

JUNE, 1922


# Labor Age

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Organizing  
the  
Harvest  
Workers

The Labor  
World  
in  
Pictures

Fighting  
In  
Capital's  
Territory

— *Through Cooperative  
Stores, Shops and  
Labor Banks*

Published by Labor Publication Society, Inc., 41 Union Square, New York

Presenting all the facts about American labor—Believing that the goal of the American labor movement lies in the socialization of industry.

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FROM a letter received—I think anybody that gets a copy of LABOR AGE will find that the copy itself is the biggest boost that a magazine can possibly have. It is an extremely and unusually well edited magazine, full of good material on all angles of the labor movement, admirably got up, printed on very nice paper and typographically really a work of art.

I think the people in your organization who are getting out LABOR AGE ought to feel extremely proud of the very fine publication that you are supplying to the working people of our country, and I am satisfied that if they could all get sample copies of it and read it as I am doing myself, you would have plenty of interested subscribers.

I hope LABOR AGE has a great success. It deserves it, and I would not be without your magazine as long as it is possible to obtain it at all. It is interesting, newsy, educational, broad-visioned and carries a little something of interest from all points of the compass.

You may rest assured that any place I have the opportunity I will say a kind word for LABOR AGE, because it deserves it. Your organization deserves to be complimented for the wonderful magazine it is putting out.

**Honorable Thomas Van Lear, former Labor Mayor of Minneapolis, prominent member Machinists' Union, President Minnesota Daily Star.**

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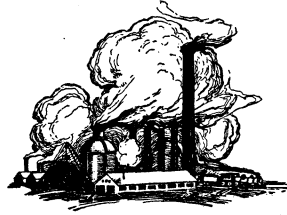
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# Labor Age



## Fighting in Capital's Territory

*American Labor Takes Up Cooperation*

By CEDRIC LONG

*NOTHING is more significant than American Labor's ventures into cooperative stores and shops and labor banking, particularly since the World War. It means carrying the fight into Capital's own territory. It marks a change of Labor's tactics from Defense to Offense. It shows that Labor can and will do that which has been considered the job of a so-called superior and select caste.*

*Labor is beginning to feel its own collective strength and ability, and to know that the conduct of business and the control of industry and credit need not be the monopoly of a few individuals for their own private profit. That we must go about this job with eyes open goes without saying. What has been accomplished thus far and what cautions experience has shown necessary are brought out in the following stories."*

**C**APITALISM has a reputation for resourcefulness. When the blacklist, the spy, and the scab fail to halt organization among the workers, the employers invoke the "company union." When these methods fail, the masters resort to their "open shop" campaign, injunctions, and a dozen other expedients. But labor is resourceful also. And the workers, during the entire history of labor organization in the United States, have never displayed a keener intuition for fundamental economic facts than some tens of thousands of them in all parts of the country are now showing.

### **Building for Themselves**

This advance guard of the American labor movement realize the comparative ineffectiveness of repeated mass onslaughts upon the strongholds of capitalism at the point of production alone, and has organized a flank movement which at once doubles labor's strength. These fighters ask, "Why continue to batter at the iron gates of the enemies' city demanding entrance? Did we not build this city which they are corrupting? Let us build another for ourselves, greater and more beautiful than theirs."

And in the cooperative movement they are making their modest beginning, experimenting with the little store, the federation of many little stores into a wholesale, the workers' milk company, the bakery for the manufacture of bread, the local laundry company, the cooperative housing association, the workers' bank, and dozens of other enterprises. In short, they are trying their hands at the capitalists' own game. Often they fumble. Occasionally they are tripped up by a shrewd promoter who has come from the enemies' ranks to betray them. Always they hold to a vision of a movement whose expansion will carry them back from retail business to wholesaling, and ultimately to production itself—production controlled by and for the use of the workers.

### **American Cooperation Invoiced**

At the present time we can count about 3,000 of these consumers' cooperative societies in the United States, with a total membership approaching half a million men and women, and with an annual turnover of some \$200,000,000.

Such an accomplishment has not been easy, for it requires nerve, idealism and loyalty to compete successfully from the very beginning

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against such perfect grocery machines as those of the Atlantic & Pacific Tea Co., or the Piggly Wiggly Corporation.

Examples of successful cooperatives may be found in Seattle, Los Angeles, St. Louis, Cleveland, Utica, Paterson, Providence and scores of other cities and industrial towns.

### Through Strikes to Cooperation

Most of the so-called "railroad towns" in the country have their little Railroad Workers' Cooperative, the fruit of unceasing educational work carried on through a few of the Brotherhood journals. Dozens of mining towns in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois and other states are just as well developed, each a center of cooperative propaganda and an example of cooperative achievement for the immediate countryside. Many cooperative bakeries, laundries, etc., owe their origin to strikes. Those in Little Rock, Arkansas, in Lynn, Mass., in Seattle, in Newport, R. I., and in Lawrence, Mass., found the inspiration and the impetus for their cooperative association during a wage fight with the employers.

### Among the Language Groups

The majority of these better societies do an annual business ranging from \$100,000 to a million dollars. Bloomington, Villa Grove, Staunton, Calumet, Sault Ste. Marie, Leighton, Reading, are a few of the smaller communities which have cooperatives of considerable size. Milwaukee has a society little more than 18 months old, which surpasses most of these in annual sales; already boasts of four stores, and has the wholehearted backing of Mayor Dan Hoan and the Socialist administration of the city.

Centers of Finnish population in the East, such as Brooklyn, Worcester, Fitchburg, and Maynard have gone in for intensive cultivation of cooperation. In some of these cities the Finns are applying cooperation to almost all of the major commercial activities that touch their lives—milk distribution, bakeries, grocery stores, butcher shops, banking, restaurants, club rooms, housing, and even newspapers. Chicago and Cleveland each have a Bohemian society running four grocery stores.

### The Unions Go Into the Milk Business

Equally effective work is being done directly by local labor organizations. In Minneapolis,

the Franklin Cooperative Creamery is a direct outgrowth of a lockout by the private milk corporations. Starting business in March, 1921, with only \$22,000 of capital, this organization has expanded so rapidly that at the end of the first year its wagons for distribution purposes had increased from 18 to 80 in number, and its sales had reached one and a half million dollars a year. Here the workers, by setting up a democratically controlled milk business of their own in opposition to that of the bosses, have not only won a wage victory, but have actually put the masses of Minneapolis in control of their own milk supply, and are gradually forcing the autocratic corporations out of business.

In the winter of 1921-2 the locked-out milk drivers of Cleveland began to organize a similar cooperative. They are now putting up their creamery building, and are about ready to begin business.

### Toward Winning the Strike

Many unions here, as abroad, have found the cooperatives a boon during strikes and lockouts. In the coal miners' strike in Kansas, during Howat's term in jail, the Central States Cooperative Wholesale was the agency for the distribution of more than \$200,000 worth of food to the strikers' families. The great Purity Cooperative of Paterson, now fourteen years old, with an annual business of \$400,000, has never failed to make to the strikers its contributions of thousands of loaves of bread. This spring these same cooperators made a shipment of three tons of flour and many cases of canned soup to the distant textile strikers in Rhode Island. The other cooperative bakeries to the north of Rhode Island—in Brockton, Worcester, Springfield, New Bedford, Lynn, Haverhill and Lawrence—have also sent thousands of loaves to the beleaguered mill hands in the Pawtuxet Valley, in Lawrence, and in Manchester. The textile industry may be notorious for its lack of organization among the workers, but few industries can boast of greater solidarity within the workers' ranks, and cooperation has played no mean part in building up and sustaining this spirit. In addition to the work done by these larger bakeries, thousands of dollars have been collected among the cooperators of textile towns unaffected by the strike.

Decades ago the little Socialist cooperatives of Belgium rendered just such service as this to

their fellow-workers in distress, and upon that foundation is built the powerful and radical Belgian cooperative movement to which the cooperative world looks for much of its inspiration and guidance.

#### The Wholesale Appears

But has the movement developed beyond the retail stage? Are cooperators everywhere still engaged only in peddling food and other essentials in small quantities to the consumers? In at least two parts of the country respectable wholesalers have been established. East St.

ative bakery is in operation or a housing cooperative in action. Perhaps Roger Babson is thinking even more of the workers' ability to own their small industries and to produce directly for use, than he is of the retail stores for distribution alone when he sends out warning to the business men of the country to beware of the cooperative movement, advising them that if it once gets under way in America, there is no stopping it!

#### Groceries in the Lead

Of the many kinds of cooperative enterprises,



UNION FUEL & SUPPLY CO., STAUNTON, ILL.

One of the many labor cooperative stores in the Illinois mining country

I. P. E. U. 624

Louis is the home of the Central States Cooperative Wholesale Society, which feeds scores of cooperative stores all through the Central and Southern Illinois mining regions. Up in Superior, Wis., is the Cooperative Central Exchange, which does business principally with Finnish societies, and which already has developed a biscuit factory, the first productive industry organized by a consumers' wholesale in this country. In all sections of the United States are smaller productive works owned and operated by the consumers—in fact, wherever a cooper-

the grocery store is the most popular. Bakeries and butcher shops come next. These can be counted in the hundreds. Credit unions and cooperative banks are, in certain states, much more numerous than stores, but few states have adequate credit union laws yet, and the movement is therefore much restricted. Restaurants, dry goods stores, milk societies, coal and ice distribution, housing ventures—these are still in the stage of experimentation. Cooperative schools, publishing houses, and laundries are in the very early period of development. Prob-



Brotherhood  
of  
Locomotive  
Engineers'  
Cooperative  
National  
Bank

First  
American  
Labor  
Bank  
(located  
in  
Cleveland,  
Ohio)

I. P. E. U. 624

bly no other country has at the beginning experimented in such a variety of cooperative activities. Yet if the cooperative economic system is to supplant the capitalistic, the workers must learn to run all kinds of business. The versatility of our cooperators augurs well for the future.

#### Learning Cooperation's Meaning

There is no more important side to cooperation in the United States than the educational. Without education regarding the social significance of the movement and the technical details of organization and administration, there can be no American movement. Capitalism here is still so powerful and so well organized that only those can compete successfully with it who are fired with a real vision of a better world, are stirred by a determination to help supplant the profit system by cooperation, and have the beginnings of an understanding of business methods. Ninety-nine per cent of the successful societies in the country have this kind of leadership and instruction.

The educational work is being pushed from many directions. There are the local cooperative groups, wiser and more cautious than in days gone by. There are in many sections of the country District Educational Cooperative Leagues. These make it their business to give technical advice and assistance to local societies and to warn them against the frauds. The Co-operative League, with offices in New York City,

does this same work for the district leagues themselves and for all cooperatives in the country generally.

#### What Will We Do About It?

The record of failures and of fake promotion schemes in America is a long and a black one. But there is no need for discouragement in this fact. It is a part of the education which most labor groups require before they are ready to search for help and advice. The cooperators of every European country traveled the same thorny road at first. There is a very real promise in the wide social vision of the cooperative leadership in all parts of the country, in the developing interest of labor organizations themselves, local and national; in the courage and perseverance of these pioneering groups that are forever reaching out to experiment and compete with capitalism in some new business venture. Perhaps the greatest hope lies in the fact that the city workers and the farmers are going along this road side by side—in the development of these thousands of consumers' societies. For the economic progress of the two classes has been very similar.

At the present time the farmers are catching up with the industrial workers, and perhaps have already surpassed them as successful co-operators. Labor must hasten the development of its co-operative activities if it is to maintain its reputation for leadership in the field of co-operative distribution and production.

# Organized Labor Takes Up Banking

## *Control of Credit and What Can Be Done With It*

By FREDERIC C. HOWE

**T**HERE is something more than accident which explains the interest on the part of many labor organizations in banking, especially the labor organizations connected with the operation of the railroads and basic industries. Among the unseen influences are:

(1) The large accumulation of money in the hands of the international unions, which have been estimated as high as \$100,000,000. These and the deposits of workers in the banks of the country amounting to from \$5,000,000,000 to \$7,000,000,000, have suggested to many leaders the possibilities of labor mobilizing its own resources within its own banking institutions.

(2) A realization on the part of labor that it is not using its powers to the fullest when it confines itself to collective bargaining.

(3) The recent organized assaults by the banking associations of the country on organized labor through coercive measures, applied not only on railroads, mines and the major industries, but on factory owners, contractors, and employers generally. This nation-wide war upon the closed shop, existing wages and conditions of labor, was inspired largely by the banks, not only in New York, but in local communities all over the country.

(4) In addition, men are coming to realize that credit rules the world. Industry is fast passing under banking control. The railroads, mines, trusts and major industries are already bank-controlled industries, while the tendency all over the country is for economic power to pass into the hands of those who control credit. The entire industrial fabric not only in America, but in England, Germany and France, is fast changing into a credit-controlled fabric, in which the former owners are being exiled from power, or have become little more than managers, acting under orders from banking interests.

(5) The cooperative movement is fast assuming prominence in the minds of labor, as it is among farmers, as a means of still further mobilization of economic power. The cooperative movement needs credit, the credit which it cannot secure from the existing banks.

### **The First Labor Banks**

The International Association of Machinists, under the presidency of Mr. Wm. H. Johnston, was the pioneer of labor banking in the United States. Some years ago the machinists acquired an interest in the Commercial National Bank of Washington, one of the largest commercial banks in the city of Washington. It ultimately acquired a balance of power and now exercises a controlling voice in the official personnel as well as in the policy of the bank. Following this, the machinists organized the Mt. Vernon Savings Bank. It was opened in 1920 with \$200,000 of capital. It now has resources in excess of \$2,000,000. Both of these banks have retained experienced bankers as the operating staff, and have enlisted outside stockholders and business men as directors. Neither of these banks has dedicated itself to labor financing, although the Mt. Vernon Savings Bank made a demonstration of the effectiveness of credit when controlled by labor in connection with the open shop fight in Norfolk, Va.

In November, 1920, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers opened the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers' Cooperative National Bank in Cleveland, Ohio. A national bank charter was secured because of certain moral advantages which a national bank charter seemed to confer. The capital stock was placed at \$1,000,000, and in addition a surplus of \$100,000 was paid in. All of the stock is owned by the Brotherhood as an organization or by the individual members. The directors of the bank are the grand officers of the organization, although trained bankers have been employed to manage the bank. The bank adopted the word "service" as its motto, and immediately challenged existing banking practices in Cleveland. It kept its doors open until 3 P. M.; it paid 4 per cent interest on savings deposits from the date of deposit to the date of withdrawal; it paid interest on commercial deposits and in a number of ways protected the depositors from practices adopted by the banks to deprive them of interest by a variety of petty devices. This aroused the hostility of the Cleveland Clearing House Associa-

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tion, but the bank boldly faced this opposition and forced the clearing house to a showdown. It refused to join the Clearing House Association, because the rules of the association would have bound the bank to abide by "gentlemen's agreements," which would have prohibited most of the things which the bank desired to do. The bank does all of its clearing through the Federal Reserve System, of which it is a member.

There were many questionings on the part of bankers, and also on the part of labor as to the ability of labor to manage a bank, especially a bank that frankly adopted existing banking machinery, but refused to abide by existing banking practices, for the national banks form one of the most intolerable and castelike monopolies in the country, and they aim to coerce all banks to uniform policy towards borrowers and depositors as well. The provisions in the bank's by-laws, limiting the dividends to 10 per cent, the use of the word "cooperative" in the title of the bank, and the avowed purpose of distributing surplus earnings to the depositors, was a challenge to our entire banking system. Especially did it tend to destroy many local banking practices. As a result of the more liberal policy adopted by the Engineers' bank, a number of the local banks have been compelled to follow suit.

### The Growth of the Bank

Despite the misgivings of many, the bank grew. As a matter of fact, it has grown probably more rapidly than any national or state bank in the country. Each month has added a million dollars to its resources. At the end of February, 1922, its total working assets amounted to \$14,000,000. Deposits have come from individuals, from trade unions, and from other international labor organizations. No vigorous attempt has been made to reach other labor organizations, nor have anything like the potential resources of labor been deposited with it. But every service that it rendered brought deposits. It made loans to school teachers whom other banks refused to assist. This established a school teacher clientele. It aided the carpenters of Cleveland to build a labor temple. This brought large deposits from the labor unions. Some good real estate loans offered to it have been rejected because the conditions demanded by brokers were oppressive to their clients, while loans to commission men looking to the monopoly of products have been refused.

Substantial loans were made in North Dakota to relieve the agricultural distress. They were made on warrants of cities and school districts, which freed other resources in the state for agricultural uses. Recently the bank purchased outright \$900,000 of soldier bonus bonds issued by the State of Ohio, which the bankers had conspired to discredit because the state refused to fix a high interest rate. This has made friends of the ex-service men.

The policy of the bank has been to keep its resources as fluid as possible, so that it could meet any emergency. Aside from large purchases of bonds and other governmental securities, its resources are as nearly absolutely liquid as banking resources could well be.

Requests came to the Brotherhood bank to organize a bank in Hammond, Ind. It quietly purchased a controlling interest in the People's State Bank of Hammond. It was reorganized in October, 1921, as the People's Cooperative State Bank, with new directors. The new officers introduced many of the features employed in Cleveland, and as indicative of the confidence and sympathy of labor in a bank of its own, the deposits of the bank grew with great rapidity. Its resources increased in four months' time from \$163,153 to \$300,383, while its deposits increased by 100 per cent.

### Attack on the Labor Banks

The success of the Cleveland bank and the discussions of banking in the labor press awakened a sense of insecurity on the part of existing banks and they have been carrying on a quiet but effective movement to prevent the organization of more labor banks. This despite the fact that for seventy years the principle of free banking has been established in America. In other words, we have always permitted men to incorporate a bank as freely as any other business enterprise. The banking associations and bankers have started a propaganda for legislation to confer upon the State Banking Commissioners the right to decide whether there is need for more banks in a given community, and, second, to pass upon the question of whether the applicants are men that should be endowed with authority to carry on the banking business.

Along with this, bankers have been promoting the idea that we already have too many banks, especially too many small banks. The new Comptroller of the Currency, Mr. Crissinger, appointed by President Harding, in an ad-



dress delivered before the Ohio Bankers' Association, shortly after he assumed office, stated there was no need "for any cooperative banks, labor banks or farmer banks. What we need in this country are fewer banks and larger banks. Take it from me," he said, "I know what I am talking about."

The Comptroller of the Currency has refused several applications from farmers and workers for bank charters. He has stated that no banks that profess to be cooperative will be given charters, while state banking superintendents all over the country are exercising the same scrutinizing control.

#### The Banking Ventures

The Amalgamated Clothing Workers have been considering the advisability of a bank for some years. They finally decided to establish a state bank in the State of Illinois, with a capital stock of \$200,000 and \$100,000 of surplus. It opened for business in April last. As this organization is very powerful; as it has a cohesive, easily-mobilized membership, with very intelligent leadership, its bank is very likely to become a powerful institution.

The railroad men have been taking the initiative in other parts of the country in the organization of banks. In San Bernardino, California, the workers secured subscriptions amounting to \$200,000 for a labor bank. They made repeated applications to the Comptroller of the Currency for a charter, but were unable to get any encouragement. Finally, they bought into the control of an existing bank, and are now operating it as a cooperative bank under the title of the Brotherhood Trust and Savings Bank, with a control of the stock ownership. It now has \$770,000 of assets and \$600,000 of deposits.

In Tucson, Arizona, labor organized the Cooperative Bank and Trust Company. Its deposits in March, 1922, amounted to \$180,650; its capital to \$70,000, and its total resources to \$262,188.

In Three Forks, Montana, the workers have organized and control the First National Bank of Three Forks.

In the City of Philadelphia, Mr. Wharton Barker, the financier, developed the idea of a bank that would operate without a charter, and as a trustee institution similar to a private bank, but with its resources dedicated to the

cooperative idea. \$100,000 of capital has been subscribed for this enterprise; a splendid banking office on a prominent business street has been secured, and the bank was opened for business some months ago. It already has about \$700,000 of deposits.

Other banking organizations are in process of formation in Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, Pa., and in Birmingham, Ala. In addition, the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen of America, and the Railway Telegraphers, as well as one or two other railroad organizations, have authorized their executive officers to take the necessary steps to organize a bank, while the officers of the American Federation of Labor were instructed by the Denver Convention to investigate the subject of banking credit.

#### Credit Unions

In addition to these banks, the States of Massachusetts, New York, Rhode Island, North Carolina and South Carolina, and several western states, have passed credit union laws. These laws permit of the organization of mutual lending societies. They do not permit full banking powers, although they do authorize the mobilization of small sums of money which are kept on deposit in other banks, but which are loaned to members of the organization. In Massachusetts the credit unions have been organized chiefly by labor organizations in the cities. There are upwards of seventy of these unions; they have resources of approximately \$3,000,000, and have grown very rapidly since the war. The same is true of New York, although the New York banking authorities are not showing the same sympathetic attitude toward them as in Massachusetts. These credit organizations are based upon the Raiffeissen-Schultze Delitsch Banks of Germany.

#### The Need for Caution

For some time to come labor banks will probably move with great caution. They should take no chances. For we cannot afford to have any failures. Labor banks should keep their resources liquid, to prevent unwarranted assaults from hostile banking commissioners, for as labor banks grow in power existing banks may seek to take advantage of some slight slip or irregularity to discredit the movement. But it has already gone so far that it can only be checked by limiting legislation. And this will

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undoubtedly be attempted. Banking is so profitable; banks enjoy such colossal privileges from the government that a determined effort will undoubtedly be made, as it has been made, to close the doors for the organization of new banks. In addition, and this is quite instinctive, banks are taking on larger units in order that they may be able to use their funds to finance larger industries. The large banking consolidations that are taking place in the large cities are for the purpose of financing trusts and monopolies, with which the directors are identified. As a result of this, there will be a shortage of loans to small business men. They will not be welcome. Already there is a famine of credit for the building of houses. The credit resources of the country are rapidly passing under the control of banking houses in New York and the bank-controlled industries that seek to use the credit resources of the country for perfecting and maintaining industrial monopoly.

### **Banks Dedicated to Service**

Quite aside from the needs of labor, there is imperative need of more banks, or for different kinds of banks, with which to meet the needs of business and of small industry. The remnants of the free life of America is being sabotaged by banking monopoly.

From the point of view of labor, the bank is a marvelous agency of economic power. First, it adds dignity to the organization that owns a bank. Second, as averages go, a dollar invested in a bank in a short time increases to fifteen dollars, because the depositors contribute fourteen-fifteenths of a bank's resources. No other business gets its working capital so cheaply and so easily as does the bank.

Through the aid of banking credit, labor can use its resources in cooperative organizations, for the building of labor temples, for aiding the labor press. It can develop cooperative house building enterprises as has been done in Europe.

In addition to this, credit has become the master of modern life. Credit is the tool of tools. Credit gives men machines. It gives factories, mines, even railroad systems. Thousands of things can be done through the control of credit that are not possible through the control of any other enterprise.

These possibilities, however, will only develop as labor learns the technique of banking, as labor acquires more confidence in its powers, and comes to rely upon its own ability success-

fully to manage industry, working in cooperation with trained men, interested in the labor movement.

The ultimate mobilization of labor credit power in labor banks must await additional legislation permitting of the organization of cooperative banks with limited dividends, with the principle of one man one vote, and more fully protected by public opinion and the laws of the states and the nation, than is now the case.

### **A New Society**

Many vistas of a new society will be opened up when labor mobilizes its credit resources for cooperative purposes. That is demonstrated by the progress made by the peasant farmers in Denmark and the cooperatives in Belgium, Italy, Switzerland, Czecho-Slovakia and Germany. In these countries labor is gradually massing its economic power under its own control. It is placing its savings and its wages in its own banks. It is using these resources to build homes, to start factories, buy land, take contracts, and own steamships. It has started stores, bakeries, breweries and printing establishments all over Europe. It is doing this largely through the little credit agencies, joined together in central cooperative banks in the large cities. Europe is training itself for the cooperative commonwealth and banking credit holds the key to power. This is being recognized especially in Italy, Czecho-Slovakia and Germany.

Credit has become the most powerful agency in the modern world. Economic life is fast passing under the control of credit. But credit is an agency that labor can use as well as capital. Banking is simple. It is easily understood. With ordinary care it is perfectly safe. A bank can be carried on with much less hazard than an ordinary business enterprise, for it deals only in money and credit. And its investments can be standardized in bonds, stocks, mortgages and other securities, if desired. The wages of labor run into the billions. The savings of labor run into billions more. They need only to be mobilized under the control of labor, as they are now mobilized under the control of private bankers, to give labor a position of power. If labor controlled its own credit resources today it would profoundly influence all forms of industry and profoundly check the aggressions of the capitalistic system. Ultimately, it may change our whole industrial system.

# All That Glitters Is Not Gold

## *The Sad Story of "Cooperative" Frauds and Failures*

By H. A. RAPPAPORT

**T**WO outstanding developments in the cooperative movement within the past few years have resulted, according to conservative estimates, in the loss of \$15,000,000. One of these has been the influx into the cooperative field of schemers and selfish interests; the other, the disastrous application of capitalistic methods of wildcat finance to cooperative enterprises, by unselfish but mistaken men. The series of spectacular bankruptcies following in the train of the "cooperative" fakery and high financiers, has been heralded by the capitalistic press as typical examples of the outcome of genuine cooperatives. And yet, as these failed to adhere to the well-defined technique of cooperative organizations, their downfall points to no such lesson.

### **The War Boom**

During the years of the war, following the increase in the cost of living, hundreds of thousands of consumers became members of cooperative societies, and the number of such societies grew from 1,000 to almost 3,000. As comparatively little was known in this country five years ago, of the nature of a really cooperative enterprise, it was no difficult matter for unscrupulous promoters to capitalize the increasing popularity of the cooperative ideal, float questionable undertakings under the cooperative colors and collect millions of dollars from the unsuspecting public. One of these slick promoters, Harrison Parker of Chicago, succeeded in selling \$28,000,000 worth of securities, and actually collected \$11,337,000 in cash for the financing of a business that had little or nothing in common with the practices of the cooperative movement. As the methods employed by this promoter have been adopted generally as a model by other "cooperative" deals, they will repay a brief study.

### **False Cooperative — The Trust Device**

The corporate form of organization, affording stockholders the right to exercise some element of control in the affairs of the business, did not appeal to this promoter. He therefore organ-

ized his companies as common law trusts, a form of organization generally employed for the purpose of administering the affairs of minors and incompetents, and well adapted to that purpose.

Mr. Parker, and two dummy trustees, appointed by his wife, were vested with the title of the property which was the subject of the trust, and with complete authority to act! These three trustees were known as The Cooperative Society of America, and they were empowered to sell securities. The trustees had the right, under the declaration of trust governing the concern, to retain 4½ per cent of the income of the business, to mortgage, sell, or otherwise manipulate the property of the business, to appoint themselves officers and fix their own salaries as such, and to employ the funds of the trust in their own private business ventures. It was, moreover, specifically provided that they should not be bonded or be answerable for any losses incurred through their incompetence. The beneficiaries of the trust had no vote at all, and were not entitled to an accounting or to financial reports!

Despite these vicious provisions, some ninety thousand people in half a dozen states were inveigled into purchasing the certificates issued by this venture, by means of an energetic campaign in which the appeal of cooperation was featured. The agents of this society attempted to link up their enterprise with the accomplishments of the genuine cooperatives abroad. They promised not only wealth for the members, through the establishment of a great chain of cooperatives of every variety, from coast to coast, but even the achievement of the Cooperative Commonwealth.

A few real cooperators, thoroughly alarmed at the menace of this scheme to the cooperative movement, induced the authorities of four states to prohibit the sale of securities by this organization. Gradually members of the society began to realize that they had been victimized, and instituted a series of suits, which resulted in the appointment of a receiver. After bitterly contested litigation, the members won

## LABOR AGE

a hollow victory, through the appointment of two new trustees to take the place of the dummy trustees. The society is still doing business in Chicago, though on a much restricted scale.

The success of the trust device in extracting money from would-be cooperators, without giving them any control, has appealed to other promoters. Several large concerns of this type are in existence at the present time, and state officials report that they find it difficult to prosecute this common law trust type of spurious cooperative.

### The Dual Organization

Some spurious concerns have employed other and less obvious devices to maintain control for self-appointed promoters. For example, a dual organization, a trap for the unsuspecting cooperator, recently appeared in New York State. One branch of the concern, the United Consumers of Buffalo, had certain provisions in its by-laws which seemed on the surface to be cooperative. In practice, however, the cooperative features were inoperative, as the society's by-laws provided that the business be governed by the Glynn System, a private corporation controlled exclusively by four self-appointed directors. The organizers of this dual society found no difficulty in securing credentials from labor unions, and, thus armed, raised sufficient funds to open almost a score of stores. Heavy organization expenses and embezzlement ate into the substance of the society, which wound up in bankruptcy, involving the loss of thousands to creditors and stockholders.

### Genuine Cooperation

Within the past year there has been a marked decline in the number of "fake" cooperatives. One after another has been abandoned by its promoters, after being sucked dry, or after state officials, egged on by genuine cooperative societies, have put a stop to fraudulent practices, under the provisions of the State Cooperative Laws. The experience of the past few years has been a costly but valuable lesson to labor. The workers are learning to distinguish between the genuine cooperatives and get-rich-quick schemes. They have learned that all genuine cooperatives conform to the same general practices adopted by the pioneer cooperative society at Rochdale, England, in 1844.

These principles are as follows: (1) Professional stock salesmen are not employed in organ-

izing societies. (2) The membership is the controlling and directing force in cooperatives. Each member has one vote only, regardless of the number of shares owned. Officers are elected and may be removed by the membership, which determines the general policies of the business. Democratic control is the keynote of cooperation. (3) Goods are usually sold at prevailing market prices, and the savings made are devoted partly to educational work, partly to the creation of a reserve fund, the remainder being distributed either as a rebate to members in proportion to their purchases, or devoted to some social purpose, such as insurance against unemployment or sickness, the establishment of theaters, medical relief, etc. (4) Capital contributed to finance cooperatives receives only the minimum legal rate of interest, if interest is paid at all. In proportion as these standard methods of cooperatives are known, it becomes increasingly difficult for schemers to exploit the cooperative movement.

Repeated warnings against fake cooperatives have gone forth to central labor bodies, to co-operators and to the press, from The Cooperative League of America, the national educational federation of the consumers' cooperatives. The League keeps a record of the genuine and the spurious societies, for the information of the public. Its committee on legislation has also drafted a Model State Cooperative State Law, which would make it practically impossible for wily promoters to organize fake cooperatives. It is hoped that, with uniform legislation, and with a wider knowledge of the sound methods of cooperation on the part of the public, the promotion of spurious societies will entirely cease.

### The Peril of Centralization

Unfortunately, the cooperative movement has suffered not only at the hands of parasites, but also because of honest but misguided men who violated the principles employed with success by European co-operators for three-quarters of a century. The cooperatives in Europe, it should be stated, have jealously guarded the right of the members of each local society to govern their affairs themselves, in important matters such as controlling their funds, deciding on the disposition of savings made, etc. Early in the development of the European movement there arose in each country the need for cooperative

wholesale and productive establishments. As this need showed itself, local societies created independent wholesale societies, and financed and controlled them. The local cooperative groups, however, remained independent and autonomous, being loosely federated for wholesale purposes through wholesale societies, and for educational purposes, through educational unions.

Turning their backs on this sound and democratic technique of cooperation, a handful of men in this country three or four years ago, began to organize societies on an entirely different basis. They took as their model not the successful cooperative societies of Europe, but the capitalistic, highly centralized chain stores of America.

One of the most widely heralded of the "cooperative" chain store systems was the National Cooperative Association Wholesale, organized by Dalton T. Clarke. This society had its headquarters in Chicago, and maintained subsidiary organizations in Hoboken and Seattle. A host of professional stock salesmen traveled from city to city, securing subscriptions to the stock of the wholesale society. The wholesale then opened up local retail stores, which were dependent upon and governed by the parent wholesale society. The plan was thoroughly centralized. Money collected from local groups was expended by the central organization and managers of stores were appointed by the national headquarters, which dictated policies in even the most trifling details to stores scattered through New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Illinois, and along the Pacific Coast.

The overhead expenses of supervising such a widely dispersed organization were enormous. Members of the local, dependent groups inevitably became dissatisfied with their lack of power to govern their own affairs, and with the burden of unnecessary charges. Creditors began to press their claims against the society, and with popular support withdrawn, it was forced into bankruptcy. The creditors recovered only 1 cent on the dollar, while the stockholders lost every cent they contributed. Fortunately, a few of the local groups, which anticipated the downfall of the society, severed their connections before the bankruptcy came, and now exist as independent units.

The Tri-State Cooperative Association of

Pittsburgh, a centralized chain store organization on the order of the National Cooperative Wholesale, likewise failed. The loss incurred through the bankruptcy of the Tri-State amounted to \$213,000, which was contributed almost entirely by workers and by unions in Pennsylvania. The Cooperative Wholesale Society of America, with headquarters at St. Paul, was another of the chain store schemes that went into bankruptcy.

The last of the centralized chain store "cooperatives," the Pacific Cooperative League, of San Francisco, failed in March, 1922, carrying in its wake 43 stores in California, New Mexico, Oregon and Nevada, with a membership of 16,000. The wholesale of The League was not able to supply goods for the vast territory covered by the organization. Under centralized management, heavy overhead expenses burdened the local stores. Weak and poorly managed stores in the chain incurred losses which has to be borne by more prosperous stores. The final chapter in this disastrous venture was written when the dominating clique arranged for the appointment of a receiver in the person of the Secretary of the San Francisco Board of Trade. Only the few stores which had seceded or had taken legal steps to establish their independence before the bankruptcy of the league were saved from destruction.

#### Lessons for the Future

It is hoped that the failure of the Pacific Cooperative League marks the close of an unfortunate experimental period in the history of cooperation in the United States. Centralized organizations calling themselves cooperatives, though violating the fundamental principles of cooperation, have failed in all parts of the country. There is one distinct gain to the movement, however, and that is the clearing of the field for genuine cooperative developments along the lines that have brought success to cooperation in Europe. The costly lesson of the failure of centralization in the cooperative movement has left its mark in the minds of cooperators. All over the country sound societies are now growing up which are not only serving their members materially, but are daily training them through the democratic technique of cooperation in the work of administering the industrial affairs of society for service rather than profit.

# Milwaukee

*One City Where Cooperative Banks, Stores, Shops and Housing Have Been Begun*

By DANIEL W. HOAN

MILWAUKEE—city of the workers—is supplementing labor's political victories there with ventures into other ambitious fields. The cooperative movement has of late attracted the earnest attention of the Wisconsin city's workers. As a result, we may look forward to rapid progress in cooperation from now on. What has been accomplished thus far is enough to bring "the smile that won't come off" to the face of any man or woman interested in the labor movement.

## The Workers Start a Savings Bank

IN 1912, twenty-five cooperators signed an application for a savings bank charter from the State of Wisconsin. The charter provided that each cooperator be given one vote and that the profits of the enterprise be distributed among those who deposit their funds in the bank, in the shape of interest on deposits and dividends.

After the granting of the charter, a little room was rented in the down town district on the second floor of an old structure which looked more like the office of a country doctor than of a bank. Nevertheless, the workers began to place their savings in this bank. To keep down expenses, the President, Mr. Charles Whitnall, donated his services to the institution for several years. The deposits were loaned principally to interested persons desiring to build homes. The surplus was invested in municipal bonds. In this way the entire savings of the institution were used to encourage municipal enterprise and home building. Today the deposits amount to \$600,000.

With its growing activity, the bank, known as the Commonwealth Mutual Savings Bank, secured quarters on the first floor of a building on one of the principal streets in the city. It has never charged to exceed 5 per cent on any of the loans which it has made to help struggling workers, nor more than a nominal fee to cover the expense of making the loan. In spite of this the bank has been able to pay to its depositors during the greater part of its existence, a larger rate of interest than any other savings bank in the city. It is now regularly paying 3½ per cent, ½ per cent higher than in other banks, and, during the last year, was able to declare an extra dividend.

## Success of the Grocery Stores

AFTER the bank venture, came the organization of the Milwaukee Consumers' Co-operative Association. Out of the experience of the Women's Auxiliary of the Railway Brotherhoods in securing orders and selling carloads of canned goods to the railroad men, the sentiment was created for a real cooperative enterprise to take care of this work.

In the fall of 1920 the interested workers met and applied for a charter. I had the good fortune of being elected to the board of directors at the first meeting. When the sum of \$16,000 had been paid in February, 1921, we purchased our first store. The business and membership grew so rapidly that we were able to establish three additional stores before the expiration of one year. By January 1, 1922, after eleven months of effort,

these stores had recorded a business of \$156,000, and were able to declare a dividend of 3 per cent to the stockholders, payable on July 1. The membership is now over 1,300. A splendid system of accounting, supplemented by regular inventories, gives a complete check on financial operations, which insures the success of this institution. We are already able to buy some of our articles in carload lots and to sell our goods as low as and lower than most of the stores in Milwaukee.

At regular intervals we have held dances and picnics, which we have made the occasion for bringing home the message of cooperation.

## The Cigar Workers and Tailors

A THIRD cooperative venture started by the workers is the cooperative cigar manufacturing plant, organized in October, 1920, during a strike of cigar-makers. The stock of the concern was entirely subscribed for by the men and women on strike, one-third of the subscribers being women. Its membership now numbers 164. Over 300,000 cigars were manufactured and sold during the first year by union men, drawing the union scale of wages.

Another enterprise started during an industrial conflict was the Rochdale Cooperative Tailoring enterprise, organized in February, 1921, by forty tailors unemployed as a result of a lockout. Unfortunately, this undertaking has had to contend since its birth against the worst of the depression. Nevertheless, through the strenuous efforts of its members, the enterprise is 100 per cent intact, its membership has been increased and its business is growing steadily.

## Garden Homes — Cooperative Housing

LAST, but not least, there has been launched in Milwaukee one of the most interesting cooperatives of the United States, namely, a cooperative for building workers' homes.

During the war I named a committee fairly representative of all the elements of the community, and put to the committee two questions:

(1) Is there a housing shortage in the city of Milwaukee?

(2) If so, what, if anything, shall be done by the municipality?

The commission reported that there was a serious housing problem, and that a special cooperative law should be enacted by the legislature to permit the incorporation of the cooperative housing company. This was done and the enterprise launched. The company is a Rochdale cooperative in every feature except two. Like the English cooperatives, the city and county can subscribe to the capital stock. Instead of the system of one man one vote, votes are allowed in proportion to the number of shares. This departure from cooperative principles was due to the need of securing \$250,000, and the belief that business men asked to invest would not agree to a 100 per



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Rosdale Cooperative, Chicago, Ill.

cent Rochdale plan of house building. However, this one deviation can be remedied later on when the investing business men are gradually paid off by the occupants of the homes.

The company was organized for \$500,000. Half of this was preferred stock guaranteeing a return of 5 per cent. The City and County took a block of \$50,000 of this preferred stock. The remainder was sold to business men.

The cooperative then acquired twenty-eight acres in a beautiful location within a block of street car service. The land was plotted without charge by the best city planning experts. These lots are 40x100 feet, affording ample sunlight and air as well as space for the children. About thirty houses are now under roof.

If present plans materialize, the cooperative will build at least one house a day during the present summer and fall. These homes will be turned over to the occupants for from \$1,000 to \$1,500 less than they could be bought under the old plan. This is due to the fact that many have given their services free, that real estate men, contractors and other useless extravagances of the ordinary building operation have been eliminated and that it has been possible to purchase the material for the houses at wholesale.

The union scale and hours of employment have prevailed throughout. This in itself is a remarkable demonstration of the efficiency of the organized crafts in this city.

#### How the Worker Pays.

**T**HE occupant of a home will not obtain a deed. He will subscribe for common stock equivalent to the value of the cost of his home and lot, which will be about \$4,000 for a six-room house. He

(This is the first of a series of articles on successful cooperative ventures in American cities. Among those to follow will be articles on Cleveland, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers' Bank and the Minneapolis Cooperative Creamery.)

will pay down 10 per cent of the cost of his stock, which money will be used to retire or pay off that much of the preferred stock. On the unpaid balance he will pay interest. All other expenses, as for instance, taxes, water, repairs, etc., will be paid to the Cooperative Company in monthly installments. While figures are not yet available, I predict that the rentals ordinarily paid by workers for similar houses will not only cover the expenses of the houses, but will also pay for the stock. The families, as a result of these payments, will be given fire and life insurance. While the occupant does not secure a deed, he is given a contract which will guarantee permanent tenure to himself and heirs while he obeys the rules of the cooperative.

Another great advantage of this method of home owning for the workers is that, in case the occupant is severely ill or is under the necessity of leaving the city, the Company agrees to purchase back his paid-up stock at the par value.

As rapidly as the occupants of the homes pay for their common stock, the preferred stockholders will be paid off and the occupants will become the sole managers of the enterprise. The popularity of the plan is assured by the fact that there are already more than 900 financially able applicants for the seventy-five or more houses.

We have no hesitancy in saying that the cooperative offers the best solution of the housing problem which has yet been devised. Even the Socialists of Europe have abandoned their position for municipal houses in favor of the cooperative idea.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that the cooperative ideal has gripped the imagination of the Milwaukee workers. Success in that field is assured, for when our workers once take hold, they never quit.

# The International

Reviewed by

"Don't Defend  
Your Home!  
It's Treason"



A Picture  
of  
West Virginia

The Worker

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N. Y. Call

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Upon invitation forty steel kings dined with President Harding—News Item.



Machinists' Journal

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## SLIPPING

(The railroad labor situation is becoming more and more acute. Vice-President Anderson, of the Machinists, contributes the above on the railroads' present position)



Labor

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"I don't want him for a daddy"



# Labor World

Labor's Cartoonists

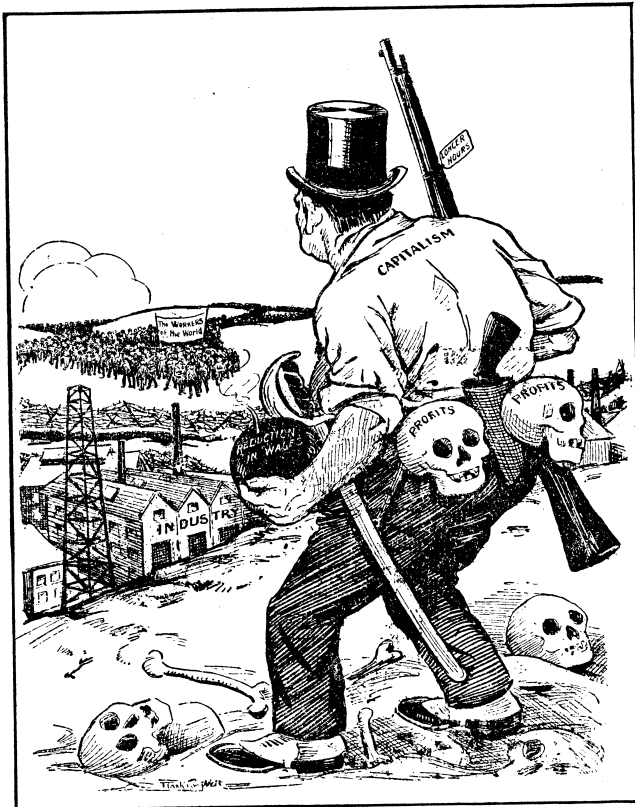
Effect  
of the  
"United  
Labor  
Front"  
(As British  
Communists  
see it)



Communist Review (England)

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Below:  
The Reaction  
and  
the Rand  
miners' strike  
(According  
to the  
Australian  
Worker)



Australian Worker

WHAT THEY FOUGHT FOR

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Australian Worker.

SOUTH AFRICA, 1922

I. P. E. U. 624

# Labor Opinion

## The Labor Press on Current Issues

### THE CHICAGO "LABOR WAR"

**T**WO hundred men identified with Chicago labor unions, including the President of the Building Trades Council, were arrested during the last month for alleged implication in the bombing of several buildings and the killing of two policemen. The facts back of the "war," as the daily press call it, were given by Robert Buck, editor of the "New Majority," in the January LABOR AGE.

Is this a case similar to West Virginia, where the miners are on trial for treason against a state controlled by the operators and their gunmen? Or, is it the result of thug rule among the labor organizations themselves?

The **New York Call**, the well-known Socialist and labor daily, thinks it significant that "in all such affairs it is a notorious fact that the 'radical' or the progressive unionist is never involved," and summarizes the situation as it sees it in the following editorial:

#### THE CHICAGO ARRESTS

Decent and progressive men in the unions of Chicago have for years waged a losing battle against a type of criminal who has fastened himself upon some unions. This type has continued in power through terrorism maintained over the members. The active member who rebelled against the criminal type often took his life in his hands, and many such men have been brutally beaten by "sluggers."

Nothing is to be gained by denying that these are facts. Whether any of the men taken at Chicago belong to this vicious type there is no means of knowing. It is certain that of the 200 arrested no more than a handful could be guilty of the charges brought against all, if there be any guilty of this particular crime.

The **Call** then goes on to point out that the affair plays into the hands of the anti-union "Citizens' Committee," which will make the most of the affair for a more concentrated drive for the destruction of the unions in Chicago." Two days later the same paper calls attention to the difference accorded the men accused in Chicago and the gunmen of West Virginia. Under the heading "**Treason in Two States**," it says:

Now, according to the theory of the Chicago judge, these Chicago leaders did what the hired mercenaries in West Virginia did. What the former did "amounts to

treason," he says. But in West Virginia the hired mercenaries are not regarded as "treasonable." On the contrary, some of them will probably testify that the miners are guilty of "treason" because they defended themselves against those who sought to "overthrow law and order."

This difference of treatment by the "law" to capitalists and workers is also emphasized by the **Wyoming Labor Journal**:

Some of the leading railroads pay no attention to the decision of the Federal Labor Board against them, and one court has held that the board cannot enforce its award or finding. All that it can do is to say, "Please, gentlemen, follow our recommendations." And all this adds to the gaiety of the nations. Coal miners prosecuted for treason, labor union leaders to be tried for murder and arson, because the award of Judge Landis was not submitted to, but the railroad directors can loll in swivel chairs and defy orders with impunity with thumb to the nose!

The **San Diego Labor Leader** (organ of the San Diego city central body) thinks that it is a pity that the Chicago labor movement had not found Murphy out before and "put an end to his reign." Its further comment is:

#### "LABOR LEADERS" WHO HELP THE ENEMY

The daily newspapers are giving plenty of space to the "Chicago labor war." As the news in these papers is always colored to suit the wishes of those who are in opposition to organized labor it is impossible to form a correct opinion of the troubles. If, however, it can be shown that "labor leaders" are guilty of the half they are charged with, it is to be hoped the law will take its course. Whether their work is paid for by the "other side" or not, those who commit such crimes are doing their very worst against the true cause of labor and playing into the hands of those who would destroy our organizations. Organized labor has nothing to gain and everything to lose by such action.

Another labor publication on the Pacific Coast, **The Rank and File**, an independent radical paper supported by unions within and without the A. F. of L., summarizes the situation in a vigorous editorial, which deserves quotation:

#### A FRAME-UP'S A FRAME-UP

Big Tim Murphy, Fred Mader and Con Shea are in jail, charged with murder. Any worker who knows the role of grafting and corruption that they have played these many years has no love for either Murphy or Shea or Mader. . . .

The charge of murder rests upon the flimsy evidence that "somebody" killed a cop and that "somebody" planted a bomb. Big Tim is held responsible because he said: "If the Citizens' Committee continues its attack upon organized labor much longer, I will not be able to restrain the men from violence." That is his crime.

The Citizens' Committee and the big-business-owned District Attorney do not claim that these labor officials planted the bombs. They do not claim they killed the

cop. They merely assert that these leaders are "morally responsible" for the killing.

Their eagerness to rush a trial suggests frame-up. In every frame-up delay is fatal. "Make them swing for it first, and find out who did it afterwards," is the attitude of Big Business in Chicago. And in the meantime use the harlot press to create an atmosphere which will make it easy for us to destroy the entire Chicago labor movement."

### GOMPERS AND FOSTER LOCK HORNS

**T**HE May issues of the **American Federationist** and **Labor Herald** sizzle with "compliments" to each other. The occasion for the heat is the movement for industrial unionism started by William Z. Foster, former leader of the steel strike, within the A. F. of L.

President Samuel Gompers not only attacked the Trade Union Educational League, Foster's organization, in a speech before the Chicago Federation of Labor, but editorially goes after the new movement in detail in the **Federationist**. Under the heading, "Another Attempt at Soviet Dictatorship Unmasked," he writes:

A few months ago there was devised in Moscow a new scheme for destroying the American Federation of Labor and its constituent unions, and replacing them by a Red Revolutionary Federation. One of the best-known American Reds spent several months in Moscow in consultation with Lenine, Trotzky & Co. to develop the new plan. It is proposed to disrupt and destroy the American Federation of Labor by means of changing the form of certain of the organizations affiliated to the American Federation of Labor. It is proposed that when this reorganization is effected there shall be affiliation to the Bolshevik International at Moscow.

According to the editorial, the plan in detail works as follows:

The new plan was launched nearly in February under the name of a so-called Trade Union Educational League and has come out in the open with the publication early in March of the first number of a costly monthly called the **Labor Herald**. The promoters of the plan frankly state their purposes in this publication.

1. They intend to employ in America the same methods they have successfully used within the recent months to disrupt the C. G. T. of France (Confederation Generale du Travail).

2. The **Labor Herald** advocates, both in the March and April numbers, the affiliation of American labor with the Red Labor Union International—a body which supports the political Red International (the so-called Third Internationale), by which it was formed. The **Labor Herald** makes an effort to bear in mind Lenine's published instructions to his followers within the American labor movement to represent themselves as "liberals" and "radicals." It announces that the object of the new organization is to bring together "progressive" and

"radical" unionists as "the determining factor in the labor movement," but the same publication elsewhere announces that its purpose is to bring together the "progressive" and "revolutionary" elements and finally gives away the whole game by the open advocacy of the Third Internationale. The March number declares flatly that the new league "advocates affiliation to the militant international trade union movement."

3. The new organization through its publication supports Bolshevism and Communism as practiced in Russia and not only as preached by the Red Labor Union International.

4. This new Moscow propaganda frankly aims to replace the entire American labor movement by ten great so-called industrial unions.

Foster answered Gompers' charge of Soviet subsidies in the newspapers with an offer to allow the President of the A. F. of L. to look through the financial books of the **Labor Herald**. In the magazine itself he expresses willingness to accept a challenge to debate the issue of industrial unionism with Gompers, stating his creed in the following language:

My contention is that craft unionism is obsolete. The old type of organization, based upon trade lines, can no longer cope successfully with Organized Capital. To fit modern conditions our unions must be based upon the lines of industry, rather than upon those of craft. The necessary industrial unionism will be arrived at, not through the founding of ideal dual unions, but by amalgamating the old organizations. Already the trade unions, by federations and other get-together devices, have made much progress in the direction of industrial unionism. I hold that this tendency should be consciously encouraged; we should not simply blunder along blindly. The thing that must be done is to boldly proclaim our inevitable goal of one union for each industry and to adopt every practical means that will tend to get us there at the earliest date.

Under the heading, "Gompers Attacks the League," Earl Browder, Foster's assistant, designates as "fossilized" the arguments used against "amalgamation" in the Chicago Federation of Labor, which overwhelmingly endorsed the industrial unionism proposal on two recent occasions. He also states that "Gompers' arguments against industrial unionism (before Chicago labor leaders) were so weak that few took them seriously."

# Organizing the Harvest Workers

*With the I. W. W. in the Grain Fields*

By RALPH WINSTEAD

*IN THE harvest fields the I. W. W. is not a "dual union." It is the only organization on the job. It is the union that the migratory farm laborer turns to, in the hope of winning some semblance of decent living conditions. This is the month when work begins in earnest in the grain country. It is the time when the I. W. W. worker gets busy to convert his fellow-workers to organization for a better deal.*

THE first hot days of late June were causing the heat waves to dance and shimmer between the tracks and down the streets of the little sub-division railroad and farm town. Sterling, Colorado, had scarcely gotten over its spring fever and here the summer was on.

Out of the Union Pacific yards strolled two begrimed young men. One, tall and slim, wore a well used army shirt, his sole remaining sample of army wear. His shorter partner had shed all such garments long before. Both had on the overalls and jumper of the road. They were equally new to their surroundings.

Wandering down the broad street that paralleled the tracks, they paused in front of the store of the Star General Merchandise Co. The short one went inside to get some supplies for the evening meal. From alongside the store, a slender, wiry youth stepped out. He, too, was clad in overalls, but was coatless, displaying an expanse of freshly "boiled up" shirt.

"Hello, Slim!" hailed the coatless one. "Where you bound for?" Slim was reticent. He mumbled something about just moving up the line and looked towards the door of the store for his partner. He was plainly uncomfortable.

"That's fine!", said the stranger. "Lots of the boys are beating through now. Are you taking in the harvest?"

Slim, more at ease, admitted that he was.

"Good again! I suppose you and your pardner, being sensible guys, are fixed up with the red ducket?"

Slim stared vacantly and failed to commit himself.

"Not organized, huh!" exclaimed the wob, still in his friendly tone. "That's bad. It looks to me like you boys have seen enough of life by now to know that none of us are going to get very far in this

world on our own. We workers need to pull together. We need to organize. Now, you never made the harvest before, did you? Of course not. Let me tell you, some of the conditions on those outfits are hard. If all of us stick together we can make them better.

"Now, here's the proposition. We old-time harvest hands have decided to go at ten hours' work in the fields this year. That is what the stock does and we are as good material as the stock, any time. We need to organize to get these ten hours. Don't you think so?"

Slim was interested. "Yes," he admitted. "I believe in organization all right."

"Sure you do," urged the delegate. "You fellows don't look like pinheads to me. Now here is the proposition. We wobblies are on the job in full force here and all along the line. We want you to join us. Organized, we can sweep the harvest fields in a body and through our solidarity we can make these Commercial Clubs and Merchants' Association pull off the limit that farmers are allowed to pay the hands. Why, do you know some of these outfits have set a limit at two dollars a day and tell the farmers they can't pay more? What do you think of that? Two dollars for twelve hours in the field with the heat at a hundred and ten! That's what we are up against if we don't organize."

The marketer came out of the grocery store with a package in the crook of his arm.

"Shorty, I just been explaining to your pardner here that you boys had better line up in the O.B.U. if you're going to take in the harvest."

Shorty was definite. "Aw! I don't want nothing to do with these wobblies! Come on, Slim! Let's eat."

Slim turned to the coatless agitator and said rather airily: "Maybe I'll see you later about that, Jack." But Jack only smiled.

**They Reach the "Jungle"**

When the two young harvesters reached the outskirts of the town where was located the jungles—the workers' outdoors hotel—they found a small group already there. One or two were washing their clothes. A couple were lying on the ground reading—still another was scouring out an oil tin. It was a peaceful scene.

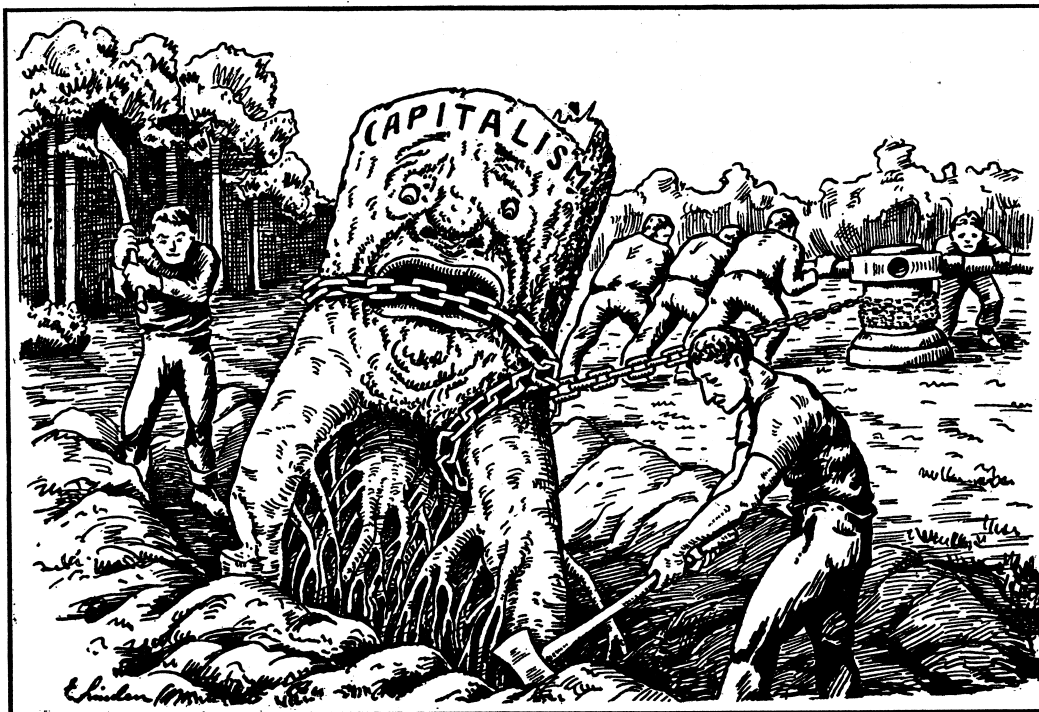
One of the readers got up at once on the approach of the two strangers. "Hello there, Fellow Workers! Harvest bound? Slim nodded. He

know much about it. I want to get it figured out. What kind of a thing is this anyway?"

So, Slim and Shorty were told about the I. W. W. They were given literature to read about it. They heard stories about it. Before they were through hearing, a delegate was writing out membership cards and that evening the two new members in company with a couple of old timers started east.

\* \* \*

Seven hundred miles away, in the state of Iowa, in the small town of Carroll, three delegates were



*Industrial Worker*

*I. P. E. U. 624*

**THE SPRING DRIVE IN THE WOODS**

was commencing to feel like a minority. Shorty paid no attention but looked about for the jungle layout.

"Want to cook up?" queried the questioner again.

Both the lads now centered their attention on him. There was something in his voice that counted. The speaker continued: "We have a good layout here. But, say, boys, how are you fixed for the little red card? This is going to be an organized harvest this year and we want you with us. How about it, Slim?"

Slim glanced at the rest of the crowd. Each and every one had turned his eyes on the new prospective members. It was plain that there was no rift in the solidarity here.

"Why, I been thinking about joining, but I don't

handling the influx of men drifting towards the harvest in southern Kansas in the same way. From the yards of the North Western and the Chicago Great Western railroads these eastern workers—some of them away from home for the first time—were climbing off of freights and after the usual rest in the jungles, or the flopping places of the town, were continuing on into the heart of the wheat belt.

At every turn, unorganized workers were bumping up against the Big Union. For I. W. W. members, I. W. W. delegates were on the job. In the jungles, on the freights, on the streets of the little farming towns, to and from and on the harvesting and threshing jobs the Organization propaganda was being put out.

## LABOR AGE

### The Field of Propaganda

Consider the field. Near Enid, Oklahoma, on June 10th to 12th, the great harvest starts with the sending of the first binders into the ripened grain. Like a huge wedge lies the grain belt above this point. As the grain ripens further north, the

#### "HARVEST TIME IS HONEY TIME"

(Extract from The Industrial Worker—I. W. W. paper—of May 20, 1922. Form of appeal to Agricultural Workers.)

The past winter was a period of little work, low wages and many hardships for the most of us. The weather was comparatively mild, for which no thanks is due either the bosses or us. Our stakes were pretty slim, and, for a lot of us, it was the backdoor trail or starvation.

Spring opened up with hardly anything doing, and the season is short in which we must get the "stake" that is to carry us through the coming winter. We don't want only enough to get by during the summer and fall—while we are working—but enough to put us over the winter in good shape. We cannot forget that handouts were few and far between last winter, and that many were looking for them. Now the harvest is here. The world waits upon you for the bread it is ready to deny you. When we start in Oklahoma we should remember there are a lot of missed meals to make up and a winter to provide for. There was no welcome and no sympathy for those of us who were unfortunate enough to hit the grain states during the winter—these people had no need for us then, nor anything else, either, except abuse.

Now they need us, and need us badly; so badly that they are ready to do almost anything for us but give us a square meal. That we must get for ourselves, and **WE MUST ORGANIZE TO GET IT.**

line of work broadens till it reaches the breadth of a thousand miles at its widest reach—a line stretching through Nebraska, Kansas and Iowa.

The line of ripening grain moves steadily north for two thousand miles and ends in the unplowed prairie lands of northern Alberta, in Canada. At every farm town and junction, jungle and job, the I. W. W. messages were delivered this year.

The Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union Number 110, of the I. W. W., exceeded all past years, in the harvest. They distributed several hundred-thousand new leaflets dealing with particular features of the harvest workers life, the conditions under which he works and the way to remedy those conditions, in addition to seventy-five thousand pamphlets and booklets on the class struggle and labor organization and the constant stream of weekly and monthly periodicals, regularly published by the Industrial Workers of the World. Speakers and educators followed the drive and held hundreds of meetings.

To enumerate the little and big job battles over this entire stretch would be to fill volumes. The workers pulled off strikes in whole counties against the conditions of work, while they constantly agi-

tated against the treatment of political prisoners and other grievances.

Innumerable sections were made battle grounds and every manner of strike and labor strategy was used. An attempt to describe the harvest drive is like trying to picture a modern trench war. The field is too big and the forces too fluid to allow one man or group of men to glimpse more than a sector of it at a time.

#### Results

No accurate account can be made of how many hundreds of arrests took place, of how many thousands of active members were bullied by police or Chamber of Commerce forces. Scores of court cases came up and were handled through the General Defense Committee. Yet the organized solidarity of the men has taught the "town clowns" a big lesson. Arrests now are of rare occurrence, and take place only for causes of more serious import than in former years. Tying up the labor power of a county for a week while the ripened grain stands in danger of being shattered by hail and wind has taught many a star-proud sheriff that prudence is the better part of valor.

The terrific feud that existed in past years with the organized high-jacks or hold-up men that preyed on the moving harvest worker was less severe this year. They have been almost broken by the forces of the I. W. W.

Organization is not spontaneous. The plans are laid for this big event by the General Organization Committee of Number 110, which is elected each year by referendum ballot of the membership. They are carried out under the supervision of the Organization Committee and the hundreds of active delegates that cover the field and give power and direction to the activity decided on by the membership.

Million of stationary farmers and workers are touched and influenced. Hostility is slowly changing to appreciation. The I. W. W. member is no longer feared and hated as he used to be.

The harvest drive has developed new tactics which are being adjusted to other industries and which are confidently expected to bring new life into the forward march of the I. W. W. all along the line. Planned action rather than spontaneous revolt, it is found, will get the goods.



# Psychology and the Workers

## *The Consciousness of Kind*

By PRINCE HOPKINS

ALL students of the lower animals are one in claiming that the social instinct, the community instinct is not a characteristic peculiar to the human race—it is a deep-seated instinct of the entire animal kingdom. Thus with the exception of the feline species, most of the highly developed of the lower animals move in swarms, herds or flocks. The books of John Muir (*Boyhood and Youth*, for instance), and of Kropotkin (*Mutual Aid*), are replete with illustrations of this group instinct. Muller-Lyer (*History of Social Development*, p. 47) gives the following significant description of the habits of baboons:

"The latter live in enormous herds, numbering many thousands, who at night time sleep huddled together for warmth, after having posted sentinels. If attacked, the whole band sets up a furious roaring, screaming and howling, the most powerful of them throw themselves with terrible rage upon the enemy, the strongest protect the weak and the young, and fight valiantly to save them from the enemy; they bring the wounded into safety, and set a rearguard as they retreat."

### **The Instinct of Mutual Aid**

The foregoing illustration indicates not only the existence of the group instinct, but the instinct of mutual aid. As proof of this instinct, one may cite innumerable instances of beetles assisting their comrades in carrying loads to their destination; of ants cooperating in bridging minute streams of water; of bees in caring for their queen; of crows on sentry duty; of stallions unitedly warding off an enemy while their mares and colts escaped, and of sea birds defending a neighbor's nest against marauding enemies.

Those species in which the cooperative tendency is more pronounced are usually better equipped for the struggle of life than are the less cooperative animals. A flock of sparrows can find themselves food more readily than can the bigger birds, and will fiercely repulse the largest bird of prey that may attack one of them.

### **The Intelligent Ant — and Why**

Social life among the animals not only helps in survival, but also develops their intelligence. It is significant that the elephants, monkeys and parrots, which possess this social instinct to an

usual degree, are also among the most intelligent of the animals. Among mankind as well we find that intelligence accompanies association. James Harvey Robinson (*Mind in the Making*, p. 72) thus shows the effect of association on mental development:

"If a group of infants from the best families of today could be reared by apes they would find themselves with no civilization. How long it would take them and their children to gain what now passes for even a low savage culture, it is impossible to say. The whole arduous task would have to be performed anew, and it might not take place at all, unless conditions were favorable, for man is not naturally a 'progressive' animal. He shares the tendencies of all other animal tribes just to pull through and reproduce his kind."

Moreover, when occasionally it has befallen a child to grow up in the bush or the jungle apart from his kind, he shows none of that superior sagacity with which the writer Kipling has endowed an imaginary hero in one of his stories, who, having been abandoned by his mother, grew up among the wild beasts in the wilderness.

Robinson goes on (p. 74):

"To get the feel of uncivilized life, let us recall how savages with the apparently advanced degree of culture reached by our native Indian tribes, may fall to when really hungry. In the journal of the Lewis and Clarke expedition there is an account of the killing of a deer by the white men. Hearing of this, the Shoshones raced wildly to the spot where the warm and bloody entrails had been thrown out.

". . . and ran tumbling over each other like famished dogs. Each tore away what part he could and instantly began to eat it. . . ."

The rest of the account is best omitted. But what a light this description of man before civilization sheds on the claims of those individualists who look upon whatever they accumulated by their superior brains as theirs alone, as though the intellectual inheritance from ages of initiators and discoverers had provided them with none of their equipment!

### **Greeks in the Market Place**

The brilliancy of the Greeks is undoubtedly due to a considerable extent to their constant association one with the other. They were constantly brought into touch with the ideas of the peoples of the then known world, through their

sailing vessels that went to many ports. Every noon the citizens of Athens met in her market place to discuss public and philosophic questions. The city supported free theaters, at which the public applauded plays too "high-brow" to please many a modern university crowd. At great festivals—in which competition in play-writing and poetry vied in popularity with athletics—the Athenian met other Greeks from all over the peninsula. Robinson says of this era (*Mind in the Making*, pp. 111-112):

"After two or three hundred years of talking in the market place and of philosophic discussions prolonged until morning, such of the Greeks as were predisposed to speculate had thought all the thoughts and uttered all the criticisms of commonly accepted beliefs and of one another that could by any possibility occur to those who had little inclination to fare forth and extend their knowledge of the so-called realities of nature by painful and specialized research and examination. . . . Why did the Greeks not go on, as modern scientists have gone on, with vistas of the unachieved still ahead of them?"

"In the first place, Greek civilization was founded on slavery and a fixed condition of the industrial arts. The philosopher and scholar was stopped from fumbling with those everyday processes that were associated with the mean life of the slave and servant. Consequently, there was no one to devise the practical apparatus by which alone profound and ever-increasing knowledge of natural operations is possible. . . . They never came upon the lens, they had no microscope to reveal the minute, no telescope to attract the remote; they never devised a . . . thermometer, not a barometer, to say nothing of cameras and spectroscopes."

### The Sociable French

Among the most intelligent people of today are the French. And this is largely because they are eminently sociable. You may sit at any of the innumerable cafe tables along the boulevards at any time of day, and others will sit near you, and sip their syrup or liquor, and discuss every imaginable topic. The French servant consequently is not, like those of so many other countries, able to talk only with others active in his own special line, but to converse intelligently with men of distinction in widely different fields. This kind of intercourse brings to him ideas from other fields which he is able to adapt to his own sphere of effort. For a like reason the French physician, when he diagnoses

a patient, can do so from an infinitely broader standpoint than his narrow German or even British or American colleague.

The shortcomings of France have been due to the failure of the people to enter sufficiently into communication with serious thinkers abroad, whose calm, objective reason might tend to offset the excitability of the French crowd. The French, above all, have long suffered from a narrow, revengeful nationalism, which has prevented them from feeling at one with other peoples beyond their border.

### "Divide and Conquer"

The lessons that the workers may learn both from Greece and from France are plain: If they would be intelligent, no invidious jealousies or race distinctions must interfere with the freest and widest intercourse among them. If the skilled worker will not associate with the unskilled, nor the white worker with the colored worker or the Asiatic; nor the native American, whose parents came over a generation ago, with the Russian who has just arrived; if the railroad worker is not interested in the problem of the coal miner and the textile worker—then there is little hope for us. **The excluded men will form hostile unions, or will scab on all unions.** The true way out of the dilemma is to do what may be personally unpleasant; accept these men as our comrades, and so bring them into our organizations. A divided working class is beneficial only to the employers.

Whoever encourages the feeling of separateness among workers is a destroyer, be he a boss consciously bent on fostering antagonisms, be he a fellow worker or a wife of a worker. Taken by and large, the women, it must be confessed, are frequently, unconsciously perhaps, a hindrance to the unity of the workers. They live a secluded and unreal life, against which they unconsciously are in protest. They consequently often tend to get vicariously a fuller satisfaction by trying to direct the actions of their children and husbands. In doing this they cause immeasurable domestic unhappiness, and also keep many of the ablest men out of radical and union activities.





# The Month

By HARRY W. LAIDLER

## Labor in America

The miners' strike—the outstanding industrial conflict of the country—settled down during the month to an endurance contest. In the hope that time would compel the workers, hungry and weary, to accept the terms of the operators, the Administration refused to take any step to settle the strike.

The month was marked by important union conventions, particularly among the clothing and railroad workers. The dominant note in a number of these gatherings was the need for unity—unity within the organization, unity of labor on the political field. Increasing interest was shown during this period in the campaign for amnesty and for industrial unionism.

### The Government Lies Down.

THE Government folded its hands and did nothing during the month toward the settlement of the coal strike. The President met John Lewis, of the miners. The House Labor Committee reported out the Bland bill to create a Fact Finding Commission for the coal industry. Several Government departments began to mobilize facts concerning the industry. But that was all. Representative Huddleston, on May 5, expressed the real situation in his speech in the House:

"We have heard it said from the White House that the Administration has some idea on the strike, but nothing has been done. Nothing will be done unless the Administration sees danger of losing its wager that the miners will win their fight with the operators, and are on the point of making a fair contract. Then we will see the Administration acting. But so long as the man the Administration wants to win is on the top, nothing will be said."

The conference of operators and miners in the anthracite district continued. The proposal of the miners at this conference that Federal officials be asked to start an immediate investigation of the anthracite industry, from mine to consumer, was rejected unanimously by the representatives of the operators. In urging this proposal, the miners declared that the successful termination of their plans would bring down the price of coal at least \$5 a ton by the reduction of cost factors other than wages. They emphasized especially the need of eliminating the wastes and overcharges in the distribution of coal.

\* \* \*

The trial of the 23 miners charged with "treason" in West Virginia, began on April 24, in Charlestown, before Judge Wood of the Circuit Court. The defendants were charged "with levying war against the State of West Virginia," by assisting in the march of the miners last fall on the non-union mines of Logan and Mingo Counties. William Blizzard, president of Sub-District No. 2, U. M. W. of A., who claimed that he had done his best to head off the march, was the first defendant to be tried. One of the star witnesses of the state was shown to have been jailed shortly before the trial for collecting money from the miners under false pretenses. The commander of the Federal troops testified that it would have been a ticklish job to have disarmed the miners had it not been for the assistance of the defendant.

On May 17, when the state rested its case, the defense demanded that the court show "a single overt act" upon which it relies to sustain conviction.

John Brophy, president of District No. 2, U. M. W. A., in a recent message to Governor Sproul, cited numerous outrages committed by the coal and iron police in the mining districts of central Pennsylvania, and placed the responsibility for these outrages up to the Governor. He mentioned, among others, the assault on Mrs. Rykala, wife of a striking union miner, by company guards, and declared his belief that a "deliberate attempt is being made to goad the miners into retaliative violence." The Civil Liberties Bureau, dealing with the mine situation, declares:

"The coal strike has produced repressive measures by force or injunction in the Gallup district of New Mexico, where the troops are in control; in Huerfano County, Colorado, where the state rangers are in practical control; in various parts of West Virginia, where Mingo County is still under martial law, and in several counties of western Pennsylvania, where non-union miners have joined the strikers in large numbers."

\* \* \*

### "The United Front" in the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union.

THE two great clothing workers' unions—the International Ladies' Garment Workers and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers—the latter the controlling factor in the men's clothing industry—held their conventions in early May. Each organization had grown in the last dozen years from a mere handful of scattered groups to among the most powerful, efficient and progressive labor organizations in the country. Each had revolutionized working conditions in its respective field. Each, during the past two years, had passed through the most extensive and most bitterly fought struggles in its existence, and had come out with lines intact and colors flying.

Chief interest at the convention of the I. L. G. W. U., called in Cleveland for May Day, centered around the willingness of President Schlesinger to accept the union's presidency again. Schlesinger had probably been more responsible than any other man for the phenomenal growth of the union. In the contest of this year against the New York manufacturers, he had shown remarkable generalship in forcing the manufacturers on the defensive. The unique injunction proceedings instituted by the union against the manufacturers who had violated their contracts, however, had, among other factors, given ammunition to the Left Wing of the union in the opposition to the administration. Since the close of the lockout Schlesinger had been the target of attack by the "radical" minority. These attacks, added to his physical weariness, led him to his decision. No sooner had this decision gained currency than Schlesinger was besieged with demands that he reconsider. Samuel Gompers, at the convention, declared that there were times when men could not dare to retire, and that this was one of them.

## LABOR AGE

Abraham Cahan, of the Jewish Daily Forward, was instrumental in forming a "unity" committee among the delegates, containing representatives of all wings at the convention, who pledged their support. Schlesinger finally capitulated, and, at the conclusion of the convention, was re-elected by a vote of 198 to 14.

The convention, by unanimous vote, urged the renewal of the Needle Trades Workers' Alliance, organized in December, 1920, by the International, the Amalgamated and three other unions. While accepting amalgamation in principle, it declared that this was not the time for this step, as the Alliance had not as yet proved its worth. The delegates denounced the piece-work system as leading to "intensified slavery and exploitation;" decided to continue their affiliation with the International Federation of Clothing Workers, urged the A. F. of L. to renew its international affiliation with Amsterdam, supported a motion for general amnesty for political prisoners, and called for the recognition of the Soviet government. By a vote of 126 to 55 they endorsed the Socialist Party and approved the Party's call "for unity of the entire labor movement on the political field." The convention also recorded itself, by a vote of 138 to 51, against the tactics of those "outside meddlers who have been seeking to create dissensions in the unions under the cloak of radicalism." It warmly commended **Labor Age** for its work for labor. The 150,000 members were represented by about 200 delegates.

\* \* \*

Coincident with the convention of the I. L. G. W., the Cloak, Suit and Skirt Manufacturers' Association, which had so aggressively fought the unions in the early part of the year, announced a new policy of "peace in the industry," but "peace consistent with living conditions in the industry and not peace at any price."

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### The Amalgamated Still Advances.

**T**HE convention of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, which opened in Chicago a week later than that of the International, differed somewhat from the latter in its attitude on amalgamation and political action. President Hillman showed his preference for amalgamation in his opening speech.

Hillman said in part:

"I hope that in the near future delegates from all needle trades will meet in convention together. This is the time for unity, for closer and closer unity, because the enemies of the other side stand together no matter what organization they belong to."

The convention did not give its support to any political party. It, however, did instruct the Executive Board to make a survey of working class political parties, report its findings and recommendations to its membership, and take a referendum vote if it should discover a political movement representing the ideals of the membership. This question gave rise to a heated debate in which a number of Socialist delegates urged renewed endorsement of the Socialist party, and declared that the resolution was a move toward the support of the recently formed Workers' party. President Hillman, in his reply, however, maintained that the

"Amalgamated is too big to affiliate with any political faction, but it will not be cajoled into taking a backward step when the conservative elements of the labor movement are abandoning their stand against political action."

The next big industrial objective of the Amalgamated, it was decided, would be the establishment of an unem-

ployment fund out of the proceeds of the industry. The officers were instructed to make this question an issue in all future negotiations with employers. An industry must be obligated, the delegates declared, to maintain its workers.

The convention gave its approval to the establishment of the Amalgamated Trust and Savings Bank of Chicago, with a capital stock—almost completely subscribed—of \$200,000. It authorized its officers to form a company for the purpose of operating Soviet clothing and textile factories on a cooperative basis, voting \$10,000 to defray initial expenses, and \$50,000 for the purchase of stock for the union. It favored week work as opposed to piece work, and referred the demand for a 40-hour week to the officers. It demanded the release of political prisoners and affirmed its faith in the innocence of Sacco and Vanzetti.

### LABOR AGE ENDORSED

The **International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union**, at its Cleveland Convention last month, unanimously adopted the following resolution:

**Resolution No. 103** (introduced by J. Breslaw, Local 35; Louis Langer, Local 35; I. Feinberg, N. Y. Cloak Joint Board; L. Pinkovsky, Local 23; Saul Metz, Local 1, and Philip Levine, Local 35.)

WHEREAS, the Labor Publication Society, an organization composed of men and women of the labor movement, fully capable and qualified to speak its needs, hopes and aspirations, has launched the publication of a monthly magazine called the "Labor Age," and

WHEREAS, this magazine, now seven months old, has proved to be a very valuable contribution to the labor literature of America, serving as a true mirror of the various tendencies within this movement and presenting an impartial view of all the stirring problems that concern labor in America and all over the world, and

WHEREAS, in these days of heated partisanship and intolerance of opinion within the labor movement, such a medium of impartial and genuinely solid information is even more valuable and desirable, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that the sixteenth biennial convention of the I. L. G. W. U. endorse the "Labor Age" magazine and pledge its moral and material support, hoping that it may serve as a clearing house for disseminating all ideas, thoughts and general information of, for, and by the labor movement. . . .

The **Amalgamated Clothing Workers** also generously voted financial assistance to **Labor Age**, and the **Pennsylvania Federation of Labor Convention** endorsed this publication.

Opponents of the administration urged the abolition of the impartial arbitration machinery, the repudiation of agreements with employers and elimination of standards of production, the reduction of the salaries of the officers and affiliation with the Red Trade Union International. In each case they lost, although they secured a vote of 63 to 98 on the question of abolishing the arbitration machinery.

During the convention a message was received from Lazovsky, president of the Red Trade Union International. "Unity and harmony in the ranks of the American trade union movement," it read, "is more important than all other questions."

Sidney Hillman and Joseph Schlossberg were renominated for the positions of president and secretary-treasurer respectively. The delegates represented approximately 170,000 members. The report of Secretary Schlossberg showed a remarkable union solidarity. A feature of the convention was a beautifully prepared "Amalgamated Illustrated," the product of the Educational Department, of which J. B. Salutsky is director.

**The Workmen's Circle Meets.**

**T**HE possibilities of workers' insurance were suggested at the annual convention of the Workmen's Circle, the big workers' insurance organization of America, held at Toronto in early May. The present membership is about 83,000, an increase of about 10,000 since last year. The Circle, according to President Guskin, sent over a half-million dollars to Russia since the outbreak of the war. Last year it spent over \$60,000 in conducting lectures, organizing Socialist Sunday schools, publishing magazines for children, etc. Its sanitarium for consumptives, recently formed, is one of its biggest achievements. The officers announced at the convention plans for establishing an old-age home for needy members.

The Socialist and Communist elements in the convention came to wordy combats on several occasions. The Socialist group, however, showed the greater strength, 105 of the 166 delegates being members of the Socialist party.

**The Railroad Unions Get Into Line**

**F**RAGMENTARY reports thus far received from the conventions of the various railroad unions are indicative of the new spirit of the times in the American trade unions. Practically all of the unions enthusiastically endorsed the Conference for Progressive Political Action, while a number of them took long leaps forward toward industrial unionism.

This was the case, for instance, with the Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks, Freight Handlers and Express and Station Employees, at their convention in Dallas, Texas. The union endorsed the political conference, favored the amalgamation of craft unions into industrial unions to cover a single industry, and demanded recognition of Russia and the immediate opening of trade relations as a means of alleviating the unemployment problem of this country. It still refused, however, to eliminate the word "white" from the qualifications for membership.

The Brotherhood of Enginemen and Firemen are also considering the problem of amalgamation with the Locomotive Engineers in their Houston convention. Their range of subjects scheduled for discussion is significant, including, as it does, labor press, participation in political campaigns, cooperative buying and distribution, alliance with the miners, maintenance of a tuberculosis sanitarium, etc.

The attitude of the Order of Railway Conductors toward political action was indicated by the statement of President Sheppard at the 37th grand division meeting of the order in early May:

"Our political action for the present will be non-partisan. The primary effort will be to elect to the next congress men who will be friendly to labor. We are compelled to take political action because the employers have secured control of the government and use political power to dominate economic situations."

The convention offered moral and financial support to candidates or movements lining themselves on the side of labor's economic and civic ideals.

The shop craft unions affiliated with the A. F. of L. at its Chicago convention in late April, recorded themselves again in favor of government ownership and democratic control of the railroads. They demanded that the

railroads return to the U. S. treasury the amount wasted in the repairs of contract shops. They admitted to membership in the federation the Brotherhood of Firemen and Oilers, though refusing other applications. They refused the offer from the University of Chicago to establish a training course in the university for minor union officials.

The various conventions approved the loose alliance with the United Mine Workers, and promised to give what support they could to the miners.

**Penn Labor Re-elects Maurer.**

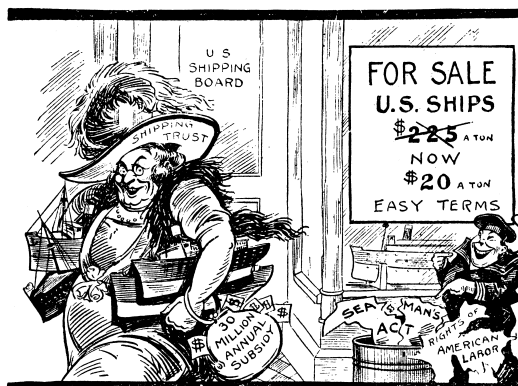
**J**AMES H. MAURER was again re-elected president of the Pennsylvania Federation of Labor at the Federation convention, held in Scranton on May 9. President Maurer, in his opening address, declared that, despite the "open shop" drive, injunctions, slanders, spies, enforced idleness, blacklisting and imprisonments, the State Federation of Labor was stronger than ever before. He described the convention of February 20, in Chicago, which gave rise to the Conference for Progressive Political Action, as

"The most significant convention held in the United States since the gathering at Independence Hall, in Philadelphia, in July, 1776. . . . The heads of the great railroad brotherhoods, heretofore opposed to political action, were present. The heads of the various crafts of the A. F. of L. were present. Farmer organizations and the Non-Partisan League, representatives of the Socialist party and Single Taxers, all had their delegates there. . . . They talked things over for two days and nights, and agreed to agree, then adjourned without a single fight or a harsh or unkind word having been spoken—marvelous."

President Maurer, marshalling a mass of data to prove the need for higher wages, urged the development of the cooperative movement, of workers' education, of the labor press and recognition of Russia. He declared that the American workers should tell the government that they "will not endure unemployment while Russian workers and farmers starve and suffer for the lack of the very goods which the American workers can produce."

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**The A. F. of L. fights the "Subsidy Ghost"**



The above cartoon, from the cover of the May *American Federationist*, indicates the fight which the A. F. of L. and the Seamen's Union are making on the ship subsidy bill now before Congress. The *Federationist* calls it the "subsidy ghost," and says that "Organized labor is no less opposed to this bill than it was to the bill introduced in 1909 and to every subsidy bill introduced prior to that year."

**Socialist Party No Longer Isolated**

**T**HE one political convention held during the month was that of the Socialist party, opened in Cleveland on April 29. The two outstanding decisions of the convention were the decision to apply for immediate affiliation with the Vienna Union (The International Working Union of Socialist parties), and that to work with other working class political groups.

Three proposals regarding international affiliation were made at the convention. One delegate favored remaining aloof from all internationals. Nine urged that the party send delegates to the next convention called by the Vienna union and report their recommendations to the party. Eleven, a bare majority of delegates voting, favored immediate affiliation with Vienna. Morris Hillquit, leader of this group, declared that it was the function of the Vienna union to infuse a little more revolutionary enthusiasm into the Second International and a little more realism and sanity into the Third.

In their program of united political action, the convention authorized the Executive Committee to select delegates to attend the next meeting of the Conference for

Progressive Political Action, these delegates, however, to have no power to commit the party to any policy, but merely to report with recommendations to the next national convention.

The convention made it clear that the party was opposed to all fusion with the Republican and Democratic Parties. "No state or local organization," the resolution read, "shall fuse, combine or compromise with either the Democratic or Republican parties, or refrain from making nominations, in order to favor candidates of either of those parties."

State organizations of the party may cooperate with organizations of labor and working farmers within their state for independent political action on the following conditions:

- (1) That the independence and integrity of the organization and the official political standing of the Socialist party be fully preserved;
- (2) that the political programs and platforms adopted by such joint groups be not inconsistent with those of the Socialist party;
- (3) that all such cooperation be subject to the approval of the National Executive Committee;
- (4) that the nomination and election of candidates be in express opposition to the two old parties, and exclude participation in the primaries and elections of such parties. The party's dues were also placed at 25 cents a month, with provision for further reduction after the membership reaches 25,000.

**Labor in Europe**

The big international events during the month in the ranks of labor included the conventions of the International Federation of Trade Unions at Rome, the Workers' International Congress at Genoa, the Council of the International Cooperative Alliance at Milan, the great May Day demonstrations throughout Europe and the increasing developments toward the "united labor front."

Big strides toward trade union federation and amalgamation were made in a number of countries, particularly in England and Australia. The adoption by the Independent Labor Party of England of a new and modernized socialist platform marks a new stage in the development of that vigorous organization.

**Labor's Program of Reconstruction.**

**W**HILE labor was practically unrepresented at Genoa, save in the Russian delegation, its representatives, nevertheless, submitted to the conference a remarkable program for the reconstruction of Europe. The program was formulated at the International Workers' Congress, called by the International Federation of Trade Unions at Genoa on April 15, immediately before the opening of the Federation's congress in Rome.

The resolution declared that the present economic crisis was due to "the policy of nationalism and imperialism pursued by the European governments,"

"Aggravated by the effects of speculation, the failure to adapt production to the development of the super-capitalism, which, without engaging directly in production, is gaining an ever-increasing hold on the economic machinery of the world. . . . At a time when it is essential to utilize the labor of every able-bodied man, some ten million wage earners are without work or bread. . . . The growing paralysis of production and of the exchanges can only be remedied by giving each country the means of production, and thus of acquiring the commodities indispensable to its existence."

The Congress demanded that Russia, without reserve, resume her place as an equal among the European nations. The first condition for a revival of economic life, it declared, was the reciprocal cancellation of the debts contracted by the European nations during the war. Credits should be provided "by means of an international loan on the security of all European nations, organized by the League of Nations and administered

under its control." The burden of reparations should be placed on the possessing class, and not on the workers. The Entente should give up the payments demanded for war pensions from Germany and put an end to military occupations and to the sanctions. International control and distribution of the chief raw materials needed by industry and manufacture should be established in order that private speculation might be eliminated. The resolution continued:

"The Congress further expresses the unanimous conviction of labor organizations that disarmament is a necessary condition for the economic revival of Europe. It is a lamentable thought that after a terribly murderous war, and in spite of the disarmament of Germany, the effective force of existing permanent armies in Europe amounts to 4,700,000 men as compared with 3,700,000 before the war. These military burdens, weighing on the life of the people, constitute heavy and unproductive charges that hinder the reconstruction of the ruins that the war has made."

The Congress protested against the seizure of the impoverished parts of Europe by syndicates, trusts and consortiums, and denounced any attempt to reduce the gains made by labor, particularly in regard to the eight-hour day and the 48-hour week.

The resolution was submitted on April 20 to the Economic Commission of the Genoa Conference.

**Trade Union Federation Takes Anti-War Stand**

**T**HE Workers' International Congress was followed by the Second Ordinary Congress of the International Federation of Trade Unions, which convened in the Theater Argentina, Rome, on April 20, 1922. This convention was said to be the most representative gathering of trade unionists ever held in Europe, containing as it did delegates from the trade union movements of some 20 countries, and representing some 24,000,000 organized workers.

The question of disarmament and of measures against war dominated most of the discussions at the congress. J. H. Thomas, the chairman of the congress, declared that an examination of the present economic situation showed the failure of the existing order of society. Internationalism, not nationalism, must be the cry of the workers today. The British, French and German workers were not going to be misled into following the imperial-

istic and militaristic policies of their respective governments.

Thomas, in defending the Federation's attitude toward Russia, stated that it had protested against the blockade of Russia in 1919, had refused to handle munition transports to Poland and had conducted a relief work in the famine districts. He, however, criticised the Russian trade union leaders as unrepresentative of the real trade union movement, and accused them of adopting a disintegrating policy.

The Congress approved the reconstruction report submitted to the Genoa Conference. In discussing this report, Jouhaux warned the workers to be on guard lest the

"Genoa Conference become a starting point for a still greater supremacy of capitalism. The rights and liberties of the working classes have not even a look-in at the Genoa Conference. Just as formerly it was a question of coal interests, so it is now a question of petroleum. If we do not develop full power, fresh wars will be the result of the Conference at Genoa."

Ben Turner of England declared that the "victorious" nations were cursed with widespread unemployment as a result of the war. The workers have had to bear the brunt of "a policy which has destroyed everything, but has not reconstructed anything."

That the trade unions of Europe must adopt a more radical policy than before 1914 was the opinion of Edo Fimmen, secretary of the Federation. He said:

"Action for the amelioration of living conditions within the capitalist system cannot be the only aims of the trade unions, either nationally or internationally. The capitalist system itself must be attacked; the fight against militarism must be taken up if we are to achieve the aims of the trade union movement, that is, socialism."

He declared that the Bureau of the Federation had declined to negotiate with the Red Trade Union International which, in a strict sense, was not an international at all, although, prior to the formation of the Red International, it had made repeated efforts, without success, to enter into friendly relations with the Russian trade unions. The Red International, he declared, contained "six million Russian trade unionists compulsorily organized," two or three national trade union centers "of doubtful authenticity," and the remainder minorities in the national trade union centers which are affiliated with the Amsterdam International.

A general strike as a last resort in case of threatened war was urged by the Congress in the following resolution:

"The International Congress declares that it is the task of the organized workers to counteract all wars which may threaten to break out in the future with all the means at the disposal of the labor movement, and if needs be, to prevent the actual outbreak of such wars by proclaiming and carrying out a general international strike."

#### Cooperative International Favors Russians

THE cooperative movement of Russia is now tending to conform to the principles followed by the movement in other countries. This was the conclusion reached by the cooperative delegation recently sent to Russia by the International Cooperative Alliance. As a result of the delegation's report, the Central Council of the Alliance, meeting in Milan on April 8-12, approved the admission of the Russian movement into their body, and in behalf of 25,000,000 families included in the Alliance, urged the Genoa Conference to utilize Russian cooperatives in facilitating economic relations between Russia and other countries.

The Council recommended that the Genoa diplomats grant credits to needy nations, to be guaranteed "without aims of domination, of exploitation, or speculation in

the way of usury," and give direct representation at the Genoa Conference to the cooperatives.

It urged that the cooperative movement in each country concentrate the financial and credit operations of cooperative societies into a single national cooperative bank, constituted as an independent organization or as a section of the Wholesale Society's bank, and that the managers of these banks discuss the possibility of establishing an international clearing house and an international bank. To assist in such a project, it appointed a permanent committee on banking.

#### Steps Toward Federation in England

IT is now practically certain that the proposed federation of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, the Railway Clerks' Association, the Transport Workers' Federation and the National Union of Railwaymen will soon be a reality. The executives of these organizations have approved the federation plan, which will be submitted to the various organizations at their spring and summer conventions. The new body will contain a membership of 1,100,000, including 700,000 from the railway unions and 400,000 from the transport workers.

The great lockout among the machinists continued. On April 27, the strikers were joined by the remaining unions in the machinists' industry.

#### Russia.

THE executive committee of the Communist International, after naming its three representatives on the Committee of Nine formed as a result of the Berlin Conference, requested Frederick Adler, secretary of the committee, to call the committee together before the adjournment of the Genoa Conference. This, however, proved impossible. The representatives of the Third International are Radek, Clara Zetkin and Frossard.

Lenin and Zenoviev both brought Radek to task for conceding too much to the other internationals at the Berlin meeting. Lenin maintained that Radek should not have promised that the Social Revolutionists should be spared capital punishment, as no bourgeois government would ever have made that concession. "Everybody knows," declared Lenin, "that the Social Revolutionists shot Communists, organized insurrections and at times also helped to form a unified front with the international bourgeoisie." However, Radek's concessions will now be respected.

Leonid Krassin, in a recent article in the *Rote Fahne*, declared that the trade unions, now faced again with the private owners, are assuming the same functions as those in Western countries. The difference between Russian trade unions and others, however, is that the former are backed by a revolutionary government, which punishes violations of eight-hour and other legislation with imprisonment and heavy fines.

The Russian delegation at the Genoa Conference, according to the *Federated Press*, was the only delegation which contained any representatives of labor except in the capacity of technical advisers. Among the 12 delegates, five of whom had votes at Genoa, were the general secretary of the Federation of Trade Unions, and representatives of the farmers and metal workers.

# BOOK NOTES

Edited by PRINCE HOPKINS

## REFERENCES ON CURRENT LABOR MATTERS

### 4. Cooperation

- Emerson P. Harris, "Co-operation, the Hope of the Consumer." (Macmillan Co., 1918.)
- Fred C. Howe, "Denmark, a Co-operative Commonwealth." (Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1921.)
- Albert Sonnichsen, "Consumer's Co-operation." (Macmillan Co., 1919.)
- Beatrice and Sidney Webb, "The Consumers' Co-operative Movement." [Longmans, Green & Co., 1921.]
- Leonard Woolf, "Co-operation and the Future of Industry." (Geo. Allen & Unwin, London.)
- Leonard Woolf, "Socialism and Co-operation." (National Labour Press, London.)

Publications of Co-operative League of America: Nos. 3 (Story of Co-operation), 4 (How to Start and Run a Rochdale Co-operative Society), 6 (A Model Constitution and By-Laws for a Co-operative Society), 11 (Control of Industry by the People Through the Co-operative Movement), 38 (Co-operative Consumers' Movement in the United States).

All of the above books and publications can be obtained from the Co-operative League of America, 167 West 12th Street, New York City.

\* \* \*

(The Workers' Education Bureau has just issued the first volume of its series of "The Workers' Bookshelf." This is a significant development in workers' education in this country, and justifies the more ambitious review which we will give it in the July issue.)

\* \* \*

**A** VERY readable, and at the same time extensive survey of the whole field of sociology from an unusual approach is Müller-Lyer's *The History of Social Development*, translated by E. C. Lake and H. A. Lake. (London, Allen & Unwin.) As its title indicates, the treatment of the subject is essentially historical. Typical chapters are "The Development of the Tool," "Evolution of Clothing," "Evolution of the Dwelling Place" and "Structure and Organization of Labor."

\* \* \*

*The Russian Revolution* is discussed in a booklet by that title (published by Trade Union Educational League, Chicago, 1922), with especial attention to the technique of organization. Foster is not blind to the shortcomings of the Soviet government. He says, "I am not astonished or discouraged that the workers are making a poor job of establishing the new society in Russia. I have had too much practical experience with the masses to expect anything else . . . but I do know . . . that it is only through starvation and all-around misery that the workers can make progress. . . . The Russian revolution will live and accomplish its great task of setting up the world's first free commonwealth."

\* \* \*

**T**HE most inspiring kind of a book is always that which tells us how someone else did something which we know we ourselves ought to do, but aren't confident we'd do properly. For this reason great praise is due to George D. Herron for his *The Revival of Italy* (London, George Allen & Unwin), and especially the third chapter therein, in which he discusses *The Revolution of September, 1920*, when the Italian workers seized and for a time themselves operated the factories in northern Italy.

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Our previous issues have been off the press on the 10th of the month of issue. This JUNE number, for instance, is in the mails on June 10. This has been necessitated by the fact that under the postal laws two issues were required for 1921, to insure our mailing permit; and the November issue—the first—was not published until November 15, 1921.

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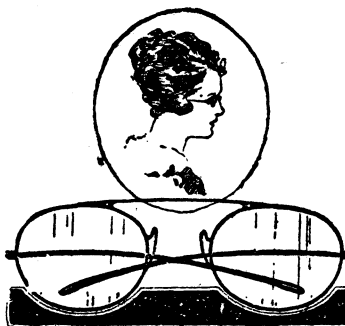
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