-operative Movement as nothing but the tendency of people to unite in such a way as enables them to get their supplies as cheaply as possible. Or he would say: "They got together solely because they could thus assure to themselves best the material needs of life. This includes in the case of producers' cooperatives the certainty of continuous employment."

Certain it is that the material motive is half the basis of the movement. It may even be much more. But not all.

Man must, indeed, feed himself. As time goes by, he sees the inefficiency of leaving production of his necessities to others—whose advantage is only incidentally to feed him well but chiefly to line their own pockets. As the common man learns this lesson, he shakes off the inertia of custom. He combines with others of his kind to go into "business" for their own united good.

Yet, in the appeal of the cooperative idea, there's much more than accounted for by the above motive. Job Harrison told me an interesting thing in his experience with his colony at Llano. "The strict Marxians, who were always emphasizing the materialistic motive, made the poorest possible material for citizens of a cooperative commonwealth." He said the group life "only succeeded when founded upon another motive than this." Let's see whether we can fathom what this other thing is.

The Ants and Bees

Of course, cooperation is not an exclusively human attribute. Cooperation is seen carried to the Nth degree in colonies of ants, bees, etc. The strict Marxian would have a hard time to show that the individual ant or bee went into any calculation of advantages or disadvantages before she decided to work in common with her

fellows. She's just born with a tendency to behave in that way.

And every other animal of those species called "gregarious," has more or less of this inborn tendency to work with others of its kind. You see the impulse cropping up in the little girl who wants to help her mother in the kitchen, or the small boy who likes to help his father in the garden.

This tendency is what Kropotkin called mutual aid. Of it he gave a thousand examples from the ways of innumerable varieties of wild animals. It's one expression of what Trotter more recently has called "the instinct of the herd."

Sigmund Freud lately has argued that this "instinct of the herd" is simply a specialized form of very much more primitive instinct of sex. In the first instance, he says, one animal in each herd becomes the center of interest by reason of its greater development in some respect. Animals of opposite sex become attached to it by the most natural of bonds. And the animals of the same sex, by homo-sexual sentiment (through common love for the Queen of the hive the leader of the herd, etc.) then identify themselves in imagination with one another. Thus a herd means simply, a group of fellow-lovers of one individual.

The Patriarch

In the earliest form of association of human species—the primitive herd—the bond of this kind, the patriarch of the tribe, is adored by the women and heroized by the men until he grows feeble. One of the latter in a jealous rage kills him and takes his place in a slightly more advanced stage of human culture. The symbol of tribal unity may be, not a living, but a dead and immortalized hero.

The personality of a legendary ruler (for ex-

WHEN COOPERATIVE PRODUCTION FLOURISHED

“I SHOULD like to speak to you at length about the economic life of cities in the Middle Ages; but I am obliged to pass it over (largely) in silence. It was so varied that it would need rather full development. Suffice it to remark that internal commerce was always carried on by the guilds, not by isolated artisans, the prices being fixed by mutual agreement; that at the beginning of that period, external commerce was carried on exclusively by the city; that commerce only became the monopoly of the merchants' guild later on, and still later of isolated individuals; that never was any work done on Sunday, on Saturday afternoon (bathing day); lastly that the city purchased the chief necessities for the life of its inhabitants—corn, coal, etc.—and delivered these to the inhabitants at cost price. (This custom of the city making purchases of grain was retained in Switzerland till the middle of our century.) In fact, it is proved by a mass of documents of all kinds that humanity has never known, either before or after, a period of relative well-being as perfectly assured to all as existed in the cities of the Middle Ages. The present poverty, insecurity and over-work were absolutely unknown then.”

“With these elements—liberty, organization from simple to complex, production and exchange by trade unions (guilds), commerce with foreign parts carried on by the city itself, and the buying of main provisions by the city—with these elements, the towns of the Middle Ages, during the first two centuries of their free life, became centres of well-being for all the inhabitants. They were centres of opulence and civilization such as we have not seen since.

“Consult documents that allow of establishing the rates of wages for work in comparison with the price of provisions (Rogers has done it for England and a great number of writers have done it for Germany) and you will see that the work of the artisan, and even of a simple day-laborer, was remunerated at that time by a wage not even reached by skilled workmen nowadays. The account-books of the University of Oxford and of certain English estates, also those of a great number of German and Swiss towns, are there to testify to this.

“On the other hand, consider the artistic finish and the quantity of decorative work which a workman of those days used to put into the beautiful work of art he did, as well as into the simplest thing of domestic life—a railing, a candlestick, an article of pottery,—and you see at once that he did not know the pressure, the hurry, the overwork of our times. He could forge, sculpture, weave, embroider at his leisure, as but a very small number of artist-workers can do nowadays. And if we glance over the donations to the churches and to houses which belonged to the parish, to the guild, or to the city, be it in works of art—in decorative panels, sculptures, cast or wrought iron and even silver work—or in simple mason's or carpenter's work, we understand what degree of well-being those cities had realized in their midst. We can conceive the spirit of research and invention that prevailed, the breath of liberty that inspired their works, the sentiment of fraternal solidarity that grew up in those guilds in which men of the same craft were united not only by the mercantile and technical side of a trade but also by bonds of sociability and fraternity. Was it not, in fact, the guild-law that two brothers were to watch at the bedside of every sick brother; and that the guild would take care of burying the dead brother or sister—a custom which called for devotion, in those times of contagious diseases and plagues,—follow him to the grave, and take care of his widow and children?

“Black misery, depression, the uncertainty of tomorrow for the greater number, which characterize our modern cities, were absolutely unknown in these ‘oases sprung up in the twelfth century in the middle of the feudal forest.’ In those cities, under the shelter of their liberties acquired through the impulse of free agreement and free initiative, a whole new civilization grew up and attained such expansion that the like has not been seen since.”

(From lecture of P. Kropotkin, published in “Man or the State?”, B. W. Huebsch.)

ample Lycurgus, King of the Spartans), still inspiring veneration, is thus the basis of primitive nationality. Similarly, the personality of a real or mythical religious hero (for instance Jesus of Christians), remains the basis of even a relatively advanced cult. At the highest stage of evolution the personal hero is replaced by an idea. Then the group think of themselves, not as lovers of the memory of George Washington or August Comte, but lovers of what they call Americanism, or lovers of humanity. And so thinking, they as before identify other Americans or other “positivists,” with themselves.

Discovery of Secret

Now this idea of Freud's in some respects doubtless will need to be added to. For instance, Freud doesn't explain why it is that some kinds of animals (for instance all the cat tribe) or some

insects (for instance spiders), fail to go in herds and swarms as sheep or bees. All the same, he has discovered a secret of human nature which is just as true as is the great discovery of Karl Marx. The future will belong to movements which take into account both these secrets.

And it is the fault of the social order of today that it doesn't do this. It fails signally enough on the economic side, with its glaring contrasts of dazzling wealth in the hands of a few, whilst the enormous majority exist in squalor and poverty. But above all, capitalism fails to bind men together by any ideal loved by all in common. It futilely tries to supply this, dragging in some preachment from a religion which the economic order contradicts in every detail. The unifying ideal must exist within the foundations of society itself. This it will do, when we who care enough put the world upon a cooperative basis.

Labor History in the Making

In the U. S. A.

(By the Manager in Cooperation with the Board of Editors)

UNITY MOVES IN TEXTILES

“UNITY” is a wonderful thing. Like “patriotism” and “Americanism,” it is frequently on the lips of those who do the most to prevent it. In the Labor Movement it is a sight strange indeed to see, that forces talking about “unity” in large terms take the steps that hurry on disunion and disruption.

It is refreshing, therefore, to see a real unity movement set on foot by the Federated Textile Unions of America. If successful, this movement will bring them within the fold of the A. F. of L. as members of the United Textile Workers—the union which has sole jurisdiction in that field.

Meeting in Philadelphia in June, the executive board of the Federated Textile Unions, passed the following resolutions. They are worth quoting in full, because they will go down in the history of the fight for freedom of the textile workers as a big move forward.

“Whereas, Brother J. P. O’Connell, president of the Federated Textile Unions of America, in an article written by him appearing in the May issue of LABOR AGE, stated that the independent textile unions are ‘determined now to have one union within the industry, governed by a constitution which will remove old and bad features, and preserve the unity so necessary for the textile workers’ future welfare,’ and

“Whereas, Brother Thomas F. McMahon, president of the United Textile Workers of America, in an article of the same issue of LABOR AGE, also expressed a strong desire for unity in the textile industry; therefore, be it

“Resolved, that we fully and heartily indorse the sentiment expressed by both Brother O’Connell and Brother McMahon in the desire for unity among the organized workers in the textile industry; and be it also

“Resolved, that we stand ready to attend a conference with representatives of the United Textile Workers of America for the purpose of bringing about the desired unity in the textile industry.”

The only union within the Federated Textile Unions not joining in this resolution is apparently the Amalgamated Textile Workers. They are voting at the present time as to whether they will remain in the federated body or not. Were they to follow the action of the other “outlaw” textile organizations, there would be accomplished that united front of the workers which is so badly needed in this important industry. Labor in other fields certainly hopes that one complete, compact union will come out of the unity discussion in this most oppressed of labor groups.

WERE THE SOCIALISTS RIGHT?

“TIME WILL TELL.”

So we have frequently been advised. The Socialist Party in America has had ups and downs enough, to be able to make some shrewd guesses as to the methods which Time will vindicate. Standing for its principles during the war, it lost many members thereby. It came out of that crisis only to run into another—the communist division. This lost it an additional large following.

At the recent convention of the Party, a membership of only 12,000 was reported. But the leaders could point to the fact that its influence was much greater than its membership, as Socialists and ex-Socialists are at the helm in the Non-Partisan League, the progressive unions and other Farmer-Labor movements. The ideas which the Socialists advanced for so many years, in the face of ridicule, are being gradually adopted by other and larger groups under new forms and names.

“Did the Party guess right in deciding to reject alliance with the Farmer-Labor Party, because of the presence of representatives of the Workers’ Party at the Chicago convention this month? Did it choose wisely in continuing to throw in its lot with the National Conference on Progressive Political Action?” That is the largest question that came out of the New York Convention. It will play a considerable part in the future political action of the American workers.

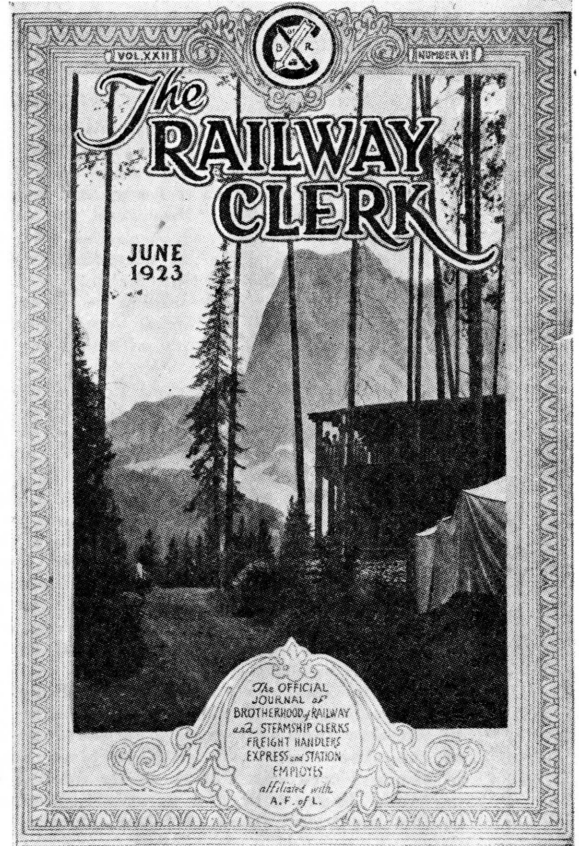
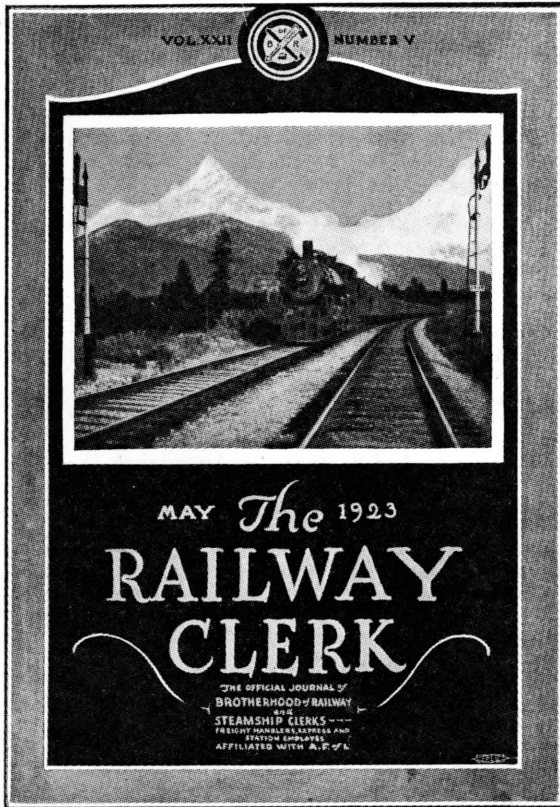
The National Conference groups may be called the “center” groups in the American Labor Movement, so far as political action is concerned. They are feeling their way carefully, allying themselves as yet with no party, but using the “non-partisan” methods of the Non-Partisan League and the A. F. of L. Many of their active members frankly hope to make the conference the nucleus for a strong, nation-wide party of farmers and workers. It has succeeded in attracting and holding the support of large international unions—such as the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, International Association of Machinists and Amalgamated Clothing Workers.

Whether the Socialists have guessed right or not will depend to a degree on what happens in Chicago this month. Is it possible for the Farmer-Labor group to work in harmony with the more radical elements represented by the Workers’ Party? Can such a fusion be of any great effect without the adherence of the big rail and other unions, who made themselves felt in the November election?

It is pretty safe to say that the unity hope for the Chicago meeting will prove a bursted bubble. Such a militant champion of the Farmer-Labor cause as the **Minnesota Union Advocate** prophesies this result, warning that the new party cannot find a congenial bed fellow in the Communists. “The platform and the tactics of the Workers’ Party,” the paper says, “means that the members would be more interested in carrying on missionary

This in Brown

And this in Green



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work in behalf of their doctrinaire ideas than in promoting the building up of a progressive labor party." The Communists in Europe, it charges, "have made a united political movement in Italy and in France impossible, and have greatly weakened the German movement. If the communists or others desire to come into this new movement as individuals and share in its practical labors, there can be no objections; but there is no field for guerilla bands to divert and divide the practical progressives in the Farmer-Labor movement."

That is weighty testimony—coming from one of the chief organs of the only state in which an independent Farmer-Labor alliance has made headway as a separate political unit. Chicago will probably show that no real step forward toward a formidable Labor Party can come without the help of the big groups represented in the National Conference for Progressive Political Action; and that the step will not come—at least in the beginning—by alliance with any group favoring Communism. To that extent, at least, the Socialists have gambled correctly on the future.

STEPS FORWARD—WITH MR. WELLS, ET AL

"PROGRESS" with a capital "P" is writ large over the Labor Press today.

That is as it should be. There is no subject which lends itself more completely to an inspiring and humanly-interesting journalistic message than the story of the fight of the American workers for fuller and fuller freedom.

"You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free," is an old, old saying. But the truth is none the less the truth because it is pleasantly and attractively presented. And, if unattractively presented, it very rarely gets anywhere.

The Railway Clerk realizes this fact. It is improving with every issue. It has not merely contented itself with using original articles, with free use of photographs and cartoons, but is also making use of the changeable cover. The message of Organized Labor to the Railway and Steamship Clerks is being delivered, through their magazine, in such a way as to make that message challenging and effective.

The increased simplicity of style is also encouraging. In the past there was a tendency in the Labor Press to use bombastic and long-winded articles—which men in a hurry could not read. That meant that unionism's seed fell on barren soil. Now the articles are becoming briefer, livelier—easier to read. **The Illinois Miner**, as we have noted before, is a leader in this style. It has now begun to devote a section of its pages to labor fiction.

The Hearst press has learned how to speak in the language of the people—and the Labor Press is learning rapidly the same thing. It is a common error among "intellectual" progressives to imagine that the success of the Hearst papers depends solely on their "yellow journalism." It depends as much, if not more so, on the style

of the editorials of Brisbane and Kaufman—and the general make-up of the other news and editorial articles.

It is well to remember that everything is being simplified today. Wells' "Outline of History" began the procession. It is written so that all men may read. It makes the history of mankind a romance—which it is—encouraging reading to the end. Thompson's "Outline of Science" has followed—making available for everybody the secrets of the earth and heavens. An "Outline of Literature" has just been announced.

What does all this mean? That men everywhere are more interested than ever before in all these things. When Gutenberg invented the printing press, it did not mean an increase of the use of the Latin language. On the other hand, it was the common languages of the people that were let loose in print. More people read. More people understood the problems of life. That is what is happening, in a different way, today. Science and history and art are being rescued from the hands of the inner circles—and becoming the property of the people.

Folks today do not want information handed out in a dry, academic style. They have too many other things to attract their attention. We are all in a hurry. We want our information brief, interesting—photographed and cartooned. The Labor Press is learning that—and is profiting by it. **Justice**, organ of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, and **Advance**, organ of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, are both making regular use of the cartoon. **Labor**, organ of the rail unions, has followed this practice from its beginning. All of us can laugh at a cartoon—and that makes its story more striking. We carry it around with us, and tell it to others. There is every reason to believe that the cartoon will shortly be seen in every local and national organ of Organized Labor.

Hand an unorganized worker an attractive union organ, of the type of a standard magazine, and hand another an unattractive union paper—and note the different reaction in each case. Then, you will know what this progress toward a punchier and livelier press means to the Labor Movement.

"OPEN SESAME!"

SECRETS of all sorts are being unlocked by and for the Labor Movement these days.

There is labor banking, for example. **LABOR AGE** has much to say about that, because there is much happening in that field. On September 1st, the Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks announce, their bank will be opened in Cincinnati. It will occupy part of the new Brotherhood Building, also being erected by the same union. The United States War Veterans' Bureau will occupy five floors.

Then, in June, the Railroad Telegraphers opened their "Telegraphers National Bank" in St. Louis. In addition to labor men and labor unions, a great number of men and women friendly to the Labor Movement have taken an interest in this bank. The first day's deposits amounted to \$1,500,000 and the new bank got off in nice fashion. Banking can be done just as well by labor unions as by individual bankers. Such action removes labor's money from the hands of Labor's enemies. It is the realization of this thing—that the group can do the job as well as the Business Man—that is becoming the the charm with which to open all secrets.

In the Arabian Nights' story, "Open Sesame!" were the words that led to treasures and wonders and happiness. Labor is finding its "Open Sesame!" in its own self-confidence.

So in the workers' health field. The New York union painters' victory, reported in the last **LABOR AGE**, has had interesting and unique results. In Boston the local painters have had a "health week"—in cooperation with the representatives of the Workers' Health Bureau. One week in July was given over to special meetings of the locals on the question of health. A special committee from Districts 41 and 44 of the Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers, with representatives of the Workers' Health Bureau, went by automobile from meeting to meeting. Ten such meetings were covered in five nights. Five local unions affiliated with the Bureau, and steps were taken for the establishment of a union health department, on the lines of the successful department of District 9 of New York.

From out of Australia comes another interesting tale. A news release of the Workers' Health Bureau reached Australia just as the painters of Sydney were seeking to secure a 44-hour week through arbitration. They had contended that the 48-hour week was a health menace in their trade. The news release confirmed their stand, for it told of the 40-hour week victory in New York. Their shorter week had been secured, it will be recalled, largely because of the health facts at the finger tips of the New York painters.

Well, in Australia the news served a good purpose. It decided the arbitration proceedings in favor of the painters. So, at least, says W. Francis Ahern of the "Australian Worker" and Australian correspondent for the Federated Press.

To all of which there is a moral: Union health departments are of great value in the dusty and poisonous trades. Not only do they help the individual worker know what his physical condition is, but they give the facts to the collective workers on which the shorter work-day and work-week can be secured.

RAIL UNIONS AND MINE WORKERS

"THE WORKERS' MONEY GOES TO WORK." So runs the title to an article in a current issue of **Colliers Weekly**, the said article being written by the well-known newspaper man, Samuel Crowther.

It continues to tell the story of "Labor in Business"—which is now becoming one of the biggest of American dramas. Listen to this! You have heard most of it already, in **LABOR AGE**; but it is well worth repeating. After mentioning the two banks of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers in Cleveland, the one with "assets of nearly \$20,000,000," the article says:

"But that is not all. The union has a bank in Hammond, Indiana; it has another in Minneapolis; another in Birmingham, Alabama; and finally it owns a substantial stock interest in the Empire Trust Company, which rises from the peculiarly earthy earth of Wall Street. The balance of the stock of the Empire is owned by capitalists who admit being such. Still, this is not all. The brotherhood is opening a trust company in New York. In Cleveland it has a ten-million-dollar investment company. It owns an insurance company with more than 100 millions outstanding in policies. It has a printing company in Cleveland, and down in West Virginia and Ken-

"LEST WE FORGET"



Labor Age Photos

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STRIKING SHOPMEN LAST WINTER AT SOLDIER SUMMIT, UTAH

July 1, 1922, is a day that will never be forgotten by American rail shop workers. It should not be forgotten by any branch of American Labor. It is the day on which the shopmen, single-handed, struck for freedom against the autocratic Railway Labor Board. The first anniversary finds thousands of these men still out—but winning on many roads. Do not forget that they need help to continue the fight.

tucky it owns a group of coal mines—which coal mines aforesaid to complete the paradox, are on a non-union basis, pay wages somewhat above the prevailing scale, have just about the best miners' houses in the country, and sell coal to anyone who has the price to pay for it. The next time you glance up at the cab of a locomotive take off your hat to the man whose hand grasps the throttle. He and his seventy thousand fellows are members of just about the wealthiest private club in the country."

The last sentence can hardly be said to be "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." But the paragraph quoted does raise some interesting questions. It shows, first of all, that Labor as a group can conduct business enterprises as successfully as individuals. To do so, however, requires a knowledge of management and an appreciation of the value of the technical man. It raises doubt as to the desirability of Labor going into all sorts of enterprises, foreign to its own industry. The control of credit is a thing that all Labor should well drive for; because Credit is a universal thing—a basic thing, which runs through every form of industry.

But the ownership of coal mines by rail unions is another thing. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers finds itself in the same position as the Cooperative Wholesale Society in England, in its present difficulty with its employes. The difficulty in West Virginia between the United Mine Workers and the Locomotive Engineers will undoubtedly be settled by union recognition and to the satisfaction of the miners. But nevertheless, the question arises: "Is it not perhaps better for the rail unions, in branching out from credit control, to think of purchase of a railroad rather than of coal mines?" From a practical point of view and from the viewpoint of democracy, is it not better for the Miners to own mines;

clothing workers, clothing factories, etc., etc? On first blush, it seems so; and the experience in West Virginia seems to confirm that impression.

THE MINNESOTA FIGHT

IT is a hot July in Minnesota. The battle between the Farmer-Labor forces and the Republican machine waxeth furious and warm.

As the *Minnesota Daily Star* says: "The eyes of the Nation are on us." The "eyes of the Nation" include the eyes of the White House—which cannot quite make out why the Gopher brethren are so cantankerous. They fail to fall for Gamaliel's talk about being a real friend of the Farmers and Cooperation—words which he actually uttered on his Western trip. They fail to enthuse over his pose of having stood between Capital and Labor—which he "got off" a la Calvin Coolidge, at Helena. They do not even ask: "Are you sincere?" They take it for granted that he is not. Why? The February LABOR AGE explains it. There is a real revolt in Minnesota, which soft words cannot stop.

It is action that the combined producers of Minnesota want. They have succeeded in getting action from one source and one only—their own organization, the Farmer-Labor Party. In November they put their own man, Dr. Shipstead, in the United States Senate. They now mean to put in another of their men, a "dirt farmer," Magnus Johnson.

The Minnesota contest may well take its place in the American history of the future along with that Senatorial contest in Illinois seventy years ago. As the Lincoln-Douglass fight really settled the question of final freedom of the negro, so may the Johnson-Preus duel foretell the conquest of our government by the men who work. Keep your eyes on Minnesota!

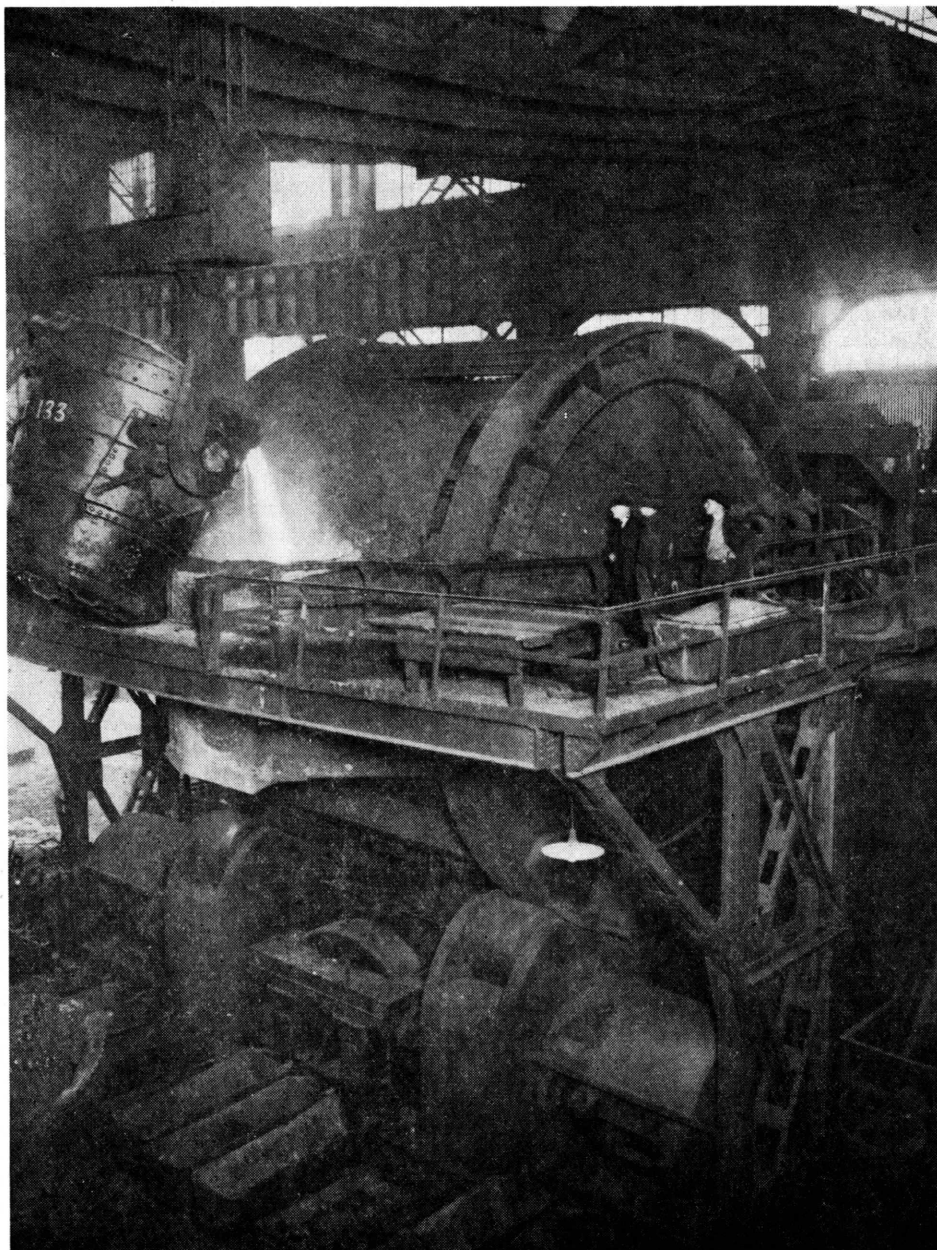
A BREATH OF FRESH AIR Steel Organization Campaign Begun

JULY is hot anywhere. But think of it in the steel mills. Think of yourself, facing the white-hot molten mass in the furnaces, working a 12-hour day this summer season.

That is what several hundred thousand men are doing. Twice a month many of them are going through the absurd and inhuman experience of the 24-hour shift. Twenty-four hours before the furnaces, at this time of the year!

Can it be wondered that there is revolt in Steel? It is a still greater wonder that the men have not risen in their wrath long ago, to strike at the Interests which have bound them down in such slavery. The conscience of the people cannot stand it. All moral forces have protested against this savage treatment of human beings.

Like a breath of fresh air on the brow of the exhausted steel worker, as he listlessly fires in the mill, comes the announcement of another Steel Campaign. It is the breath of Freedom. In the January LABOR AGE, it was foretold that this was the big year for Steel. The Big Year is on. If properly taken advantage of, it means Victory and the death knell of the 12-hour day. That day can die only through Unionism!



I. P. E. U. 624

With Our English Brothers

C. W. S. STRIKERS



London Daily Herald

I. P. E. U. 624

Meeting of Members of National Union of Distributive Workers
—Engaging in Unique Strike Against
British Cooperative

TROUBLES "WITHIN THE FAMILY"

"UNREST" continues to run all through the British Movement. It is pretty well understood that the settlement of the farm workers' strike has satisfied neither the farmers nor the laborers. That it was settled at all is due to the generalship of J. Ramsay MacDonald, leader of the British Labor Party. It has stopped the tendency to lower wages and lengthen hours—and probably is a turning point in the unions' battles. Certainly, the arbitration proceedings, which ended the building trades' difficulty, marked a victory for the men.

A new problem appeared on the horizon in early June. It is the combined strike and boycott, carried on by the National Union of Distributive Workers against the Co-operative Wholesale Society. This is the big supply organization—with banks, factories and storage houses all over England—which furnishes goods to the retail co-operative societies.

The union numbers 90,000 members—15,000 of whom are employed by the C. W. S. These 15,000 rely on the others—employed by the retail societies—to see that a rigid boycott of the C. W. S. goods is carried out.

The cause of the trouble is the action by the Co-operative Wholesale Society in cutting the wages of the workers, abolishing the provision for wages during sickness, and cutting the yearly holiday in half. The union demands that all these matters be referred to arbitration. The C. W. S. refuses to arbitrate on anything but the reduction of wages.

In a paid advertisement in the *London Daily Herald*, the British unions' daily paper, the C. W. S. declares that the fight is one of "the few against the many," and that the union by its boycott has urged "its members to support private capitalists right up against the aims and progress of Cooperation." In the same issue the union charges that the C. W. S. has broken the constitution of the Joint Committee of Trade Unionists and Cooperators in refusing arbitration on sickness pay and holidays. The workers claim that the Cooperative wishes to "alter wages how they choose, when they choose, and where they choose" and are "defying the whole trade union and labor

movement just like Lord Penrhyn of Bethesda, and William Martin Murphy of Dublin."

It looks very much from this side of the water as though the union were thoroughly in the right. The difficulty also is somewhat of a jar to those who contend that consumers' cooperation alone can solve the labor problem. It is a big help; but strong organization of the producers—and control by them—is an important item in bringing about real democracy and peace in industry.

CLOUDS OVER THE COAL FIELDS

IT IS NOT only in the Ruhr coal fields—the most important in Europe—that the clouds of war hang low.

The British miners also face a fight—with their British employers.

For months the men have been demanding a return to wages somewhat near to the living wage line. As early as November of last year, *LABOR AGE* reported the "terrible suffering in the miners' ranks," caused by the heavy unemployment and the low level to which wages had sunk.

Late in May the delegates to the Miners' Federation—representing one million men—met at Staffordshire, to decide what action to take as a result of the operators' refusal to increase wages. Frank Hodges, Secretary of the Federation, threw his influence in favor of a minimum wage through Parliamentary action rather than through a strike. This was the decision of the executive officers, also, and favored by referendum vote of the men.

The British Labor Party thereupon introduced a bill, amending the Coal Mines Minimum Wage Act of 1912, to meet the miners' demands and bring the wages of the lower paid men up to the 1923 standard of living. "The miners have been living below the level of the workhouse (poorhouse) standard of existence," stated William Adamson, the author of the bill, in moving its adoption. "Unless Parliament changes these conditions you are courting a far greater disaster than has yet befallen either the industry or the nation."

Despite this warning, the Baldwin government fought the measure tooth and nail. On final passage, it was rejected by a vote of 230 to 154. What this means to the miners is shown by the fact that the present minimum wage is only 20 per cent above the 1914 level; while the cost of living is 70 per cent higher.

The only alternative left to the men, as indicated by President Herbert Smith of the Federation, is to attempt to secure a new agreement—and failing which, to strike.

A BIGGER LABOR DAILY

British Labor knows the value of a militant labor press. The trade unions now own and control the *LONDON DAILY HERALD*—as a result of the last Trade Union Congress. In order to make it fully effective, they have increased its size from 8 to 12 pages. They have also livened it up, with photographs and cartoons. The old *HERALD* had but very few pictures in it, but the new daily is making a specialty of them. Labor's message will reach a wider audience, as a result, and will get more results. All of which is worth while noting.

BOOK NOTES

Edited by PRINCE HOPKINS

INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY

INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY is the big issue of the present age. When the question of the advisability of doing away with the capitalist system is debated as a regular order of business in the British House of Parliament, the "signs of the times" are manifest. The British, whatever else may be said of them, take things up in an orderly fashion and look facts in the face.

"Democracy" was the great battlecry of the World War. When it was all over, men and women wondered just what "Democracy" meant. It was clear that political democracy alone did not satisfy them longer. They were ready to consider another step onward.

The book by Glenn Plumb and William G. Roylance on "**Industrial Democracy**" fits in well in an issue devoted largely to cooperative production. That is what the authors champion as the method that will bring Industrial Democracy to pass. Mr. Plumb—formerly a corporation lawyer—devoted the full energy of his later years to the establishment of a plan which would mean that for the railroads of this country.

It is to the joint control of industry by the Government, the union workers and the technicians to which the authors look forward. They consider this not only desirable, but inevitable. In stirring language, they picture the upward sweep of Democracy—the struggle of the masses for more and more freedom. This tidal wave is now sweeping into Industry, and cannot be permanently stopped.

The fact that the hard coal miners only the other day suggested this sort of plan as their solution of the coal problem shows how the idea is gaining ground every day. It is being pushed forward vigorously in England by the Guild Socialists, and is also making headway on the continent. It seems to settle the difficult question as to how workers are to control a specific industry, and yet make full use of the technician and satisfy the workers outside the industry. It is the next step.

Trade unions' libraries cannot afford to be without this book. (It is endorsed by the heads of all the railroad unions.) B. W. Huebsch is the publisher, and \$2.00 is the price.

PENSIONS

THE campaign for old-age pensions—now going on in many states—makes appropriate the studies of public relief, now coming out in book form.

In a **Critical Analysis of Industrial Pension Systems** (Macmillan, 1922, \$1.75), Luther Conant, Jr., considers "that most pension systems now in operation do not make a substantial approach toward solving the problem of old age dependency." Only a trifling proportion of wage earners, he contends, ever go on the pension roll. Recommendation, therefore, is made of a system of "cumulative annuities," to be paid up by successive employers. Unions may find this of some value as a reference book.

"The Health Insurance Commission created by . . . Illinois . . . found that about one family in seven was living below the line of bare subsistence, and out of this number one-fourth of the families stated that sickness was responsible for their lack of income." After examining what has been done in America, Denmark, Germany,

England and other countries, Gerald Morgan, in **Public Relief of Sickness** (Macmillan, 1922, \$1.50), comes to the conclusion that we should have: (1) Compulsory Health Insurance paying cash compensations for loss of wages only, and (2) Health Centers aided by grants of state aid not to exceed 50 per cent of their installation and expenses.

"DREAMS"

WHILE "practical men" of business have been fond, for a long time, of emphasizing to the new generation the need of each individual having some aim in life, they have shown strange indifference to the need of humanity, in the mass, formulating for itself such an aim. The form of a perfect society has, from ancient times, been set forth by thinkers and dreamers, and from time to time some editor has performed for us the service of collecting these into one book. But never before was the work so well performed as it has been for us now by Lewis Mumford, in **The Story of Utopias**. (Boni & Liveright, \$3.00). He not merely presents, but presents with rare appreciation of what is transitory and what is permanent and valuable, his picture of Plato, More, and the others. He gives us an intelligent analysis of why they wrote as they did, and ends with challenging contrast between the true ideal, and that false ideal of life which is implied, because realized, in the pleasant country villas of the rich, made possible by the smoking factories and tenements in which swelter the poor.

GOOD WORDS

IT IS impossible to print all the fine letters we receive, endorsing **LABOR AGE** and telling of the good work it is doing as a digest of the Labor Movement.

Among individual letters received, the following may be quoted: McAllister Coleman of the ILLINOIS MINER: "I got the enclosed subscription from a coal-digger who read **LABOR AGE** in our office and was very much excited about it. He wants to have his children brought up with the right ideas and believes that **LABOR AGE** has them. So do I."

William Moore, Secretary, Webb Weavers' Union, Newburgh, N. Y.: "Your magazine for May was great. The information we received was simply invaluable. We hope in the near future you will be able to give us another issue dealing with the textile trade."

Parley P. Christensen, Chicago: "Your issues are A 1. Each one hits the nail on the head. I can't get on without them."

F. W. F., Cleveland, Ohio: "I am more than ever interested in the progress of **LABOR AGE** and the cause for which it stands. I hope you will continue to widen your sphere of influence, because I know you deserve the recognition and support of every friend of Labor and student of labor conditions."

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This important question—showing its possibilities and practical limitations—will be discussed in the AUGUST ISSUE of LABOR AGE.

It will be done in a THOROUGH and CONSTRUCTIVE manner.

“It is a significant fact,” writes Brother A. M. Jennings in last month’s issue, “to know that the most conservative organization in the A. F. of L. has been considering such a modern question (as amalgamation), and that the committee to which the question was referred for consideration recommended its adoption.”

What does it all mean? Where is it applicable? Where is it not applicable?

Local Unions will want to read this discussion, based on no dogmatic viewpoint, but merely on the FACTS.

EVERY LOCAL UNION SHOULD HAVE “LABOR AGE,” AT LEAST IN ITS OFFICE, FOR THE USE OF ITS OFFICERS AND ACTIVE MEMBERS. THE LATEST FACTS ON LABOR BANKING, COOPERATIVE STORES AND SHOPS, LABOR RESEARCH, WORKERS’ EDUCATION, MOVES TOWARD INDEPENDENT POLITICAL ACTION, CLOSER ORGANIZATION AND SOCIALIZATION—ALL THE NEW THINGS WHICH LABOR HAS TAKEN UP IN ANSWER TO THE REACTION.

ATTRACTIVE COMBINATION OFFER:

LABOR AGE (regular price, \$2.00 per year) and “THE CONTROL OF WAGES,” by Walton Hamilton and Stacey May (regular price, 50 cents)—Both, \$1.75.

Let Us Hear From You.

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