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Labor Age

The National Monthly

The Worker Looks at Ford

By ROBERT L. CRUDEN

Five Day Week Plus

By M. H. HEDGES

New Bedford's Revolt

By HARVEY O'CONNOR



Strike Must Be Won for Their Sake

Whose Business?

Radicals and Conservatives

\$2.50 per Year

Labor Age

The National Monthly

25 Cents per Copy

Published by Labor Publication Society, Inc.— Composed of International, State and Local Unions

3 West 16th Street, New York City

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



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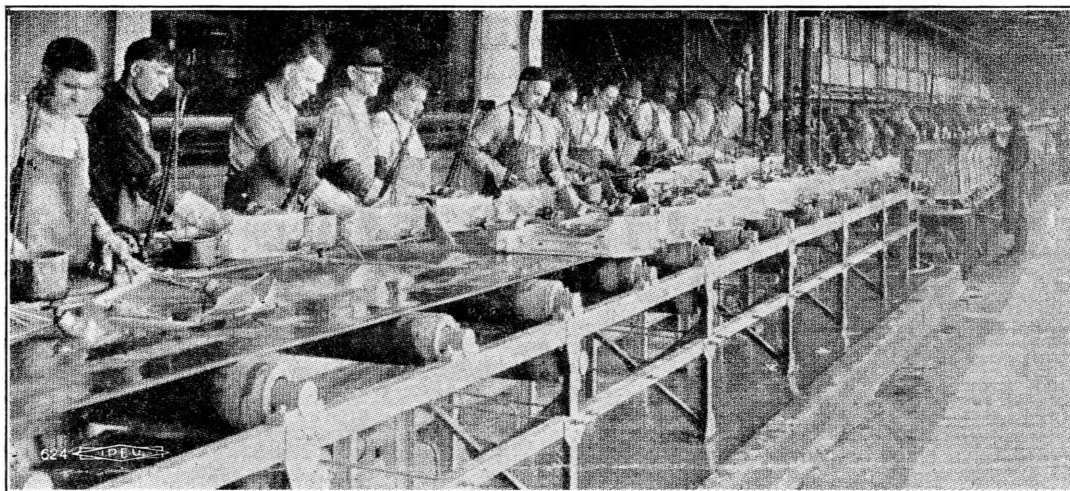
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Labor Age

The National Monthly

The Belt

Auto Workers Can Be Organized!



Making Ford Radiators

WITH this issue LABOR AGE begins an expose of the inhuman conditions existing in the automobile industry. First, we present an article by Robert L. Cruden describing speed-up conditions in the Ford plants, which brings to mind the oldtime notorious sweat shops in the needle trades.

Ford is not alone, however, in setting a killing pace for his workers. Speed-up methods are also the rule in the other big automobile plants such as Dodge, Packard, Hudson, Buick and Studebaker. The headlong speed and clamor of the gear and axle plant and the motor assembly plants of the Chevrolet reflect the desperate competition now being carried on between Ford and General Motors. While the company dealers engage in a "sales war" the workers are driven ahead by the machines and the straw bosses. The confusing group bonus systems of wage payment and the speed-up system are among the chief grievances of the workers. The irregularity of employment is another. Dodge, for example, fired 6,000 workers a few weeks ago. The workers are hired and fired without any right of collective protest. The companies, amassing millions of profit yearly, are absolute autocrats in their plants.

Attempts at organization have been made within the past two years, without result. We might as well realize that organization will not be handed out on a silver platter. To organize the automobile and other unorganized

workers a new attitude on the part of Labor is imperative, as Brother Budish points out in his article.

Detroit workers who read this article by Bob Cruden should send in more facts about factory conditions to LABOR AGE. Tell us the truth about wages, hours, unemployment, the dictatorship of the bosses, the speeding-up of work and the other grievances. Give us the low-down on the welfare schemes and the tactics of the company to keep you "happy" and "contented".

Those Detroit companies are powerful opponents. They are the leading and class conscious elements in what the New Republic describes as "the most virile, convinced and resourceful capitalist rulership which the world has ever seen." And yet no labor movement—if it would move—must be intimidated by such a foe. Our immediate objective must be stout-hearted, effective and well-financed organizing campaigns. And they CAN succeed if they are pushed with energy and intelligence. The men and women along the belt CAN be organized.

But it will require the whole-hearted cooperation of all who sincerely desire that the auto workers shall be organized. In this connection, we direct attention to Brother Muste's contribution in this issue, showing that radicals and conservatives not only can work together but it is essential that they do so for the good of the movement.

The Worker Looks at Ford

Speed Is Henry's God

By ROBERT L. CRUDEN

1. THE RUMOR SYSTEM

DETROIT is a city of rumors. No murmur from the beehive of the auto industry ever reaches the newspaper offices; not a breath of the fetid factory air penetrates the editorial sanctums.

Not that the manufacturers don't get space—whole sections of the Sunday editions give them free advertising and give the worker a nice contented feeling that he's got a lot for his dime!—nor do I mean that new factories and factories opening up after a shut-down don't get space—Ford made the headlines last fall when he opened up—but we had never been told that there had been a shut-down, in the first place. Unemployment is never mentioned in polite newspaper circles; and as far as the papers go the public is ignorant of the many industrial accidents which happen in this city. But such news comes through. A very efficient word-of-mouth telegraphy system has been built up, so that if a plant at one end of the city lays off men every worker in town knows of it in a very few hours. It is the only way in which the worker is able to get the news of industry which really interests him.

The investigator then, since he cannot get at the facts through official sources, must rely on this "rumor" system; or he can dig in for himself and speak with the workers at the plant in which he is interested. The weakness of the former method is self-evident: it is unreliable as far as the actual detailed facts of a situation go, just as all word-of-mouth communications are; only general impressions are given. The latter is reliable and efficient: you get at the kernel of a situation in less time and with more surety of the facts through personal contact. That is especially so if the workers are unaware that "they are talking for publication." Even here you must guard against rash generalizations. The most that can be said is that certain situations appeared in certain lights to certain individuals. I have followed this plan. From the observations of Ford employes over a period of four years up until the present I have selected what seem to be typical causes for complaint. They may not exist over all the factories, to be sure, but they are in large enough situations to warrant attention and criticism. With that in mind, let us get "down to brass tacks."

Personally, Henry Ford would seem to be a sincere hard-working man who has "risen from one suspender." He has never forgotten it. The long hours and the hard toil which it took to get his "flivver" idea on its feet have never been erased from his mind; and he thinks that everyone else should do the same—for Henry Ford, of course. He believes that he is giving his workers a "fair" day's pay and he expects from them a

"fair" day's work. "High wages cannot be paid unless the workmen earn them. The high wage begins down in the shop. If it is not created there it cannot get into pay envelopes," he says. He has the typical "self-made" frontier psychology—"If I did it, you can." He throws out the "You" part of it like the finger of Uncle Sam used to be on the war posters with "Your country needs YOU." He believes that "brains will come to the top," just like froth on beer. The really intelligent mechanic will not remain content with being a machine-hand. He will think of ways of cutting out waste; he will look around him and find out where men and machines can be more efficient (a nice way of saying speed-up); he will do all that he can to help the company in the particular part of the plant where he happens to be laboring. He will eat Ford, drink Ford, sleep Ford, work Ford, and—when he is able to do so—play Ford! For Henry still has a naive idea that intelligent workers get a creative joy out of tightening up nut 99 on 999 cars for eight hours a day. As an aid for such honest, red-blooded Americans Ford maintains classes where they are taught everything from safety slogans to handling "wop" labor in Italy. Does he not say himself, "The Americans in our employ do want to go ahead. The foreigners, generally speaking, are content to stay as straw-bosses"? And with all good Board of Commerce members Ford says that there is plenty of room at the top of the ladder, "The vast majority of men want to stay put. They want to be led. They want to have everything done for them and to have no responsibility. Therefore, in spite of the great mass of men, the difficulty is not to discover men to advance, but men who are willing to be advanced." All of which, you must admit, is as much good for our generation as his fiddling contests and his old-fashioned dancing!

II. PRODUCTION

Speaking of working conditions in the Ford plants, a former employee had this to say to me, "You've got to work like hell in Ford's. From the time you become a number in the morning until the bell rings for quitting time you have to keep at it. You can't let up. You've got to get out production (a word, by the way, which no Ford worker ever slurs over or mispronounces), and if you can't get it out, you get out." Ford, with characteristic complacency, chimes in, "It is pretty well understood that a man in the Ford plant works. . . . Any one who does not like to work in our way may always leave." Speed is the one god before whom there are no others in the Ford plants.

The amount of work to be got out each day comes from the office. It is divided among the various de-

partments. The department heads divide up the work of their respective departments, and assign to the foremen their sections. The foremen in turn go to the straw-bosses and give them their orders, and the straw-boss is then responsible for the work the men have to get out. Thus, the only man of the hierarchy with whom the worker comes in contact is the straw-boss; he gets all the abuse when there is a speed-up or a lay-off. It is really surprising—the way in which the workers boil over about their straw-bosses! But production, as ordered from the office, has to be got out, though the heavens fall. Speed-up is inevitable.

In many departments the workers are not allowed to speak to one another. One worker told me of how a superintendent had seen him speaking to his mate during a slack time—a rare, rare occurrence in Ford's—and the superintendent had come over and told him that a factory is no place for talking. He made it very clear to the worker that workers can work eight hours and *work*, or get out. It seems to be a general rule over both the Highland Park and River Rouge—pardon me River Rouge is now Fordson—plants that workers cannot wash themselves until the bell actually rings for quitting time. During the time he is working, if a worker wishes to go to the toilet, he must be relieved. Even at lunch-time, in several departments, the worker must be relieved before he can eat. Regarding lunch periods there seem to be two systems: one whereby the worker puts in eight hours and twenty minutes, gets twenty minutes for lunch and is paid for eight hours; the other, whereby the worker puts in eight hours, gets half-an-hour for lunch and is paid for eight hours. This latter plan seems to be in effect only in those places where there is no rush. I have found only a few cases where it happens in the Fordson plant. You can see that with twenty minutes for lunch, the workers simply have to gulp down their food—just like a cow does, swallow and try to chew afterwards. The workers don't even get time to clean their hands; nor can they get out the bad factory air, which persists in spite of Ford's really good sanitation and ventilation systems. At all costs, the machines must be kept running.

Machine Is Boss

The company is not content with prohibitions of what may seem injurious to high speed production. Speaking of this to a Fordson plant worker recently, I got this reply, "Am I bossed around? No, I don't need to be. The machine I'm on goes at such a terrific speed that I can't help stepping on it in order to keep up with the machine. It's my boss." Another speed-up scheme which they have reminds me of a part in "The Jungle": "Jurgis saw how they managed it; there were portions of work which determined the pace of the rest; and for these they had picked men whom they paid high wages and whom they changed frequently. You might easily pick out these pace makers, for they worked under the eye of the bosses, and they worked like men possessed. This was called 'speeding up the gang' and if any man could not keep up with the pace there were hundreds outside begging to try." Although differing in

a few minor details, the Ford scheme is essentially similar. Expert machinists come and work on a machine for a day. At the end, as is to be expected, their output far exceeds that of the ordinary worker, who is then told that his output must come up to that figure within a certain length of time. The fact of this man's speeding up speeds up everything else: the man before him must "step on it" in order to keep him supplied with materials, and the man after him must increase his pace so that the materials don't pile up on him. If the worker cannot make the pace he is recommended for transfer" by his foreman. Theoretically this means that the man is transferred to some department more suitable for his personality; actually it means that the worker is put into a department where he ordinarily cannot last a week. It's "elimination of the unfit" in a nice way. One worker tells me that in times of great unemployment the company doesn't even hang on to that formality. The department head simply fires the fellow who isn't speeding-up; there are plenty outside who are "begging to try". How much credence can be given to this allegation is doubtful, for there are always thousands of men seeking employment at the Ford plants. The company wouldn't have to wait for slack times in order to do away with the formality. Another scheme is to have a production schedule attached to each machine. From time to time this schedule is increased—ostensibly after timing by one of those "scientific personnel" men—and the worker must keep up with the schedule. No obstacles in the way of high pressure production can be tolerated.

That Sweaty Line

It is on the line, however, that the real speed comes out. This is how a perfectly safe and sane conservative tells of it in the MICHIGAN MANUFACTURING AND FINANCIAL RECORD: "Each man has his specific space and his special operation to perform. It may be merely the tightening of a nut, but it must be done quickly and well, and within a set time, for further construction depends upon his work being completed and upon his being out of the way." The men work like fiends, sweat running down their faces, their jaws set and eyes on fire. Nothing in the world exists to them except that line of chasses bearing down on them relentlessly, like a steam-roller determined to crush them. The chasses come through on a conveyor which moves at a relatively fast rate. As each chassis passes the worker has to do his particular job before the next one comes. The line moves fast and the chasses are close together: the men go like lightning; some underneath on their backs on little wagons, propelling themselves by their heels all day long, fixing something underneath the chasses as they move along; others work *frantically*, with bent backs and faces tense, tightening up and putting on screws and bolts; they all work quietly and swiftly, like silent slaves with an unseen taskmaster over them. Their sweat is the sign of their labor; the impression of the whole factory is sweat; the whole district reeks with sweat. For sweat is a sign of speed, and speed is Henry Ford's god.

Radicals and Conservatives

Can They Work Together?

By A. J. MUSTE

A T first thought the answer seems to be an emphatic No. I can almost hear some of my readers muttering disgustedly, "Just look at the way they are tearing each other and the movement to pieces at present. What is the use of discussing such a question at all?"

What happens to be true for the moment is not always, however, true in the long run. Sometimes events that are close to us, in which we actively participate, lead us to forget temporarily the deeper and more permanent realities of the movement. As a matter of fact there have always been both conservatives and radicals in every labor movement in the world and there always will be. So long as human nature is what it is neither one can get on without the other and the movement can function only if it has both.

There are many angles from which this matter might be approached. We confine ourselves here to one of them. In a general way, the conservative in the labor movement is the man who is interested primarily, perhaps almost exclusively, in the immediate aims of the movement. He wants people to get higher wages, shorter hours, better working conditions, more security, more of the good things of life here and now. Go into any meeting of a local union or a central body, or an international, where the conservative elements dominate, and the talk will be about such questions. Even when such a body concerns itself with broader issues, it will deal with accident compensation laws perhaps, safety regulations, sanitary standards, electing officials who will favor some additional legislation along these lines, or will oppose bills that might hamper trade union activities for immediate aims. Such ideas as revolution, a new social order, a world controlled by the workers, are either absolutely ignored in such gatherings or strenuously opposed. These things are regarded as impractical and remote even if not dangerous and destructive.

The radical, on the other hand, is interested in the ultimate aims of the labor movement. To him that movement is part of man's age-long struggle for freedom, justice and equality. It is in fact the last crowning phase of that struggle of the centuries which is to issue presently in a great victory for the masses, after which we shall have an order of society controlled by the workers, the producers, in which the shirker will have no chance to exist, much less to rule and exploit others, in which the good life will be attainable by all men, in which brotherhood shall replace strife. If pressed, the radical will admit theoretically that improving the workers' lot here and now may be of some importance, but in practice he is likely to ignore these things and frequently even to insist that these little immediate gains which the labor movement achieves

are only sops thrown to the workers by their exploiters in order to blind them to the real state of things, in order to keep them from rising in their wrath and claiming all that is their due. One may go to meetings of organizations and groups where these radicals dominate and seldom hear discussions about working conditions, compensation laws, and similar matters. There the great battle cries, the idealistic slogans that are barred in the other camp, are ever on people's lips and deeply stir their hearts.

Heavenly Pie

In reality, however, these radicals could not build a labor movement without the help of those conservatives whom they are inclined to look down upon as small minded bargainers, or hate as "politicians" who sell out the workers' cause for a mess of pottage. When they carry their positions to an extreme, radicals arrive precisely at the same point as certain religious sects which they so much despise. These religious sects ask people to pay no attention to the ills they are suffering now and to endure all manner of hardships for the cause, promising them that they will achieve perfect bliss in heaven after they die. There is to be "pie in the sky by and by". The radical also tells people not to worry about the petty human ills that afflict them and calls upon them to make all sorts of sacrifices for the cause, assuring them that by and by the revolution will come and riches, freedom and joy will be theirs. They will eat pie, not in the sky, it is true, but in the new social order here on earth. There is no telling just when that day is to arrive. For many workers it may not be until after they are dead.

Experience shows that you can get a small, a very small percentage of people to take this extreme long run view, to postpone all present enjoyment, except what is to them the greatest joy of all, activity in the beloved cause. In other words, on this basis you can build a propagandist sect, religious, revolutionist, or what not, but that is all. No great mass movement in the sphere of religion, labor or any other department of life was ever built on such an ultra-idealistic basis.

Experience shows that you can get a small, a very small percentage of people to take this extreme long run view, to postpone all present enjoyment, except what is to them the greatest joy of all, activity in the beloved cause. In other words, on this basis you can build a propagandist sect, religious, revolutionist, or what not, but that is all. No great mass movement in the sphere of religion, labor or any other department of life was ever built on such an ultra-idealistic basis. The masses suffer poverty, hunger, sickness, pain, insecurity, and a myriad of other ills today, and they want relief today. They cannot wait to eat and drink, to clothe themselves, to heal their sicknesses, to get a roof

over their heads, to render position more secure until in a year, ten years, or a hundred years, the great change comes and a new world is born. They will not long remain in any labor movement that cannot help them to deal with some of their immediate problems, to gain some immediate advantages. It is upon organizations built up in part at least upon such a practical basis that the radical must ever depend to bring the workers together, to give them a consciousness of their united power, to furnish them a taste of victory, to increase their self respect, to raise their standard of living above that of subject, submissive slaves.

When, however, the conservative leaders of such organizations conclude that they can get along without the radicals, that these latter are at best nuisances, and at worst destructionists and traitors, never anything else, then they are equally mistaken. The conservative cannot get along without the radical. There are all sorts of reasons for this, only a few of which need to be mentioned here.

The Torch Bearers

For one thing, human beings are queer animals. It is true that they want to have their organization produce the goods here and now, but it is equally true that they want their organization to be and to do something more than that. They want visions held before them, they want ideals to look up to. They want to be called upon to make sacrifices for some great cause. If there is not something big, visionary, idealistic, stirring about their organization, they lose interest. Man needs bread in order to live but "man shall not live by bread alone", so the Good Book says. Radicals keep alive that spark of idealism which is indispensable.

Again, the trade union like every other organization gets experience in doing its work and handling its problems. It learns to do a certain job well. This would be fine and after a while things would run along of themselves but for one little factor that throws a lot of fine plans and organizations off the track, namely that the world does not stand still. Conditions change, new problems emerge. But a machine that can do one thing perfectly, by that very fact is unable to do anything else, and many an organization that was going along smoothly has suddenly found itself floundering when a new situation develops. Here again the radical, the person who is dissatisfied, who insists that the organization takes a larger view, has a part to play.

It is not even true, however, that an organization can be trusted to keep functioning effectively so long as conditions do not change. On the contrary, there is a tendency in all human organizations to set, to harden, to grow stale and lazy, to rot from within. What saves an organization from perishing from this process is opposition, people who ask questions, who are not satisfied, who keep prodding those who are in control. True these people are often great nuisances, they are not always polite, sometimes they are all wrong. On the other hand, the opposition would often be more patient, more tolerant, more intelligent, if every suggestion they made was not met at the outset by such high-handed and bitter opposition.

A union that has become a mere business proposition,

without vision and idealism, may keep going so long as it is successful and is able to give its members ever greater benefits. Every organization, however, encounters periods of defeat and failure. At such times, the worker who regards his union as a mere business proposition will quit his union just as readily as he would abandon his grocery man if the chain store on the other side of the street offered him cheaper goods. It is precisely in this way that in a good many instances the company unions lure workers away from the bona fide organizations. Members will stand up and sacrifice for their unions only if they can feel that it is part of a great cause, if the radicals in the organization have to some extent kept it true to its ultimate aims.

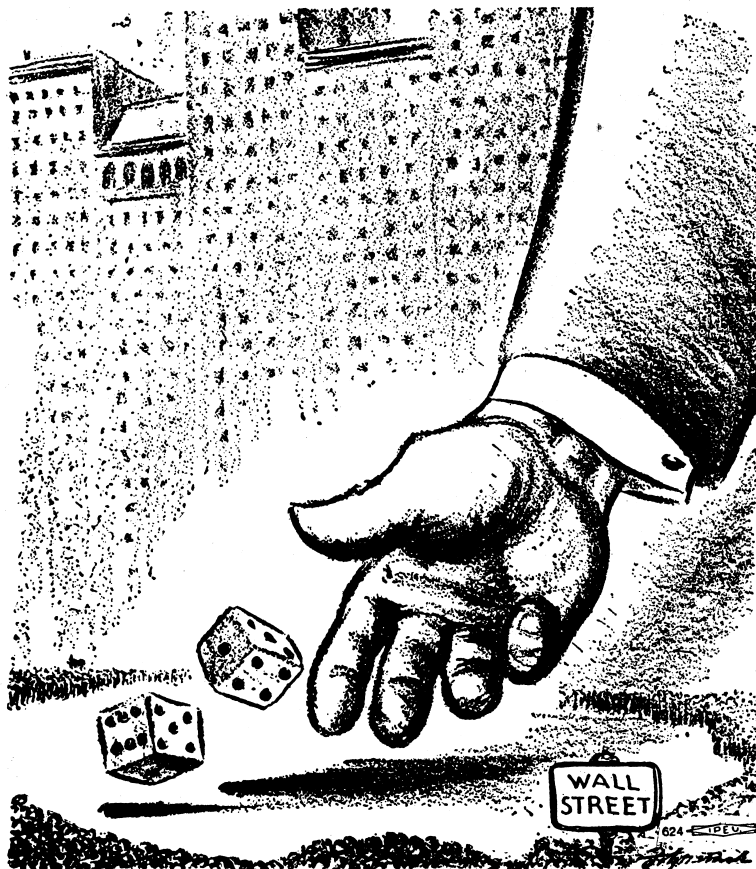
To name but one other consideration, the labor movement as it grows, as it achieves some of its immediate aims, finds itself confronted with ever greater problems, compelled to deal with larger and more fundamental issues, to concern itself with more and more spheres of human life and activity. It does literally have to make a new social order, to deal with world problems, to assume more and more responsibility for industry and society so that they may function for human welfare. It wants simply more and more and more, as Samuel Gompers put it. But where is its demand for more wages to end? Will it stop short of eliminating speculative profits altogether? It wants for the worker a voice in the control of conditions under which he lives. How much of a voice? It wants freedom and justice for the worker. With how much freedom and justice will the worker be satisfied? Will he rest contented so long as he is a wage slave, a well kept one perhaps, but a slave none the less? The labor movement may not want to go into politics. How can it keep out? It may not want to assume any responsibility for the conduct of industry. How can it avoid doing so? In every country as it goes along it wins more and more respect and recognition, but also more opposition. It must ever seek more power if it is not to be deprived of the gains it has already achieved. So the radical is also right and the conservative cannot get along without him.

Putting on the Brakes

Now it is theoretically conceivable that all human beings should be well balanced, intelligent, governed solely by reason, neither too conservative nor too radical. If that were the case we should not need different types of people; all of us would always go just as fast as conditions warranted. Actually this is not the case. No one is a perfect thinking machine. Everyone is governed by his interests, fears, prejudices, as well as in greater or less degree by his reason. Since there are those who want to go too slow, there must be those who prod them; and since there are those who want to go too fast, there must be those who put the brakes on them.

This also almost anyone will grant in theory and in his calmer moments. But of course in any actual situation no one wants to be prodded and no one wants to have the brakes put on. The one seems to his

GAMBLING SANCTIONED BY LAW



Fitzpatrick in the St. Louis Post Dispatch calls it the national sport. Wall Street's dice are loaded, however, and soon we shall hear "weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth."

opponent a rabid, fanatical destructionist, the other a lazy or crooked traitor to the working class. Thus the movement is constantly a scene of conflict. We may deplore this, especially where the conflict between internal forces becomes bitter and absorbs so much energy that little is left for the conflict with the enemy without. Yet we must be realistic and face the fact that as things are, the movement is kept alive and progresses only because conflict exists. Because on the one hand, the conservative does not completely abdicate to the radical nor the radical to the conservative; because on the other hand, the conservative cannot completely subdue the radical, nor the radical the conservative.

All this is mere generalization, some one may remark. Generalization it is and I have particularly not been trying in this article to tell any union or other labor group what it ought to do about a specific conflict in which it may be engaged. What I have been doing, if I have stated the case correctly, is sketching the background against which in part at least such conflicts must be envisaged. And it is legitimate to point out

in conclusion that in the long run no attempt to shut out any considerable section of workers from the movement can succeed. This holds true where the attempt is made to inject the religious issue, for example, into the movement. It is equally true where political, social and economic issues are involved. If the radicals try to shut out those who don't agree with them, the upshot is that they exile themselves into No Man's Land, become a mere propagandist sect, defeating their own ends of depriving themselves of influence on the main course of the movement. If the conservatives try it, they condemn their own organization to rot away, because they are deprived of new blood, of their vision, of the opposition that stings and keeps awake.

We have to make up our minds to work together. A waggish male is said to have remarked about women, "A man can't live with them and can't live without them". Of course if you cannot live without them, the upshot is that you do live with them. Radicals and conservatives might as well make up their minds to the same conclusion with regard to each other.

Whose Business?

Shortsighted Outlook Renders Labor Helpless

By J. M. BUDISH

ORGANIZED Labor is passing through one of the most difficult periods of its history. The serious unemployment and the grave situation in the mining industry are only phases of the same general problem. During the entire post-war period, the labor movement with minor exceptions, has been marking time. On the other hand, company unionism has been gaining ground. We fully agree with the American Federationist that the company unions have not grown of themselves, but they represent the desire of the employers to have the benefit of an organized work force without the necessity of considering any real vital demands set forth by the workers. It is no doubt true that the company unions are not labor unions. President Green correctly describes them editorially as organizations formed by the management, controlled by the management and existing by the sufferance of management. Right. But there still remains the puzzling question, why have the company unions been outstripping the labor unions?

This question touches upon fundamentals. It is not merely a question of methods, though methods are of great importance. Dr. Wm. M. Leiserson, who is known as a student of economics and labor, and who has had many contacts and a great deal of experience with labor unions, has in a recent statement put the blame on "the lack of alertness of trade unions and their failure to meet the needs of highly specialized workers in industries employing great numbers." That our present forms of organization are rather out of date and are inadequate to meet the needs of the times, is now generally admitted. The A. F. of L. in formulating a plan for the organization of the automobile industry, was impelled to overstep craft boundaries and to agree, at least in principle, that the organization campaign would have to be conducted on industrial lines, jointly by all the international unions involved.

Overstepping Craft Boundaries

In the basic industries in which craft lines have been practically obliterated, industrial unionism is the only possible form of organization. The company union while mostly limited to a single plant is industrial in its character: it embraces all the workers of that plant, independently of their operations. To that extent company unionism has an advantage over labor unionism because the latter if and when successful would immediately split the workers into several separate unions, depending upon the number of various crafts engaged in that plant.

Industrial unionism in one form or another is an imperative demand of the hour, at least for all basic industries. But methods and forms of organization are secondary to the spirit behind them. Methods and forms

of organization must be flexible, must be adapted to the times and conditions. It is the lack of flexibility, the slowness of changing and adapting the forms and methods of organization to the rapidly changing industrial conditions that are more troublesome than the inadequate methods themselves. In 1927, the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. in its report to the Convention, formulated the problem of organizing the basic industries as presenting the following two obstacles: "What shall be the basis of union organization and what agency shall be responsible for organizing them?"

Two Conventions—No Answer

An attempt to deal with this question had been made at the 1926 Convention. It was then decided that a conference of all national and international organizations interested in the automobile industry be called for the purpose of starting a joint organization campaign in the automobile industry and that the question of jurisdiction be suspended for the time of the organization campaign. Two such conferences were held, but somehow no progress was made.

One of the great difficulties arises from the fact that the majority of these workers belong to no jurisdiction. There are 30 million wage earners in this country. Less than 4 million are organized. The organizations have been limited primarily to skilled trades. The great masses of unskilled workers who are the bulwark of the working class have so far been practically outside of the sphere of influence of organized labor. They are not only unorganized but in the majority of cases they are outside the jurisdiction of any international union. The skilled workers are now a small minority in every basic industry. Most of the international unions that do not claim any jurisdiction over these unskilled workers cannot see that it is their business to strain all their resources to the limit, to put at stake their all, in order to organize the great masses of unskilled workers over whom they do not seek any jurisdiction. One can easily imagine a conference of all international unions interested in a basic industry, which would together not claim jurisdiction over more than 25 per cent of all the workers of that industry. We do not know whether this was the reason why the plan of the A. F. of L. Convention, to inaugurate a joint, vigorous campaign in the automobile industry, did not materialize. In any case, the 1927 Convention still had to put the same question as to the form of organization and the agency to carry on the organization work. This convention again failed to supply an answer to the question: Whose business?

The difficulty in answering this question is inherent in the present general attitude of organized labor. It is an attitude which carries the craft divisions from the forms of organization to the entire spirit and outlook

LABOR AGE

of labor. It is the spirit which makes every labor organization more attached to its own industry than to organized labor as a whole. It is the spirit which considers that a labor union has more common interest with the employers of their own industry than with the workers of all the other industries. It is a spirit that considers team work on the part of employers and employes of the same industry of greater importance than team work upon the part of the working class independently of industrial boundaries. It is the spirit that is all too eager to arrange for cooperation between the Union and the employer but that shrinks in horror from any suggestion of cooperation between conservative and radical labor. It is the spirit that will kill itself worrying over anything that would tend to widen the breach between employers and workers, and that would not lift a finger to prevent the widening of the breach between groups of workers within the same industry adhering to different schools of thought.

Wanted—Labor Team Work

The inherent weakness of this antiquated point of view and spirit is that it fails to recognize that, whether we wish it or not, the wage earners are a class by themselves, who can hope for relief from no other source but themselves. The common phrase that united we stand and divided we fall has not yet become part and parcel of our mentality. In any case, we apply this maxim only to limited sections of the working class, only within the framework of a single union. As yet we do not embrace in this precept the entire working class, skilled and non-skilled alike, conservative and radical alike. We still do not feel, or that feeling is not strong enough to guide our actions, that either we will all hang together, or figuratively speaking, we shall all be hanged separately in our industrial struggles. As long as that out of date spirit is not conquered the question Whose Business? can hardly be answered satisfactorily.

The International Labor News Service, the ex-officio news agency of organized labor, reports about the recent convention of the Pennsylvania State Federation of Labor:

“The major achievement of those of the right wing” (achievement, indeed!) “was the defeat of a resolution condemning the Mitten-Mahon plan, as it concerns the P. R. T., and the agreement entered into some time ago between Mitten Management and the Amalgamated Association of Street and E. R. E. The resolution called upon the Pennsylvania Federation for a pledge to fight all company ‘unions’ and to organize all workers into a bona fide militant union.”

The position taken by Vice-President P. J. Shea of the Amalgamated, in discussing this resolution was to the effect that the Amalgamated is an International Union, knowing its own business, and if they found it advisable to enter into such an agreement they know what they are doing and it is nobody's business to either criticize it or condemn it. Without entering here into the question of the merits of the Mitten-Mahon agreement, a very careful analysis of which was given in the previous issue of LABOR AGE by A. J. Muste, the ques-

tion still remains, is it or is it not the business of a convention of organized labor to weigh in judgment the benefits or injuries that such an agreement may carry in its wake for organized labor. In other words, is the concern of one labor organization the concern of all or is it merely the concern of the organization immediately involved? Whose business is it?

“War On in the Mines”

That veteran fighter, Andrew Furuseth, in the AMERICAN FEDERATIONIST tells us that there are at this time, up to 100,000 miners in West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Ohio who are so helpless that nothing but general assistance from all the rest of the people can get them out of their misery. In the same issue J. K. summarizes the Pennsylvania strike situation thus: “There is war on in the mines.”

There cannot be any doubt as to the character of that war. It is a class war. It is a war between the employing class and their subservient supporters and the working class. While in the strike regions of Pennsylvania this struggle has assumed the form of an actual state of war, the same class struggle is going on in a somewhat different form in those Yellow Dog regions referred by Andrew Furuseth. And the difficulty again is that this great struggle of the miners is still considered primarily as the business of the organized miners, and only to a very slight degree as the business of all organized labor. While all organized labor is conducting a life and death struggle against Yellow Dog company unionization, it is still possible for a single organization to conclude an agreement definitely pledging itself not to attempt the organization of two street railway lines in which the management has formed company unions and to further bind themselves that “the standard of economic excellence” (excellence, indeed!) reached by these company unions shall be “the standard by which union performance and cooperation with Mitten Management on other properties shall be measured.”

While organized labor seems to be ready to take the last step of revoking the charter in case a union shall be captured by the extreme radicals or communists, organized labor will still refrain from even criticizing the company unionization of a labor union.

This is perhaps the main reason why the question whose business is it to organize the unorganized cannot be answered adequately. For the only answer which will enable organized labor to meet the needs of the times must imply the recognition that a worker is a worker for a' that and a' that. Whether he adheres to one school of thought or another, whether he is skilled or unskilled, whether he is conservative or radical, whether he is extremely conservative or extremely radical, as long as he depends for a living on his labor he belongs to the working class. And the business of every substantial group of workers is the business of the entire working class. With this new general attitude adopted there will still remain many great difficulties of method and form of organization. But the way will be paved for their solution. The first question we must answer is the question—Whose Business?

The "John Mitchell"

Miners' Own Insurance Company

By C. J. GOLDEN

1. A HUSKY INFANT

"THE John Mitchell Mutual Life Insurance Company, an old line legal reserve life insurance company, was organized by miners or their children; and only three years old,—but husky enough to more than hold its own with the big fellows ten to fifteen times its age and weight—that's the JOHN MITCHELL!"

A miner from "down Lykens way" (which is the westmost point in the anthracite coal field) made that brief summary when asked about the United Mine Workers insurance—the John Mitchell Mutual Life Insurance Company.

That statement briefly tells the story of the effort of the mine workers to give protection to their wives and families in the event of death, or to provide a fund for old age, or total permanent disability. The work was planned before 1922. The big strike of that year prevented actual organizing effort. It was late in 1923 when insurance activities were resumed.

Pennsylvania's insurance laws require that applications for at least one million dollars worth of insurance be on hand, together with a guarantee capital fund of two hundred thousand dollars, before a charter would be granted. Before the canvass for either applications or money to provide the guarantee capital fund could begin, men had to be trained in the work, so it was in the spring of 1924 when the real organizing work began.

The company was chartered in October, 1924, and commenced business January 1, 1925. At the beginning of operation only group insurance was written with maximum insurance protection at minimum cost. With the low rates charged, and the large benefits guaranteed by the company, it is needless to say that many of the large companies writing insurance on miners were not in sympathy with the move, but the "John Mitchell" continues its steady, healthy growth. Its first year showed well over a million dollars in insurance policies in force, though the six months strike of 1925 and 1926 cut heavily into operations. The close of its third year of operations finds it with more than four millions of insurance in force and going strong.

Reasons for organizing the "John Mitchell" were that men who investigated insurance charges found that some companies doing business in the coal fields were charging rates that the miners considered exorbitant. The John Mitchell's rates, however, save the miner about one dollar out of every three he spends for insurance.

The group insurance established, miners began asking for ordinary lines, including endowment insurance, straight life and twenty payment life. The "John Mitchell" issued these policies and soon found they were almost as popular as the group, for the bulk of

the miners are thrifty. In particular did the endowment policies take well, one sub-division of the anthracite field becoming known as "Endowment Valley," due to the fact that 92 per cent of the policies sold there were of the savings brand.

2. AGENTS FROM THE MINES.

Organization was effected through the initial efforts of John J. Helferty, the company's president, who had years of experience in the anthracite field under old line companies after he left the coal breaker in early youth. Joining with him in the effort was a small group of miners who had first-hand knowledge of the difficulty of the mine workers getting adequate insurance protection for the rates charged.

The preliminaries attended to, the company organized, officials, in addition to the president, now including: John Strambo and John J. Coonan, vice presidents; James J. McAndrew, secretary; Owen Crossen, treasurer.

Licensed agents have been recruited and trained from the ranks of the miners unions. At the outset most of them handled insurance in their leisure hours. The system now being developed gradually takes them from the mines and puts them full time on insurance work, for the John Mitchell is a husky infant and is making growth at a more than satisfactory rate.

A long-drawn strike the year it was born, and an equally long-drawn coal depression in the third year of its existence have been met and overcome by this husky infant, which has gained more than a million and a half in business during the year just ended. With the return to normal, now forecast by house-cleaning (and coal-cleaning) efforts by operators, the John Mitchell will get into action with all its 134 licensed men, in an effort to cover every community in the anthracite and to spread into the nearby industrial districts.

Standing on its own feet, it has met all comers in the insurance field. It has jostled merrily with opponents, even when they employed questionable methods in futile efforts to halt its progress. In point of services—and, of course, rates—it is in a class by itself. It is an established fact that "Every knock is a boost," for the John Mitchell had made capital of the supposedly adverse advertising which "big business" tried in an effort to prevent the public from learning just how much real insurance is worth.

In an orderly way the John Mitchell is proceeding to take its share of the life insurance business in Pennsylvania. There is no fighting or scrambling for business; just a plain, detailed statement of facts and objective. And that course wins. "Money talks" is an old adage. And it talks to the workers of Pennsylvania, who see that the portion they put into insurance will work to their advantage if they put in into their own company.

Research For Workers

By LOUIS STANLEY

III.

Guides To Magazines

IT is already clear that the first thing that any research worker does upon undertaking an investigation of a subject is to turn to the catalogue to find out what books in the library will help him. A moment's thought will, however, remind us that there are many precious bits of information that do not appear in books at all. They find their way into magazines, especially when the topics are of current interest. Articles that are five, ten and even fifty years old may be exceedingly important today, for very often the material has not even found its way into books. Thus, if one wants to find out something about Sam Parks, the Building Trades labor leader, and why he was sent to Sing Sing, he would have to consult an article by Ray Stannard Baker in "McClure's Magazine" for November, 1903. Baker made a first-hand study of the situation then, and what he writes can hardly be discovered in any other way today.

Now, just imagine having a library with thousands of bound volumes of old periodicals and having to discover among them an article or two that you ought to use but that you have never heard about. Those volumes might as well be at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean. Well, that or a similar thought entered the head of a young fellow who was attending Yale University some eighty years ago, when magazines were not yet so numerous as today. He hit upon the idea of going through the old periodicals and listing by subject the articles that might be of use to himself and his fellow students. This index was in such great demand that he had to have it printed in 1848. Five years later he put out a larger edition but then becoming engrossed in the task of making a living, he did nothing more for more than twenty years, although the demand for his guide became ever more persistent.

This man was William Frederick Poole, one of the greatest librarians that the United States, if not the world, has ever seen. In 1876 he attended the first meeting of the American Library Association and there he proposed the preparation and publication of his index on a cooperative plan. Librarians in various parts of the country undertook on a voluntary basis to list articles in magazines that were assigned to them. The work proved so successful that in 1882 the first volume appeared, indexing various publications from 1802 to 1881. In honor of the founder and editor it was called "Poole's Index to Periodical Literature" and so it is known to this very day. Every five years supplementary volumes were issued until 1908, when it was decided to discontinue the work. "Poole's Index", therefore, ends with January 1, 1907. It is found in most of the larger libraries of the country.

The chief reason for the discontinuance of the pioneer work just described was the appearance of rivals which remedied the chief defects of "Poole's Index". The latter was only published every five years and it ar-

ranged articles solely by topics. What were called *cumulated* guides appeared upon the scene at the close of the century. These indexed articles monthly, then cumulated them in *continuous alphabetical order* every three months, then every half year, then annually, and finally for periods of five years or so. The new indexes were also arranged by author and sometimes by title. Of the new cumulated indexes the one which has survived is the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature." It was founded in 1901 to index magazine articles by subject, author, and sometimes by title from 1900 to the present time. Today it is published weekly, cumulated monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, annually and then again every few years. No thorough research work can be carried on without generous reference to this index. One should learn to use the various cumulations with ease.

Similar to the "Readers' Guide" and just as indispensable are the following special works:

Agricultural Index, since 1916, ten times a year.

Industrial Arts Index, since 1913, bi-monthly.

International Index to Periodicals, since 1907; formerly known as "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature: Supplement", five times a year.

Public Affairs Information Service, since 1915, weekly.

Index to Labor Articles, since 1926, formerly known as "Index to Labor Periodicals," monthly.

All of the above except the last are cumulated at least annually and are only arranged by subject. Unfortunately not every library carries all these indexes.

For Your Research

The only way to learn to use these guides to magazines is to go to the library and consult them for some special subject in which you are interested. See how they work. With the aid of the librarian for recent magazine numbers and of the library catalog for old volumes, secure copies of the periodicals which you find listed in the various indexes. If you have no choice in the matter look up such subjects, as Nicaragua, unemployment, strikes.

Reply to Reader

N. R.: In what ways do American businessmen make use of research that labor ought to imitate?

Answer: This question will be answered more fully in later articles, where the sources of information at the disposal of employers will be discussed. Briefly we might mention these items that are just as important for workers as for their "bosses": the prosperity or poverty of a company at any particular time, let us say, before presenting wage demands; the record of a corporation's dividends and profits; the condition of business in any particular trade or industry and the prospects ahead; the state of business in general; prices of various goods at retail and wholesale; and changes in wages and hours. All these things and much more are public information, available to businessmen and trade unionists alike. Why not make use of this material?

Flashes from the Labor World

John D. Jr.'s Company Union Bites Master's Hand

Can a company union go wrong? Dun't esk. Or at least don't ask Standard Oil's personnel experts. 2,200 oil workers at Tide Water's plant on Constable Hook, Bayonne, N. J., thought their company, a John D. Jr. enterprise, meant business when a nice works council was installed back in 1921. In fact Tide Water's workers actually struck for 11 days for the privilege of joining a company union.

And then the other day 55 men threw down tools with disgust, grabbed lunch baskets and stamped thru the gate. Word flashed from department to department. "Strike!", was the word that ran down the line as group after group pulled on coats and joined their fellow-workers.

What pulled out the men "protected" by the company union, and why did the workers' representatives on the works council suddenly constitute themselves a strike committee to lead Bayonne men to grips with one of the world's mightiest corporations? Confused are the explanations, but one thing is sure. Standard Oil workers revolted when speed-up went one step too far. Wages cut, men fired, work doubled. That was Tide Water's game, and the works council didn't—couldn't—do a thing to stop it. So the "workers' representatives" became strike leaders.

Beware, American industry! As Warren Stone put it, the company unions, the nice little pussies of the bosses, may grow up into tigers.

* * *

40 girls who work 11 and 12 hours a day and have never known a week's vacation, toiling in southern mills and factories, will gather in a summer school near Asheville, N. C., this summer for six weeks of workers' education. From textile mills, cigarette factories, garment shops they'll come, to compare notes, to hear that many workers up north really have the 8-hour day, that there are cities where fathers make enough, through unionism, so that mother and the girls need not toil inhuman hours within factory walls. Virginia and Carolina labor federations and city central bodies will help pay tuition for the girls.

White-collared technical men are workers, too. There's the Union of Technical Men in New York City, for example. Tired of waiting on Tammany politicians forever for a raise promised them, they are using good old union tactics to bring their wages up to the level of building trades and other manual workers. They'll demonstrate in City Hall, 4,000 strong, get 400,000 signatures from the public, put Tammany, "labor's friend", in the hole on the eve of a national election, and then will take "drastic action" if need be, to get a much needed increase.

* * *

When Actors Equity meets "in regular convention assembled," it's a cross between a Shakespearean stage army and a crowd at the Polo Grounds so far as size is concerned. This year the union actors hired the great ballroom of the Hotel Astor in New York and filled it. Actors, of course, can't hold delegate conventions like other unions, because most of them are in road shows, shifting from place to place and they can't leave the show. So every union member within hailing distance of Broadway's bright lights is expected to attend the annual meeting. This meeting is so large as to be representative of the rank and file throughout the country.

* * *

Union porters have laid their cards on the table, and are standing pat for union recognition or strike. Which it will be is up to Pullman and President Coolidge. Union porters voted 100 to 1 for a strike. Now Coolidge, under the Watson-Parker act, must name a board to mediate. Thus, for the first time autocratic Pullman will be forced to talk cold turkey with their porters.

* * *

James H. Maurer, retiring from the presidency of the Pennsylvania Federation of Labor after 16 years of service, talked as a father to 427 delegates. "I've been preaching for years to you men", he said, "to study your industries, to study economics, to study modern business and politics. In this, my farewell address to you, I urge more strongly than ever

before that you do the hardest and fastest thinking you have ever done in your lives. . . Call it (industrial unionism) by whatever name you please. Don't abandon the unions you have now—simply adapt them to the needs of the day. Accept all workers, of whatever skill or type, who are employed in a given mill into the one organization. Sub-divide them later if necessary; keep craft distinctions wherever they will help, but insist on the one fundamental fact—all workers in the same industry should be in the same union and all workers in one plant must absolutely be in one federated organization."

* * *

Art Shields and Esther Lowell Shields are off on an exploration of Dixie. For the first time a thorough study of the new industrial south is to be made in labor's interests. Not muckraking, or finger-pointing. Western Pennsylvania can show as much intolerance as Alabama when it comes to strikes; in Kenosha, Wis., workers must fight for freedom as well as in Charlotte, N. C.

The Shieldses believe that the underlying facts about southern textiles, iron and steel, farming, furniture and tobacco, insofar as they affect labor, need to be known, both if southern labor is to organize and if northern labor is to save itself from low-wage competition from below Mason and Dixon lane. Results of their investigation, which may continue into 1929, will be published in labor newspapers, magazines and finally, in book form.

* * *

Boston & Maine made \$20,000,000 clear since 1920. So they've got to reduce the wages of their railway clerks. Thud, thud, go the reductions of 3 to 10 cents an hour. But the union is getting the derrick into position and will keep wages where they are or even boost 'em, before it gets through. B. & M. stock, worth \$15 a share a few years ago, sells at \$63 now. Probably the poor stockholders can worry along somehow if the clerks do keep their old wages.

This department was prepared by Harvey O'Connor, New York representative of the Federated Press.

Five Day Week Plus

A Means to Remedy Unemployment

By M. H. HEDGES

An interesting question is raised in this valuable article on some of the economic effects of the shorter work week. We look forward to further discussion of it in our columns.

THE pavement teaches bitter lessons. Miles of concrete traversed by foot, when seeking jobs that do not exist, press in upon the consciousness of a man the blind ineffectiveness of the economic order. He realizes then, if he never has before, that industry is not organized with the job at the center, therefore with the human being at its center, but with profit-making at its center, therefore with materialism at its heart. The worker bent on a futile search for work comes to know the economic order at its worse, in its cruellest, coldest, most inhuman aspects.

So it is that joblessness becomes a kind of badge of the working class. One principal difference between the salaried man and the wage-earner is the difference in security. And one great everlasting bond between members of the working class is their bitter out-of-work experiences, shared in common, borne bitterly alone, without the cooperation of other sections of the community, save in the guise of doles or unspeakable charity.

Consequently, very early in the history of the labor movement, trade unionists have attacked the problem of unemployment. And very early appeared the idea of the short-day and the short week solutions. As early as in 1903 the Chicago Federation of Labor analyzed the economic order in this wise:

"Once in about so many years this country is afflicted with what we call hard times. It is a striking instance of the limitations of human wisdom that the wise men have not been able to diagnose the causes of such periodic bad spells . . . But there is one simple and all-pervasive question, rarely if ever taken into account, which explains much; one condition which more than any other, makes toward the glut of markets and the periodic depressions of industry. This axiomatic proposition may be formulated thus: So long as those who produce wealth do not receive for their labor a return sufficient to enable them to buy back the equivalent of what they themselves produce, congestion is inevitable and depressions will vary in frequency and intensity in direct ratio to the discrepancy between values earned and received."

Here is the paradox at the heart of the modern economic order. And it is interesting that this analysis has been rediscovered recently and popularized in a series of books by Messrs. Catchings and Foster.

Just a year before this analysis of our economic illness was promulgated by the Chicago Federation

of Labor, President Samuel Gompers (1902) declared in his report:

"The philosophy and the stern necessity for a reduction in the hours of labor is underestimated and too little understood. There are some who believe, or pretend to believe that a reduction in the hours of labor carries with it a curtailment of production. As a matter of fact every reduction in the hours of labor that has occurred in industry has been followed by a vast increase in production. New machinery, new tools of labor, have invariably followed, while at the same time, increased leisure and opportunity for the workers have made them larger consumers and users of productive labor, giving to industry and commerce an impetus obtainable by no other means."

In other words, the solution for overproduction is increased consumption. Again labor anticipates Messrs. Catchings and Foster.

As early as 1912, the American Federation of Labor heartily commended the five day week," and at various conventions since then, it has reiterated its faith in the short week, and short days as a mitigation of economic ills. Certain labor critics of the economic order do not like to be tied down to an exact figure, and so they declare for "ever increasing wages and ever lessening hours."

What then is new about the present contention for the five day week? Two things: the heavy ever-increasing need for some counterbalance for the constant, ever increasing displacement of men in industry by machines; and second, the swift arrival of the five-day week as an actuality.

Dream Becomes Reality

Yesterday the five-day week was a dream. Today morning it was an academic question. Today noon it is an actuality, so swift are the industrial changes that go forward beneath the surface.

Economists for the New York Trust Company estimate that 1,625,000 new men have been absorbed into the automobile, radio and tourist businesses recently. The deduction is that these men have been displaced from other manufacturing industries by time-saving devices, but these figures on reabsorption fail to indicate at all the extent of displacement since 1920. Senator Shipstead using the Department of Labor's figures, shows that 8,000,000 men have been forced into unemployment since 1920. Deducting the figures for reabsorption, we get the staggering figure of 6,000,000 (approximately) unemployed men. There is not a particle of doubt that machines are creating a problem, more extensive and entirely different from any previously met. The industrial revolution wrought by steam a century ago was a zephyr compared with

the transformation of hurricane size now going forward.

Incidentally it should be remarked that tender-minded persons who see in Henry Ford's introduction of the five-day week an act of charity, or a piece of industrial statesmanship, are foolish. The automobile industry, where mass production obtains, is forced to make this adjustment. Only the other day, the president of the General Motors Corporation declared the five-day week is inevitable. Opposition is coming only from the contractors in the building trades, who fear it, and we shall see why.

Outside the automobile industry, about 150,000 workers, chiefly unionists, now enjoy the five-day week. The painters report 207 cities where the five-day week obtains. Michaels-Stern Company, Rochester, has just instituted it. It exists for all building tradesmen in Miami, Atlantic City, Portland, Oregon, and Seattle. Union office workers are receiving it during the summer months. As each week goes by the practice becomes more wide-spread.

It seems wise, therefore, to ask the questions: What can the five-day week do? What can't it do? And like all economic questions, it is not so simple as it appears. In the first place, there is more than one kind of unemployment.

1. Unemployment due to yearly rise and fall of business (Seasonal).
2. Unemployment due to cyclical ebb and flow of business (Cyclical).
3. Unemployment due to displacement of men by machines (Technological).

In the second place, prosperity, which may be defined as a condition of steady work for all at a wage that will give opportunity for savings and self-development for every member of the family, depends on many conditions. Let us enumerate some of the conditions affecting prosperity.

1. On national resources involved in production. A poor country can't be prosperous no matter how enlightened its people.
2. On the technical process; ability to eliminate waste, and increase production.
3. On gold supply and banking system.
4. On profits taken, and their use.
5. On markets, foreign and domestic.
6. On purchasing power of consumers.

New hours worked may or may not be a factor in prosperity. If the technical process is so advanced, the number of hours worked can be greatly decreased. When man-power was hand-power, the loss of one man would curtail production; but with every industry geared to turn out twice as much goods as the market can absorb, the loss of man-power can go to an unusually extreme. It is this realization that has led labor unionists to declare for a short work week. This declaration is in effect a contention for spacing of workers in such wise that all workers shall get rich benefit from rich technological attainments.

If 30 men produce 3000 units of work in a week of six days

Let 36 men produce 3000 units of work in a week of five days.

So runs the argument.

No doubt that employment (technological) due to displacement of men by machines would yield most of its asperity by this innovation, but what of unemployment due to cyclical rise and fall of business? What we know as periodic hard times?

A Strong Case

With the extra day of leisure the worker is conceived as having time for self-development, recreation, home-building, and civic activities, which hitherto he could not have. And these values are important. They are a test of civilization; and if there were no other arguments for the five-day week and the six-hour day, these are strong enough to push a willing industrial civilization into the abbreviated work-week column.

But it is also conceived that Saturdays off will mean more gasoline consumed, more auto tires worn, more motors scored, more athletic shoes donned, more sandwiches eaten; in short the five-day week is expected to boost the sales of luxury goods. This is another reason why the automobile manufacturers are strong for the proposal.

Why, it is now time to ask, is the five day week not instituted at once, and why do we not enter into such a golden era immediately?

Cyclical unemployment, recurring depressions, over-production, under-consumption—like names for the same set of economic occurrences—present the answer. To see how they apply let's go back to our formula.

30 men produce 3000 units of work in six days, receiving \$1,500.

Now let 36 men produce 3000 units of work in five days, receiving \$1,250.

One man's share per week in the old regime—\$50.

One man's share per week in the new regime—\$34.60.

With the five-day week on the old wage basis, each worker has more leisure, but less money to spend. Maybe he will have to sit at home Saturday, and let the old flivver rot in the garage.

This is a serious question. For the best approach to the solution for cyclical unemployment—recurring depressions—appears now to lead along the road of increased consumption through increased purchasing power.

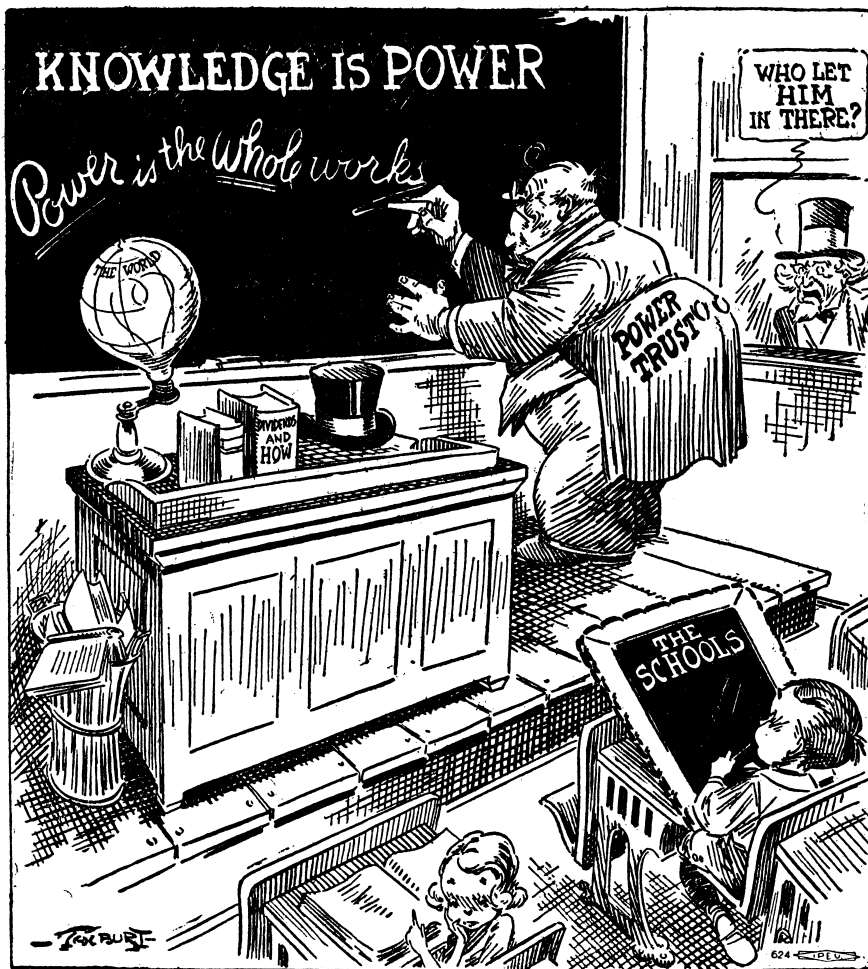
The dilemma is this: Shall we mitigate technological unemployment by the five-day week, only to increase cyclical unemployment through decreased wages? Of course, labor is keen enough not to get caught easily. We note that contractors in the building trades are alarmed at the five-day week movement because the unions are asking the same wages for five days as for six. And we note that organized workers in the clothing trades refuse the five-day week in Chicago because they could not get 44 hours pay for 40 hours work.

This is a sound economic position. Labor must contend that

36 men producing 3000 units of work in a week of five days shall receive \$1,800 or more.

On the face of it, the movement for the five-day

POISONED JUICE



N. Y. Telegram.

The Power Trust overreached itself. By carrying its propoganda into the schools brazenly and shamelessly, even its friends on the Federal Trade Commission were unable to withhold the facts. And the result is that for the present Muscle Shoals is saved from the clutches of the electrical interests.

week looks innocent enough, but, like all economic measures, it soon inducts us into the sharp struggle of economic groups for a larger share of produced income. As one corporation head recently put it, in this writer's presence, "If this railroad installed the six-hour day, who would pay the subsequent 25 per cent loss in production?" Of course, the fair answer is, "Labor has not yet received a just share of the produced income. Indeed, labor and the underlying population, have not benefited proportionately at all in the increased production that technological achievements have made possible. Huge fortunes have been piled up; speculation has increased; genius has intended to bless all of mankind, and yet labor's share

remains virtually the same as it was in the old handcraft days."

Even so, granted that labor is successful in maintaining the same wage for five days as for six, unemployment of the cyclical type is likely to persist. It is likely to, because many complex factors enter into the working of the business cycle. In this article, we have not touched these and have intentionally oversimplified the case. It appears that organized labor has a chance, where strong enough, to win for itself a new and profitable leisure, lessen the toll of machine-displacement, and at the same time, provide for a wiser and more equitable distribution of produced income, which will in turn create a higher type of prosperity.

New Bedford's Revolt

Textile Workers in Finish Fight

By HARVEY O'CONNOR

IN the bright sunshine of a crisp mid-April morning, spinners and weavers, slasher tenders and doffers, streamed toward the mills. Fifty-six sombre, many-eyed mills awaited them and their daily sacrifice of toil, offered up to the thunder of flying shuttles and bobbins dancing madly.

Mothers and flappers they were, men who had fixed a thousand looms and youngsters in the packing room, joking, laughing, chattering in a half a dozen languages. Now they were people, Jenks and Archambault, Silva and Yareski; soon they would just be "hands," changing bales of cotton into finest of cotton weaves, silk and rayon mixtures, the better cloths which vie with lordly silk for milady's favor.

But no! Before the open mill gates they stopped. They were gathered into excited groups, talking eagerly, pointing toward the employes' entries. But none crossed the line that separated street from mill owner's property. Others came, were eyed attentively, then greeted. The tension that marked the first quarter hour disappeared. None had gone in. The strike was on! Once again New Bedford's cotton mill workers had thrown defi back at bosses intent on cutting meager wages. This time 27,000 of them stood shoulder to shoulder against the edict of the Manufacturers' Association that an average wage of \$19 a week was to be cut to \$17.10.

Textile council organizers drove up to group after group. From autos they shouted: "Acushnet is out 100 per cent;" "Not a man or girl in Wamsutta;" "Not a frame working at City Mill." Cheers. Cheers for the leaders, cheers for themselves. Catcalls to the supers and the second hands huddled in the mill offices. Men danced jigs and girls clapped in unison.

By 8:30 mill gates were deserted. Strikers had returned home. Some went to bed to know the delicious feeling of sleep in morning hours. Others went fishing. Women shopped for supper. Men gathered to exchange mill gossip and bring to memory strikes of old when they had fought it out for six months—even longer—with New Bedford's sullen, autocratic mill bosses.

They'd Sooner Starve

Weeks have passed since then; each week end marked by a laconic statement from Secretary Raeburn of the Manufacturers' Association: "The mills will not reopen Monday;" each Monday marked by great mass meetings vowing they'll not take the 10 per cent cut this side of starvation.

Pastors from pulpits have denounced those mill barons, led by the doughty William M. Butler, confidant of Calvin Coolidge and chairman of the Republican National Committee. Pastors have quoted the Methodist social creed, the Catholic bishops' program, the pronouncements of the Federal Council of Churches on industrial relations. They have told the strikers that

they are right; that industry owes them, in return for their labor, a decent living.

Editors have stormed, not against strikers, but against mill owners, branding them as inefficient, incompetent, short-sighted. Merchants, hit by the threat of 10 per cent less cash in their tills, have not mounted Rotary and Kiwanis rostrums to attack union men and women. New Bedford's business and professional classes know who butters their bread.

Who are these strikers, holding aloft in a corner of the old Bay State the banner of textile unionism and showing labor in other cities how a strike can be called and made to stick? Old Lancashire men and their wives, they are, the people back of the textile unions. The Weavers' Protective Association's charter, dated 1891, reads of names common in Bolton, Oldham and Manchester. Unionism is four generations old in the gaunt bones of these English people. Then there are native Americans, chased from Massachusetts' spare soil into the mills. Another wave, that of French-Canadians from old Quebec. These races and mixtures are the backbone of the seven unions which have stuck it through in New Bedford when textile unionism elsewhere was hard put to it.

Portagee and Polack

Back of them, in the more unskilled callings in the mills, are thousands of Portuguese and Polish workers—Portagee and Polack—without the traditions of unionism, in a strange land, cut off by language from their neighbors, clustering about their separate churches, their Narodni Doms and Casas portugasas.

35,000 workers there are in New Bedford's mills; 8,000 still working in mills where the wage cut was not imposed. Some are workers in the silk, but most of them are working on the finer cotton goods in which New Bedford specializes. The bugaboo of southern competition does not scare New Bedford—yet. Competition comes mainly from Rhode Island and several Fall River mills whose costs are roughly comparable.

So eminent a textile authority as M. D. C. Crawford, style editor for Fairchild Publications, the trade authority, minces no terms on New Bedford's manufacturers. Unprogressive, incompetent, backward, ill-advised, these are some of the epithets Crawford hurls at their heads. Labor Bureau, Inc., made a study of the economic conditions in the city, found workers averaging \$19 a week, found mills profiting to the tune of \$50,000,000 in the past 10 years; found profits at 11 per cent over a period of years; found mills grossly over-capitalized and still paying good dividends; found competition unimportant. These facts, checked by economists of the trade, are declared correct.

Will the strikers win? They will, if America's workers admire fighting spirit, intelligence and stick-to-it-

WHERE SHALL JOBLESS GO?

Perhaps Barron's Can Tell Us

BY a peculiar coincidence on the day that the announcement was made that Rockefeller's Consolidated Coal Co. had decided to discharge 20 per cent of its miners, a newspaperman handed us a release issued by Barron's Financial Weekly, which has been going the rounds in Wall Street.

It declares that "the assumption that labor cannot change easily from one job to another in periods of stress is largely fallacious." Quoting from an editorial in that journal it continues: "Superstition dies hard, and one which has cost the world a great deal of misery may be summed up as 'once a miner, always a miner.'" One of the far-fetched examples it gives relates to the British general strike. It showed, says Barron's, "that men could

change their employment with surprisingly little teaching except in the most difficult trades."

But if Barron's Weekly is concerned with lessening the world's misery, it would be more to the point if it would tell us to which industries the miners laid off by Rockefeller should go for jobs. There are four to six million workers unemployed in these days of "prosperity." Shall they go into the railroad industry where workers have been laid off by the thousands? Or shall they go into the automobile industry, where the speed-up is forcing large numbers on to the streets? Perhaps they should enter the basic industries, such as steel, oil and textiles? The New York World is authority for the statement that these basic industries are overdeveloped. Come, erudite gentlemen, we await your answer.

iveness. They do, but it's not easy to get the message of New Bedford over in a country 3,000 miles broad. In the meantime many a striker's child goes to bed hungry in New Bedford and mothers sit long into the night, thinking and wondering. Mothers are mill workers in New Bedford.

The strike is a cold-blooded piece of business for William M. Butler and fellow members of the Wamsutta Club. They have piled up stocks to last them far into the summer. They own mills in nearby Taunton, still working. They have connections with mills in the Blackstone and Pawtuxet valleys, in neighboring Rhode Island. They'll starve out New Bedford, cut wages, then other mill owners, pointing to New Bedford, will cut wages, then New Bedford will have to cut again "to meet competition." Sounds fantastic? Not at all, for that's what's been happening in New England ever since those bitter days of 1921-22 when mill bosses first began wage-slashing.

The strikers must stick it out all summer, stick it out perhaps to Labor Day. Bosses will need production, they will be convinced by then that their "hands" have used their heads and mean business. The notices will be torn down and operatives offered their jobs back at the old wages.

A little money will go a long way in New Bedford to enable strikers to keep away from mills until Labor Day—and Victory. Good soup is nourishing, and now there's lots of green vegetables, and soup meat is reasonable. Then outside New Bedford lies the broad Atlantic, teeming with fish. The "Portagee" are master fishermen from the Azores, in their boats come tons of nourishment for the men, women and children of the strike.

Join U. T. W.

New Bedford is a job American labor can handle. It is possible, with good relief machinery—and New Bedford knows how to run relief machinery—for American workers to make victory certain for these 27,000 strikers

and their 50,000 dependents. The Textile Council brushed to one side the only technical obstacles to outside relief, that of membership in the independent American Federation of Textile Operatives, by voting overwhelmingly to join the United Textile Workers. New Bedford workers have welcomed unity; other organized workers must make that unity mean something.

In these spring days, great white-breasted clouds drift in from the blue sea; strikers, freed from mill monotony, fish in nearby streams and in deep waters; young men and women keep trysts at the mill gates while they do picket duty; at Buttonwood Park thousands gather to hear reports from textile council leaders, to listen to famous speakers from distant cities, bringing substantial checks and messages of cheer. Merchants grumble about bad business; the street car company wails over lost income; mill magnates at the Wamsutta Club get glummer and glummer; children laugh and play near the mills, adding strength daily so that they too some day may take up the thread where mothers and fathers leave it.

In the many strikers' clubs and relief centers, huge soup pots boil happily, sending cheery odors into the streets where kids gather with big buckets. Away go the kids, swinging steaming buckets, generous loaves of bread tucked under their arms. Here and there mill women, who do not understand the meaning of the strike, grumble and fret, threatening to go back. Other women upbraid them; the men look at the groups of arguing women from beneath shaggy eyebrows, the memories of many another long strike giving them a philosophic aloofness.

Just another strike? No, but a strike on which may hinge the future of all textile unionism in America, a strike in the best organized mill town in the country, a strike from whose victory will stream renewed hope and courage to a million savagely exploited textile workers from Maine to Alabama.

New Bedford's great strike must be won.

Facts To Light the Way

Essential in the Labor Fight

By FANNIA M. COHN

EVERY intelligent group is now discussing the necessity of research in its own field—whether that field be medical, industrial, social, psychological or religious. Each appreciates the growing importance of research.

In plain language, research means making a study of the particular problem we are interested in, so that we have a thorough knowledge of every possible aspect of that situation. The industrial world especially feels the need for such study. Nowadays business and commerce are paying almost as much attention to statistics supplied by their research departments as they are to the output of their factories. These figures and this information, compiled by careful study, determine the marketing of an industry. They decide where merchandise shall go—what shall be allowed for the cost of labor and what for the cost of management—how much shall go to shareholders and stockholders. But the primary object of all these studies is to advance the interest of business. Naturally, therefore, the profit element is always greatly stressed.

And yet, with all this money incentive to research, and with all the actual compiling of facts that is being done, our present industrial troubles, according to Foster and Catching's book "THE ROAD TO PLENTY," are due largely to the fact that our industrial order is not intelligently controlled. According to Mr. William T. Foster, we will never know what causes financial and industrial depression until we make a more detailed and scientific study of facts. And this, at the present time, is not being done by industrialists—by the National Association of Manufacturers or by the United States Chamber of Commerce, with all the work that their existing research departments do.

In his analysis of the present industrial situation, Mr. Foster thinks that each individual is doing his own work and building his personal achievements without adequate knowledge of what the other fellow is doing or adequate interest in what the industrial community requires. This statement is particularly interesting and significant at the present time when Capital is adjusting itself to the evasion of the income tax, with the assistance of shrewd lawyers. A popular method of doing this seems to be to shift income to salary. It is said that many large shareholders are also holding important positions in their companies and drawing exorbitant salaries. These, of course, are not taxable as excess profit.

A Matter of Luck

Mr. Foster thinks also, that whenever we make progress in increasing real wages, it is by a stumbling chance and not by planful efforts on the part of

Capitalists. This gentleman warns industrial powers that there is no use in increasing wealth unless there is a better distribution of it. He reiterates that the money and profit economy of today is bad; that even if an honest effort be made to approach the problem of unemployment, there are no facts to be had. No study has been made of supply and demand. No index of employment exists.

Mr. Foster feels that accumulated capital is not a safeguard against industrial depression. It cannot be loaned by the banks at a time when it is most needed. During prosperity, banks are freest in their loans. At the approach of industrial depression, however, when freely circulating money can prevent its spread, they cannot be relied upon. At such a time, all the advice that banks give to their depositors tends to lead to an increase of the depression as they usually counsel them to curtail production, decrease wages and postpone the installation of new machinery. The result is that this stops the flow of money at a time when the country needs more money than ever to prevent unemployment from assuming an acute form for millions of able bodied men and women who are eager to work and to produce their share of the country's wealth. With unemployment comes a glutting of goods on the market.

I have been discussing all this with the view of calling attention to how little, according to Mr. Foster, our industrial kings, magnates and captains are concerned with the real economies of their business, economies which might result in well-being of the mass of people who depend for their daily bread on their wages, and whose wages are a reflection of the health of their industry.

Millions for Speculation

These indictments are made by a man who, by no means, can be accused of wanting to undermine the class to which he belongs. Mr. Foster is an intelligent supporter of our industrial system and aims to prevent its downfall, which he sees as inevitable if the ignorance and mismanagement of our national wealth continues. This ignorance and mismanagement, however, even though it results in unemployment, does not seem to check speculation in Wall Street. This can be interpreted to mean that bankers, in times of depression, feel uncertain of their interest if money is loaned to business men. Still, they must have money in circulation, if they are to get interest. So they make these loans to speculators. Thus, money saved by individuals and corporations, is not in circulation when most needed—the paradox of our present day economic life. A paradox which creates more economic misery. But as long as big business is making profit and paying dividends to its shareholders, why should it be disturbed by this.

LABOR AGE

depressing economic condition of the masses? Those in whose possession the money lies—a part of it entrusted by the workers in the belief that it will be used to the advantage of the community—are satisfied to lend money to speculators for interest and leave six million breadwinners idle.

These exposures of the inefficiency of our capitalists should be enough to make us reflect. Are we in the Labor Movement doing enough to solve the great problem with which workers find themselves confronted, largely as a result of technological mismanagement? What are we doing to expose the incompetence of our industrial rulers and to disillusion the mass of people from their dream that they can depend upon Capital to prevent unemployment.

Unfortunately, many otherwise quite intelligent people still have confidence in the rational management of our economic institutions. They still believe that business affairs are planfully and sagaciously directed. How can we make the masses of people who suffer most from this misdirection of industry, see the truth? How can we present facts to them in a simple, forceful and incontrovertible way? There is one method, and only one, the method of investigation—investigation carried on under the auspices of the labor movement. It should be a research whose results are simplified and boiled down to essentials, printed in pamphlet form for easy distribution among the masses.

Some doubt whether the labor movement should undertake research on a large scale in face of the expense involved. Suggestions have been made that research be done cooperatively by the labor movement and employer's organizations and that the cost be charged against industry.

Of course, I recognize that much research can and should be done in this way. For instance, some phases of industry can be profitably studied jointly by the labor movement and by business management, that is, subjects like the prosperity of industry, the cost of production and comparative statement of conditions in the same industry in America and Europe, the elimination of waste, etc. The causes of business cycles and how they may be prevented may likewise be done jointly.

Labor's Own Job

Neither do I deny the importance of the research work accomplished by scientific and economic organizations. But I do realize that there is a great deal of research which must be done independently by the labor movement.

The employer is naturally interested in that phase of industry which stresses his interest. The labor movement will emphasize the phase of the problem which deals with the workers' conditions. For instance, it is high time we made a study of the correlation of efficiency to unemployment as well as of the relation of increased productivity and the installation of the automatic machine to unemployment.

For all the talk that new industries will absorb those workers put out by their increased productivity has not only been unrealized but unemployment is on the in-

crease. To say to these workers that in the long run they will be absorbed by new industries and that they may meanwhile be satisfied with starvation is brutal. Any delay in caring for them is, besides, bad for the economic stability of the country, as each unemployed worker increases the misery of the unemployment situation, in industries depending on his purchasing power. Talk has proved unavailing against this situation. Labor must study it more carefully. It must also study the effect of fatigue caused by mass production on the health and the mind of the worker, of the economics of marketing costs, of the costs of production of labor and of overhead expenses. It is most essential that the labor movement should make a study of wages and of how the net income is distributed among the various elements engaged in the productive processes as labor, management, capital and rent.

For a time, our building trades were busy and prosperous. Things have slowed down, however, and I think this period in the development of the industry should lead us to a study of the housing problem. We should know the absorptivity, the elasticity of our housing facilities. Have we really built enough houses? Is this slowing up a natural result? Or is the supply sufficient because we do not planfully provide healthy and sanitary housing facilities for our masses.

In its investigations the labor movement should also constantly stress the fact that distribution is no function of production, as it is now practised, but that production is the real function of distribution.

Vocational Guidance

As industry is managed at the present day, parents send their sons and daughters into various trades without adequate knowledge of the prospects that await them. The labor movement should find it important to make a study of the manpower demanded in industry. With facts as a basis, we should be able to advise workers in which industry to send their children so as not to overcrowd the market in a particular industry. Labor should be as fluid as capital so that if the son enters his father's industry he should not thereby throw his parent out of employment.

What I want to emphasize is that the A. F. of L. must be to the individual worker what the Chamber of Commerce is to the business man and the National Manufacturers' Association is to the manufacturers.

Not only have the workers' organizations failed to meet this need in the past but even the Federal organization which was created to help labor, the Department of Labor, has failed to give efficient service. Compare this department, for instance, with the Department of Commerce which is also financed by the government. The Department of Commerce is the research bureau of Big Business. An intelligent business man can get valuable and pertinent information here. Compare this with the very meagre information that the U. S. Department of Labor compiles for the labor movement. I think it is time that the labor movement insist that Congress provide the Department of Labor with a budget adequate for the maintenance of an up-to-date, effective statistical division. We have a right to request that this depart-

ment get as much budget consideration as the Department of Commerce receives.

At a critical time when about 6,000,000 workers are unemployed, one would expect the Government to be much concerned with relieving the sufferings of millions of families that are without means of a livelihood. But instead, the government is busily occupied with reducing the taxes of the well-to-do. This is done at a time when money should be used to help the unemployed.

We are glad to note that the A. F. of L. has made a start in the direction of research but we realize that its means are limited. If its work is to be done on a scale which the present situation requires, it will need more funds. The A. F. of L. of course, will appreciate the research done by various agencies associating themselves with the cause of the labor movement.

We have not yet made a study of the effect of the Sherman Anti-Trust Law on Labor. This law, originally aimed to curtail trust combinations has often been effectively used to hamper the advance of labor. It is especially important now, when the labor movement is being so hampered and crushed through the application of the injunction, that we make a study of the economic and legal status of labor and we may find it advisable to define this by law; in substance, the same as the British Rights of Law Disputes Act of 1906. Once for all we must get rid of the power of the courts to issue injunctions in industrial disputes.

The movement of industries from the city to the country and the resulting economic implications should likewise be worthy of study by the labor movement.

In addition, we should know what is happening to the traditional rating in industry. For instance, a valuable study would be one which determined the position of each group in industry, determined if they still retain skill and measure it, and find out the exact basis on which their wages in comparison with other groups is fixed.

Contacts With Consumers

Another element in labor research must not be neglected. If we are to succeed in carrying on a campaign with the support of the liberal minded elements, we must make a study of who the consumers of a particular industry are. An effort should be made to explain the labor situation to them and to demonstrate how it ultimately affects them. For instance, a strike in the automobile industry may seriously hamper the farmers. If an effort be made to acquaint them with the entire situation, it will not meet with their unreasoning hostility, which is almost always due to lack of information.

There is another promise which mass production has made to the workers which deserves examination. Increased productivity was supposed to decrease prices. What actually happened? Quite the contrary. High prices have been retained—some think, even increased. As a result, mass production did not lead to mass consumption. And this added to the unemployment situation.

I realize that the foregoing comprehensive program of study cannot be put in full swing immediately. But a start must be made. A plan must be presented to the rank and file and to the liberal minded public, many of whom now join various scientific research groups, and would gladly lend assistance to us.

Such a program, comprehensive and inspirational, should impress the rank and file with the intelligence of its organizations. Through such researches the labor movement will discover what an important force it can be in eliminating the many evils with which workers are beset.

Power comes from knowledge and this intelligent approach to workers' problems, if understood by the workers, would bring a new religion to the rank and file of the labor movement.

There is one warning which I should like to give. There is a danger that the aim of research will be merely to accumulate information and publish statistics in volumes to be used by a few economists and investigators. If this should happen it would defeat our own end. It would be most unfortunate and hardly worthy of the time and money put into the research. We must beware of being satisfied merely with scientific treatises and theoretical terminations. What we need is an attempt at research which will popularize our findings and conclusions and present them written in simple language, in pamphlet form, and at a minimum cost. They should be distributed among the masses. The Labor Press can be used for this work if an effort be made to stimulate the reader's interest in their own publications.

Only when the masses understand the danger and place the responsibility for the misery of unemployment will the powers-that-be possibly approach the situation more seriously.

I am not unmindful of the difficulties involved in doing research, financial and otherwise. We all realize that the main function of the union is to organize the workers and to fight for their economic and social betterment. Nothing should divert our attention from this main purpose. The condition of the worker needs our daily vigilance and efficient handling of every minute situation. But economic problems assume large proportions in our modern world. Our method of solving them merits a new approach. They must be taken up in a new, and more serious spirit of study to discover truth.

Let us not go to the opposite extreme.

No one expects the labor movement to become a research bureau. Every intelligent worker has a right to expect that any research it does, considering its limited means, must be confined to the field in which it will most assist him.

But whatever will be done in the way of investigations, our main aim will always be to stimulate organization among the unorganized. The labor movement owes this to the millions outside of its fold as well as to those whom it already guides. Both gain by such organization.

The Psychology of Trade Unionism

How Job Environment Affects the Group-Mind

By HERMAN FRANK, Ph. D.

A SEARCHING analysis of some of the mental facts and events observable in the groups called trade unions will bring out a few psychologic characteristics of trade unionism in general.

The association of minds in groups is of many kinds; but while in all such associations the minds forming the group are reciprocally affected by mutual contact, each mind nevertheless remains a separate source of thinking, feeling, and willing. It follows from this that the "group-mind" is a pure fiction. In actual reality such a collective mind, imagined to be a new entity over and above the minds of the members of the group, does not exist. In social theory, however, we are allowed to build up, from the mass of mental traits common to all wage earners, an abstraction called the "group-mind of labor". Accordingly, therefore, it is wise to distinguish the group-mind from the mind-group. This latter, in contradistinction to the imaginary group-mind, is a tangible reality and results from the effects of mind on mind. Needless to say, the formation of a mind-group does not limit or destroy the separateness and distinctness of the minds so united.

Evidently, then, a trade union, more especially in Great Britain and in the United States, is a mind-group not of a political or religious character but of an occupational character. In this sense of the term, a trade union is a body of men and women of the same craft or occupation, generally wage earners, who associate for mutual benefit and protection in the economic sphere. The phenomenon of British and American trade unionism may be treated as typical of trade unionism at large.

Although the general public tends to regard trade unionists as a class, there are basic differences of policy or character between trade unions. But it is true that many points of contact are to be found among all trade unions. These similarities provide the field within which the general mental characteristics of trade unionists as a whole can be discovered. Besides these general characteristics of the mental outlook of trade unionism, there are other important characteristics which distinguish one trade union from another. Mainly to these specific characteristics of trade unionism the readers' attention is now invited.

Working and Thinking Together

The mental outlook of any group of persons similarly occupied is naturally the same. This is reflected in their language. Carpenters have a special language of their own, including words, which are not used by ordinary men, for the parts of doors and windows. Seamen and railwaymen also have their own language. These characteristics do not occur except where there is a distinct mind-group.

The more the group is a co-operation between its members, the more useful the special language or special grouping of ideas tends to be. Every game creates its own slang; baseball, football, horse-racing, golf, each has its own vocabulary, which the votaries employ among themselves. Likewise, every family has a store of special phrases due to the comedies of its own experiences, unknown to the next-door neighbor. On the other hand, the looser the connection between the members of the group, that is to say, the more "individual" the occupation, as for instance the artist's work, the less useful are the common ideas and words.

Not only language, but dress, the time and place at which work is done, and the conditions under which it is done, all go to the making of the mind-group. It is natural that men in such conditions should think and act similarly, and in so acting affect one another. Consciously the attitude and action of the trade unionist are affected by the attitude and action of his fellows in the craft. In consequence, the trade union tends to embody in a well-defined form the mental attitude of the craft. Thus the craft unions are expressions of a tradition, a common experience, leading to certain rules and customs. The prominence of customs in regard to apprenticeship in certain well-established unions shows the importance of tradition in this mind-group.

Now, the hostility to the uprooting of custom is one of the securities of all civilized life. Why so? Simply because to violate or destroy such customs necessarily increases the uncertainty of those who have found these very customs useful in man's struggle for existence and for social betterment. The conservatism of craft unions is thus more than naked selfishness. It is rather a contribution to the whole complex of civilization at one stage of its growth. But this stage also will be out-lived and forgotten, for automatic machinery, indispensable to social progress, destroys the hard and fast lines of division between the several crafts.

The Effects of Craft Fellowship

It is essential to social well-being that industry and work in general should be regarded not as a source of income but as a public service. Yet this desirable mental trait in a worker's outlook is very often dependent upon his occupational environment. Social-mindedness is thus one among other differences in the characteristics of mind-groups in different basic trades. This assumption requires, however, a brief elucidation.

For example, the attitude and emotions of an organized railwayman are very different from those of a member of the miners' union. The railwayman is always in contact with men of other occupations—passengers, skilled mechanics, or laborers. Being employed on the trains, he is often in different places, where customs and manners differ. Furthermore, in the very services

he performs his world appears as a part of a much vaster and a more complete world. The persons served by unionized railwaymen are all near at hand, and the workers' responsibility toward the public is obvious. In case of a conflict between labor and capital such trade unions are easily swayed by public opinion.

The coal miner, on the contrary, lives in one spot surrounded by fellow miners. His environment being narrow and all of a piece, the coal miner is likely to consider himself the predominant factor of the situation. The persons who use most of the coal that he produces through hard work, and often at the risk of his life, are all far-away and invisible. Therefore, the miners regard coal mining, in the first place, as a source of income and not as a service. In the second place, moreover, if the occupational characteristics of this mind-group have been reinforced and added to by a large trade union organization, as is the case in Great Britain, the attitude of mind of the miners, particularly when they come into conflict with employers, is rather "down-right" than hesitating, rather intractable than amenable to external influences making for moderation. This has been proved by recent developments in the British trade union movement.

But it should also be noted that in the case of the workers who live apart from the rest of the community, the general public is ignorant of their fully justified grievances. Such ignorance is behind the public's fear of an assertion of the will on labor's part. The blind hostility, in turn, inflames labor's sentiment against the public. This alone is enough to reinforce the tendencies to "downrightness" among such a segregated group as the coal miners.

Segregation of occupational groups may be of two kinds. In the case of the bituminous coal miners the areas are usually in many different parts of the country, whereas in the textile and garment trades the workers are found largely in a few parts of the country or "markets". In both cases there is evidence on the workers' part of a sense of living apart from the community as a whole.

The Effects of Size of Union

Another outstanding characteristic in the group-mind in trade unionism arises from the size and organization of the units. Everyone knows that it makes a world of difference to one's attitude if one is a member of a large or of a small group, be this group a state or a sport club. In just the same way the group-minds of trade unions differ.

First of all, the small union tends to be conservative. There are about one thousand trade unions still in Great Britain, each with a very small membership of a few hundred living in one locality and interested in a very narrow range of activities. They are still hardly more than clubs or benefit societies, such as existed in the early days of trade unionism. Correspondingly, the group-mind of such small groups is usually narrow and unaware of the existence of world industry and world markets. Their main aim is negotiation for wages or conditions with small employers, and their outlook is altogether sectional.

By contrast with these small unions, the great unions

CLOAKMAKERS WIN 40-HOUR WEEK

As we go to press we learn that at a conference between the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union and the New York Cloak manufacturers the latter agreed to establish immediately the forty-hour week. On Monday, June 4, therefore, all New York cloak shops will operate on a 40-hour, five day week, basis.

This union held its convention at Boston during the past month. It was gratifying for us to note a recommendation made by the committee on Officers Reports that the incoming General Executive Board should continue to support Labor Age and to cooperate in its future progress was adopted unanimously.

During this past month, too, another important union in the needle trades held its convention, namely, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, and also laid the foundation for progressive and constructive work. We congratulate both these organizations.

have a type of group-mind which turns aside small issues and pierces to fundamentals. This is the second effect of size of union upon its outlook. Men in large, varied groups naturally find that what is similar in the position of vast numbers is most important. Wages differ, conditions in different shops or districts differ, the characters of different employers differ; but everywhere some facts are still the same—for example, the danger of unemployment, insecurity of tenure, control by irresponsible capital, and the lack of social-minded managers. Hence it is only the large unions and amalgamations that may be willing to base their policy not only on negotiation as to wage rates, but on modifying the prevailing system in industry.

Thirdly, the large size of the units is conducive to new forms of organization with corresponding changes in the workers' outlook. Officialism is an inevitable result of centralization and of a federative structure. Therefore, the mental attitude among the members of large unions includes a vague suspicion of differences of interest between the rank and file and the officials. Hence the group-mind of the large union is often very excitable. The "leaders" of such unions must show that they are not traitors. To state the idea in another way, the rank and file must feel certain that their own outlook is represented in the action of their officials.

The specific difference in the group-minds of different great unions is due to the different forms of organization adopted. The less highly centralized organizations limit the power of officialdom, with a beneficial effect upon the group-mind. Again, if all the members of the Executive do not live at the centre of government, and are therefore more easily influenced by the rank and file, they scarcely are central officials in the strict sense of the word. In such cases the Executive most likely will not dominate the formation of the group-mind and will provide scope for self-expression on the members' part.

Wars, and Peace Rumors



War and questions of war keep the pot boiling in every land. There is even some talk about the outlawry of war, but most of it by diplomats with tongues in their cheeks.

In England Austen Chamberlain is about to sign Kellogg's treaty. The London Daily Herald's cartoonist depicts Mars in tears. "You're not going to let me down now, old man?" says he. "I thought we were the best of pals." They still are, and Sir Austen might have reassured him by mentioning the fact that Nervous Nellie, soon after submitting his anti-war treaty, made a speech to the effect that the right of national defense is inalienable. And as everyone knows, no modern country with a live diplomatic staff ever indulges in an aggressive war.

Just look at Nicaragua, as Westerman in the Ohio State Journal bids us to do. We see American marines who have died for what? In a defensive war, our State Department tells us. United States' special interests in the Monroe Doctrine must be defended.

With that sort of an example before them European nations and Japan will find it easy to sign a treaty "to outlaw war."

"For East is East and West is West, and the twain will never meet," wrote Kipling, and yet we see, with Kirby in the New York World, a China coming out of the mist. The Chinese Republic is fighting hard to leave the clouds and chains of imperialist brigandage behind.

A cycle of Cathay ends and liberty steps forth!

Believing With Coolidge

Workers' Capitalist Illusions

WE do not remember that President Coolidge has ever been considered a friend of labor. The ruthlessness with which he broke the police strike in Boston is in line with his indifference to the outrageous situation in the mining regions of Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia. Still there is a labor paper, the Chronicle, owned and controlled by the Central Trade and Labor Council of Cincinnati and vicinity, which is ready to identify the philosophy of organized labor with the professed beliefs of President Coolidge. The trend of thought of the Chronicle is not peculiar to that labor journal. Unfortunately, it is vaguely shared by substantial sections of organized labor, thus supplying additional proof that a fundamental change in the psychological attitude of labor is absolutely essential.

Says the Chronicle in its editorial of May 5th: "Organized labor believes with President Coolidge who in his D. A. R. address said: 'Our theory of society rests on a higher level than Communism. We want our people to be owners of their own property in their own right. We recognize that they are all capitalists by nature. We want them to be all capitalists in fact!'"

Far be it from us to enter here into discussion of either Communism mentioned by President Coolidge, or Socialism, to which the editorial of the Chronicle refers. What we are here concerned about is whether organized labor can so easily be taken in by such assertions as "We want our people to be owners of their own property in their own right" and "we want them to be all capitalists in fact." There must be something wrong with our entire mental attitude if we can for a moment seriously assume that the powers that be really want the working people to become all capitalists in fact. Why, when President Coolidge speaks of "the people" he least of all thinks of the working people.

At this writing, Coolidge has vetoed the bill passed by Congress to provide for the payment to postal service employes of an additional ten per cent of their hourly pay for night work. This veto will naturally help the supervisory employes, clerks, watchmen, messengers, laborers, carriers and motor vehicle employes to own property in their own rights. A niggardly ten per cent extra pay for night work is begrudged by President Coolidge to workers whose wages are proverbially low. And still there are those among us who believe with President Coolidge, and who endorse for the presidency a member of his Cabinet. Far more important, however, is the fact that the professed

theory of society which would make all our people owners of property in their own right, is a mere fiction created with a deliberate purpose, to delude the working people and deprive them of that militant readiness to depend upon their own organized efforts which is the only way in which they could really improve their conditions.

Just a few statistics taken from official government sources will suffice to show that the real tendency of our economic development is the other way. Rather than to increase the number of property owners, this number is continually reduced. Instead of becoming capitalists, a great section of the working classes and farmers are actually being pauperized, deprived not only of property in their own right but also of any chance to make a living.

According to official statistics of 1925, 1,830,000 wage earners in manufacturing industries and 418,000 railroad workers were getting an annual wage of less than \$1,000 a year, that is, less than \$19.23 a week for full time employment. That is about 25 percent of workers on railroads and in manufacturing industries have been reduced to the starvation wage of \$19 a week, when they are lucky to get a full week's employment. The average wages of farm laborers without board amounted to less than \$50 a month.

The farmers are not much better off. In 1880 only a quarter of all the farms in the country were operated by tenants; in 1925, the percentage of tenants had gone up to 39 percent, that is almost two-fifths of all the farms were operated by tenants. In other words, 14 percent of the farmers who were owners of property in their own right in 1880 have now been converted into tenants.

Prof. W. I. King has shown that the "poor", sixty-five percent of the people own but 5 percent of the wealth of the nation, while the "rich" two per cent of the people, own 60 per cent of the wealth of the nation. In a recent article in the New Republic, Prof. Slichter has shown that the process of the concentration of the wealth of the nation in the hands of a few has made rapid strides after the war. Now more than ever it is absurd to speak seriously of all the people becoming capitalists.

To tackle its problems with any prospects of arriving at a solution organized labor must shake off all illusions of becoming capitalists. Labor must cease to depend upon theories of society propounded by the spokesman of the "rich" two percent. Only by assuming an attitude in accord with its own condition, will labor be in a position to overcome the great difficulties which stand in its way and come into its own.

J. M. B.

Following the Fight

With Comment Thereon

OUR AIM:

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

ROCKEFELLER'S FRANKENSTEIN

A Company Union Develops Teeth

WE have stated in these pages repeatedly that company unionism was a fake and a fraud, and that at the first actual touch it would crumble like a house of cards. Our contention was proven to be correct, when 2,200 workers employed by the Tidewater Oil Co. at Bayonne, N. J. walked out the other day. And they won their strike in short order, just as we said they would two years in an open letter to the men of Constable Hook, "Oil Workers, Organize!" Five of their seven demands were granted after six days, and the company was compelled to give a promise in writing that no one would be discharged for striking.

It is significant that the 12 workers representatives on the works council led the strike. But more significant is the fact that the men voted to assess themselves one cent a day per man "to prepare for similar emergencies."

When is a company union not a company union? When it begins to build a war chest, a strike fund. This might well be said to be the turning point in converting a bosses' union into a genuine union.

Two years ago we had the pleasure of handing copies of LABOR AGE to the Oil workers at the company gates.

At that time we said to them:

"You cannot get as much as possible, while the company runs your organization. You cannot get what is due you as long as the Standard can prevent you from meeting together, in one group, and making your demands as one group. Do the oil company officials never see each other and talk things over? They are meeting together constantly and talking your situation over amongst ourselves. Why cannot you do likewise?"

"That very fact in itself shows what a piece of fakery your so-called 'Republics of Labor' are. Did you ever hear of a 'Republic' in which men could not talk things over with their fellow-citizens for the common good? You have no 'Republic of Labor' on the Hook. It is an 'Autocracy of Capital'."

And in the following issue of LABOR AGE, we said, referring to the "Republic of Labor," "The workers on the Hook will not be such easy marks, we prophesy."

The workers grasped the idea immediately, but it took some time before they acted. It was that pet of the personnel managers, the speed-up, with its consequent laying off of men, and the increasing burden on those who remained that strengthened the determination of the men for a show-down. Spontaneously the workers downed tools in one department. They were immediately followed by workers in other departments until all the manual workers were out. White collar workers caught the enthusiasm of the strike, and many of them walked out, too.

And once the strike was on, it made no difference that they had been serfs of a "Republic"; they acted like real citizens of the Labor World, and showed as fine a spirit as could be found anywhere. They had no inhibitions against mass picketing, for hundreds of them gathered around the gates to let the world and intending strike breakers know about the situation.

The company's ultimatum that if the strikers did not surrender unconditionally they would lose every penny of sick and death benefits, insurance and old age pensions, only angered the men more, and gave them a pointed lesson which they will never forget.

The workers countered by having their strike committee confer with "company union" representatives of other Bayonne Standard Oil plants. They promised that the men in their plants would not handle Tidewater oil. "If they do," said the head of the Standard works council, "we'll pull every man out, too." (Doesn't that sound like real trade union language?)

Standard Oil feared the strike would spread and capitulated.

Bayonne workers have struck a blow at Company Unionism which may well be decisive and which if rightly understood by the workers may bring about its early demise. At any event many a personnel manager is going around with a headache worrying about the health of this industrial "war baby," company unionism "conceived in sin and born in iniquity."

Company Unions must either be destroyed or transformed into genuine labor organizations.

FOUND WANTING

"IS Real Silk Real?" was the title of an article in these pages a year ago, which was based upon a study made by the managing editor of Labor Age of a midwestern company union. He had talked with Mr. J. A. Goodman, the head of the Real Silk Hosiery Mills at Indianapolis, his Good Friday, Arthur Zinkin and the workers. His answer to the question was emphatically in the negative. Real Silk Employees Mutual Benefit Association was called a fraud and a sham.

Now comes the report of the Department of Research and Education of the Federal Council of Churches and the Social Justice Commission, Central Conference of American Rabbis, whose representatives made an impartial study of the E. M. B. A. It makes mincemeat of the E. M. B. A., and pointedly calls it a failure. It is as severe a condemnation as could be expected.

We would like to quote from the report at length, but have space for only one paragraph:

"The revolt in the full fashioned department was suppressed only at the cost of installing 'individual contracts' together with the espionage, suspicion, and discontent which still obtain in this department. The E. M. B. A. must be said to have failed to adjust the problems of industrial relations in this department. It has not been able to mediate between the management and the workers so as to secure even a clear statement of policy from the company. Much less has the E. M. B. A. been able to bring the company to face the issues in the department squarely or to adjust them satisfactorily."

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

NEW Jersey justice is notorious for its ruthless suppression of every effort of workers towards organization. The case of Roger Baldwin during the Paterson strike of 1924 was a striking example. The police as usual assumed the part of strike-breakers and denied the strikers their constitutional rights of free assembly. A protest meeting was called with Roger Baldwin of the American Civil Liberties Union as the chief speaker. The police dispersed the meeting and Baldwin was later sentenced to six months' imprisonment and a few others to fines for an alleged intent to hold an unlawful, riotous and riotous assembly. Two higher courts sustained the conviction. On May 14, 1928, the Court of Errors and Appeals finally reversed the judgment. Considering the record of New Jersey justice this decision is no doubt a step forward; it provides some safeguards for the freedom of assembly. It cannot, however, be considered by any means as a serious victory for the right of workers to unhindered meetings at times when such meetings are most essential, as during strikes. The wording of the opinion of the highest court of New Jersey would still make possible to declare an assembly unlawful not because of any overt act upon the part of those assembled but because of an apparent "common intent" or because of a *tendency* to inspire "rational, firm and courageous persons with well-grounded fear." As long as we deal with intentions and not with acts, as long as a gathering of working people may be declared unlawful because some persons in the neighborhood who consider themselves "courageous" choose to be inspired with fear, the free-

dom of assembly becomes subject to the discretion of some hostile police authority. During strikes some excitement is inevitable. The local press which is almost always directly or indirectly subsidized by the employers keeps up a propaganda, spreading all kinds of alarming rumors and inspiring all kinds of fears. Under this opinion of the highest court the police could always find some pretext to declare a meeting unlawful. And little consolation could be derived by the workers if even the Court should later disagree with the judgment of the police. This will not remedy the damage done to the cause of the strikers. Labor must insist on unqualified freedom of assembly.

HIBERNATING

THROUGHOUT the country labor leaders are complaining of the lack of interest upon the part of the rank and file in the regular activities of their unions. Meetings are ignored or else poorly attended. Labor Day cannot be fittingly celebrated because the men won't turn out. Meetings called to protest against the abuse of the injunction cannot draw enough workers to fill the halls; while educational institutes dealing with such a vital question as *unemployment* attract but the faithful few. What seems to be the matter with labor?

Some leaders say labor is too well off to take an active interest in the affairs of their union. Others say the radio keeps the workers at home and yet they are not too lazy to attend prize-fights. Others say the movies furnish too much competition for the unions to overcome. Are these explanations valid or are they just excuses?

That labor is hibernating at a critical moment in its history is clear to the dullest; that such hibernation is dangerous is evidenced by the gradual decline in union membership at a time when Company Unions are growing by leaps and bounds; that this is encouraging the abuse of the injunction is evidenced by the ease with which they are issued and the brazenness of the injunction judges. Unless something is done to energize the labor movement the outlook for industrial and political progress is dark indeed.

Labor is hibernating because it has had nothing to inspire it to worthwhile activity. The old battle cries of a bygone age have lost their effectiveness and yet the leadership of labor has found nothing new to meet changing conditions. How can skilled workers enthuse over the cry of "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work?" The unorganized, to whom this cry might have meaning, are practically ignored by the leaders of labor. In this crisis labor needs a new clarion call to action. Such a galvanizer can only be some worthwhile ideal, such as struggling for a saner social and economic order motivated by social welfare rather than by private greed. A saner social and economic order cannot be achieved unless the workers will be educated to organize industrially the economic field and then to strengthen their economic gains by independent political action. Without the control of the political machine they will still be at the mercy of the injunction judges.

Let labor preach this gospel with renewed vigor and added fervor and it will be amply rewarded!

In Other Lands

JAPAN'S SHREWD GAME

China's Civil War Nears End

FROM China the cables, not always trustworthy, tell us that the Japanese have practically thrown their support to the Southern or Nationalist forces through their giving an ultimatum to General Chang Tsolin, the Northern dictator, and tool of European imperialists, that he must not carry the Civil War into Manchuria, which he would undoubtedly wish to do should Peking fall into the hands of the Southern army. As Chang will have no place to retreat after he loses the capital we can see nothing but a surrender or a compromise between the Dictator and the South in which he would be allowed to save his face, a little of his prestige and, perhaps, his estates and property. Chang who is one of the most reactionary and most unreliable political generals in China, has been on the payroll of the European imperialists since 1921.

There are two chief reasons for the new stand of the Japanese statesmen regarding China. The first is that Manchuria is a sort of protectorate of Tokio wherein there are large investments of Japanese capital. It is the chief rice granary of Japan. In fact, without Manchuria Japan would have a hard time keeping the cost of living down, and with that, discontent and revolutionary outbreaks. Consequently, the Japanese know only too well what would happen to their nationals, their colonists and their rice fields, that is to say, their food supply, if Chang were allowed to retreat into Manchuria and let his troupes rest and recuperate, while he himself, as dictator, would be in a safe position to make new deals with the British or other imperialist powers interested in China. There would be nothing left for the Southern or Nationalist forces to do but to carry the war into Manchuria before Chang's plans could materialize.

The second reason for Japan's interfering, and at least giving moral support to the Nationalists, is the very much overlooked fact that as long as the warfare was in the Yangtse kiang valleys and

plains, where the British have vast interests the Japs did not care. We believe they rather sneakily were pleased, for it gave them a chance to consolidate their trade and interests in the North and other places without being un-neutral on one hand or disloyal on the other. Now that the Southern forces have pushed North, their political controllers, or Koumintang Party having become democratic or bourgeois, and having rid the armies and the cities of the Communists, the Jap statesmen see no harm in the South or Canton getting possession of Peking and all China proper. It means the end of the Civil War and the last of piracy, robber rule of the feudal war lords of the North. For Japan all this means more trade and the ousting of the British, their chief competitors, from the best part of China.

One naturally asks: Where does Russia come in? It should be remembered that Russia is also an Asiatic power and understands Oriental psychology better than the British and other Europeans. There is also less race hatred against the Russians. The Napoleonic phrase "Scratch a Russian and you find a Tartar" means a lot in Asia for the Asiatic looks on the Russian as a blood brother but just a bit removed. Russia has Mongolia now. She will also have a free hand in Turkestan and other parts of Central Asia. Better than all the Soviet Union will have the railroad through China to carry its goods and merchandise to the Pacific ports over the shortest route. So that even though the Communists were ousted from the Koumintang Russia is the winner in the diplomatic game that was being fought in and around the Civil War in China.

Just what the British can or will do to retrieve their lost prestige, power and commercial footing is hard to predict at this stage. The victory of the Japs and the Russians leaves the British Hong Kong which is not of much commercial value owing to the periodical boycotts. We believe the stage is set for a middle class democratic republic in China.

GERMANY'S ELECTION

With returning prosperity and more stable industrial relations the Reich is swinging from the extremes of Chauvanism to middle class republicanism and orthodox socialism as evidenced by the elections held in Germany the other day.

The imperialists were ousted, and for that no one is shedding tears. It will mean the end of race hatred as preached by General Von Ludendorf, the Heffin of the Reich. The Social Democrats being the largest party and

the Centrum or Catholic party, will control the next government. No serious change in Germany's foreign policy is likely to occur for the Social Democrats are pledged to peace and reconstruction. The Communists who made very large gains will have a substantial group in the Reichstag. Nor can the Communists accomplish much beyond some perfunctory obstruction during the sitting of the Federal legislature or Reichstag, unless they combine with Ludendorf and his die hards and other groups of Nationalists of various brands and hues. Even then owing

to the large majority of the combined Social Democrats and other republican moderates they can not be effective.

This does not mean that the vote cast for the Communist party should be minimized or belittled. It has certain important significance inasmuch as it indicates that the workers of the large cities, where the Communist vote was strongest, are swinging to the left. In view of Germany's history since the Armistice this may not be an unmixed blessing. It will probably cause the new government to pass the progressive legislation promised the workers several years ago but which was held up for one reason or another. The big question is: Will the Communists be constructive in their tactics?

BRITISH "MONROEISM"

The Kellogg notes to Britain asking that war be outlawed was accepted by Sir Austen Chamberlain, the British Foreign Secretary, but with a very big string attached to the acceptance. Chamberlain reserves the right to define what war is and to proclaim a sort of Monroe doctrine, not alone around the British Empire, which would block Canadian annexation to the United States or the sale of the British West Indies, the restoration of the Falkland Islands to the Argentine Republic or the return of Honduras to Central America but certain large areas of contiguous territory now semi-protectorates of London, such as Tibet and the German Colonies mandated to Britain. And we must not overlook Egypt and the Soudan in Africa: Palestine and Mesopotamia and other Near East lands between India and Turkey.

Kellogg talking of outlawing war while our forces are in Nicaragua and other non-American territories is preposterous and absurd. The same applies to the British while they are in Egypt and other non-British lands against the wishes of their inhabitants.

AN ASIATIC BLOC

A few days ago the cables gave the significant news that the King of Afghanistan had signed a treaty of alliance with Kemal Pasha at Angora. Such is the manner in which the Afghan King concluded his tour of the West. He saw Rome and its Fascisti, Paris with all its brilliancy, London and the British Fleet, Germany and its wonderful industrial plants, Moscow with its Red Army, its wonderful ballet and its horse races. No one knows whether he signed a treaty with Chicherin the Soviet Foreign Secretary or just arrived at an understanding regarding their mutual interests. But the actual and first treaty of alliance the King signed was with the Republic of Turkey. This will not be lost sight of by the imperialist powers who are trying to exploit the Near East and Far East regardless of the wishes of the people.

Turkey, with Arabia sympathetically inclined, Persia and Afghanistan now form a strong block across the Western part of Asia, a bulwark against the imperialists of Europe. With Siberia and Russia in the North and Japan in the East it looks as if a movement was on foot to expel the European exploiters from Asia. China, to all appearances, will be the first battleground.

OIL AND MINERALS

Wherever oil, gold and phosphates are to be found a capitalist imperialist nation is to be seen intriguing, for

or grabbing the lands of the backward nations or peoples. The reason for most of the troubles and rivalries of the imperialist nations in the Asia and Africa is oil. Mesopotamia, Persia, Georgia and other countries would have been left to develop along their own natural lines and in accordance with their national needs. But oil was found and Greece, England, Italy and France began securing mandates and quarreling over the right to exploit the lands.

Trans-Jordania is the latest victim. The British capitalists have got a strangle hold on it and some twenty million tons of phosphates are to be taken from the land without any return to the people except the coolie wages that are paid to the local workers.

IRELAND AND FOREIGN CAPITAL

According to the official labor papers in Dublin the Irish who more than any other people go into hysterics over the labels and tags of nationalistic freedom while forgetting all about the fundamental and essential factors in the situation, relating to the life and labor of those who compose the majority of the population. After fighting to drive out the "foreigner" and setting up a "native" government representing the people this same cabinet invites and secures foreign capital, much of it American, to come in and exploit the country and the people. As a result Henry Ford and others who know absolutely nothing about the wants of the people attack the fiscal policy of the country and send cold shivers down the backs of the members of this same "native" government. The Labor organs say foreign finance is as deadly as foreign battleships. The Irish are learning now that Americans long know that political freedom when not backed up by economic and social freedom is largely a sham and a fraud.

INDIA'S TEXTILE STRIKE

The sleepy stagnant Orient is waking up. Bombay had all its cotton and jute mill workers on strike and much the same scenes were enacted in the Hindu industrial capital as were enacted in Paterson, N. J., Lawrence, Mass., and other U. S. textile cities. An attempt to get the weavers to operate three looms instead of two was the direct cause of the strike. Armed police fired on the strikers killing and wounding several of the demonstrators. 150,000 were on strike which lasted four and a half months.

In the Punjab, cables tell us, British forces "fired on a mob" which had gathered at Kothala village to prevent 200 prisoners who had been rounded up for "disobedience to Durbar" and were about to be transported to the interior of the province or to one of the large cities on the coast. Seven were killed and fourteen wounded, the British reported. The irony of the foregoing is apparent for it was just at that time Sir John Simon and his Commission were telling the world that India was loyal and that British rule was secure. As shootings and massacres on a small scale are matters of the day Liberals in England and radicals everywhere are doubting the promises of reform made to India by Simon and company.

The British Trade Union Congress sent \$1,250 to the Bombay strikers which though small was symbolical and prophetic of the big things labor can do when it acts and thinks internationally.

PATRICK L. QUINLAN



"Say It With Books"



WHERE WORKERS CONTROL Russia's Social Insurance and Unions

Labor Protection in Soviet Russia. By George M. Price, M. D. With an Introduction by Dr. Alice Hamilton, N. Y.: International Publishers, 1928. 128 pp. 50c.

Soviet Trade Unions. By Robert W. Dunn. N. Y.: Vanguard Press. 1928. 238 pp. 50c.

THESE two books are, in a very real sense, supplementary to each other. They present fascinating accounts of the effort of labor unions and the political state to protect the workers under the proletarian regime now occupying one-sixth of the surface of the globe. Dr. Price approaches his task from the standpoint of a physician who has always taken a special interest in the health of the working class. For many years he served as the Director of the Board of Sanitary Control of the Women's garment industry in New York and his unofficial visit to Russia in 1927 to study health conditions was the third of his trips to that country. Twice before in 1913 and 1922 he was sent as a representative of the U. S. Department of Labor and as such laid a foundation for the present volume. The result is a scholarly and objective survey of protective legislation in that country.

Mr. Dunn, the author of the **Americanization of Labor, American Foreign Investments and Company Unions**, brings to his task a wide knowledge of the labor movement on both continents and his second visit to Russia was devoted almost entirely to a first hand study of the Russian trade unions.

Both authors give us a background for their studies a portrait of labor conditions under the Czarism. And both rightfully claim that the present situation cannot be adequately judged without keeping in mind the status of the workers in the pre-revolutionary days.

Dr. Price concludes that, prior to the revolution, the organized workers had little or no standing in the country, and that labor organizations, except during short periods, as for instance, immediately following 1905, were regarded as illegal. The inspectors for the government labor bureau were largely agents for the employing class and their activity consisted to a considerable extent in breaking up strikes. Few safeguards were provided against accident, occupational disease, child labor and various forms of exploitation.

Today the government is striving valiantly to protect workers in their hours, in sanitation, in accident, sickness, unemployment and old age. To be a member of the union is not a criminal act, but a badge of distinction and nearly

10,000,000 workers are said to be members. Dr. Price presents them as a rather privileged group. They are exempted from many forms of taxation. They enjoy a reduction for tickets to theatres and motion pictures. They are preferred students in certain schools. Their payments for social insurance are small. They are favored by cheaper rents for housing. They are entitled to sojourns in rest houses, sanitoriums and other institutions as free patients. And so the privileges extend.

Dr. Price sets forth the Labor Code of 1922 which is applied to all forms of labor. This code refuses to permit private employment exchanges. It fixes a minimum wage, provides that no deductions be made from wages during non-employment resulting from the fault of the employer and sets up various committees for the adjudication of disputes. It provides for an eight-hour labor day and for special rest periods during the week. It protects women and minors in various special ways.

The government has made several departures in legislation regarding safety and sanitation, although, as the author brings out, "the economic and industrial life of the community has been so terribly dislocated that it will take years to put them in workable condition. Moreover, Russia has never been famed either for good sanitary or safety conditions in its factories."

Dr. Price gives much space to the selection of factory inspectors, who consist largely of trade unionists and technicians. Under the system of social insurance, participated in by the unions, the employers contribute all, the workers nothing. The rate of insurance contributions, he claims, is larger than in other countries. The author concludes with a description of the industrial hygiene institutions. The book clearly indicates the will of the government to protect its workers by every conceivable means. Its chief defect is its failure to give sufficient data regarding the practical application of these various acts to the complex industrial situation. However, the mere compilation of the measures enacted into legislation is of distinct value.

Mr. Dunn has not contented himself with studying the trade union movement in a center like Moscow, but has travelled into the provinces and examined the structure as it is actually working. He deals in detail with the organization and power of the factory committee,—the basic unity of the Russian trade union—the various departments of the unions,—which are for the most part industrial rather than craft—organizational, educational and economic. He tells the reader how the workers bargain in

A HAPPY RUSSIAN TRIO

private forms and in state enterprises. He analyzes the relation of the trade unions with the government and the cooperatives; describes their constructive part in production and in cultural work.

The factory committee, Mr. Dunn contends, is the basic unit in the trade union movement, and does much to protect the interests of the workers in both private and governmental industry. He gives an intimate view of the educational department of the unions and their work in the "liquidation of illiteracy" and traces the stages of control to the Central Committees of the movement housed in the Palace of Labor, the bi-annual Congress and the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions.

Of special interest is Mr. Dunn's description of the methods whereby wages are determined upon in the various industries:

"The methods used to fix wages in the various industries are as follows: The total amount of the industrial funds to go to wages each year is fixed by Gosplan. This body surveys the plans and profits of all the industries, coordinates them, and then cooperates with the unions and the heads of the industries in working out the total wage increase possible for the year.

"The central committees of the national industrial unions, through their wage departments, work out the general increases they think they ought to receive in the new agreements. Then these committees confer with the wage department of the C. C. T. U., and a general plan for wage increases in all the unions is prepared. When this is done union representatives go to Gosplan and fight for the increases that have been tentatively determined upon. The Gosplan takes into consideration the country as a whole, all its industries and their achievements. It works out with the unions the general increases to be made. The final determination of the percentages for each industry usually follows the original claims made by the various national unions as coordinated by the C. C. T. U. Should the Gosplan and the unions be unable to agree, the whole question will be referred for further discussion and settlement to the Council of People's Commissars and the C. C. T. U. As we shall observe later, the nations are represented on the Supreme Council of National Economy, the Council of Labor and Defense, the Commissariat of Labor and all governmental economic bodies that confer with Gosplan when it is engaged in its work of determining the wage increases."

At present, the author declares, piece work is quite prevalent and regarded as a temporary necessity. It is the hope of the Russians to eliminate it ultimately when the cooperative spirit is stronger. The author quotes Professor Douglas as declaring that real wages have increased about 12 per cent over the year 1913, not including the "additions to wages" in the form of social insurance, vacations with pay, medical service, free rent for at least 20 per cent of the workers, etc.

An elaborate system of arbitration and conciliation has been built up. Strikes against bad conditions both in state and private undertakings occur, but when they take place, the trade union officers who have permitted conditions to come to such a pass that the workers quit are often punished by the holding of a new election of trade



These workers enjoy the benefits of Russia's Labor Code.

union officials. Mr. Dunn sees the unions in state enterprises as becoming increasingly important as semi-administrative organs, or at least as closer participants in the socialist construction of the country rather than militant fighting organizations.

"As the state becomes less the instrument of class oppression and dictatorship and more a social instrument for constructing a new society, the unions may tend to become organs of production and distribution. But for the present, they must maintain a position half way between "independence" and complete identification with the government."

Even today they are, through their production committees and conferences, taking a considerable part in the increasing of productive efficiency.

One of the most interesting chapters of the book is that dealing with the educational and recreational activities of the unions—their clubs, sports, libraries, excursions, classes, newspapers, etc.

The chapter on international relations in which Mr. Dunn largely whitewashes the "Red" Trade Union International and lays the blame for lack of unity in the international field at the door of the Amsterdam International is largely special pleading and ignores many facts regarding the divisive tactics of Moscow in the days before the "united front". Nor does it give the reader a fair description of what the "united front" means in communist parlance. This chapter is, perhaps, the least satisfactory of any in the book.

One suspects also that the Communist party has a greater control over the trade union movement than the author indicates. Yet, when all is said and done, one can not fail to be impressed with the vitality of the movement and its contribution to trade union tactics in other countries, as it is here portrayed, nor fail to be grateful to the author for the clear marshalling of information on many points hitherto obscure to the average American reader.

HARRY W. LAIDLER.

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