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Labor Age

The National Monthly

Salem vs. Biddeford

In "Decaying New England"

Genesis at West Lynn

The Coming Harvest

1. Pawlowski and Goscka
2. Negro Workers at the Crossroads

Are Women "Just Women"?

Under the Telescope

Halt the War Party!
They Want "Confiscation"
Loyal Lawrence Legion
Much Ado About Morals

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CONTENTS:

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HARVEY O'CONNOR, Labor journalist, now making study of organization problems.

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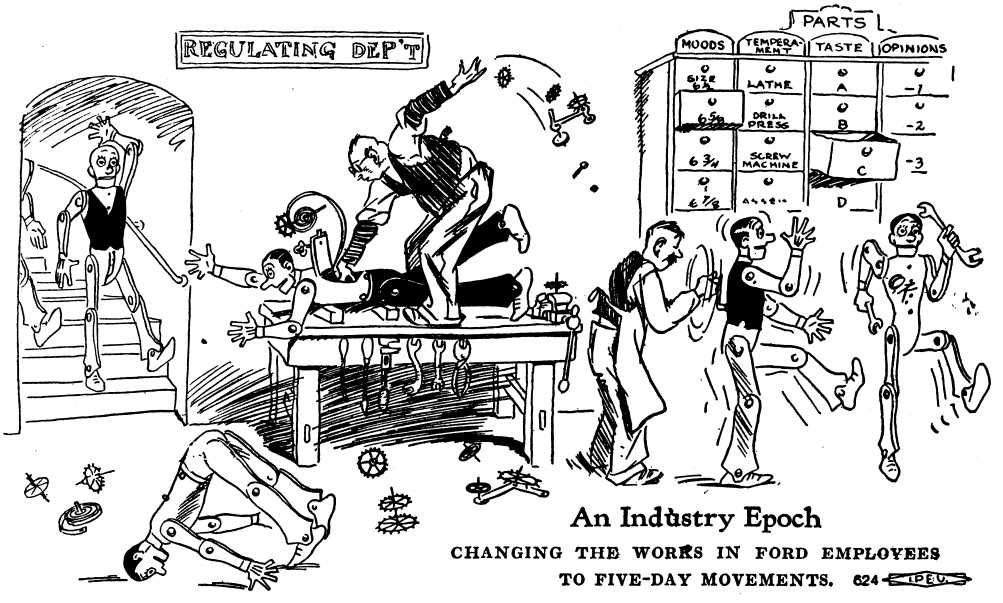
Labor Age
The National Monthly

"Decaying New England"

ANOTHER SECTOR OF 1927'S WAR FRONT



An Industry Epoch

CHANGING THE WORKS IN FORD EMPLOYEES TO FIVE-DAY MOVEMENTS. 624 IDEU

NOTHING speaks more eloquently of the "new era" facing the unorganized than the above cartoon, from the Automobile number of LIFE. Speed-up has reached the sublime state where it has become ridiculous. Humorous weeklies have to strain their imaginations but little to get a hearty laugh at the mechanical men produced by Ford, et al.

The speed-up plan blossoms not only at Ford's. It can be found at the General Electric, at the Westinghouse, and among the sorely exploited textile workers. In the latter case, it has expressed itself particularly in the multiple loom system. Where one worker in the sheeting industry has tended 10 to 12 looms, the non-union mills have put them to work at the ratio of 28 to 30 looms per worker.

To meet this situation, and the debasing conditions of other sorts that go with it, is one of the chief problems of Labor in 1927. Nowhere are the lines more tightly drawn on the entire issue of Unionism vs. Non-Unionism —of Freedom vs. Slavery, that in the textile sheeting industry. Something of the tale is told in the immediately following pages.

SALEM VS. BIDDEFORD is a page torn from the book "Decaying New England". The wail of the textile manufacturers of that section has been heard throughout the land. That something is emphatically wrong with the industry, anyone with eyes to see can see. That it will grow any stronger or better by the further exploitation of its already hard-pressed workers is another matter.

In the trenches of New England, Local 33 of the Textile Workers is fighting for freedom from any such "solution" as that. They are seeking to expand the union itself. They are engaged in one of the most worth-while and bitter battles that Labor has before it anywhere. What they have done, and plan to do, is a story of inspiration.

Salem vs. Biddeford

As Told to the Editor

By JOHN P. O'CONNELL, FRANCIS L. GORMAN and GEORGE E. GENDRON

WINTER is winter in New England. The Boston and Maine pulls you Northward through seas of snow. A tempest of sleet beats and howls at the windows. Stations are almost invisible, hidden by old Boreas in his cold-hot fury.

A company of downcast gobs—headed by dapper, cigarette-consuming officers—leave the smoker at Portsmouth, and plunge into the fray with Nature. "Off on a vacation!" one says, with a sickly smile, as he buttons up his jacket. They strike a chill over you, as they march off, two by two, like prisoners to a lock-step.

We change at Dover in the continuing squall. Kennebunk is covered with white magic. Biddeford, when we land there, confronts us with a ten-inch fall, through which we wade, almost up to our knees, past the big red buildings of the Pepperell sheeting mills—on to the Hotel Thacher, the only hostelry in the town.

"Desolate" is the word that describes poor Biddleford. A palsy of inertia and despair stalks up its Main Street, and peers out from its shop windows—and *into* its shop windows, too, in the eyes of the mill workers who have never known what freedom is. When winter's touch is added, it is more cheerless than the North Pole could possibly be. For, at the North Pole you do not meet beaten human beings, at any rate—nor storekeepers worrying about future trade. Nor ham actors from a cheap "revue", who wander aimlessly in the hotel lobby and through the one street they dare to tread on, seeking in vain for some brother Bohemian spirit in this "one horse hole." Nor mills running on part force, as the Pepperell or shut down altogether, as the York at neighboring Saco—just across the "river". Nor founderies dead, as the anti-union Saco-Lowell works, over there also.

The Contrast

Anti-unionism has made Biddeford into a paralytic, a mere shell of what an American town in our Era of Eternal Prosperity, is pictured to be. What a contrast to bustling Salem, with its Naumkeag mills going at full blast, with night work even necessary, with men and women who can speak out their minds, and control their destinies to a degree at least through union action! Biddeford of the Open Shop—wasting away, seeing only further hope through further exploitation of its population, already reduced to standards which no Men and Women should bear. Salem of the Union Shop—active, alert, requiring added workers even from Biddeford, with wages one-fifth higher, hours decidedly shorter, conditions which reflect themselves in the keener minds and surer step of its citizens. These are two strong contrasting pictures in "Decaving New England" around which there hangs a tale. And now we will proceed to tell it.

First, as to Biddeford. The Pepperell Manufacturing Co.—head and front of anti-unionism in the textile sheeting industry—has long dominated the town. Biddeford lives off Pepperell. No feudal castle ever threw its shadow more menacingly over a medieval village than the red buildings of the big mill over this vassal-town. Pepperell products, from time immemorial, have been stamped with the black mark of the Open Shop. All through its long history, the lords of the plant have become bloated into fatness off an oppressed mill population. Their reactionary business policies have succeeded largely because these have been carried out at the expense of the working machines who make up the citizenship of this spot on the Maine map.

Twenty-four or five years ago the mill was shaken to its foundations, figuratively speaking, by a mass walkout. That strike was lost. Two years later the loom-fixers began a drive for organization, and about half of them became union men. That was the "high tide" of the union movement until the eventful year 1919. Then, the issue raised was the hours of labor. Fifty-four hours work per week was the rule, as they are today. A demand for the 48-hour week swept the mills. At 4 o'clock one cold afternoon in February, a spontaneous strike tied up everything. It was the worst possible time for such action on the workers' part, being in the dull season, with the men and women getting in, in reality, only three or four days of work per week. One of those tragedies of mass action, which have so often thrown their shadow over American industrial history!

Thirteen weeks of walkout found the workers exhausted and the strike lost. The bitterness of the struggle and the widespread publicity it had received led to a statewide movement for the 48-hour week by legislation, such as exists in Massachusetts. Here again, however, a reactionary legislature smashed the workers' hopes. It was in the mill towns that the demand for the progressive legislation was most loudly heard. Labor throughout the State and in other industries did not measure up to expectations in the effort to secure the needed change. That, in itself, played no small part in the final defeat.

Enter: Whitehead—and Trouble

Despite these constant set-backs at the hands of the bosses, the loom-fixers continued to maintain their organization. All other forms of unionism vanished with the 1919 outcome. Six years of "quiet" followed. Then, in 1925, came the introduction of the multiple system of handling the looms. A new mill agent, Howard R. Whitehead, was imported for the specific purpose of putting this system into effect. His predecessor as mill agent had refused to be a party to the introduction of the "new idea". Mr. Whitehead jumped at the possibility of landing the job, as he had had a rather difficult record as a mill official, with Success scarcely attending him as handmaiden.

Under pretense of Southern competition—which is almost non-existent in sheetings—Mr. Whitehead an-

nounced that a great experiment would be carried out on December 1, 1925. Instead of handling the usual 12 looms per worker, one girl would be tried out on 22 looms in Room 54. In another part of the mill, another weaver would be put on 16 looms. A check-up would demonstrate which system would be introduced.

Despite the weavers' warnings and a futile conference between them and the agent, the girl was ordered to the 22 looms on the promised Monday morning. A committee of workers immediately advised Whitehead that the girl must come off the extra looms by noon, or they would cease work at 1 o'clock. The answer was a notice, posted throughout the weave rooms, stating that the plant would shut down. So, another struggle was on!

This strike or lock-out (or something of both) was under the auspices of the American Federation of Textile Operatives, whose headquarters are at New Bedford. Just about the time it broke out, Local 33 of Salem—the only local of any power in the sheeting industry—was severing its connection with the A. F. T. O. and re-joining the United Textile Workers of America, largely as a direct result of the Unity Conferences in Textiles, called some years ago at the suggestion of LABOR AGE.

Mill Lying and Intimidation

Some of the tactics immediately resorted to by the mill bosses are mentioned in a letter to the BIDDEFORD JOURNAL of December 28, 1925, written by George E. Gendron, a union loom-fixer of 24 years' standing, who became the local leader of the workers. We quote in part:

"What were the results of my union activities? The results were that everything was tried to put me in the wrong with the union. I have detectives or sheriffs at my heels whenever I go out, and if I happen to leave the city I am sure to find one or two of them at the station when I return. It is also circulated that I am being paid better wages while having charge of our strike than I ever earned in the mills. They also tell the public that I was to give up my job at the mills and that I took advantage of the present opportunity to get back at the company. They even go so far as saying that I am the man responsible for the failure to reach an agreement, and if I got out of the way the weavers would almost obtain anything from Mr. Whitehead."

This was part and parcel of the usual system of intimidation and lying that anti-union employers resort to in crises of this sort. To test out the rumor that Gendron was the stumbling block, the weavers sent a special committee, without Gendron as a member, to see the mill agent. The result was merely a demand for complete surrender. The entire strategy of the mill was to create friction between the loom fixers and the weavers and thus break the strike, destroying Gendron and his reputation in the process. The old mysterious term "radical" was hurled at him and whispered about him—French-Canadian and Catholic that he is—just as has been done in every crisis of this character, since man first revolted against his enslavement by man.

Nationality was played against nationality, also, with some small success. Of the strikers, 65 per cent were French. The others were Irish, Poles and Greeks. The management sought to pit one racial group against the other, and made some headway in each camp, save with the Greeks, who stood loyally and stubbornly in the strikers' camp. This was particularly significant, since they were comparative newcomers to the place and industry.

The then Mayor, Edward H. Drapeau, a union molder, was one of the most violent in his fight against the mill strikers. Some of the police, under his control, went so far as to act as employment agents for the mill, going into the workers' homes and seeking to intimidate them into going back to work. The sheriff's forces acted in like manner—with the splendid exception of deputy sheriff Henry Berube, who kept his hands off throughout the strike, his sympathies being with the strikers.

The entire mill-controlled administration was found later to have been reeking with corruption. The then city clerk, Arthur Hevey, was recently sentenced to from 2 to 4 years in jail, for misappropriation of funds. The then Mayor is being sued by the city for $150,000, for giving out contracts irregularly. The corruption expose came as a direct supplement to the strike; for the mill workers, irate at the city's anti-union policy, drove all of the machine out of office, after long years of tenure.

A Dubious "Agreement"

The strike itself was less successful. After 11 weeks, a so-called agreement was reached, verbal in form and virtually breaking the back of the strikers. There can be little doubt but that the loss of the struggle was partly due to the inefficiency of William E. G. Batty, Secretary of the American Federation of Textile Operatives. His entire actions toward its close were mysterious and inconsistent. Nine days prior to the "settlement", he came into Biddleford and assured the workers that they were making headway along the right lines. It was on the following day that he went up to Boston and met Leonard, Treasurer of the Company, State Labor Commissioner Beals and Federal representatives Brown and Wood. The strike was called off by Batty by telephone, with the mere statement that an "agreement" had been reached. Such as it was, the agreement was practically the same as that submitted by Agent Whitehead on February 4th—a complete surrender to the company. It reads as follows:

"1. The Pepperell Company has always considered this company to be on an Open Shop basis and we maintain that this condition shall continue.

"2. All employees now working shall continue in the employ of this company so long as their work is satisfactory to the company.

"3. The company shall make such experiments as it desires, to improve the processes of manufacture, keeping equally in mind the welfare of its employees and of the company at all times.

"4. It also must be understood that GEORGE E. GENDRON is out of the employ of the company."

One man blacklisted outright, the multiple system triumphant, the mill management supreme—such was the verdict reached after 11 weeks of struggle. But the mill had given itself a more severe blow than it had thought. Since that day, the Pepperell works has never been on full-time, even down to the present day. The multiple system has undoubtedly introduced an inferior product on the market, and the danger of tie-up from labor disputes is always in the air. Can the Pepperell honestly guarantee peace in its plant, such as will make

for steady production? From the secret opinions of the workers there, we state quite freely that it cannot.

The "Social Club"

Whitehead and his big boss, Leonard, sensed this fact immediately after the strike. Gendron was decoyed away from the scene for a few weeks, in a way that we shall see. The company with hot haste, announced the establishment of a Social and Athletic Club. This is not even a "company union". It has nothing to do with safety, even, or minor conditions around the mill. It cannot even play at being a "House" and "Senate". The company would not dare to entrust such playthings to its "wards".

It is purely a Lady Bountiful scheme, with the workers paying no dues and many of the officers not real employees in the ordinary sense of the term. The telephone girl and the lunch cart concessionaire and the wife of an overseer are among its leading spirits. An entire weave room near the main office on Main Street—opposite the Hotel Thacher—has been set aside for the club, and the place remodeled for a dance room, gymnasium and library. By such a crude device, the company hopes to defraud the workers of Biddeford of their just wages and conditions, making them sweat for the inefficiency of Leonard and Whitehead.

To make the business all the merrier, a monthly publication, the PEPPERELL SHEET, is issued for the employees. Pictures of this worker and that are run every month, with nice things about them, and of course a lot of clap-trap about "our remarkable Treasurer, Mr. Leonard", etc., etc. Just why the sheet, and why all the hubbub about Athletic Clubs, and the like, can be seen from the following comparison of wages and conditions between Biddeford and Salem:

COMPARATIVE WAGES AND WORKING CONDITIONS

	Biddeford (Leading non-union mill)	Salem (Naumkeag, union mill)
Hours per week	54	48
Looms per worker .....28 to 30		12
Wages		20% higher

In Salem, social activities are enjoyed by the mill groups, even more than at Biddeford. They are the free expressions of free folks, however, an entirely different thing from the mill-lash which compels attendance at social functions. Or, the workers think it does, which is about the same thing. It is the union which encourages minstrel shows and study classes and other forms of social expression at Salem. Undoubtedly, it should do so even more than it does. But, despite the competition of Boston nearby, it has done a pretty good job of it already, and means to do better in the future. In Salem—wonder of wonders—we see 2,400 workers, 100 per cent at work.

Salem, the Union City

Now, the story of Salem is, after all, a simple one. In 1919, they had a revolt for union there, also. Unlike the Biddeford affair, it went over successfully. The workers won; first, through a more compact solidarity; second, because of a management shrewd enough to see that further fighting along that line was hopeless, and injurious. A number of locals, at first, finally consolidated themselves into the one Local 33, formerly under the A. F. T. O. John P. O'Connell of the Plumbers' Union, who had been active in directing and counselling the strikers, became their business agent and secretary and has remained in that capacity ever since.

The multiple loom question came up in Salem—and with it, the wage reduction proposal—just as it did in Biddeford. The differing answers arrived at are merely outstanding evidences of the different results of Unionism and Open Shoppery. When the Naumkeag Mills pleaded that they could not stand up under the competition with the 9 non-union concerns—and that the multiple loom system or reduced wages, or both—would be the result, Business Agent O'Connell promply called the LABOR BUREAU, INC. to the rescue. This intelligent action saved the day; for the Bureau was able to show, by an exhaustive study of the Naumkeag's financial history, that it had always made generous profits, was still doing so, and would continue onward with its record, if it intelligently extended its market.

The Naumkeag management thereupon withdrew from its position, and union conditions have been continued in its plant. The union, to maintain itself and to make itself secure against all eventualities, saw itself thereupon confronted with a two-fold task: 1. To extend its organganization to the chief non-union centers as rapidly as possible; and 2. To expand the market of the union product—the PEQUOT brand of sheeting and pillow cases—and thus strike non-unionism a blow in that quarter, also.

The Campaign for PEQUOT

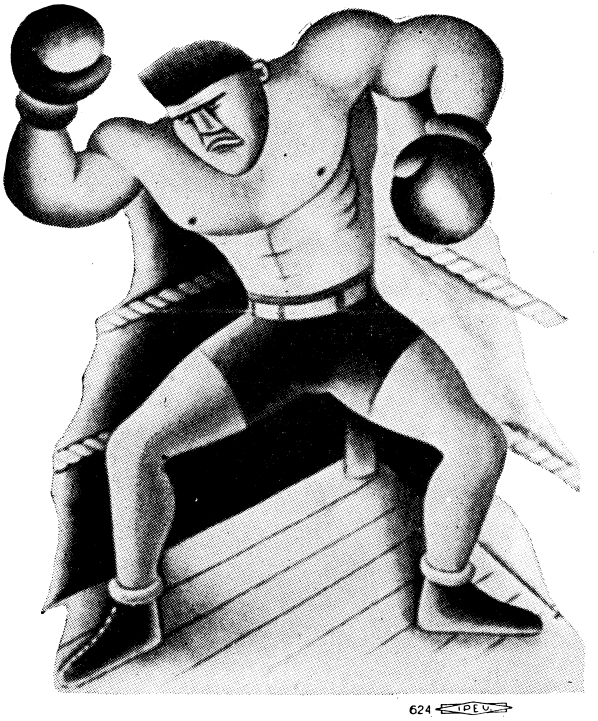
Accordingly, for over a year a campaign of publicity and education has been carried on before city central bodies and State Federations, and to the convention of the American Federation of Labor itself—advising the workers and the public that the only union made sheet and pillow case in the market is the PEQUOT brand—with its subsidiary brand, SALEM, of a lighter fabric. This campaign has not been the boosting of a decaying business or the building up of an undertaking depending on unionism alone: the Naumkeag products long having been recognized as the first in quality in the market.

It is interesting to note, incidentally, how union conditions have stimulated the Naumkeag management to further and further mechanical progress and efficiency. Their mills are undoubtedly the most modern in design in the country. Their machinery of the latest types. No sooner is a new machine in the market, than the Naumkeag management is busy at its installation. Of the non-union mills the same can scarcely be said. They are wreaking the vengeance of old devices on the unorganized, multiple-driven workers.

The extension of unionism to the present non-union centers is being aggressively pushed forward by the local, supported by the United Textile Workers. A special organizer, Francis L. Gorman, has been assigned to the sheeting industry. Gendron is also maintained at Biddeford, to the great chagrin of the Pepperell. Other centers will see activities within the next few months. The sheeting battle ground lies in the following non-union places:

Waterville, Maine; Lewiston, Maine; Biddeford, Maine;

CARTOONS OF THE MONTH



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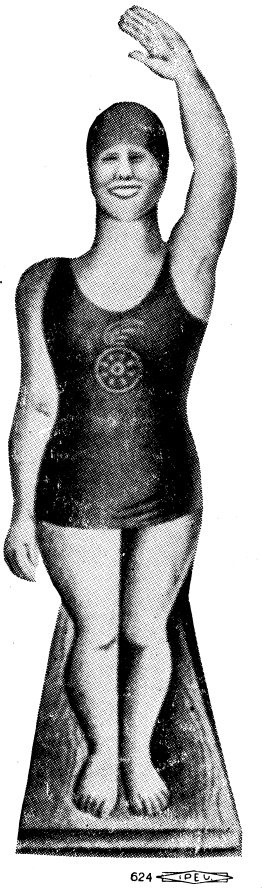
THE IDOL RICH



624 IDEV

"By Their Gods Ye Shall Know Them," says "Vanity Fair", in presenting us with these American idols—the pugilist and the water sprite. How about it, brother worker? Until we think as much of our own problems as of the Mighty Maulers and Channel Champs—the boss will have the drop on us!

Lowell, Mass.; Chicopee, Mass.. Utica, N. Y.; West Durham, N. C.; Thomaston, Ga.; Kannapolis, N. C.

The southern mills are of small consequence at present. It is Biddeford, Utica and Chicopee that are definitely strategic points for the union drive. Of that drive we will have much more to say later, with a glance at the effect on it of the bleachery situation. It may be added now, that there is a process of consolidation or of secret cooperation going on among the non-union mills, both to attack the Naumkeag market and to rid the one union center of its unique character. So that with the union, it is a matter of going forward or going backward—as is generally the case in similar situations.

That the poverty plea—raised on high by the non-union mills, at every mention of just labor conditions, based on unionism—is the feverish product of able fiction writers, can be seen from one glance at a summary of the Labor Bureau's findings in the case of the Pepperell. This runs as follows:

"The true value of the total plant is approximately $20,000,000.

"The stockholders have taken out of the business $21,000,000 in the last 21 years.

"The property is worth about that much, as stated, and all the stockholders have put into the business is $2,500,000.

"To put in 2 million and a half and take out 21 millions, is a pretty tidy investment."

We rather think so! A new campaign at the Pepperell gates, and elsewhere; the continuation of the union product drive—and the solidification of union influence in Salem itself—through the local study class, union social activities and other things—will push ahead into the enemy's territory in the sheeting textile industry, the standard of Unionism. From Salem, it must march on Biddeford, Utica and Chicopee and plant itself there for good. "Decaying New England" will decay no longer, for its workers, if that sort of stuff goes forward.

The Coming Harvest

FACING THE UNORGANIZED

Pawlowski and Goscka

By HARVEY O'CONNOR

It is good to face the unorganized—to view their background and to note the difficulties in our way. When we see these difficulties—as presented by Brothers O'Connor and Dabney—they grow much less insurmountable than we generally suppose. Every one of them can be overcome—in Cleveland with the Poles, throughout the country with Negroes. Armed with the facts, let us get on the job! Further articles will show even more clearly how this can be done. LABOR AGE *has already indicated the general line of procedure.*

TWENTY men "made" Chicago, asserts C. W. Barron in a vainglorious editorial in his WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Cleveland can boast of a wider and a greater basis for her greatness, because it took the flower of a nation to build and operate her mills and factories. That nation is Poland.

Cleveland was merely another Columbus or Indianapolis, a cross roads town with none too large a hinterland behind her and the blank waters of Lake Erie before her when the invasion of America by Poland commenced. Ten years after that tide of humanity had rolled over this country, the banks of the muddy Cuyahoga reflected the night glow of huge steel mills while her air rivalled Pittsburgh's as a hundred sprawling mills and factories belched smoke into the Ohio heavens.

From the interminable pages of the 11th Decennial Census report, you can learn that 40,000 Poles claim Cleveland for their own. The finest sons and daughters of the vast Polish plains, they came to the Fifth City bearing gifts worth far more than a king's ransom. Poland, torn as she was between three imperialist powers, had reared these men and women to maturity, had borne the full costs of their development into sturdy, full-blooded workers, and then had presented them to America. Had that peasant land given Cleveland her great factories, the world would have marvelled and America would have paid tribute in laudation and interest on the investment. Instead Poland gave flesh and blood, ready and eager to toil before the hot furnaces and the throbbing machines of the American factories erected for these peasants.

Cleveland's rise to industrial greatness on the shoulders of the Poles is just another of the crucial problems posed for solution by the labor movement. For theirs has not been the reward given the 20 men who "made" Chicago. Not palatial mansions in Bratenahl or Shaker Heights, nor winter homes in Florida have fallen to the men and women who made Cleveland, but slum dwellings down in the smoke and dirt of that city's belt. There for square miles are the squat houses of the steel workers and the machine shop workers, relieved only by the spires of Polish Roman Catholic churches.

When the steel mills shut down, terror spreads through those glum haunts of inarticulate workers. Families telescope, a dozen living in quarters where half a dozen had lived before and none should live. The queues of black-shawled women, ambling one, two and three miles to the downtown public markets for baskets of the cheapest vegetables and a small cut of the cheapest soup meat, grow longer as they haggle with the sharp hucksters for a penny and an ounce.

But no, we cannot jump to the conclusion that these Polish people, these quiet uncomplaining folk who furnish the sinews of industry not merely in Cleveland, but in Pittsburgh, Youngstown, Akron, Detroit, Toledo and even Chicago, have been entirely neglected by the trade union movement. Truth to tell, they constitute an organization problem before which the most aggressive and intelligent movement might well pause.

A superficial survey of the reasons for their hard conditions, for their failure to organize and for their apathy in the face of oppression might reveal some of these factors:

1. A deep feeling of fear brought over from the old days of Czarism in Poland when opposition to authority —any authority whether of the police, religion or the boss—met an immediate and stern punishment.

2. The peculiar strength of the Polish Catholic religion over its adherents. In a strange land, the Poles have turned almost instinctively for advice and guidance to the parish priest, a fact of tremendous significance.

3. A distrust of their own leaders, inculcated by a long and disgraceful reign of fraud by Polish editors, lawyers, politicians, doctors and other "intelligentsia" over the unlearned masses. In Cleveland, for example, not one Polish lawyer could be found to defend—without an enormous fee—a countryman accused of murder with all the familiar apparatus of a frame-up. An American Civil Liberties Union lawyer of high standing before the Cleveland bar gladly took up the case.

4. A distrust of American labor organizers because of charges—whether true or not the writer does not know —that they victimized the Poles as badly as their own fellow-countrymen had.

* * *

Allow me to introduce my friend, whom we'll name Pawlowski:

"The more intelligent Polish workers in the steel mills yearn for a union. They know what a union could do for them because many of their friends are in the build-

ing trades. They compare their conditions with those of the union building workers. But what are they to do?

"It is easy to strike against a little construction boss. But our bosses are the subsidiaries of the Steel Trust."

"And who would lead us? We have not developed good leadership among ourselves. And we remember too well the steel strike when that rascally organizer came among us."

"He drove into town in a Ford and started collecting dues and initiation fees. Everyone joined. Then came the strike call and we responded 100 per cent with the other steel workers. But by that time our organizer was riding a Buick and pretty soon he disappeared. We were left alone, without relief, without leadership. Our people become discouraged, the priests were busy all the while and our business men were yelling through our Polish newspapers that we must go back to work.

"And so we did. But we still remember that and so we fear to strike, even to organize a union. If the company spies don't get us, the little band of us who still talk unionism fall before the fear and apathy of our own people who suffer terribly now but fear that they would suffer more in another strike."

But perhaps our friend Pawlowski dwells too much in the past. Then let us hear Goscka. Goscka is a member of a railroad brotherhood, a born promoter and an inveterate politician of the better sort. He hovers between the depths of despair and the heights of confidence.

He enters my office triumphantly waving the latest edition of the Polish Catholic weekly paper. "Look," he gloats, pointing to the English column. And there, phrased in rather awkward English perhaps, is an ardent appeal for Sacco and Vanzetti, equal in spirit to any labor editorial yet written about the two victims of Massachusetts injustice. A truly tremendous achievement, considering the character of the paper.

This indefatigable propagandist, who had swung the Polish daily over to the LaFollette cause, is now working to liberalize the Catholic paper. Next week Goscka reports he has been placed on the political committee of the Polish Chamber of Commerce, there to present labor's side in local electoral matters.

"But what about a little union activity down there on Broadway (Little Poland's Main Street)?" I ask.

Goscka shrugs his shoulders. "The thinkers are the rulers," he answers apocryphally, ending up with a florid peroration from E. Haldeman-Julius, evidently the H. L. Mencken of the Midwest.

The topic is a painful one to him, for he shies off at any or no opportunity. Pinned down, he answers:

"Well, what's the use of all this work I'm doing, if not to back up the progressives among the Polish people when they are in trouble?"

"But can't we also be doing some actual organization work among the steel workers and machine shop workers?" comes my inquiry.

The problem is too big, and there is no answer.

* * *

Cleveland's problem is not merely a Polish and a steel mill problem. Other nationalities, principally the Hungarians, the Czechoslovaks and the Jugoslavs are main ingredients in the Fifth City's industrial population. And steel mills are just one of the many industries; in fact they are the outposts of steel, which centers in the Mahoning Valley and down into Pittsburgh along the Allegheny and Monongahela. Indeed, the fabrication of steel into machinery, engines and equipment of every sort is Cleveland's main basic reason for existence. Trucks and sewing machines, tools and forgings, every implement needed for a civilization founded upon iron and steel, are turned out of Cleveland. Midway in America's industrial belt, it enjoys admirable distribution facilities. It is in the center, too, of primary production, with the ore boats of Lake Superior dumping at her docks and long trains of coal winding down from Ohio and West Virginia valleys.

It is more akin to Detroit, also a steel fabrication town, than to Pittsburgh. Toledo is just Cleveland on a smaller scale. So are Erie, Ashtabula, Painesville, Lorain along the south shore of Lake Erie. Roughly, the union problems of the cities stretching along Lake Erie up to Detroit, the very heart of the Ruhr of America, are substantially alike. With native Americans, there are the mid-Europeans in all these cities (Cleveland for example is the geographical center of America's Jugoslav population); the employers generally are intelligent, alert and aggressively non-union; the industries are about the same.

Among notable differences must be mentioned Cleveland's progressivism. In 1924, Cleveland and Milwaukee were the only major cities to swing to LaFollette. Outstanding progressives of national note, such as Peter Witt and Marie Wing, are influential members of its city council. Three big railroad brotherhoods have their headquarters there. The city has a heritage of progressive tradition from the days of Tom Johnson, of 3-cent fare fame.

* * *

The problem of the unorganized in Cleveland can be summarized roughly in this manner:

1. Prosperity for the underlying population is no more real in Cleveland than any other industrial center. Hundreds of thousands live below the comfort line; the city's industrial leaders can boast of Negro slums equal in squalor to the worst in Dixie.

2. The liberalization of the foreign workers continues. Their papers are becoming somewhat less mercenary. The isolation of the foreign language groups from the rest of Cleveland and America is being visibly permeated by English columns in their papers, by discussions of local and national politics, by the spreading influence of labor ideas. The former towering position of the corrupt foreign language newspapers which customarily sold out to the steel trust and other employers during big strikes is being undermined by the growth of a sturdy labor and progressive press. Some of these papers, such as *Radnik*, the national Jugoslav paper; *Americke Delnisty Listy*, the strong Cleveland Czech socialist weekly; and the Cleveland progressive Hungarian weekly will give most valuable aid in a union campaign.

3. The leadership problem is not a hopeless one. Fleeced so consistently by their own fellow countrymen, they place touching confidence in American leaders, once they are convinced of the native's sincerity and honesty. Among their own ranks, too, are young men who will hitch their wagons to the labor star if only labor has some program with fire and spirit. Naturally they are

not greatly inspired by some examples of native craft unionism in action.

4. The knotty problem of the attack on the employers has not been approached, much less solved. Certain shops are more vulnerable. Research should indicate them. Strategy, given the heteregenous working force and the aggressiveness of the bosses, is yet to be evolved.

5. In an intelligently planned fight, unionists could count on the moral support of a great portion of Cleveland's million people. Two of the dailies are fairly liberal and a financial apparatus could be erected with assurances of local relief. Certain progressive leaders would be towers of strength in a union campaign.

6. The trade union movement would be an asset in such a drive. Although its strength is centered chiefly in the building trades, yet it has real influence and good machinery. The Cleveland building trades are being subjected to stiff attacks from a so-called Citizens Committee which has a war chest of $5,000,000 and instructions to break the back of the unions. The Building Laborers have had to abandon their fight for a $1 an hour scale while the Painters have lost a protracted strike; clearly the building trades have their hands full.

7. An imperative need is a central skeleton organization which could be expanded easily for research, mobilization of speakers and organizers and for relief work. A branch of the American Bureau for Industrial Freedom would be ideal in such a capacity and might well be the way to open wide the door of trade unionism to Cleveland's 250,000 non-union toilers.

Negro Workers at the Crossroads

By THOMAS L. DABNEY

WHAT should be the attitude of Negro Workers to the trade union Movement? Should they join white labor or support the capitalists? Should they be opportunists and content themselves with the role of scabs and strike-breakers or should they form unions of their own?

These are some of the perplexing problems that confront Negro Workers. And there is the great diversity of opinion on these questions. Not only the rank and file, but the leaders of the race, are hopelessly divided as to the action that Negro workers should take: Many Negroes, like Dr. Hubert H. Harrison of New York and Prof. Kelly Miller of Howard University, Washington, D. C., adhere strictly to the philosophy of social solidarity as opposed to class solidarity. Others like Dr. W. E. B. DuBois, editor of the CRISIS and Mr. Charles S. Johnson of OPPORTUNITY, subscribe to a more liberal policy. A few Negroes like A. Philip Randolph are proponents of the theory of the class struggle and are staunch trade unionists.

Ten years ago the outstanding problem of Negro workers was that of breaking into the trades held exclusively by white workers. Although this is still fighting ground, the advance made by the race during the years since the war has precipitated new problems. So long as Negro workers were confined to the less competing and comparatively unimportant jobs and trades in which trades unions have made little head-way, the question of organization was not paramount.

War Brought Changes

Today the situation has changed. The war, with its consequent increase in demand for skilled and unskilled labor, greatly aided the efforts of Negro workers to secure more and better jobs in industry. And Negroes proved to be such good laborers that their permanency in the skilled and semi-skilled trades now seems assured. And the race is making advances along these lines every year. In 1920 between 400,000 and 500,000 Negroes had secured jobs in the industrial cities of the North. Most of these were migrants from the agricultural districts of the South, particularly Mississippi and Louisiana!*

The success of Negro workers in industry is attested by the fact that a great many plants retained them, despite the falling off in production since 1922 and 1923. In the latter year there were something like 16,000 Negroes, or 21 per cent of the total number of workers, employed in the steel mills in and around Pittsburg. Following the war-time peak of production, when the plants began to reduce their labor force, many Negroes were dropped from the pay-rolls the same as the whites, but in several cases they were retained in large numbers. Thus, the A. of M. Byers Company kept their entire force of Negro workers, and the Clark Mills of the Carnegie Steel Company had in 1923 a Negro labor force equal to 42 per cent and in 1924 a force equal to 56 per cent of their total labor supply.†

Negro workers have made a decided advance in other industries. In New Jersey, for example, they have become an important factor in the building trades. A large number of them have jobs as hod carriers, brickmasons and carpenters.‡

The fortunes of Negro workers vary from city to city and to some extent in regard to trade. Even in New Jersey, where such an advance has been made in the building trades, a Negro can not become a licensed plumber or steam-fitter. In St. Paul, Columbus and other cities—especially the smaller industrial centers—Negroes are greatly opposed by white labor, who fear their competition. In Kansas Negroes can not secure jobs in plumbing, electricity and printing.§

The conflicts in recent years between Negro workers and white workers are symptomatic of the present strained relations between these two groups. The race

*Report of Dr. George E. Haynes, Division of Economics —Dept. of Labor, 1920.

†John L. Clark—Opportunity, March, 1926, pp. 87, 88.

‡Opportunity—March, 1926, p. 93.

§Opportunity—March, 1926.

riots in Chicago in 1919, the outbreaks more recently in Detroit, Carteret and other localities have strong economic implications. They show that white labor is not at all friendly to Negro labor on the job, despite the professed friendliness and interest on the part of certain labor leaders. True enough, Negro workers have made great gains in industry, but these gains have not been made without increased suspicions, emmity and conflicts between the races.

Employers, quick to profit by any unfavorable developments within the working class, have taken advantage of the strained relations between Negro and White workers, and in some cases, no doubt, have abetted the movement among white workers to antagonize Negro workers in certain plants.

Barring the Negro

Some trade union leaders have done just as bad if not worse than the capitalists. Certain trade unions have barred Negro workers because of their avowed opposition to the bugbear of social equality.

Last winter the writer sent letters of inquiry to a large number of trade unions regarding their attitude to Negro workers who nominally fall within their jurisdiction. My letter to the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks brought the following reply.

"Our constitution provides that all white persons, male or female . . . shall be eligible to membership."

In reply to my question as to the reason for the organization's opposition to Negroes as members Mr. Mufson wrote: "You can answer . . . yourself. It's social."

Charles S. Johnson, director of the department of research and investigation made an extensive investigation of the relation of various trade unions to Negro workers. Mr. Johnson made his report at the annual conference of the National Urban League last February. According to Mr. Johnson, "While but eight local unions still expressly bar the Negro from membership—there are less than 115 to which he is yet admitted without any lines being drawn." Many unions that do not have constitutional provisions against Negroes as members have other means of barring them.

Some trade union leaders explain that the majority of Negro workers can not join trade unions because they are not working in the organized trades. Others along with the rank and file oppose them in certain plants because they are not organized. The American Federation of Labor puts the issue up to the various crafts and internationals.

Meantime, Negro workers are receiving all sorts of advice and admonition from White and Negro leaders and the capitalists. The latter say that they have no objection to hiring Negro workers. They lay claim to an impersonal interest in the matter; but maintain that White workers are making the objections. On the other hand, some trade union leaders say that Negroes are not organizable—because they do not adhere to the principles of trade unionism and because many are not employed in the organizing trades. And finally there are some Negro leaders who warn Negroes against making common cause with the White trade unionists. Some Negroes, who advise the race against joining the trade union Movement, are men of prominence and influence. Prof. Kelly Miller of Howard University wrote an article for the AMERICAN MERCURY for October, 1925, in which he said: "Logic aligns the Negro with labor, but good sense arrays him with capital." A goodly number of Negro editors do not believe that Negro workers should support White labor as against the capitalists. Certain Negro organizations have advised Negro workers against connecting themselves with trade unions or any radical organization or Movement. Typical of these is the Improved Protective Order of Elks of the World. This Negro fraternity passed the following resolution at its convention in Richmond, Virginia in August 1925:

Whereas, it is clear to those of us who have studied the bad results of other like movements where those of our race-group lose positions through union agitators and strike leaders, that unionism is calculated to do our people all sorts of harm and injure them with the employing class in America; therefore be it

Resolved, that we recommend that the methods used by the great industrial organizations of the country in relation to employee representation plans be used as a pattern to form organizations of workers within our group, wherein the interests of both employer and employee will be presented, and be it further

Resolved, that it be the sense of the Improved Benevolent Protective Order of Elks of the World in Annual Convention assembled to discourage Bolshevism, Sovietism, Communism and the like within the race; and be it still further

Resolved, that it be the continued policy of our people everywhere to live up with best class of American citizenship, which in the last analysis all over our great country constitute the large employers of labor. And we emphasize the value to our race group of standing squarely back of capital in this country, to the end that we may continue the economic development set in motion during the last five years. And finally, be it

Resolved that it be the policy of the leaders in the Improved Benevolent Protective Order of Elks of the World, in their efforts to husband, strengthen and further the industrial destinies of our people, that we discourage and discredit all forms of unionism and economic radicalism as presented to us by white labor agitators, and their tools, and that we pursue only those policies which will hasten the day of brotherly love amongst men of every race and color and creed and nationality to the point where we can all of us sincerely sing, "My Country, 'Tis of Thee."

Another warning to Negro workers was sent out some months ago by the Allied Economic Alliance. This warning reads:

"The Voice of Danger!"

Steel, iron, coal and other cardinal necessities for modern life must be produced and these great industries have been opened up to you in spite of the labor unions that seek to bar you and shut the door of opportunity in your face. Unions have barred you from most of the building trades and if the great industries had not opened up you would have been forced to hang your head and turn your face to the land of quiet and oppression.

You have been able to thrive in the great industrial

and railroad centers of the North and unskilled and untrained men have been able to look up to a bright horizon of life. You have caught the spirit of progress and you are buying your own homes, developing your own business and educating your children. The wealth of America gave you the chance.

Should you now listen to the voice that demoralized Russia and brought starvation to millions of men, you will defeat your own purposes. Sit tight in the saddle and you will eventually work out your own destiny. The world is watching and should you prove ungrateful to those faithful few who broke the shackles of peonage and serfdom; you will be unwise.

Ten Thousand of you are now earning livelihoods from the great arteries of traffic and travel—the railroads. Ten thousand of you are getting closer and closer to the heart of humanity because of your faithful service and intimate contact. The railroads and the common carriers have given you a new perspective on life. Do not jeopardize your position, nor your strategic opportunity. The future is rosy for you if you are level-headed.

The voice of the labor union is the voice of danger, betrayal and destruction. Do not heed it. Much is in store for you, either prosperity and happiness or trouble and disaster.

Such statements as the foregoing are partially true—true enough to keep Negro workers in a state of indecision and quandary. Thus Negroes blunder along with no clear-cut policy in any direction, hoping all the while that labor will change its policy of opposition and indifference.

Many of the leaders and members of trade unions do not understand the psychology of Negro workers with respect to the Labor Movement. In principle and theory Negro workers to a considerable extent favor trade unionism. The philosophy of the Labor Movement has a tremendous appeal for them; but they have learned by bitter experience that the theory of trade unions is one thing and their practice is another. There are cases where Negro trade union members were loyal and faithful to the organization, going out on strikes and supporting the campaigns for higher wages and better working conditions only to lose their jobs when the settlement was made with the employers.

OPPORTUNITY for February last published the following item relative to the action of a certain union towards its Negro members:

"During the strike of April, 1924, the union went around and scouted all of the colored—by ruse to join the union, they collected $3.00 for an application to join and after the strike were kicked out."

This is the situation which White labor must understand and face. It is not a quesion of Negro workers preferring a revival church meeting, as Hilmar Raushenbush intimated last year in a series of lectures on the problems of the coal industry at Brookwood Labor College; but it is largely one of whether Negroes can depend on the professed friendship and interest of White workers in the face of their narrow, selfish and discriminatory practices.

200,000 in Unions

That Negro workers are amenable to the philosophy of trade unionism is attested by the fact that more than 200,000 Negroes belong to trade unions. The majority of them are in the trades in which Negroes have a monopoly or are engaged in large numbers such as railway workers, longshoremen, hod carriers and building laborers.

The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters organized August 25, 1925, has had a marvelous success. Something like 7,000 of the 10,000 Negroes employed on railroads as porters have joined the Brotherhood. The writer has attended several of their public meetings in New York and can say from experience that speakers seldom meet such enthusiastic and responsive audiences as were present at these meetings of the porters.

The Brotherhood of Dining Car Employees has members on twelve railroads and include under its jurisdiction 4,000 men—3,000 of whom are members of the Brotherhood. In Norfolk, Virginia and vicinity above 1,900 Negro longshoremen belong to the International Longshoremen's Association. There are approximately 25,000 Negroes in the International Hod Carriers' Building and Common Laborers' Union of America.

Because of the attitude of the conservative element in the American Federation of Labor, Negro workers seem to be skeptical of the Movement. Taking advantage of this situation the more radical groups are the most vigilant and energetic.

With such an outlook before them, what should Negro workers do? Should they remain loyal to Capital or join Labor despite the past and present attitude of White labor? Should Negro workers continue their policy of conservatism or accept the proferred offers of the radicals? What Negroes are likely to do is of more interest than what the reclused learned sage thinks they should do.

NEGRO UNIONIZATION SUCCESSES

MUCH has already been accomp'ished in the field of Negro unionization. The achievement up to date in that field—particularly in the last year—is inspiring. Its complete story will be told in a near-forthcoming issue. Out of it we can learn to Go On and do more of it. The coming harvest for the unions among white and black workers, alike, will be a mighty one—if we continue, with further energy, to pound at our non-union citadels!

Are Women "Just Women"?

Important Role of Union Auxiliaries

By FANNIA M. COHN

THE worker's wife is invited to a meeting. It promises to be interesting—and more. She has high hopes of finding at it solutions to many of the problems that burden her mind, answers to her vexing questions. She awaits it eagerly, discussing it with her fellow housewives. And in the late afternoons, when she sits alone, her housework done, her children out of doors, her husband not yet home from work, she thinks about it, trying earnestly to organize her thoughts, to prepare herself to join in the discussions at the meeting.

It assumes great significance for her. She will be one of its principal figures. The meeting will be devoted to discussion of matters important to her. She begins to feel that it will be almost as important as the meetings her husband attends. She dares to imagine that after she has participated in a few such discussions and helped to build an organization, the problems confronting her husband will not any longer be a mystery to her. She will be qualified then, she hopes, to talk of them with him. There will be a common understanding of social and economic questions which she hopes will lead ultimately to the development of a new friendship between them.

So she dreams. But one evening after supper while her husband is comfortably smoking his pipe, she turns the talk to the meeting. All her enthusiastic hopes for it come pouring out. Her husband's eyes crinkle, he draws his pipe slowly from his mouth and turns a good natured but evidently amused gaze at her. She is shocked, disappointed, chagrined—her enthusiasm chilled. For a moment there is silence.

Then her husband speaks gaily—"Oh, a meeting—a woman's meeting. Men excluded!"

A knock at the door interrupts him. In response to his invitation, a young man enters, a fellow trade unionist. His appearance urges the husband on. "Oh, John, come in, sit down. We have important news for you. Do you know the revolution our wives are making?"

John, appreciating the jest—"No. What kind? What's going to happen?"

Husband, "Why, don't you know our wives are being called to a meeting to discuss all our problems? No husbands admitted. Secret decisions. Now we can rest assured that all our difficulties are over. Yes, the Ladies' Auxiliary will take care of everything for us." "Oh, says John, "you needn't worry about them. I've heard from some fellows in other towns that it's only a woman's organization. Their wives belong to it, but all they do is get up chicken parties, teas—strawberry festivals. And in convention week, the auxiliaries come in handy. While the men are busy, they keep the women happy with their auxiliary convention."

These are characteristic attitudes of some of our good trade union husbands who have not been emancipated from the old fashioned masculine attitude towards women. Kept busy every day working, supporting families, participating actively in the affairs of their trade union, they fail to appreciate how great a social force women can become in the labor movement.

They take women at women's own estimate of themselves. Working women and housewives lack confidence in their own abilities and possibilities, quite naturally since as a group they have had only limited experience in our labor movement in particular and in social activities in general. Almost the first generation of women is now at work in the labor movement and must have allowances made for it.

If our good husband, the trade unionist, realized all this, he would not scorn his wife's prospective meeting but encourage her to attend it. His careless remarks prevent her from gaining confidence in her own abilities to function as a constructive force in the labor movement and so make the dismissal of ladies' auxiliaries as confined merely to chicken suppers only more true.

In a certain city, for instance, the husbands object to the formation of ladies' auxiliaries because they feel that such organizations would become mere clubs for gossip. They are afraid that women who lack experience in the labor movement may waste their time and energy in quarreling with each other. Do these good husbands ask themselves why women's activities should be so fruitless in the labor movement while organizations of every other kind find women most valuable participants in their work?

Though the worker's home has hardly been affected by modern inventions in comparison with industry, yet the housewife has been freed from much of the drudgery of housework. No longer must she spend all her time in keeping her house going. She devotes less and less time to knitting and sewing. The increased use of steam heat and electricity is even now tremendously lightening her burden. She is gaining more leisure and the question of what to do with that leisure grows ever more important. It should not take much thought for us to realize that this released energy of the housewife can be effectively and constructively directed for social progress.

But even in our age of large scale production and centralized authority, of congregation into large communities where the group continually replaces the individual, we still recognize the fact that the group derives its intelligence from the individuals who compose it. Workers' wives can thus only be useful as a group when each of them is given an opportunity for development for a collective purpose in a labor environment. This is a task for the labor movement.

The wife and mother has another claim for preparation for the great task of meeting new conditions—her influence over her children. Today trade union parents are always being hurt to discover suddenly that their children are, to say the least, indifferent to the labor movement to which their parents have dedicated their lives, to which

THE PRICE OF COAL

In First 11 Months of 1926 332 Miners were Killed in Unnecessary Disasters

they feel they owe both their improved material conditions and their improved standing in our social life. They are deeply grieved often at finding the children even hostile to the labor movement.

Now the mother has a profound influence over the children. A recent study showed that the world's great men and women owed much of their development to the encouraging influence of their mothers. Psychologists, whatever their disagreements, do not dispute the influence of surroundings upon man. This home atmosphere is so largely influenced by the mother that her part in the formation of habits and attitudes in the children cannot be overestimated. She can inculcate interest, ideals and respect for a movement if she, herself, understands and respects it. But the children are reluctant to heed her or their father unless they feel that these elders know what they are talking about. Since the world will be what the children of today (the men of the future) are prepared to make it, the importance of keeping the mothers informed as to the labor movement is evident.

Workers function through trade unions. There they learn to act collectively for the good of the group. And that group steadily expands until at last it embraces the whole world. The worker begins to think of workers living everywhere and more and more responds to their appeal for assistance in their struggle for a better and happier world for all. There, too, he learns how to realize his ideals through action. There he learns to take responsibility in his activities for the many. Through all this, he gains confidence in his own abilities and those of his group. His character, his personality, his inherent talents are given an opportunity to develop there.

Is there any reason why his wife should not be offered the same opportunity? Can not she, too, respond to the same demands of life and the interests of her group? Can there not be aroused in her the same interest in the happiness of humanity upon which depends the happiness of herself and her family?

There already exist organizations through which women can function, the Ladies' Auxiliaries (I wish they were called women's auxiliaries). There is no reason why they should not be made the agency by which an educational program for workers' wives is made effective. Even their devotion to sociability which causes the men such amusement today could be turned to use. Sociability is much to be desired and women can turn their talent for arranging social affairs which promote good fellowship to double account, for at these occasions when they bring men and women together for enjoyment and gayety, they can introduce some educational work.

Indeed, there is already one organization introducing such a project—the Ladies' Auxiliary to the International Association of Machinists. Its educational committee, in accordance with the instructions of their last convention, has prepared an elaborate scheme of educational activities. We are sure that the working out of their plan will be watched with interest and will encourage other organizations to follow their example.

The Auxiliaries should be developed. Women should be encouraged to take advantage of them where they already exist. Men should be made aware of their possibilities. Then we feel sure that instead of carelessly dismissing them, as "only women's organizations", men will encourage their wives to join them, to band together with their sisters whose economic and social interests are identical with their own. And through the Auxiliaries, the great social force that is in women can be made more valuable to the labor movement.

MUCH ADO ABOUT MORALS

Father George and Little Dumb-Dumb Cross the Delaware

By BILL BROWN, Boomer

FATHERING one's country is a darn sight worse than mothering anything or anybody. You can take that from me. If poor old George Washington was to come back, he'd start right in and found a Birth Control Society—for the Prevention of Conception of New Nations.

It's the blamest luck of all, if you get to be the Father of a Moral Country, like our own. Your children stamp the Father after their own image and likeness. They make you so confounded Moral that you wouldn't know yourself if you seen yourself in the mirror or the Hall of Fame. They just naturally take all the immorality outta you, till you haven't got any life left.

Look what they've gone and done to poor old George. Philip Guedala gives it all away in that book of his, "FATHERS OF THE REVOLUTION". (There's a lotta step-fathers in that book, by the way, parading as the real guys.) "The father of his country has been deprived of his identity by his children." Think of that! His happy heirs have repaid him "with a withered nosegay of schoolgirl virtues." They don't even let him cuss or drink or tell a little lie. (George DID like those things!) They just took him and drained all the blood outta him, and made him up into a stuffed Mummy of Morality. And there he sits, you understand, in pictures and statues and everything, without blinking an eyelash—reminding us, one and all, what a Moral people we are.

Life in this here country, anyway, has become just one Moral thing after another. You kinda remember—if you've got a good memory—about those big headlines in the newspapers—gee, it seems a whale of a time ago: All about

MORAL TURPITUDE

Well, we pretty near came to forgetting all about that. Except, we knowed it was something or other that got a Countess on the front pages of the newspapers, all over the world. And we all sorta wished we knew just what to do, to get to be MORAL TURPITUDINOUS so we could get all that free advertising, you understand. But we never did find out.

So, we all settled down to getting poisoned by the Government and other little thrills of that kind—playful-like—when here comes Little Dumb-Dumb and crosses the Delaware. Just like Washington did 150 years ago, you understand! And of course, he makes a speech. And of course, he's gotta go and spring a Moral saying on us, all of a sudden. That saying means NOTHING so much that we all break our heads to find out if there's not Something in it. And so we get:

MORAL DISARMAMENT

That's what the whole world's got to do, by hickory, says Little Cal. Especially Nicaragua. We're going to make those guys down there so blamed Moral, that they'll become as mummified as poor old George. Those Moral Marines—what did such nice things to the Haiti people for the National City Bank, just killing a few thousand and sticking up a few thousand and playing around with them in that Moral manner, you understand—they're going to put the Fear of Wall Street into them there inferior peoples in Nicaragua, you can bet.

We gotta Divine call to Moralize the whole darn world. Of course, we "Say It with Battleships." (We're disarming fast by building more and more, and ordering more poison gas.) But—that's the Moral part!

Yes—in the clear winter air, from the banks of the Delaware, comes Calvin's clarion call, in that old familiar nasal twang: "Love one another, and get ready to shoot!" Can't you just see the little feller, though, dressed up like Cupid the God of Love—which isn't much dressed at all—flitting about, "morally disarming" the world?

Well, my think is—and it may not be much—that what we need is a little IMMORAL DISARMAMENT. If the fellow-workers around this here globe will just take it in their beans NOT to fight, that might not be so strictly Moral, but it would be Disarmament. It would be a lotta more fun to see Rockefeller and Morgan and Doheny going down there to Mexico and fighting with Calles and Morones and Obregon single-handed, than for us to be placing ourselves in fronta cannons for the sake of their Holy Oils.

After all, Moral Turpitude and Moral Disarmament are too much alike. They're too blamed Moral!

Drawn by J. F. Anderson for Labor Age

THE OLD LADY'S FRIGHT

"The Bolshevies will get you
If you don't watch out!"
—Senator Norris' poem on Kellogg

Genesis at West Lynn

Continued Epic of a Company Union

By LOUIS FRANCIS BUDENZ

II. RISE OF THE REAL UNIONS

IT was the summer of 1918. July, to be exact. We were all engaged in a reputed "War for Democracy." With blood-lust in our eyes, we were rushing hither and thither, bayoneting and bludgeoning the Hun. Not merely in No Man's Land, but over here in He-Man's Land were we absorbed in wiping from the face of the earth those "whelps of Satan." At Collinsville, Ill., we strung up the entire Teutonic brood in human effigy, as we crushed out the palpitating life of Richard Prager. "Democracy" was on everyone's lips, but it was absent from quite a few American hearts.

Steady, good friends, steady! There were cheery signs in the midst of this enveloping darkness. "Democracy" was not absent from the hearts of millions of our workers. In a crude way it was present at West Lynn. Blinded by their long years in the depths of Open Shoppery, the men and women there came, blinking, toward the light. July—great month of divinely-mad mass movements—was the Day of Genesis for the "lower classes" in Lynn's General Electricdom.

The Manager of the Lynn Works at that time was W. C. Fish. The General Electric Company itself will probably admit today, with some apology, that Mr. Fish measured up pretty well to the correct definition of an Industrial Czar. When the first flutterings of unrest were visible in the Works, he resorted to the time-honored method of attempting to cow the workers through the discharge of the more active spirits. There was Leslie Taylor, living then at 124 Vine Street, in the city of Lynn. We quote what happened to him, and how it happened, from the official record of the "Hearing Before the (Massachusetts) State Board of Arbitration and Conciliation In Regard to the Strike at the General Electric Company." Under examination by William A. Nealy, Secretary of the Lynn Central Labor Union and District Representative of the American Federation of Labor, Taylor testified to his discharge as follows:

..."Q. When were you discharged?

"A. Monday, the 5th of July. Monday morning about 15 minutes past seven.

"Q. How long did you work for the Company?

"A. I think going on eight years.

"Q. What was the reason given for your discharge?

"A. Mr. Henderson came in that morning and told me, 'Taylor, you are not needed any longer. I was coming over Sunday to discharge you, but I didn't want to.' I asked Mr. Henderson what I did. He says, 'Taylor, you know just as well as I do.' I said, 'No, Mr. Henderson, I don't know except you told me.' He says, 'Yes, Taylor, you know I had orders from the office to discharge you.' I said I knew I joined the union. He told me if I had waited I would make more money in the following week than I ever made in the General since I been there."

"Mr. Henderson" was the foreman in Building 59. Taylor was relieved of his job in the midst of an overload of work at the plant—war-time work, that hurried, rushing, feverish thirst for more production that marked those days. During the week prior to his discharge, he, able workman, had been at his tools for seven days, for a total of 82 hours. His whole story is summed up in those few words in his economical phraseology: "I always did my work well, and I had it from the Deferred Classification (Department) that on account of my good work I was essential for the General Electric, and for joining the union they discharged me."

"Firing" and an Upset

Across the pages of the testimony there pass the shadows of man after man, "let out" in like manner and for like cause. Here is John J. Conley, of Beverly, Mass., discharged as early as July 10th, at 10.30 A. M. He was dismissed much more gently than Taylor, given a discharge slip, which Taylor did not get; even quizzed by the employment department about "taking another position." By the 15th, as you will understand further on, the company was in something of a panic. Its action was hasty, precipitous, harsh.

There is easy accounting for that. By the 15th it knew that it had a man-sized job on its hands, in stemming the tide of unionism. Following Conley's discharge, this man and that had been picked off—all, oddly enough, secret members of "the union" or actively sympathetic with union agitation. On Friday, the 12th, something happened which upset Mr. Fish's program considerably. It is narrated in the testimony by Charles D. Keaveney, International Organizer for the Brotherhood of Electrical Workers—who handled the strike admirably, by the way, from his previous experiences at Schenectady. He says:

"On Friday, July 12th, I was in the city of Boston and came back from Boston about five o'clock, and coming into the (union) hall I found about 49 to 50 men and women assembled in the hall. I asked them what the trouble was that they were assembled there, and they said one of their members, Mr. Glassett, has been discharged for what they believed to be union sympathies, and they came out of the plant in protest to the discharge."

That was the beginning. Thereafter, events followed one another in dazzling succession. On the next (Saturday) night the union organizers called a mass meeting for the workers of the plant. About 1500 responded, crowding the hall, filled with the first burst of union enthusiasm. In their midst, there arose seven of the 17 persons discharged, to testify to what had occurred to them because of their adherence to the cause of unionism. Outside the hall, the foremen and other agents of Mr. Fish lurked, up and down the street, watching and not-

ing those who dared to defy the G. E. in this open manner. More discharges followed—as we have noted in the case of Mr. Taylor—on the following Monday morning.

Walk-Out!

But that sort of sniping was drawing to its close. By mass action, the workers were about to clear the Works, in toto—no longer leaving their fate in the hands of Mr. Fish. On Monday afternoon the miracle occured. It was then, as if by magic, that the big megaphones appeared at the gates of the Works, announcing a general walk-out. To the strains of union music, the thousands dropped their tools. Within an hour every building was as silent as the Deserted Village. You can read all about it, in detail, in the Lynn papers of those dates—on file in the local public library and in the newspaper offices themselves. It was the same sort of exhilirating mass action that Steve Butler (of the Musicians' Union) and I had been watching earlier in the year out in St. Louis —when 4,000 street carmen sent their cars to the barns, at our signal, at 3 o'clock one Saturday afternoon in February, and by Wednesday found themselves a full-fledged, organized union. That union flourishes, even to this very hour.

Thus was the patient work of the union organizers at Lynn finally rewarded. One year and a half before this eventful day, they had first appeared at the Works gates. The fruit was now ripe for the picking. Even so, shall we again see the organization message answered there in the not far distant future—and at Bayonne, too, and in the Bethlehem, and in all sorts of other odd places.

We can best pause here to view the central scene of such commotion—up to then the unchallenged domain of old Tyrannicus Fish and now, for the time, seething toward Democracy. The River Works—much larger than the Federal Street establishment—is described for us by the G. E. itself in its "MANUAL FOR EMPLOYES." The copy I have is heavily finger-printed by the man who gave it to me, evidence of hard study on his part. (Incidentally, he says of the company union plan, now in vogue: "Without covert threats, much as the same as Mr. Fish indulged in openly, this plan would not last one minute here.") Says the G. E. of its Works:

"The manufacture of electrical and mechanical apparatus at the River Works of the General Electric Co., located in West Lynn, Mass., represents one of New England's largest and most progressive industries. The River Works is the second in size of the Company's plants, consisting of 40 large buildings, which with a number of smaller buildings provides a floor area of over 54 acres, normally employing more than 10,000 men and women.

"In the erection of the plant, nothing was left undone to make the factories conform to the last word in modern building practice. By constantly adding new machinery, a high standard of equipment is always maintained.

"The work at the River Works is of a great variety, and consequently, we find many trades represented on the Company's payroll. There are steel, iron and brass foundries; carpenter, patternmaking, steam fitting and blacksmith shops; many buildings devoted to the manufacture, assembly and testing of electrical apparatus; machine shops working on all manner of equipment from the large power station turbine generators to the delicate, intricate electrical instrument. In a plant of such complex activities, a man cannot fail to find some kind of work that appeals to him. There is every opportunity for the employee to develop along his natural bent."

As to the peculiar ways and means of such "development", we shall have something to say a bit later, in the chapter to follow. We have here a fairly good picture of the main plant, in which so much had taken place during that hot July.

Tug-of-War

Now, with the men out of the Works, there followed more or less of a tug-of-war. Herbert Skeffington, of the Federal Government, sought to have the company and the unions submit the various questions at issue, to the National War Labor Board. This, the union organizers readily agreed to do. But naturally, they insisted that all discharged men be taken back, pending the Board's action. Mr. Fish pursued a more devious course. He hemmed and hawed, and snorted at the idea of submitting anything to anybody. He advertised in the papers, demanding that the men and women return to work—in the sacred name of the G. E. and the Presidential proclamation, which he himself heeded not. He stated quite emphatically before the State Board—which also stepped into the picture—that "a union man can work for me, but I am not recognizing a union."

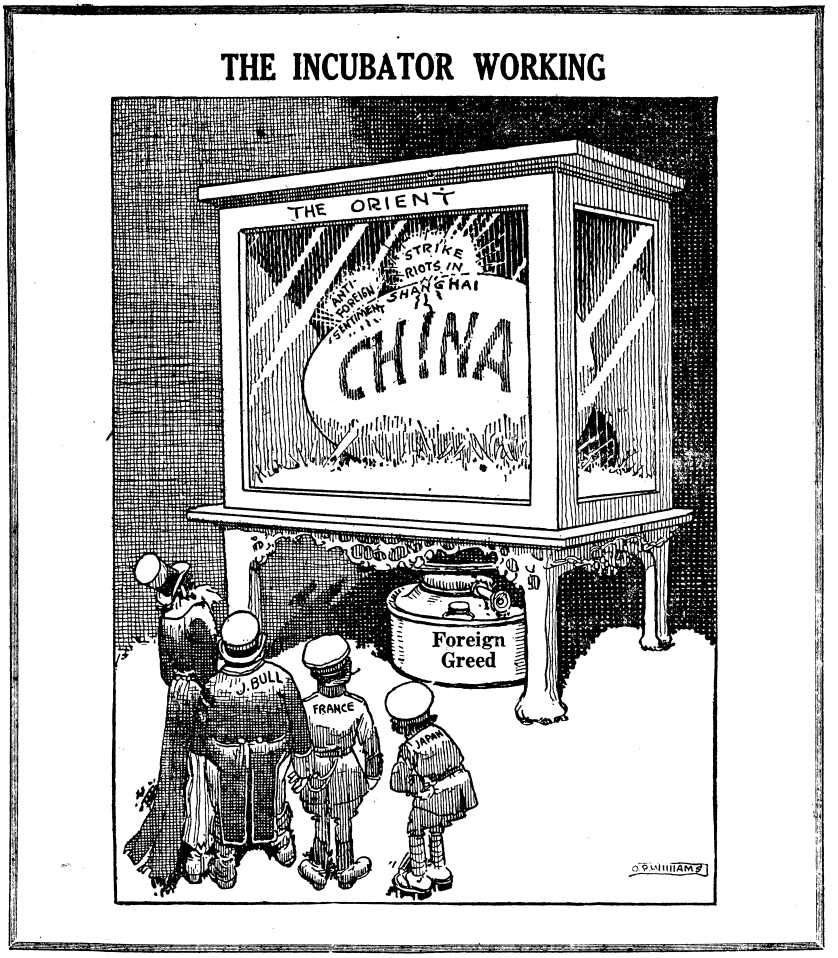
Mr. Skeffington read to him the first principle of the War Labor Board, that "The right of workers to join trade unions and to bargain collectively if a union of 3,000 representatives is recognized and formed . . . shall not be denied, abridged, or interfered with by the employers in any manner whatsoever." To that he gave the same answer: That union people could work for him, but he would recognize no union. He also insisted, finally, in putting any arbitration matters that he might decide were arbitrable, up to the State Board rather than to the National body.

In the end, Mr. Fish had to capitulate. His advertisements got no response. Ruefully, he faced his first labor trouble. The National War Labor Board came in; the unions were recognized. "Democracy" had been won! There was, of course, a string to the union recognition—a string which the G. E. was about to pull at steadily and strong. The War Board set up a form of plant organization or of "employee representation", side by side the real unions. It was to do more damage to them, in the two years to come, than old Tyrannicaus Fish could possibly do, in the face of upheaval.

Today—In View of the Past

We have given a bird's-eye view of the conditions prior to organization, and right up to organization, because of the part they played in subsequent developments and in the situation today. It is clear that workers, living for so long under such autocracy as that which characterized the Fish regime, would require several years of experience to familiarize themlselves fully with the workings of unionism. When impeded by a dual form of organization, under company control—as the plant "union" was bound to be—the disintegration to follow could be more or less readily foretold. The plant organization could

THE CHINESE "PROBLEM"



As Seen By the "Illinois Miner"

be played against the newly-born unions, and could be used as a lever to bribe union men and to weaken the mass morale. Such speedily proved to be the case.

At the present moment, however, it is not an altogether unhappy thing that a "company union" does exist. The alert workers are completely aware of its fraud and fakery. It has not "sold" itself by any means to those men who ordinarily are the spirit of any union organization movement within the works. Something of the same situation, it seems, exists here, as in the city of Chicago. The American Plan Open Shop Conference has been moved to warn employers there: "Do not form any club of employes. It proves to be an invitation to the union to come in and take them over. The Engineers' Club has gone lock, stock and barrel into the Hoisting Engineers Local." The company union can shortly be used to present demands that the G. E. will never grant—demands that the company union exists to prevent being granted. Secret agitation within its organization, coupled with educational campaigns at the gates, will write new events on the walls of Electricdom in Massachusetts.

(It is with the financial investment chains which the company has forged for its workers that the unions will have to be most concerned. Fortunately this problem also can be worked out, without injury to the workers, and to their eventual betterment.)

At the present moment, it is particularly fortunate that Brother Keaveney of the Electrical Workers is still within call. It was my privilege to spend an entire Saturday afternoon with him in Salem, going over the past and present situations. His resourceful conduct of the big strike is one of the best pieces of work done during the war. The fact that he is not of the "agitator" type, that he can readily look objectively at mistakes, that he has had a long experience in the General Electric itself —can convince anyone who cares to look into the matter, that the primary fault of the union decline did not rest with the unions. That result was brought about through the unscrupulous policy of the company. In industrial warfare it may be perfectly all right to follow such tactics, as the G. E. will undoubtedly contend. But there seems to be small ground for going about in the pure, white robes of innocence—as that company seeks to do, via its pen-pushers and publicity experts—when one's record of anti-worker activity is as pronounced as its own.

Which leads quite naturally to our next subject: The Company Union in Full Bloom.

Under the Telescope

By M. H. HEDGES

I. "HISTORY BE DAMNED"

A TELESCOPE is an instrument with which to bring far things near. It is indispensable in the viewing of the vast starry spaces that open interminably in the heavens; or more practically, in detecting moving objects at sea. It is an uncommon instrument. None of us consider it an indispensable part of his working equipment, and no worker keeps a telescope in his tool kit. In this fact we find something symbolical. Not only the worker, but all Americans, are prone to take short views. Not so long ago, Henry Ford was reported as saying, in effect, "History be damned."

There is something in the sweating rush of American life that makes the taking of long views a hardship. We leave that to the professor in his study, or to professional historians. This short-sighted attitude we decry—especially for workers, and we frankly lay our cards on the table and tell you that this is a plea for more frequent use of imaginary telescopes.

Why should anyone hate history? Or what is worse, be indifferent to it. It is a story—first of all—a tale in the grand style, more exciting than any you ever spun by an artful Dumas or Sabatini. And it is growing more interesting now that modern historians have learned the trick of writing about it in the realistic style, as a record of the nights and days of human, all too human men and women. Not for nothing have old lady professors and snobbish members of the Daughters of the American Revolution been exercised by recent biographies of George Washington and Benjamin Franklin, which paint these men as men and not as stuffed shirts tricked out to frighten school boys away from cigarettes.

And history is something more than story. It is a moving, awful and terrifying lesson. We say this remembering that there is something in Barnard Shaw's remark that the great thing about teaching history is that no one learns anything from history. But Shaw is a waggish philosopher, and no doubt would privately admit that he, Bernard Shaw, had learned something from history, if only the age-old sorrows of the common people. What this or that historian has learned from history usually colors all of his historical writing. For it must not be supposed that a history—a written record—is an impartial, uncolored chronicle of events. It, like a novel, may carry the author's private prejudices, and opinions, his pet philosophies.

Let us set down some of the points of view with which historians have confronted the vast panorama of man's discoverable past.

History is a record of wars (military motive).

History is a record of kings and rulers (civic motive).

History is a chronicle of the lives of great men (heroic motive).

History is a story of each nation's search for fertile land (geographic motive).

History is the record of epoch-making inventions and discoveries (scientific motives).

History is a story of the rise and decay of cultures and civilizations (moralistic motive).

History is a chronicle of man's struggle for freedom (religious and liberalistic motive).

History is the record of man's literary and artistic achievements (aesthetic motive).

History is the study of the place of women, the rise of the family (sex motive).

History is the record of a class's rise to power within gle for raw materials, their manufacture, and the quest for markets (economic motive).

History is th record of a class's rise to power within the state (class motive).

History is a story of the human family, a study based on the likenesses between man (humanistic motive or international).

Of this list—and histories have been written from everyone of these points of view—a worker is at once interested in several; in particular in (1) man's struggle for freedom; (2) man's struggle for subsistence; (3) labor's struggle for power; and (4) the struggle of the human family for integration. And it is interesting to note that the last three approaches to history are modern, immediate, and practical. Only since the industrial revolution a hundred years ago have historians been studying the past with an eye on liberalistic movements, economic determinism, labor's will to power, and internationalism.

II. BABBITT BOOKS

In Baltimore, a young man, a worker-student, is setting a good example to all of us. He is re-reading and recasting history, and incidentally he is making history, labor history. He is not content with history writen by men who think the rise of big business in America is the only event of signal importance during the last century. (A professor of history at Princeton has written a five volume history of the United States without mention of American labor). He is not content with the generalizations that lie ready-made about him, hewn out by patient hired men of the established order. He is scanning the past with fresh insight and new courage, and he is arriving at new generalizations of interest to other worker-students.

This young man—he should be called a social critic and historian—sits in his library—the finest private library of modern books this writer has seen—defying the spirit of modern America. He declares that knowledge is of more worth than possessions; and he apparently prizes a modest seat in the cosmic theatre more dearly than a ringside chair at the world's greatest prize-fight. About the time Tunny was plastering Dempsey with fancy

blows, V. F. Calverton, this social critic and historian, was sitting up nights reading the proofs of his latest book "Sex Expression in Literature". His earlier work "The Newer Spirit" was published in 1925. This is not the time or place to give a minute review of the books. What we are interested in just now is his scholarship, and his point of view.

If Calverton has a list of college degrees attached to his name, we do not know it. Yet he is a very learned young man. His learning is the kind that finds the present in the past, and the past in the present. He is a kind of continuity writer for the great scenario of the ages. He makes the past have meaning for worker-students, and he makes the present a logical survival of the past.

Calverton, as a social historian discovers four conditioning factors in the life of our age: first, economics, civilization's material base; second, labor's rise to power; third, the drawing together of the separated masses of the world; the fourth, sex as revealed by art and literature. These strands of human volition, interpenetrating all society, he disentangles, and reveals in their just relations to each other.

Take such an innocent looking phenomenon as a popular novel. What has the struggle of capital and labor to do with that? Judged by the avidity with which workers lap up the popular novels which express the code of business men, one would think nothing. Yet Calverton contends that our literature, with a few salient exceptions, is the emanation of the business class. And the flood of books pouring from the presses will continue to body forth the code, the habits, the aspirations of one George Babbitt until there is a fundamental change in the social structure.

> Although revolutions in aesthetics (i. e. art and literature) are due to revolutions in ideas, every revolution in ideas is a consequence of a revolution in the social structure that the prevailing national conditions have produced.

Calverton believes this fundamental social change is imminent as evidenced by labor's rise to power.

Like literary fashions, moral codes, which literature reveals, are popularly assumed to be unchanging throughout the ages. This assumption Calverton denies. He contends that moral codes are merely the social habits of the ruling or dominant class. His second book "Sex Expressions in Literature" is an extended illustration of this thesis. This scholarly and interesting work begins with a consideration of literature in Shakespeare's day. Indubitably he discloses the great dramatist's dependence upon royalty for a living, and his readiness to ridicule the peasant to make sport for kings. With the snuffing out of the glory of Elizabethan literature, came the rise of the business class, and a corresponding change in manners and morals. The Puritan, Calverton contends, lived a sexually suppressed life as a compensatory reflex to his loose business habits. He made purity a mask for his cruel habits of commercial exploitation. As Puritan-business-man succeeded Elizabethan noble, so a new type treads upon the heels of a disappearing caste. Calverton sees the present as a mirror of the break-up of old morals, and the rise of an age of moral chaos under the dominance of big business type, with a still newer era on the horizon, when labor shall come to power—an era of decent candour.

III. A NEW CIVILIZATION

Writing in the December LABOR AGE, I said: "We can appeal to every man's respect for the past. Ancestor worship is still a driving force in human lives. What about the past of labor? Who are the labor leaders of yesterday? Where is there an adequate story of the struggles of past years? We need labor poets, novelists and historians." V. F. Calverton is an answer to this invocation to those intelligent gods that hitherto must direct the destinies of common men. He makes the past have meaning for workers. Calverton's historical writings carry lightly a heavy burden of philosophy and social interpretation. They pry open a whole new world for study and illumination. They make room for other scholars, critics and historians to appear and to dedicate themselves to the task of revaluating literature, art and human conduct.

We predict that other books of economic interpretation will appear. They will help to clarify the labor struggle, and in clarification they will add new strength to those who are battling daily for what may appear to be only bread and butter, but which in reality is a whole new civilization.

Encouraging signs of labor's growing power are daily materializing; not only in workers' education, but in labor research; not only in labor research, but in labor's new interest in labor history; not only labor history, but in literary and social criticism.

In December we pointed out that these secondary lines of defense are important to the labor struggle. We reaffirm this view. And we add, "Soldiers in the labor struggle, we shall know when labor has arrived at its goal only by its books, its schools, and its art."

FROM THE FIRING LINE

OUR January mail-bag continues to be full of words of encouragement, for the job we have set out to do. With the usual warning that we can not print any large percentage of them, we wish to call your attention to one or two evidences of the vital help that we are proving to be to those men who are actually DOING something and not merely talking about it.

ALFRED HOFFMAN, Organizer of the Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers, affiliated with the United Textile Workers, writes from Paducah, Ky., of the helpfulness that LABOR AGE has been in his work. Twenty-eight striking workers are reading the magazine monthly—particularly enjoying the articles on company unionism. We mean to be of more concrete help to the textile workers, even than we have been—as their wider organization is one of the immediate tasks ahead. It is encouraging to know that the task CAN be accomplished.

The Drama of American History

A New Series of "Brookwood Pages"

By ARTHUR W. CALHOUN

III. Drawing It Tight

THERE is no use getting heated up about constitutions anyway, for no constitutional guarantees can ever be depended on to protect the weaker group. The dominant crowd can always make a constitution mean whatever suits its purpose. So it has always been with the United States constitution.

Take that clause in the constitution which says that the constitution together with laws made under it shall be the supreme law of the land. In one sense that is true enough: the U. S. constitution takes precedence over state constitution and laws; but in another and more important sense, the statement is a pure lie. The constitution is not and was never intended to be the supreme law of the land. The men that made the constitution had been brought up on John Locke, who described property as a right prior to the existence of the State, and argued that "the supreme power cannot take away from any man any part of his property without his own consent." People that thought that way could not conceive of a constitution that would supersede in any degree the system of vested property interests. They took it for granted without saying that the U. S. constitution was not supreme but that it was merely an instrument for giving effect to the higher law,—the sacred rights of the property system.

But it was not sufficient to take the gospel of property for granted and trust to the strong government set up by the men who made the constitution. Under guise of an item in a "Bill of Rights" demanded by public sentiment, the Fifth Amendment was made to guarantee that no person should "be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law" and that private property should not "be taken for private use without just compensation." These provisions sound, to be sure, like mere common honesty; but when you remember that the courts have stretched the word "person" to include corporation and have stretched the word "property" to include the right to operate at a profit, it is easy to see which way the wind is blowing. Add to that the provision that no state shall pass any laws impairing the obligation of contracts, and remember that the Supreme Court has construed the clause to mean that a legislature can not revoke a grant of state property made fraudulently by a bribed legislature or alter the terms of a corporation charter, and you will see that things are sewed up tight enough.

But we are getting ahead of our story. Granted the strong government that was set up under Washington and Hamilton, the constitution might as well have been a blank piece of paper. The federal authorities could write on it whatever they chose. The party of Big Business could not, however, count on a continuous hold on power. Thomas Jefferson and the little fellows were coming along, and they might, likely enough, put some queer kinks into the technicalities of the law. Not that there was really much danger of such a thing, but the business interests were panicky; so puffy old John Adams sat up all night on March 3, 1801 signing commissions of a new swarm of federal judges, commissioned to hold office for life and warranted to guard the Ark of the Covenant against the profane hands of the Reds; for the respectable citizens were as much alarmed at the accession of Jefferson as their successors would be if Scott Nearing were inaugurated!

The courts! That was it. Let the congressmen amuse themselves with law-making if they liked. What did it matter so long as a row of hoary buzzards behind a long desk could have the final word? And that's where John Marshall came in. He was appointed chief justice while the party of Big Business was in power, and he held over through the Jeffersonian democracy and the Jacksonian democracy making the world safe for property interests. Old John was a queer chap. He would just as lief as not issue as a decision of the supreme court an opinion of his own that had been voted down by the majority. And why shouldn't he? As Aaron Burr, vice-president with Jefferson, and a prime lawyer said, "Law is whatever is boldly asserted and plausibly maintained." In other words, it is whatever you can get away with. John Marshall carried out that principle.

When the Supreme Court was first launched, it didn't make much of a hit. John Jay, the first chief justice, resigned and took another job, and when invited to return to the bench refused on the score that the Supreme Court was no accunot and very likely ever would be. He did not have enough imagination to see what could be made of the hoary bench by a self-willed, unscrupulous man like John Marshall. But John saw, and he nailed down hard and fast the proposition that the Supreme Court may declare unconstitutional the acts of congress.

Now there was nothing in the constitution expressly conferring such a power. The big wigs had to infer it from their oath to support the constitution. On the other hand, the constitution gave congress almost complete jurisdiction over the Supreme Court, so that it could tie up the judges almost entirely by "such exceptions and such regulations as the Congress shall make." Congress was supine, however, and allowed the old boys to get the whip hand; so that now congress has about forgotten that the constitution makes it supreme over the court, and nearly everybody else has forgotten too.

If only there had been some more presidents like Andrew Jackson! He considered himself just as good a lawyer as Marshall and just as much entitled to pass judgment; so when a decision of the chief justice did not suit him, he simply said, "John Marshall has made his decision; now let him enforce it." That was according to Hoyle, for our government was built on the principle of

THE LOYAL LAWRENCE LEGION

Bravely Hiding Behind the Aged Leather Workers

GNARLED and gnawed rags of humanity, thrown on the scrap-heap and ash-cart of Life! Yea, we have many of them among our workers, even in this Coolidgean Year of Jubilee.

Such a one this editorial person met with on the streets of Peabody, in the State of Prosperity's Papa. Twenty years had he served the A. C. Lawrence Co., faithfully and well. He had so served, right through the big strike. At the end of the two decades of continued labor, having evaded the dreaded "leather lungs", he had received his reward: ONE-THIRD of his pay.

Now figure that up for yourself. You need only common-school arithmetic to do it. Suppose he had been getting $27 a week. (For we will not give away the exact figures to the "guardian angels" at the Lawrence Leather Works, for fear they spot the man and take the pension entirely from him.) One-third of that is $9 per week. He could not live on that. He had to go elsewhere, to add to his income.

Further than that, he has to submit to the company doctor and nurse, viewing him three times yearly. He must do what they tell him. Perhaps all for his welfare; but this man liked it not. And other pensioners, some four in number, feel much the same way about it.

Further still, he must remain subject to the call of his leathern overlords. If a strike should come, he would be expected to rally to the company, fitting in as a strike-breaker. Thus, the Loyal Lawrence Legion of personnel men and bosses hide behind the aged, in their war on the unions.

And all of this—the mere $9 per week, the social service supervision, the selling of his soul after he has left work,—is purchased at the expense of his manhood, initially. This golden pension only comes to him, if he has been "loyal" to the corporation, in every word and deed. They demand from him an even greater loyalty than does the Great Jehovah. In the Divine Economy, man gets another chance and another and another. But in the A. C. Lawrence Co., one strike is enough. All of those men who walked out in 1919 are debarred for eternity from the scrawny pension.

We note in the little brown booklet of the National Leather pension scheme—in force at the Lawrence—that the corporations under it very carefully protect themselves legally, so that they may draw back at any time. The men have nothing binding to go by. They can just hope—that's all—that maybe the string won't be pulled back.

Well, we can say to the Lawrence men: Raise Hell, forget your pensions and be men! And to the State of Massachusetts: Provide a decent existence for your worn-out workers, so that in their prime of life they may remain freemen and something approaching what Americans are supposed to be!

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checks and balances, and what was more fitting than that a president should sit on the end of the seesaw opposite the chief justice? But there have been no more like Andy. Even Teddy of the Big Teeth, with all his talk about recall of judges' decisions, never got around to the perfectly simple practice of ignoring them. That would be the easy way, for if the executive department would not lend itself to the enforcement of judicial decisions, the old mummies on the bench could whistle. We hardly need to expect to see them trudging about enforcing with a club their own decisions.

And why shouldn't a president have as much regard for his own intelligence and his own oath of office as a judge has? There is no reason why a president shouldn't go ahead and enforce the child labor laws in spite of all the Supreme Court has said. There is nothing in the constitution that binds the president's conscience to the decisions of a mouldy court.

Once congress did pluck up enough courage to beard the Supreme Court. That was after the Civil War and it was thought that the Court was likely to declare unconstitutional some of the pet measures of the party in power. Consequently congress passed a law threatening with fines and imprisonment the members of the Supreme Court if they interfered with the carrying out of the legislation in question. What happened? For once the court heard its master's voice from the right quarter. It refused jurisdiction of the cases at issue. Congress could have done exactly the same thing in the case of the Child Labor laws. If it had do you suppose Taft would be peering out today between the bars at Atlanta? Rather unlikely. Even if he does get an ample subsidy from the Carnegie Corporation, he doubltess prefers to draw a regular salary.

But there's the story. As if the worthy fathers had not gone far enough in saddling the country with an illegal document (otherwise known as the Constitution of the United States); as if they had not gone far enough in setting up a government designed to be proof against democracy; it remained for a shrewd and bold lawyer on the Supreme Bench to do away with the system of checks and balances, to override the constitutional supremacy of congress, to overawe congress and the president, to pull the wool over the eyes of the American people so that they no longer remember that the constitution in so many words makes congress supreme and gives it sweeping power to curb the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. Truly we are, politically, a nation of children.

It was necessary to interrupt in this way the flow of our story, because no one can understand American history until he understands the mechanism by which the alleged republic is converted into an irresponsible oligarchy of ancient men, so that the government is bound to be always at least a generation out of date. No wonder that Taft would rather be Supreme Judge than president!

HOW TO OBTAIN LOCAL PUBLICITY

4. Using the Facts

MERE charges and attacks, without the facts, will come to nothing. Indeed, they may prove to be worse than had nothing been said at all; for our wily opponents may seize upon them to use them as a boomerang upon us.

In our publicity efforts this is Item No. 1 on our program. Labor has so many facts on its side of the case, that it is regrettable that more use has not been made of them. We have too often resorted to general charges—against the Open Shoppers, Company Unionism, etc.—whereas we could and should have demolished them with concrete examples. That is exactly what LABOR AGE does, and it is another reason why the figures and concrete examples this magazine gets out should be made free use of by local publicity representatives.

Let us take the case of the railroads and their workers. At the present moment, movements are on foot for increased wage demands by the Brotherhoods. We have heard but little about the shopmen, who need the raises the most. But that all railroad workers stand in need of a decided lift in wages can be seen from the figures of railroad profits during 1926.

We could quote, in our publicity, the profits made by the carriers in the first five months of 1926, for example. These figures are taken from the WALL STREET JOURNAL and the railroads' own Bureau of Railway Economics, and were compiled in July, 1926. Here is the line-up on 20 roads, comparing 1925 with 1926:

Net Incomes 1st 5 Months	1925	1926
Pennsylvania	$29,726,954	$34,545,471
New York Central	23,405,154	25,519,243
Southern Pacific	10,741,680	14,192,042
Baltimore & Ohio	12,379,808	15,542,430
Santa Fe	12,261,833	15,146,206
Union Pacific	9,029,914	9,906,533
Southern	12,072,154	12,574,577
Burlington	7,167,436	9,725,241
St. Paul	2,951,593	4,490,644
Chi. & Northwestern	4,659,979	6,703,171
Louisville & Nashville	9,013,268	10,729,157
New Haven	8,459,855	8,836,347
Missouri Pacific	5,903,133	7,258,993
Chesapeake & Ohio	10,131,642	12,278,232
Norfolk & Western	9,626,652	14,243,013
Northern Pacific	4,059,456	5,760,936
Boston & Maine	3,474,174	5,002,749
Seaboard Air Line	4,098,552	4,660,040
Wabash	3,485,308	3,913,722
Pere Marquette	2,583,529	3,407,906

These 20 railroads show a combined gain of about $40,000,000 or 22 per cent over the profits of the first 5 months of 1925.

Put out in proper publicity, these figures would arouse pro-Labor sentiment.

EDITORIALS OF THE MONTH

MEXICAN matters are being thoroughly muddled by the Wall Street office boy, Kellogg. When an organ of the business interests terms Kellogg's tricks "the dark, backstairs methods now being employed", we can see that there must be much feeble-mindedness to them. We quote the editorial in part. Because of its source, it should be broadcasted far and wide in the present Mexican dispute.

MYSTERY AND MEXICO

(New York Journal of Commerce, January 5)

"The current belief, and probably the correct belief, is that the dissatisfaction of American interests with the way they are being dealt with by the Calles Government and, incidentally, by the constitution under which the present Mexican regime is operating, is at the heart of the whole matter. The American groups who have been active in Mexico, chiefly in the oil fields, may have a case. If so, however, the fact has not been fully demonstrated. No property rights have as yet been confiscated. A number of property holders having refused to meet the requirements laid down by Mexican law may presently find themselves deprived of their concessions. If they do, it will certainly not be easy to make their claims good in abstract justice. They may have been correct in feeling that the Government would have inevitably ended in confiscation, but if so they can hardly be said to have handled their cases very adroitly.

"But, however these things may be, there is hardly very much justification to be found for the devious means that appear to be in vogue now, as heretofore, in dealing with things Mexican."

For December, we quote a brief extract from the PITTSBURG COURIER, Negro paper, on the Southern textile situation. This paper can be quoted frequently in organization work among Negroes, as it is friendly to Labor.

THE NEW SOUTH AND NEW ENGLAND

(Pittsburgh Courier, December 4, 1926)

"The mill owners have a powerful weapon hanging over the heads of their workers in the South that is absent in New England, the Negro. They do not, to be sure, allow Negroes to work in their mills except as janitors, laborers, porters and the like, but every white worker knows that any militancy on his part for higher wages, better working conditions and the abolition of child labor, is likely to result in his displacement by Negroes. Whereas in New England the workers in the textile industry are in the lowest class and can thus organize for better conditions without fear, the Southern white worker finds his wage scale gauged on what the large class of blacks below him receive—and he is too obsessed with colorphobia to join hands with the black worker and demand for him, too, the rights due a worker."

Following the Fight

With Comment Thereon

By THE MANAGING EDITOR

OUR AIM:
To Educate the Unorganized—To Stimulate the Organized—To Unity, Militancy and Intelligent Action.

A FIRST NAIL

In the Coffin of Open Shoppery A. D. 1927

NEW and daring is the warfare that we must set afoot against Employerdom. We will all, editor and readers, agree to that. Victory, nevertheless, is at the end of it. We will risk our reputations as prophets on that prediction—and we have never erred in such forecasts up to date.

The vital item of the business is to know when and where to strike. After all, the task is not such a mighty one. A mere article in our December number on the "witchcraft" in the A. C. Lawrence works at Peabody, Mass. has created a great uproar within that company union, and has even led to something of a quarrel among the worthy bosses there.

If we pause a moment at the beginning of February, 1927, and glance about us, we will discover that an immediate nail can be driven, far and deep, into the coffin and carcass of Open Shoppery. It is urgently important, likewise, that we go about the business of hitting that nail on the head.

Such action lies in the field of industrial pensions. To appreciate what our effort should be and what good it holds out to the drive to organize the unorganized, we can look over and measure the weapons which our enemies are depending upon to vanquish us. Here is the way that things stand:

1. Company unionism has NOT been sold to the workers under it. Its largest danger for the Movement lies in the widespread publicity in its favor, and the impression which will be set afloat by such publicity that unionism has spent itself. "No hope lies for the worker in the union field," is the verdict, which Company Unionism seeks to have adopted. We have already shown the first step to the answer: in hammering this new device with the cold facts, in the widest fields of publicity that we can secure.

2. Industrial pensions—of which we speak at this moment—and stock ownership are much more challenging. The United States Steel Corporation, wise in its generation, understands full well that there is an inevitable struggle going on between the workers and their employers. It does not propose to waste its time with any conciliatory devices, such as Company Unionism. Rather will it make the workers prisoners—or hostages, if you will—through inducing or forcing them to buy stock in the corporation and to be tied up financially in other ways.

It can be seen, without much peering into the question, that this is the most dangerous enemy that American Unionism has to face. The unorganized workers, already in the shadow of fear—of the corporations' gunmen and spies—are further enchained by the danger of losing their "investment" in the company's property and in the company's pension promises.

At the present hour, an excellent opportunity is presented for meeting the industrial pension issue squarely, and settling it once and for all in a number of States. This year 1927 is the year of many State legislative sessions. After all, it is a ridiculously easy method that we have at hand, and one founded on sound social justice.

OLD AGE PENSIONS BY LEGISLATION will break the lure of the corporation-created industrial pensions. Our job is to put such legislation on the statute books of our States this year. The excellent report of the Pennsylvania Old Age Pension Commission—showing in detail the weaknesses and criminal false promises of most corporation pension schemes—should be in the hands of every alert trade unionist. Its facts should be widely published to the world.

We should broadcast further, the findings of the United States Department of Labor on the revolting conditions in the almshouses of this country, as part of this campaign. "The worst managed public business in the world" is the way that the poorhouses were stigmatized by that report. It moved even the NEW YORK TIMES to denounce the poor farm—where aged workers are herded together—as "our human dumping ground."

In your fight, call freely on the American Bureau for Industrial Freedom, connected with LABOR AGE. We will gladly cooperate in getting up publicity or in supplying facts on the rottenness of our almshouses and the urgent need for Old Age Pensions. Hit the Nail, Brothers, Now!

OTHER DOCTORS QUARTZ

Refined Torture of Corporation Pensions

REGRETFULLY, we report: The neo-Babbitt class that has arisen in the land—managers, college produced, full of speed and theory, personnel men and other sky-pilots of $lobbery—may be 99-44/100 per cent pure, but they are not 100 per cent perfect.

With a great Joshua-shout that would have shaken the walls of Jericho thrice-over, they have paraded their industrial pensions before the amazed citizenry of this free land, as an example of the "new spirit in Industry".

Slyly they have informed the Money Masters that these promises of security in old age will keep the unorganized worker unorganized and contented. To the "public" they have pictured the happy lot of the workingmen, now taken care of up to the Gates Ajar themselves!

In putting the screws on these blah-blah boys—as we must do this year, in advancing Old Age Assistance through Legislation—let us make full use of the FACTS that are at hand. It is with that in mind that we quote from the much-mentioned Report of the Pennsylvania Commission—a splendid and convincing document. Listen to this, from page 7 of the report:

Pension Plans Unsoundly Financed

"One of the most important disclosures of this study is the lack of proper financial provision to meet the pension payments. With rare exceptions, the concerns having pension plans have not set aside special funds to take care of the pensions as they fall due, but expect to meet these liabilities simply out of operating expenses. Almost none of the companies which established pension systems made scientific calculation in advance of the probable cost to themselves over a period of years of these pension systems. And in the case of the companies which are establishing new pension systems this habit of largely trusting to luck that future pension costs will be within their capacity to pay is still being adhered to.

"The fallacies of this system have been repeatedly pointed out by (insurance) actuaries and all those who have studied the problem. None of the American systems have yet reached, or have nearly approached the peak of costs, and it is simply on account of this fact, the experts declare, that most concerns have found it possible to continue operating their pension systems without finding the outlay involved a serious financial burden. . . Insurance companies and independent private authorities criticize the whole principle of allowing private firms which are not subject to public regulation in this respect to engage in what amounts to the business of writing annuities."

To make it snappy: The corporations brutally hold out to the men promises that they can never fulfill, or are likely not to fulfill. A number of them, as the report reveals, meet the problem by simply firing men on one trumped-up excuse or another, as these men near the pension limit. The chief object of the scheme: "Elderly persons must be pensioned as a means of developing employee morale and to eliminate drags on production is the new doctrine of many of the most successful captains of industry." (Page 6).

The serious outcome is this, so far as the befooled and befuddled workers are concerned:

"This Commission has come to the conclusion that as pension obligations are now carried, unless our present business prosperity continues without periods of reaction, it is likely in the long run that public and charitable agencies will be forced to assume the maintenance of thousands of workers whose employers had led them to expect that they would be granted pensions in their old age."

The working-life of the mass of men and women in industry is shortening to a decided degree. The "savings" of workers can never maintain them in old age. State Old Age Assistance is the only path along which there lies any hope for them.

In view of the above, our new industrial managers—with their high-faultin ideas—appear largely in the role of that demon-criminal, Doctor Quartz, who thrilled the Nick Carter days of our youth. They have, in the name of "benevolence", introduced a refined method of torturing workingmen. We will be responsible, and we alone, if it is allowed to continue.

"THE UNSEEN DOLLAR"

Little Skin Game of the Howling Dervishes

IT may be a far cry from the Singer Sewing Machine Co. of Elizabeth, N. J., and the General Motors Corporation of St. Louis, Cleveland and Detroit, to the Howling Dervishes of Aleppo. They have something in common, nevertheless: they all put on a blamed good show.

The dervish howls and gulps in reddening coals and lacerates himself with knives; persuading the Moslem faithful, and no doubt himself, that he has done a good day's work for Allah. Of course, the coal is not so hot as it appears to be, and the knives go much less deep than many suppose. He has performed his little feat just the same, and brought pleasure of a sort to himself and those about him.

The General Motors and the Singer hand out group insurance to the blare of the publicity band, and persuade some workers, and perhaps themselves, that they are rivals of the Holy Brigham rather than of the cynic Barnum. Of course,, the workers pay for the bulk of the insurance, and they get a lessened wage in fact, by reason of their acquiescence to the Employers' schemes. But these Employer-Dervishes have performed their little drama just the same, and there are good hard American dollars in it.

"The Unseen Dollar" is the title of this group insurance histrionic hit. So it has been dubbed by none other than James E. Kavanaugh, Vice-President of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. of New York. It is the dollar, rapsodies Mr. Kavanaugh in the JOURNAL OF COMMERCE of January 17th, "which the worker never gets his fingers on, which never leads him into temptation." You mutton-headed, lecherous workers—is the idea—we have used your money, better than you could yourselves. On that theory, the Dervish-Employers and their insurance allies ought to take it all, and pour it forth in capsuled food into the serf's employer-regulated maw.

Mr. Kavanaugh estimates that there is more than

$5,000,000,000 of group life insurance alone in force today, covering possibly between two and three million lives. Corporations added this past year include: General Motors Corporation (covering all its subsidiary companies); the Rock Island Railway; the Bankers' Trust Company; the Long-Bell Lumber Co.; the Western Maryland Railway, and the Continental Baking Corporation.

In this list we see old tried and true enemies of Labor. The whole doggoned bunch are voraciously anti-union. The Metropolitan assists this little game, by its Policyholders' Service Bureau—which advises them on how to run their business and how to maintain a force of whipped cur slaves. Behold the services that go with group insurance:

1. Safety engineering.
2. Production engineering.
3. HUMAN engineering.
4. Business Administration.
5. Publicity.
6. Research.

Everything you want, on that bargain counter in the "humanics of industry"—as Mr. Kavanaugh acclaims it. We prefer a little DYNAMICS in industry, in the form of workers who are American freemen and not a gang of slaves. Of that we shall speak later, harshly and loud.

THE MORAL AT PRESENT: Let us show up these Howling Dervishes of Employerdom from their champion Kavanaugh's own words: That the men pay for their own insurance; that the result is to make them "cooperative", or in other words, a servile lot; that their own money, thus taken from them before they ever see it, is used against them; that, if they strike, they lose the insurance paid for; and that, all of this is a rotten substitute for the wage increases which they deserve, out of their increased production. Who will be the first to tackle them in the public press?

STARVATION BY INSTALLMENT

Will Rogers, Roger Babson and U. S. Steel

HE who lives by the installment plan may also perish by it.

Will Rogers remarks that public officials and industrial leaders are constantly talking about "prosperity", but that we could have had that kind of "prosperity" at any time, if we had wanted to get it on the installment plan.

Roger Babson, statistician for Big Business and little, warns the world, solemnly, that installment buying is a bad thing. It is plunging the underlying population, as Veblen terms the lower classes, into the depths of debt. At the end of the war, says Mr.Babson, practically no one in this country was in debt. Today at least 30 per cent are head over heels in it—and there seems to be no end in sight.

Why not face the cause as well as the effect of this business, Mr. Babson? It is a most unhealthy condition. It will be much more so when a period of industrial letdown comes along, as it will. Then, we may see starvation on the installment plan, and very likely, will see it. Why, then, have we this evil with us?

The answer is as plain as day. You need not consult Ricardo, Marx or Andrew Mellon, to find it. The mass of the workers are turning out much more product than they, at their wages, can consume. The product is flying around in plenty. In order to secure it, the worker must use the installment scheme, thus constantly anticipating his wages and mortgaging them in advance.

New York Graphic

DON'T LET IT COME TO THIS

Rather than halt the mad enterprise, the Masters of Life are pressing it on, harder and harder. Here cometh the U. S. Steel Corporation, to add fuel to the flames. A Christmas gift is announced out of its enormous surplus revenues. But to whom? To the workers, in order that they may avoid the deadly installment merchant? Nay, nay, Pauline! This surplus goes to the stockholders of the company, in the form of a $200,000,000 stock dividend. Thereby the capital on which the company must earn, in order to get that "fair return" which Industry demands before it will give the workers anything, is increased.

Actually, the workers are not only defrauded of the wage increase which they should have had, as a result of their highly increased production—which created this surplus. In addition, they now face an added capitalization, on which the stockholders must get a rake-off before the workers can get decent wages. They must sweat all the more, in order to keep up with what they got last year or the year before.

Feeble-mindedness could devise no finer form of self-suicide than this. Our Capitalist Empire, by devices such as these, has sealed its doom, eventually. The only hope is that the workers will determine to become masters of their own destiny. In Steel, that means, firstly: UNIONIZATION!

Vital Issues

HALT THE WAR PARTY!

Patiently, They Await the Close of Congress

SLUMBER not, in your war on the War Party at Washington. A sense of security, so evident now after the first round in the Mexican-Nicaraguan business, is the most fatal policy that the American "public" can pursue. Their almost unanimous voice against War and for Arbitration has not moved the Coolidge-Kellogg plotters one inch from their first stand. That peculiar phonograph, the Presidential spokesman, has now announced that there is but one issue, and that is Oil. On that, these United States propose to stand, firm and stubborn. "Confiscation" will not be permitted in Mexico.

By what divine right we have become the interpreters of the Mexican Constitution, the White House oracle sayeth not. Mexico contends that its laws are not confiscatory in any sense. They take nothing away from the man or corporation who places himself or itself under Mexican protection. What sort of a rumpus would have followed had Britishers, for example, had a good bloc of Southern slaves, and insisted on having them remain slaves in the South, after the Emancipation Proclamation, is too painful to imagine. If there was ever "confiscation", that act was one. By what particular authority, or "clean hands" in these matters, have we the right to insist on stopping "confiscation" in other lands? Moreover, what pray is the 18th Amendment itself? Is not that "confiscation"? Has it not, in fact, confiscated the property of foreign rum runners, when the enforcement officers were alert enough and honest enough to carry out its provisions? We cut rather idiotic capers with our talk for Oil.

These United States, down in the coffee fields of Nicaragua, are standing at the cross-roads of their career. Shall they commit again the blunders of past Imperialists—of Macedon and Rome, Spain, the Holy Roman Empire and Great Britain? Shall they make Might supreme? If so, then prepare for the resultant whirlwind of Latin-American hatred, heaped up in full upon the never-dying fires of European bitterness. Prepare to see America become the Germany of the Next Great War —with all the powers of the world shouting for her Caeseristic blood.

We have committed enough crimes, God knows, in the Philippines and Haiti, upon helpless peoples. Smug, hypocritical cant about "Democracy" and "Civilization" will not cover up our imperialistic hideousness. "American culture" can become, rapidly, a fair-sized imitation of the much-attacked "Kultur" of late, almost-forgotten

Halt the War Party! They are waiting, patiently, for the close of Congress. With Congressional voices of protest hushed, they will coolly proceed to plunge us into mass slaughter. Thunder at the gates of Congress for immediate action. Demand Arbitration! Demand the immediate withdrawal of the marines from Nicaragua! Make your viewpoint clear to your Representatives and Senators. We will allow no War with Latin-America over Oil!

MORGAN BECOMES A FREE TRADER

The New Tactics of International-Bankerdom

AGAIN, the old world is mentally confused. Those wrinkles of idiotic puzzlement are growing deeper on its forehead, at the maneuvres of its overlords. "Are we to believe that J. P. Morgan has become a modern edition of Saul of Tarsus?" Has the High Priest of Mammon entered the service of the people, whose voice is reputed to be the voice of God?

No lengthy time need be wasted on such questionings. International Bankerdom, headed by J. P., has indeed issued an edict for free trade. It is to take the form of free commercial intercourse between European states. Back of it may lie suggestion of free trade—or something approaching it—with and by these United States.

But, as usual, the international bankers are the gainers thereby. We pointed to the coming of the free trade argument from the bankers, in these columns months ago. And why? American Finance is today the Master of the World. It has taken the place of British Finanoe in that happy position. Today our bankers are as much interested, financially, in the manufacturing units of other lands as they are in those of our own country. With lower wage costs abroad, they stand to make a fatter profit from those enterprises across the seas. If the gates of commerce are opened, and the walls of a protective tariff destroyed, the goods of Europe can flood America—and the bankers of America will be the greater in pocketbook out of the whole operation. Slowly, even that may come.

With the international schemings of the bankers more evident than ever, and with the recognition that no matter what stand they take on the tariff the workers will be the losers, it is clear that a new line of policy is demanded by the new developments. We cannot hope to win in any tussle with such a powerful foe without international trade union cooperation. The beginnings of that have been made—the Metal Trades Department of the A. F. of L. being a conspicuous example. But we have much farther still to go. We must cease to think of ourselves so much as American workingmen only, and to think more of ourselves as international comrades of the workers everywhere.

We must abandon the philosophy of the "full dinner pail"—which is after all, the philosophy of hired men, handed down to them by some agent of the bankers, such as Mark Hanna. We must think in terms of the "full dinner in our own home"—the idea of international freemen, capturing the economic and political machinery of all the countries and pooling it for the benefit of the working peoples of the world!

In Other Lands

CAPITALISM'S SICK BED

Despite the golden credit argosies that flow from the mythical shores of America to revivify other lands—two billions of dollars flowing into foreign securities during the past twelve months alone; despite the profits from across the seas that come, as of old, to the coffers of British Bankerdom; despite the newly created Hungarian money, about on a pre-war basis—built up out of the war wreck by the kindly hand of Wall Street; despite much hue and cry about the business of "stabilization"—Capitalism is uneasily aware that it still remains unwell.

John Wheatley, British Laborite, rises to say, wisely and well; "It is competitive capitalism, and not the capitalist, that has failed." How so, my brothers? Does not a great lightning streak of human voices play across the wide Atlantic, linking up the two Romes of our modern world? Does not the silent force of White Coal fling its Hercules-voltage of hutherto unheard-of power, over the hills of Pennsylvania and into the far reaches of the West? Yes, and much more of mechanical magic miracles. But the Moral Force of Capitalism has not marched with its mechanical genius.

One million seven hundred thousand Germans, by most conservative count, want work and find none. The crisis of Dawesization, now existent for quite a long time there, cannot burn itself out. The close of the British coal strike has added fuel to its flames; the Germans no longer being able to send coal abroad, so abundantly. A million British miners, whipped but not crushed in spirit, go back to their dark holes; with class hatred stoking itself fiercely in their hearts and souls. British industry, thriving overseas in the tea of far-flung colonies, the rubber of the Congo, and other exoteric products, cannot right itself at home. To make matters worse, money for foreign enterprises is becoming slack. Over, around the globe, in lands afar, billions of dusky men are awakening to a call to arms against Imperialist oppressors.

So, Capitalism—gouty, heavy with its wealth—lies on its sick-bed, bristling with cannon. Whether it be its death-bed, the workers of the world will have to say. Hastening to link hands—as the world grows smaller through intercommunication — they must forget destructive dictrinaire-isms and petty provincialisms, if they hope to arise, dominant, out of the world wreckage.

GOOD-WILL THROUGH GUNBOATS

In the midst of the maelstrom, the statesmen of the world play on their mighty game of chess. (As to what has come of it before—up to the Great War—do not fail to consult G. Lowes Dickinson's "International Anarchy", 1904-1914, a powerful book.) Often, in the game, Great Britain and Russia meet. In the fertile valley of the Yang-Tse, within the confines of explosive Shanghai, on the bleak oil mounds of Persia—these two ancient rivals stand facing each other, in new roles. Like a phophecy from the tomb come the words of the dead Sun—Yat-sen, father of Canton: "Very soon will the day come when the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics will be able to greet in a powerful and free China a friend and ally; and both these allies, in the great struggle for the liberation of the oppressed peoples of the world, will go forward hand in hand." As the current magazine "Asia" says: "Powerful and free" Canton today regards "Soviet Russia much as we regarded France in 1778."

Britain, blindly disregarding her old policy of conciliation and driven to desperation by bitter regret that she did not know China better, threatens thunderingly to

Simplicissimus (Germany)

MUSSOLINI: "The attempted assassination is due at 12.50 prompt. What shall I wear for that?"

secure Good-will through Gunboats. Picture how the American people wou'd view a squadron of such boats on our Great Lakes and up our Mississippi, decks cleared for action, guns trained on Chicago, Detroit and St. Louis? What rage of mob action would follow we hesitate to detail. Even so is it today in the Land of the Dragon. If mobs there be in Foo-choo or Hankow, if Shanghai grows restive and rumbling, it is the blind British policy that is but reaping its reward. The British have gambled against the Chinese workers; and the Day of those workers has arrived.

DECLINE OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE?

While all these schemes and stratagems are afoot, Britain itself is in a continuing bad way. The recent Imperial Conference in London—attended by all the representatives of the dominions and colonies—did little to brighten up the picture. Premier Bruce of Australia—et tu, Bruce", British Big Business must have exclaimed—stated very loudly and long that his country did not propose to wait for English money if it could get funds in America. Further, Australian loans are being more and more taken up in that land itself. This is bad news indeed, for Britain has been able to go along of late largely out of its foreign investments. It is interesting to note that while coal, steel, iron, shipbuilding and textile manufacturing—Britain's chief home products—were

given terrific blows this last year, that the banks and foreign investment concerns prospered enormously.

Mr. J. M. Keynes, the agile economic expert, now advises his countrymen that their hopes in this direction are likewise being cut off. There is no more money available for foreign speculation! In 1924, there was over $600,000,000 at hand for that purpose; in 1925, this had fallen to $400,000,000, and by September, 1926, it had gone down to $150,000,000. The current year will

BALDWIN TREED

By the Labor Bulldog, says British "New Leader"

see an actual deficit in the national funds for this purpose, he prophesies.

The attack upon the miners, part of a nation-wide broadside on the workers, was decided upon, in the hope that the financial powers of the country could hold out through their foreign incomes. As a result, however, the South American market has been lost, United States coal seizing it; the continental and other foreign markets have gone to German and French concerns; the British steel industry has suffered a catastrophic blow—and the colonies and dominions are becoming lukewarm because of the lack of capital available in Britain for their purposes. During the last few years, their attachment to the "Mother Country" has been more economic than political; and the loadstone of American gold is drawing them away from this last bond of union. The decline of the British Empire, permanently, is freely foretold in many places. Whether it can be staved off through new alliances, a loose United States of Europe or some other development, the future will decide. The messed-up situation, nevertheless, seems to point surely to the incoming of another Labor Party Government before many moons have come and gone.

COMBINES

"Trustification", nevertheless, goes forward in Britain, much the same as in other European countries. Coal mines are beginning to take note of the spirit of the times in this respect. In chemicals the movement is most marked, a trust of $150,000,000 capital arising in that industry. In automobiles, there is a like trend.

Although Germany has perhaps taken the lead in this development, international boundary lines have been swept away to an astounding degree, in 1926, in the trust-making process. The European Steel Ring was the most significant, joined now by the steel companies of Austria, Hungary and Czecho-Slovakia. On its heels, there came: The Aluminum Combine—covering France, Germany, Britain, Switzerland, and Norway; the Copper Combine —covering the European, African and American output— or 90 per cent of the world's production; the international combine of Superphosphate Factories, covering 13 countries. a new rail combine, and a new incandescent lamp 'cartel". Last, but not least, there was formed the so-called A. B. C. Trust—American, British and Continental Corporation, established in New York with a capital of $14,000,000, and comprising ten of the largest banking corporations in the world. Beyond and above all these, there have gone on endless agreements, combinations, alliances and mergers of business interests, almost too complicated to follow.

In that direction goes the Europe of 1926, as goes the world. The new Leviathan front of Capital will call forth new alliances, mergers and combinations within the workers' union movements themselves—to present front against front and might against might.

TRADE UNIONS—HERE, THERE AND EVERYWHERE

With unemployment still at a record peak, and with the Tory Government devising all sorts of ways to end the unemployment relief, the British trade unions face a difficult situation. The sky is not made brighter by the apparently determined effort of the Tories to put trade unions under a governmental blacklist—as reported last month. The swing to the Labor Party, if it goes fast enough, may frustrate this program; but the way ahead is still not one of roses. Of other labor movements these few points may be noted:

The Canadian Trades and Labor Congress sets out on a program of old age pensions, unemployment insurance and "constructive measures to minimize unemployment by the provision of work." Austria's unions win considerable improvement in social insurance benefits for their 200,000 non-manual workers. Belgian unions demand action by the Government to combat the rising unemployment, as a result of "stabilization." A special congress of the unions is to be called to formulate a program for old age pensions. The Finnish Trade Unions come into the cabinet of the Socialist-Labor Government of that country. A Baltic-Scandinavian Labor Congress, called by the International Federation of Trade Unions, opens the way for all labor movements in those lands to join Amsterdam. Norway's trade union center votes to consider union with Amsterdam. The Russian Trade Union Congress (held in December) reports a membership of 9,000,000 workers—organized in 23 industrial unions.

Progress, therefore, is being made, under the surface of capitalist semi-collapse and "stabilization."

DON'T FORGET PASSAIC!

In the war against the Company Union menace, those brave workers in Passaic still hold their trenches. Never was a more valiant fight waged in the annals of American Labor. If they bear the brunt, with a fervor that many other American workers might well envy, what should we not do to assist them in their battle? They are standing at the breach in the Company Union wall. Help them to go through it, triumphantly. Help them with funds, to buy coal, clothing and to pay rent. It is a Labor Bond for Liberty that you invest in, when you send a contribution to Passaic. Relief Committee address: 743 Main Ave., Passaic, N. J.

DO THEY WANT "CONFISCATION"?

Supreme Court Makes Robbery a Property Right

LED by the winsome Willie Taft, with his $10,000 a year subsidy from the Carnegie Steel Corporation, the Supremest Court in the land has decreed that Robbery is a property right. Boldly, it does this in the Indianapolis Water Case. The Hoosier capital, be it known, is not merely the nest of that peculiar brand of pervert parading under the robes of Klansmen. It also is the one city of its size still boasting of a private water company.

This company has long hamstrung and quartered the simple-minded inhabitants of that "second Cambridge", as Arnold Bennett calls it. To make this continued vulture course a permanency, the Company has gone to the Washingtonian Sacred Cow, to have the highest possible peak in valuation sanctioned by that holy oracle.

Yes, answers the compliant Court, we will give you all you ask. Then it proceeds, not only to grant the $19,000,000 valuation requested by the company, but to allow it to earn 7 per cent on such valuation.

Father John A. Ryan of the National Catholic Welfare Council, with his accustomed courage, denounces the act as a sanction of "rapacious usury." Before the Mid-Luncheon Club of Springfield, Ill., he put the issue thus: "In the Indianapolis case, the value confirmed by the Supreme Court gives the owners of a public utility, though they possess a monopoly of a necessary commodity and though their money is practically guaranteed, a return of not less than 30 per cent of their actual investment. . . . If the same increase is granted the railroads, it will lift the probable Interstate Commerce valuation from twenty-two billion to between thirty-three and thirty-four billion dollars. Very great increases would likewise take place in all other public utility property, particularly electric concerns. The general public will pay higher rates to give what is considered a fair return upon these valuations."

Not only that, but the workers will be defrauded of wage increases, through the plea that the utilities cannot earn enough return, at the proposed wage levels, on these fictitious valuations. Father Ryan rightly says, that "this is the most important political question before the American people and will remain so for many years." It is the most important political question since the struggle over Negro slavery. Do our worthies on the Bench and their Bosses of Big Business propose to have this question settled in the same way as the Negro question was settled? Do they propose to make the valuation business so ridiculous that the people will throw up their hands and demand "confiscation" of all utilities in the public interest?

Big Business is in soft clover at this hour, even as the Slave Power was when Garrison raised his voice against it. A day of reckoning is on its way. When the people learn that "confiscation", as the Supreme Court defines it, means simply the prevention of the robbery of billions of dollars from the workers and "public", they will begin to think it a rather happy term. In the Indianapolis water case, the owners actually invested $2,502,700. They are presented with almost $17,000,000—as a little gift, in the name of the prevention of "confiscation".

We look forward to hearing much more, as time goes by, on this "confiscation" subject.

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