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Messages to Workingmen

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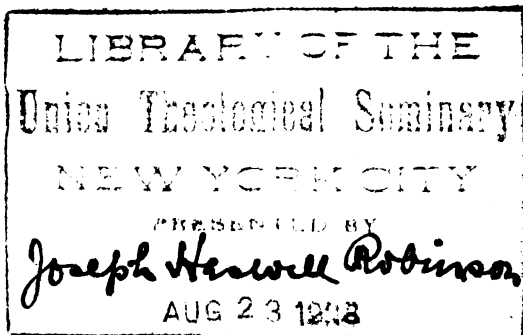
CHARLES STELZLE

Author of "The Workingman and Social Problems," "Boys of the Street," etc.



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To the editors of the labour press who so cordially coöperated with the author in presenting through their columns, these messages to workingmen.

PREFACE

THE chapters which form this book were syndicated to the labour press of the United States and Canada.

They are now put into permanent form because of repeated requests which have come from many who are interested in the relation of the church to the labour movement.

Written in the midst of an active life on the firing line, they deal with questions met with in labour halls and in personal conversation with the men on both sides, but all deeply and sincerely interested in these discussions.

It is the hope of the author that the brief suggestions herewith presented may develop further thought on the part of both the workingman and those who have to do with industrial problems, especially as they relate to the church.

CHARLES STELZLE.

Chicago, May 10th, 1906.

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Messages to Workingmen

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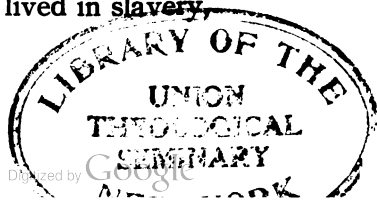
LABOUR'S PROGRESS

IT would be folly to insist that the social system of the day is ideal. But any man who reads history knows that the condition of the workingman to-day is infinitely better than it was a century ago.

Whatever other causes have been at work to bring about this change, much of it must be attributed to trades unionism.

There has been steady progress like the irresistible sweep of a mighty river. Eddies have been formed which seem to mark the backward course of the stream. The pessimist has seen the eddy and points to it as an indication that there has been only a backward movement, indifferent to the fact that the flood just beyond reveals true progress.

He has forgotten that only a few centuries ago half the world lived in slavery,



and human life was counted so cheap that men and women were killed for sport. Speak to him of the progress made by working people, and he will fling into your face the bitter argument of the anarchist, unmindful of the day when labour was considered degrading and dishonourable—when the philosophers declared that a purchased labourer is better than a hired one; when the workingman lived in a small, dingy, foul-smelling room; when he slept in cellars and over open drains; when men worked sixteen hours a day the year round, without being paid for the “over time.”

He has forgotten the time when manufacturers were actually paid to rid a parish of pauper children, who then became white slaves; when conditions were so degrading that in many cases full-grown men remained at home caring for the babies or mending stockings, while the women were engaged at the wearing work of the mill; when it was a crime to increase the workingman's wages above a certain amount; when the workingman could be put into jail for owing a storekeeper ten cents; when the mechanic received fifty

cents for a day's work, at a time when fifty cents would purchase no more than it will to-day.

The condition of the skilled American workingman to-day is superior to that of the royalty of three centuries ago. He has a better home, more conveniences, more books, more of the things that make life worth the living.

The increase in wages, the shortening of his hours of work, the multiplication of his comforts, his new educational advantages, his superior position as a citizen and as a man—all these have made the average workingman a progressive, right-thinking human being.

As already noted, conditions are not ideal. There is much that needs to be adjusted. Because of this, among the so-called "masses," there is a feeling of unrest which many fear. It is supposed this feeling indicates that there may be an uprising destructive of law and order, but no one need fear a sane agitation carried on by honest intelligent men. It is a sign of life and growth, and an indication of better things to come. The good sense of the American people will see that it comes

out all right. But Rome was not built in a day.

The bitterness in human society will not be healed by an arbitrary division of men into classes. Any class movement in this country, be it a workingmen's movement or an employers' movement, it is sure to fail.

The rich are frequently accused of fostering a class spirit. However that may be, this unfortunate spirit is not confined to the prosperous. The same spirit sometimes exists among workingmen. The journeyman frequently treats his helper with the greatest contempt. The mechanics in some trades consider themselves superior to those engaged in some others. Because some workingmen are privileged to wear white linen shirts while at their work, they despise the labourer whose toil compels him to wear one made of wool or cotton. This spirit of caste has also gone over to their wives. In a little Minnesota railroad town the wives of the engineers, the firemen and the brakemen are formed into exclusive women's clubs. It is absolutely impossible for the fireman's wife to join the club composed of the

engineers' wives, and as for the brakeman's wife—she simply "isn't in it."

If ever the labour question is to be settled, men must have the spirit of brotherhood taught by Jesus Christ Himself. There are broad-minded men who have this larger vision. Men who deprecate the bitterness and the stinging personalities which have been injected into the labour question, which must be fought out only on its merits and on principle. But the average agitator, whether he represents employer or employee, with his pessimism, his cruel satire, his appeal to class prejudice, can only retard the growth of the spirit of brotherhood which must prevail before the golden age can be ushered in.

II

THE ORGANIZATION OF AN ANTI- POVERTY SOCIETY

THE dawn of day for the toiler has been brought nearer through the men who have laboured morning, noon and night, in the interest of the industrial movement. And the realization of this progress has been the best reward of those who have made many sacrifices for their fellow men. Speed every movement which has for its object the betterment of the physical condition of the workingman! As I write on "The Organization of an Anti-Poverty Society," will you keep in mind that I am in hearty sympathy with every organization which has that as its aim?

And yet, in this materialistic age, there are some things of which we need to be reminded. When I say "we," I mean the entire human race.

Ever since poverty came into the world men have accepted it as an evil, and they have organized societies of many kinds in

order to abolish it. But somehow they have not touched the root of the matter, and as that is the most vital part of the whole thing, poverty has not been abolished.

Men have been tinkering with those things which appear upon the surface, forgetting, or being ignorant of the fact, that there is much that does not appear upon the surface, and that that which does not appear, is, after all, the most important. In this study of the abolition of poverty, there are a few underlying principles, of which we must never lose sight.

WHENCE HAPPINESS COMES

The average man thinks that money—material wealth—is the foundation of happiness. That is not true. Automobiles, pianos and summer homes with steam yachts do not hold the secret of happiness. No man was ever made happy by wealth. No man was ever made unhappy by poverty. I realize that this is a very broad statement, and that it may be sadly interpreted, but I would say again that happiness and unhappiness, if they have come to you, have come because of something from

within you, not because of something from without. Somebody has said that the successful man does not look *out* for opportunities; he looks *in*, for that is where they come from.

Once a man came to Jesus and said, "Master, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me."

Jesus replied, "Take heed—beware—for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

VARIOUS KINDS OF RICHES

Another thing to be borne in mind is that when we speak of poverty we mean not only that a man has no money, but that he is not the possessor of some other things that make a man rich. Some people have much money but they are poor mentally. Many a so-called "poor" mechanic who depends upon the public library for his reading matter is richer mentally, than many another man who has the walls of his private library lined with the world's best volumes.

The savage chief from Zulu-land, visiting London, appreciated nearly everything but the libraries. He was poor mentally.

You may become rich in knowledge. No man can prevent you from doing that.

Others are poor because they do not appreciate the beautiful things in the world—a sunset, scenery, pictures, flowers, and music. Some men go through life with their eyes closed to all the inspiring things that God has given them. They think and plan simply for a square meal, a can of beer, and a night's sleep. Their motto for life is this: "Meat, Malt, and Mattress." Life has no meaning for them beyond this. And yet money cannot buy this appreciation. Even some so-called rich men go through this world with their eyes closed.

Some people are strangely poor in love, while possessing other graces. The Inspired Book tells us, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge ; and although I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains and have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though

I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing.”

Oratory, the gift of prophecy, wisdom, knowledge, faith, charity, self-sacrifice—all these without love—are nothing. The chapter closes with these words :

“And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three : but the greatest of these is love.”

It is the most important thing in the world. Suppose it should suddenly be taken out of your life. No love of sweetheart, of wife, of children. Could money take its place? Never! Life would not be worth the living.

The worst kind of poverty is that which sacrifices the inner life for the sake of outward show, or material advantages. It is bad enough to have the body hungry. I know what that means. But it is far worse to starve the soul.

FOUR CLASSES OF MEN

After all, poverty is an individual matter. It does not belong to any particular class. Some people tell us that our country is divided into two great classes ; the capitalistic and the proletariat—the wealthy and

the working class. There are really four kinds of people in the world:

The poor poor—those who have no money and nothing else.

The rich poor—those who have no money, but who have the other things that I have been writing about.

The poor rich—those who have money, but nothing else.

The rich rich—those who have money, as well as the other things.

The last class, as a rule, ought to be the happiest people, but if I had to choose between being a “rich poor” man or a “poor rich” man, I would rather be a “rich poor” man—and anybody may be a rich poor man.

WHY SOME SOCIAL SCHEMES HAVE FAILED

Poverty cannot be abolished by wholesale, for the reason just given. Scores of schemes planned for the abolition of poverty have been tried but have all failed. No matter how they may have been advocated in good faith, and no matter how earnest and sincere were the men who promoted these schemes, yet

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selfishness and laziness, the lack of individual effort, dependence upon the community—these are the reasons given for their failure. No society can do for a man what he will not do for himself.

A SOCIETY OF ONE MEMBER

You have discovered that I have been preparing you for the statement that the best kind of an Anti-Poverty Society is an organization composed of one member. He must be president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer; he must do his own committee work; he must get up his own constitution, and principally, he must amend his constitution. Most of us need to change our attitude towards things in general before we can become rich in the best sense. We must get rid of many false ideas concerning foundation things. We must get the right estimate of values. We must learn to see things in their right proportion.

THE REAL SECRET

We have been talking about the things that you are to receive. Let us go down deeper into the problem—into the secret

of getting and enjoying the best things. Suppose you should go to the librarian and say to him :

“I demand the wisdom contained in the books on your shelves.”

You might threaten until you are black in the face and you would not get it. The librarian would tell you that you must give heart and mind to the study of the books before you can obtain the wisdom which they contain. You must burn the midnight oil ; you must give time and strength and study, then they will be yours.

Furthermore, if you are to enjoy beautiful things, you must give them your sympathetic interest. No one can enjoy music, flowers, sunsets, pictures and scenery, if he systematically neglects them. The arm that is not used soon becomes paralyzed. The brain that is not exercised soon becomes dull. The talent that is not employed is soon taken away. These all cry, “Give! Give! Give!” before they say “Receive.”

And what about love? Did you ever secure another's love by demanding it? What is it that makes you rich in the love

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of your wife and children? It is because you have first given your own love. No man ever enjoyed the beauty of true love until he gave his own heart, and until he was ready to lay down his own life, if need be, for the one whose love he prized.

And that is the secret of getting rich—giving to others. Jesus said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive,” and, ever since He said it, this saying of Jesus has been made the subject of many a joke. But Jesus Christ was never more serious than when He said it, and He knew what He was talking about.

FOR THE “HERE AND NOW”

Not a word has been said about treasure in heaven. We shall have that by living out the principles here given. Unselfishness and love and devotion pay in this world, and they are the only things that do pay, either in this world or in the next.

How, then, may you organize an Anti-Poverty Society? First, by constituting *yourself* such a society.

Second, by making other people rich. Have I been talking “up in the air”? Then the philosophy of Jesus and the best

men who ever lived, is false. But you know better than that. The experience of the human heart tells you that these things are true. And all that has been said applies to the "rich" as well as to the "poor." God help us to live out these thoughts, making the world richer for our having been in it, and thus enriching our own lives.

In this spirit let us enter the labour movement. Many there are who have already done so, equalling in devotion and in sacrifice the missionary of the church, who, forgetting himself, is spending his life in true service for his fellow men.

III

IS THE CHURCH OPPOSED TO WORKINGMEN?

“THE church has always been against the workingman”—so some men are wont to say. I shall not discuss the purely theoretical arguments in this connection. Neither do I propose to make this a theological treatise; nor yet shall I discuss religion as such. There are some well known historical facts which may and should be produced against the statement at the head of this article.

In the first place, its founder, Jesus Christ, was not against workingmen. Never were more sympathetic words spoken to the “common people” than were uttered by Jesus Christ. We are told that the “common people heard Him gladly.” He Himself was a carpenter and He must necessarily have had a workingman’s sympathies. He constantly rebuked the oppressors of the poor. The men whom He selected as His disciples and

Is the Church Opposed to Workingmen 27

who were the first promoters of the church were workingmen. During the first centuries of its history, the church received its strongest support from the great labour guilds of that period—the labour unions we would now call them—and it is not impossible that Jesus Himself was a member of the Carpenters' Guild in Nazareth.

In the second place, the prophets of the church were not opposed to workingmen. The strongest indictments of the labour agitator against society to-day are chosen from the sayings of the prophets as they are recorded in the Scriptures.

Furthermore, the Text-Book of the church is not opposed to workingmen. The principles laid down by its writers would solve the social question if faithfully lived out by both the capitalist and the labourer. Hardly a book treating on political economy which was used in any university ten years ago but is out of date to-day. The Bible is the only book always up to date, and it is the only text-book which the church officially recognizes.

Again, the leaders in the great religious movements in history were not opposed to workingmen. Indeed, most of them were

28 Is the Church Opposed to Workingmen

workingmen themselves. The great religious movements had their origin among the common people. They were fought for by workingmen, of whom thousands upon thousands shed their blood because they believed in the great principles involved.

Finally, the preachers of to-day as a class, are not opposed to workingmen. Many of them could be named who fearlessly denounce the sins of the rich as well as the sins of the poor. Eager to help, they are asking what they may do in a practical way to assist in raising the standard of living for the workingman.

In the light of all this is it fair to make the statement that the church is opposed to workingmen? I confess that the church has not done all that she should for humanity, because, after all, it is made up of poor, weak mortals. But give her credit for what she has done. You would demand the same treatment for trades unionism, and rightfully so.

IV

LABOUR'S CHAMPION

WOULD it not be a great thing for the workingman to have as his champion a leader who is practically the court of last appeal on the social question?

There is such a man. One time He was a carpenter. He knows about the difficulties that confront the toiler. While He lived upon earth two thousand years ago, His influence and power to-day are such that no man living dares set himself in open hostility to His reign. No king or ruler in the civilized world would think of prohibiting the homage which men universally accord Him. If he should attempt to do so, there would be an instant rebellion which neither court nor army could suppress.

Forgetting for the moment the question of Jesus Christ's divinity and His claim upon the lives of men, the tremendous significance of the fact that He is "our" man,

should appeal most strongly to workingmen.

He is the one man who will be listened to by the world, including those who in many cases are unfriendly to labour. Some time ago, a book entitled "What Would Jesus Do?" was written by a Western preacher. So eager are people to learn what He would do in the industrial and the social world, that no other book in modern times, with the exception of the Bible, has had such a sale.

Why not invite Him to unite with your labour union? Ask Him to sit upon the platform at your meetings. Take your place behind Him, and permit Him to speak for you. Quote Him as your authority. No man has ever spoken stronger words of condemnation to those who are mistreating the common people. Others have attempted to serve as champions of workingmen, but they have not been listened to by those who most needed their message. Here is a man who will compel attention. You need never again quote the political economists. Quote Jesus Christ. He will unhinge the doors of the oppressor's kingdom and

open the way for His own dominion. And that dominion will be one of truth, of justice, and of righteousness.

If the capitalist and others have taken Christ away from the common people, let us present our claims upon Him, for He is "our" man.

V

ECONOMIC PROGRESS

THERE are quite a number of employers who are being deluded by the vain hope that if they can abolish the labour union, they will have solved the labour question.

The labour union is not the labour question. Most of us forget that when we discuss the industrial problem. If every labour union were to be wiped out to-day, the labour question would still be with us, only in a more aggravated form. It is because the workingman has the right to organize and because he does organize, that the agitator of anarchy meets with so little response among American artisans.

The labour union is simply a part of that process of evolution which is going on in the industrial world. It will not be destroyed until something better takes its place, and the better system will come as the further result of the same evolution which produced the labour union. In all probability, it will be a development of the trades union idea.

It would seem that the logical thing to do, then, is not to attempt to destroy the trades union, but to improve it. Only in this way will real progress be made. It is supposed by some that socialism will eventually supersede trades unionism. It is altogether likely that socialism will play a prominent part in the world's industrial drama, but an eminent socialist writer recently declared in the leading socialistic journal of America that socialists must not flatter themselves that because a change in our economic system is probable, therefore socialism must necessarily become the prevailing system.

In the end, there will be not one answer to the social question, but many. But all will agree in this—all will be religious. The social question is fundamentally a moral and a religious problem, therefore the church will have an important part in its solution. The church must have a clear message with reference to the principles involved. The preacher need not discuss social theories, but he must present, in the spirit of the prophet, the supreme laws of love, of justice, and of service, and apply them to present-day questions.

34 Economic Progress

He should speak with no uncertain sound concerning the evils of child labour, of unsanitary conditions in sweat-shop and home, of the curse of Sunday labour, and everything else that is preventing the masses from living the abundant life which Christ came into the world to give them.

VI

CONTENTMENT VERSUS SATISFACTION

DOES the church teach that a man should be satisfied with his present condition, no matter what that condition may be? Long hours, short wages, unsanitary workshops, unhealthy homes, uneducated minds? Nothing could be farther from the truth. The whole trend of its teaching is in the opposite direction. Some men are sneeringly saying that the church teaches submission, and that, therefore, it is an obstacle in the way of real progress. At another time I desire to discuss this matter with reference to a man's relation to his "master." Just now I want to point out the difference between being "content" and being "satisfied." The Bible exhorts men to be content. It does not teach that they are to be satisfied.

There is a great difference between the two. St. Paul said that he had learned in whatsoever state he was, "therewith to be content." He had learned how to make the best of things as they were. But in

36 Contentment Versus Satisfaction

the same epistle he added: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect. This one thing I do: forgetting the things which are behind (the successes and the failures) I press on." He was content, but not satisfied.

Satisfaction is derived from the Latin words "satis" and "facio"—which mean, making, or having enough. Contentment is from the Latin "contineo"—which means, to contain, or to hold one's self together.

Contentment lies in one's self. Satisfaction is derived from external objects. Contentment means the enjoyment of what one has, but it does not imply that one has reached the ideal. It is not indifference or laziness. It does not demoralize character or hinder noble aspirations or brave endeavour after improvement.

It does mean, however, that one is self-contained—the master of one's self. No man can reach out after better and higher things until he has conquered himself. Solomon, the wise king, once said, "He that ruleth his spirit is greater than he that taketh a city."

And so, the church is with the toiler in

Contentment Versus Satisfaction 37

his struggles after the better things. It does not teach that a man must be satisfied. It does teach that a man should learn to be content—and so does common sense teach it.

VII

DUTY VERSUS RIGHTS

SINCE the birth of the American Republic, we have accepted as supreme the doctrine of "the right of liberty and the pursuit of happiness." In our systems of jurisprudence, and our treatises upon statecraft and sociology, the emphasis has been upon the "rights" of mankind. We have been hearing about the rights of the child, the rights of women, the rights of capital, the right of labour, civil rights and political rights, until the doctrine of human rights has become a thing working endless confusion and hatred.

In sharp contrast with this method of securing better conditions for mankind and a more harmonious spirit among men, is the doctrine taught by God. In the sacred word there is practically no reference to the rights of man—the emphasis is upon the duty of man.

When the strong oppress the weak, we immediately cry out that there has been a

transgression of rights. The New Testament declares that the law of love and brotherhood has been violated.

If the rich operator oppresses the wage-earner, reducing him to a starvation plane; if he so manipulates the market and closes factories so as to prevent the labouring man from enjoying food and comfort, the remedy that the Bible proposes is not in emphasizing the rights of the poor, but in thrusting in upon the employer the thought that in the treatment of his men he is to follow the law of love and of brotherhood.

Human rights will never suffer if human duties be performed. The time has come when duty must be emphasized. The duty of the mistress to the maid, of the maid to the mistress. The duty of the employer to the employee, of the employee to the employer.

Duty then, and not rights, is the supreme need of the hour. For the doing of one's duty will carry one farther along than the mere granting of another's rights. Gradually, men are coming to learn this important truth. The growing spirit of altruism indicates it. The workingman demands

justice, and he is right. But God demands more than justice—His Imperative is Love. For Love is the fulfilling of the Law.

VIII

JUDGING TRADES UNIONISM

NOTHING is ever gained by mere denunciation. This applies to trades unionism as it does to everything else. The time has come for a saner study of what Carlyle has called "the universal vital problem of the world."

Ordinarily, trades unionism is judged by a newspaper story which had its birth in an insignificant strike event, but which was nurtured by the irresponsible reporter of a sensational newspaper. Sometimes, the story of tyranny or lawlessness practiced by trades unions is true, but this lawlessness is not an essential part of trades unionism, any more than hazing is an essential part of the college curriculum, or the killing or maiming for life of the football player an essential part of a college education.

Trades unionism must be judged not so much by its misdeeds—as by its ideals. We demand the same thing for the church

42 Judging Trades Unionism

and every other institution. You need not go very far back into the history of practically every great movement to find duplicated nearly everything that we are to-day denouncing in the trades union. These all have passed through their period of hysteria. The older unions are proverbially conservative, and men sometimes say that if all trades unions were of their type, no one would object to them. But they were not always so. Most of them were at one time as radical as the newer unions. The time will come when the young giants among trades unions of our country will use their strength to better purpose.

Judging the value of trades unionism by the general direction in which it is going, it must be given the credit of bringing its adherents into the haven of better physical, social, and moral conditions. And that must be the final test.

IX

HAS THE MINISTER A CLOSED SHOP?

IT is not my purpose to argue the merits of the "closed shop." There are some things, however, with regard to the position of the minister in this connection that should be stated. There are some fundamental differences between the "closed shop" of the unionist and the ministers' association.

In the first place, the labour union which insists upon the closed shop, declares that unless a man belongs to the union, he may not work at his trade. At any rate, that is the practical result of the union's attitude. This is not true with regard to the ministers' association. Any man has a right to preach, and no ministers' association will attempt to prevent him. There are thousands of evangelists all over the world, who have never been ordained and who do not belong to any so-called "ministers' union." Some of the most famous preachers in history were never ordained. I need but mention the names of Dwight

44 Has the Minister a Closed Shop ?

L. Moody and Charles H. Spurgeon to prove this statement. The "shop door" of the ministry is wide open to any one who desires to preach, without passing through the formality of joining the ministers' association.

Any man may preach and organize a church if he chooses, but the people themselves have a right to say whether or not he shall preach for them. The ministers' association has nothing to do with this. Furthermore, the whole church is responsible for the so-called "closed shop" in this connection. Every member in it recognizes the propriety of setting apart a minister for the performance of special functions, and every member heartily accepts—indeed insists upon—setting apart the minister for this work.

There are some churches which go so far as to permit a layman to administer the sacraments, so that there is practically no difference between the layman and an ordained minister so far as this matter is concerned. But it will be noted that it is the people themselves, even in these cases, who determine who shall serve them in this capacity.

Has the Minister a Closed Shop? 45

The labour union in seeking to enforce the "closed shop" idea is an outside organization seeking to place regulations upon another individual, or organization. The church in placing restrictions upon its ministers is an organization enforcing rules upon itself, for the regulation of its own affairs. It is a similar case to unions placing restrictions upon their own officers, as they have a perfect right to do, and as in fact, is essential to the existence of the unions.

X

“SCAB” CHRISTIANS

TO “scab” on a fellow worker, is, in the estimation of the trades unionist, very near to committing the unpardonable sin. The term carries with it only contempt. It suggests the parasite—the man or the growth that receives strength and comfort and sometimes life itself from another, without assuming any responsibility and without making any sacrifice.

There are various kinds of “scabs.” The genus is not confined to the industrial world. He is found in the church. Sometimes he calls himself a Christian. Frequently he is the most prosperous, financially, in the congregation. His position in the social world has come to him because of his relationship to the church. He really joined the church because of the good society he would get into. It was a cheap deal. His stingy contribution—sometimes wrung from the helpless—may bring him a degree of comfort, but he is

a “ scab ”—a parasite. He is receiving privileges for which he has not given to the measure of his ability. Not that these privileges are to be denied those who cannot pay for them, but in justice to those who are bearing the burden of the church’s work—and most of them are comparatively poor—there must be no shirkers in a movement which has for its supreme object the bettering of mankind’s condition.

But there are others. I am sometimes told that a man need not belong to the church in order to be a Christian. That may be true. The church hasn’t a monopoly of the Christian men and women. But I want to say that the Christian who is in the church is the “ union ” Christian, while the Christian outside of the church is the “ scab ” Christian.

Every charge that you hurl at the head of the scab in the industrial world is a boomerang that swings back upon the professing Christian outside of the church who flatters himself that he is independent of the church. As a Christian he is enjoying privileges which cost the blood of the martyrs. For centuries men and women

have been sacrificing themselves in order to give him religious liberty and a comparative Christian civilization. He is to-day the recipient of countless blessings which came directly as the result of the power and influence of the church. In all probability he is sending his children to the Sunday-school where they are receiving the only religious training that comes into their lives. He knows the real pleasure and genuine profit of this training. But so far as he is concerned, he is either indifferent to the claims of the church upon him, or, as is sometimes the case, he is fighting the institution to which he owes some of the best things in his life.

In a measure, all this applies to every man who is out of the church, but it is especially applicable to him who says that he is a Christian, but who is not identified with that institution.

A “scab” Christian! Is there a more contemptible position?

XI

HOW THE CHURCH AND LABOUR MAY COOPERATE

MOST of the bitterness in the world is due to misunderstanding. And usually the misunderstanding is not all on one side. Getting together and "talking it out" has often resulted in a better feeling on the part of former enemies. Important, then, is the plan of the exchange of fraternal delegates between Central Labour Bodies and Ministerial Associations.

The ministers have come to learn that the general public has a grossly erroneous idea as to the character of labour leaders and as to the nature of the business transacted by the labour union.

The delegate from the Central Labour Body has discovered that the average preacher is a warmly sympathetic leader whose mistakes with regard to the labour question have been very largely due to ignorance.

Working together, the labour union and the ministers' association may bring about

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many municipal reforms. Indeed, united, there are few things in this direction which they may not accomplish in the cause of good citizenship, independent of partisan politics. Especially in those matters which involve moral issues—such as the saloon, gambling, the social evil, Sunday work, child labour, sanitary conditions in tenement houses and factories, and everything else that influences the moral life of the community—may these organizations cooperate.

There are other important reasons why Central Labour Bodies should encourage and accept Fraternal Delegates from Ministers' Associations.

First, because one of the most bitter and most conspicuous opponents of trades unionism in this country is opposing the plan. If the labour movement were going to suffer through its introduction, the man in question would undoubtedly endorse it. When the matter was under consideration in his city, he sent a circular letter to every minister in town, urging them to vote it down.

Second, because trades unionism has nothing to lose, and everything to gain,

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in the education of the public in the matter of trades union principles. There is no class of professional men who are more influential in moulding the thought of the public along moral and ethical lines than the preachers.

Third, because there is so much in common between the church and organized labour. No one realizes this quite so well as the trades unionist. Let us give the minister a chance to learn it. He cannot get it in books. He must get it in the human touch of his brother, in the labour union.

Fourth, because the workingman should learn that the church is not opposed to his interests. That may have been so in the past, and it may still be true in isolated cases. But why throw into the face of the present-day preacher who is earnestly seeking to know the truth, the charge that he is hypocritical and unfair to labour, when he distinctly proves that this is not true in his case by his willingness to know more about the conditions, the aims and the aspirations of the toilers? That minister and the organization which sent him are indicating by their official action that

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their feeling towards the toilers is not one of opposition but one of real and hearty interest. At least, give them a chance to prove their sincerity. If the Central Labour Body fails to do this, it can never again declare, with bitterness, that the churches and the ministers are not concerned about their interests.

Fifth, because the American Federation of Labour, at its last meeting very heartily recommended "that all affiliated State and Central Bodies exchange fraternal delegates with the various State and city ministerial associations, wherever practicable, thus insuring a better understanding on the part of the church and clergy of the aims and objects of the labour union movement of America."

XII

THE GREATEST QUESTION OF THE AGE

CHRISTIANITY is not dependent upon the infallibility of the church nor of the Bible. The church and the Bible are simply a means to an end, and not an end in themselves. Their purpose is the revelation of God in Jesus Christ.

Therefore, the chief question that men are called upon to answer is not "what do you think of this doctrine, or that church, or that system of theology?" but, "what think ye of Christ?" Gladstone once said that this is the greatest question of the age.

You might be asked: "What do you think of Plato, of Socrates, of Shakespeare?" and you could dismiss the matter with an off-hand reply. But this question asked of Christ, passes into the most practical and the most personal of questions: "What shall I do then with Jesus?" The question becomes insistent. Men cannot get away from it. It will follow them to

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the ends of the earth. They may become angry because of its presence, but does not that prove that it is no ordinary question? To dismiss it by saying that Jesus Christ was simply a great reformer will not satisfy. To say that He was only a good man, or that He was a great teacher, but simply one of many teachers, brings the consciousness that one is only dodging the issue.

It is frequently stated that Christ came to establish an Ideal Republic, or that He sought to inaugurate a Utopian Democracy. Neither statement is true. His own words indicate that it was His purpose to establish an Absolute Monarchy, a Kingdom, of which He should be the Head. This Kingdom is to embrace all those who will acknowledge His Kingship.

Therefore, when some "social reformers" select from among the words of Jesus Christ a few catchwords, which have to do only with certain social affairs, rejecting everything else that meets with their disapproval, especially that which applies to their personal lives, and then claim to be the only bona fide followers of Jesus Christ, they are leaving out of their consideration altogether the most important part of

The Greatest Question of the Age 55

Christ's plan for the complete emancipation of mankind.

“What think ye of Christ?” Workingmen cannot afford to evade Him. He is too often quoted by them. He is too great a factor in their lives. More and more will this be true.

XIII

WHY WORKINGMEN SHOULD BE INTERESTED IN THE CHURCH

CHURCH steeples are not signs of superior goodness. They are mute appeals to God for mercy. Church members are bands of men and women grouped together to learn what Jesus wants them to do.

The churches care for the workingman. That is why they sometimes go to the shop at the noon hour in the person of the preacher and others, to present the gospel of love and fellowship. That is why they go to the workingman's home in the person of the church visitor. That is why they minister to the every-day needs of workmen, as they have opportunity. While there are occasions when the church should come out boldly in behalf of a particular reform measure, a moment's reflection will convince the honest critic that a general propaganda in behalf of every social reform measure which men sometimes ex-

pect the church to advocate, would soon result in endless confusion.

Far better is it to apply the principles of Christ to these problems, so that there may be a constant factor at work, which, in the end, will accomplish more than the agitation in favour of a temporary measure.

It was not the intention of the founder of the church that it should become an annex to any social, industrial or political organization; but by furnishing a Christian sentiment, the church disturbs the wrong wherever it exists.

Jesus died that sin and selfishness might be destroyed. That should be the motive in every strong man's life.

We cannot afford to present a divided front to the enemy. The church and labour must unitedly concentrate their attention, their sympathy, their love and their choicest powers as Christ did His.

Whatever misunderstandings may have existed in the past are being removed by a closer acquaintance and a mutual interchange of views. The church and labour can work together in the common effort to uplift our fellow men, and so to improve their condition as to make possible their

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moral and spiritual development, thus fitting them for happiness in this life and in the life to come.

The church needs the workingman in this battle, just as the workingman needs the church. Our churches are democratically organized. Labouring men have the franchise in our churches as fully as in our democratic nation. The church invites them to take as full a share in its government and work as they will.

But there is another reason why you should go to church. Some of you have children. Your children are watching you. They believe that you are the best men in all the world, and that what you do must be right. You know how true that was in your own childhood experience. When the awakening comes to your children as it one day came to you, would it not be more comfortable for you to realize that your example as fathers was such as to lead them towards that institution, which, way down in your hearts, you know to be the most uplifting force in human society?

Your wives need your help in training those children for God and for righteousness. It is hardly a square deal to thrust

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upon our wives all of the responsibility in this matter.

You need the church for your own sakes. Perhaps you are saying that you can lead the Christian life outside of the church. That may be true.

As a matter of fact, however, you do need the church to live the best kind of a Christian life. And you know it. Why not be honest about it?

The church wants not yours, but you. We do not pretend that church members are blameless, but we do believe that in our churches you will find that sympathy, that fellowship, that hope, that life which we ourselves found.

We want you to have it. More important still, Jesus Christ wants you to have it.

XIV

ADVERTISING THE TRADES UNION

MIKE DOLAN once said: "It is not what you say as long as you keep saying it." That may go with some people, but a greater than Mike once remarked: "You can fool some of the people all of the time, you can fool all of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time." I'd rather take Abraham Lincoln's maxim as a guide-post.

In advertising the trades union, your argument must be based upon indisputable facts. These facts are readily obtainable. Sound talking points for organized labour should be furnished every trades unionist by his Local or his International, for use among non-unionists. Some "Facts in a nutshell," presenting a few clear, telling truths as to why a man should belong to the labour union, printed in attractive form, would be a good investment for most labour unions. You cannot success-

fully "bluff" many men into seeing things as you see them, or as you think you see them. Did you ever stop to think out the advantages of the trades union, and have you ever attempted to present them in logical form? Try it. If it does nothing else, it will prove to you how much you have been missing by failing to read your trade journal or your labour paper.

"But," somebody may ask, "why advertise the trades union?" For this reason: Whatever else the trades union may be, it is largely a business proposition. The same business sense must be applied to the management of a labour union that is applied to the selling of legitimate life insurance, for instance. Some of you know what that means, because of the methods employed by the agent who persuaded you to take out a policy in his company.

Labour union success does not come unsolicited. It comes because somebody hustles for it. And this hustling should not be limited to the business agent. If he is doing one-half of the things that his office demands, he is doing twice as much as you think he is.

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The advertising agent of the successful business enterprise tries, first of all, to "create an atmosphere," in which he can work. This is done in several ways, and with several purposes in view. He seeks to associate his business with certain familiar objects, so that when one thinks of these objects, one immediately thinks of the goods that he wants to sell. The "Rock of Gibraltar," "57 Varieties," and "See That Hump?" each suggests only one thing to the mind of the reader. But if the results of this advertising are to be permanent, the reputation of the business must be good.

Trades unionism needs no particular advertising as a fact or as a factor in our social life. It is already quite in evidence. But what is the first impression of the man who has occasion to think of trades unionism? Is it that the trades unionism which he knows about is conspicuous because of lawlessness, of grafting, of unreasonable demands? Or is it because of its influence as a child saver, as a benevolent organization, as a factor for the Americanization of the immigrant, as a force for the bettering of the social, the intellectual

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and the moral conditions of working people?

All this will count on an occasion when the trades union needs the sympathy of the public. It is the atmosphere which it has been creating. And the character of the sentiment of the public towards the union at such a time will depend largely upon the reputation or the atmosphere which it has developed.

Advertising is largely an investment from which the advertiser may secure no immediate benefit. The labour union must be content to work for the good will of the people, even though there is nothing to be immediately gained through the propaganda method which may be adopted. In other words, an educational campaign should be entered upon before the necessity arises for the requesting of public support in a particular controversy. Unreasonable prejudice must be overcome. Common misunderstanding should be eliminated. Bitter antagonism must be shown to be unfair.

It is not the purpose of this article to present an advertising scheme. That must be worked out, each union, or each city,

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for itself. I desire simply to point out the necessity of giving trades unionism the widest publicity, and the importance of having that publicity of such a character as to invite the non-unionist to become identified with organized labour, and to secure the intelligent, sympathetic interest of the public at large.

XV

TRADES UNIONS AND INTEMPERANCE

I'D like to drive home just three thoughts with reference to the workingman and intemperance.

Said an excited visitor in my office to-day: "If I had my way, I would compel workingmen to labour twenty hours a day, so that they could not go to the saloon."

I reminded him that it is usually the man who works the longest hours who drinks the hardest. Sheer exhaustion drives him to the grog shop.

The second erroneous idea that is being harboured by many a man is that trades unions are factors which make for intemperance. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The trades unions of this country have done more for the cause of temperance and sobriety than any other purely benevolent or philanthropic organization. A number of trades unions have laws which deny assistance to any man who was injured while intoxicated. At least one Interna-

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tional Union has a prohibition clause in the contract which it makes with employers.

Twenty years ago practically every labour union met back or over a saloon. That is rarely the case to-day. In many instances they own their own labour halls. Twenty years ago I could have counted scores of drunken men at a meeting of the organization to which I belonged. During the past three years I have visited literally hundreds of labour unions, and I do not remember having seen a single drunken man in the meetings.

This does not mean that workingmen do not get drunk, nor that they do not need help in the matter of temperate living. I mean to say with emphasis, however, that the average labour union is an influence for good in this direction. The best labour leaders and practically every labour editor stand out clearly and boldly for temperance reform among workingmen. At a conference composed of eighteen employers and eighteen members of an International Labour Union, it was discovered that practically every employer indulged in strong drink, while only two of the labour

representatives drank beer or whiskey. Many similar cases might easily be cited.

Third—the matter of saloon substitutes. The workingman despises patronage. Many a plan which appears to be very beautiful upon paper, or as it comes from the lips of the enthusiastic reformer, fails because it leaves out of account the element of human nature.

The best substitute for the saloon is the home. Never will there be a better one proposed. To assist the workingman to make his home more beautiful should then be our aim. In this the labour union is also a help. A higher standard of living, better sanitary conditions, the abolition of child labour, as well as the development along moral lines—in all these the labour union has a most important part. Too often do we lose sight of the social and the moral influences of the labour union. The possibilities in this direction are almost limitless, but already the labour union has become a great factor in this matter. The average man outside of the ranks of the workingmen can hardly believe that the trades unionist is a man “of like passions as he is.” That he has the same longings,

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the same ambition for himself and for his family. And when he realizes just what he may do to bring comfort and joy to the wife and children whom God has given him, he will be the first to give them. So let us help him in his struggles. Let us show him that we are his brothers, putting aside every feeling of patronage or of superiority. He will quickly respond to our sympathetic endeavour.

XVI

FACTORS IN SOCIAL REFORM

JOSH BILLINGS once said, "Before you can have an honest horse race you must have an honest human race."

There is lots of horse sense in that statement. The present industrial system is not ideal. It is the aim of thousands of earnest men to make it so. But after all, the progress that is to be made in this direction shall be determined by the great masses of the people. The question of leadership is important, but more important still is the problem of the every-day man. Any organization that influences him for the better, is helping to bring in the golden age for which all good men are longing.

The Labour Union is a strong factor in this connection. Misunderstood, misrepresented, as it frequently is by friend and foe, nevertheless it is moulding men for better and nobler living. It has its own field. Men must not expect the labour

union to perform the functions of societies which are organized for other purposes. If it works out its own problems—and they are important enough—men should be willing to give trades unionism due credit.

The same thing is true of the church. Almost every social reformer claims Jesus Christ as the champion of his particular social system, and he criticises the church because it does not boldly proclaim his theory. But it has not yet been proven that any social theory, in its practical application, will bring about the millennial dawn. Furthermore, the advocates of these systems are not clear in their own minds as to just what they want or how their schemes will work. Is it not folly, then, to ask the church to advocate a system which even its own advocates have not yet fully thought out? Back of every honestly advocated social theory there is a great moral principle. There are many definitions of Socialism. Among other things true Socialism demands “from every man according to his ability.” That means a life of service. Communism demands the surrender of one’s personal interest for the good of all. That means self-sacrifice.

Anarchism demands the doing of right without the strong compelling arm of the law. That means justice, love, purity.

It will readily be seen that the success of any of these great social reform measures which are being presented to workmen, is dependent upon a high unselfish character. Christianity makes a specialty of the development of this character. That is its chief business. The principle of Jesus Christ was ideal. He struck at evil, at sin. He tried to change men, rather than methods. He did not advocate the reform measures of His day because He knew that they were insufficient for the needs of the twentieth century. He taught the principles which will be applicable to every century. That should be the chief function of the church. But some social reformers are asking the church to stand for a specific social system which may some day be accepted by the majority, as slavery once was, thus subjecting herself to the ridicule of a future generation, which shall have outgrown that system. The next generation will not be satisfied with our solution of the labour problem.

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But while the church must not commit itself to any economic system, it should apply Christ's great principles of justice, of love, of service, to every problem that confronts society to-day.

XVII

SOCIALISM AND THE CHURCH

WHEN the average socialist speaks of the church he becomes hysterical. To his mind, no man has a right to an opinion which differs from his own. If that opinion does differ from the one which he holds for the time being, the holder of it is, according to that socialist, a "grafter," a "tool of the capitalistic class," a "weakling," a "hypocrite." When discussing such an unfortunate, the average socialistic writer will dip his pen in vitriol and figuratively burn him at the stake. Granting for the moment that the man he is abusing is intolerant, he himself is too intolerant to tolerate intolerance, although he expects to find that virtue in the man whom he is "roasting." If the reply is made that the socialist who does these things is not representative of true socialism, then I answer that neither is the churchman who practices similar methods, representative of the church, although there are occasions when both the socialist and the churchman may

be justified in vigorously protesting against the words and actions of a particular individual who may be on the other side.

Just as the socialists insist that their movement to-day must not be judged by the mistakes of their predecessors, so the church of to-day has a right to demand that it shall be judged by its present attitude towards particular problems, and not by its past errors. The church has made mistakes. To deny this, would be absurd.

But, it is insisted, the world is on the verge of a crisis, and the church must declare herself with regard to socialism. The world has always been on the verge of a crisis. It always will be, because the world is moving. To say that even the introduction of socialism will at once settle every social question is a sign of egotism. If socialism should ever be accepted, it would simply be a step in that process of evolution which will never end, for the labour question will never be settled until the last day's work is done.

It has been said that the church should recognize and endorse socialism because there are so many socialists. There is no particular point to this argument, for there

are probably as many people in this country who are directly and indirectly interested in the saloon business as there are socialists. Must the church therefore endorse the saloon, even though some saloon men are just as sincere as some socialists?

It is true that certain churches of today have taken action with reference to socialism. Let these churches be held responsible for their own decrees. Socialists are careful to accept as authoritative only such statements as are issued by their particular branch of socialism. It should be remembered, also, that in practically every instance where a church assembly denounced socialism, it had in mind the grossly materialistic and morally antagonistic features which have sometimes found place in the system, just as it has frequently denounced the same tendencies in prevailing political parties.

As a matter of fact, however, what is the real attitude of the church as a whole with reference to the questions involved?

First, it recognizes the right of every man to be a socialist, if he is convinced that socialism is morally and economically sound.

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Second, it recognizes the fact that there are some good things in socialism, for which socialism should be given credit.

Third, the church does not stand for the present social system. It stands for no particular social system. It accepts only so much of the present system as is in accordance with the principles laid down by Jesus Christ. It insists that these principles shall be applied to society in all of its ramifications, but it believes that others besides socialists have both the brain and the heart to interpret these principles.

Fourth, it is not offering the gospel to workingmen as a mere sop, nor because it is afraid that some day they will bring on a revolution. It is offering the same gospel, with all of its privileges, as well as all of its obligations, to their employers.

XVIII

“SERVANTS, OBEY YOUR MASTERS”

WHEREVER that injunction is found in the Scriptures, it has to do only with slaves. The exact translation of the passages in which it occurs should be, “Slaves, obey your masters.”

It would be absurd to so address the twentieth century workingman. Neither the church nor the Bible has any such message for him.

In so far as these passages teach moderation, coöperation, and conscientiousness, as controlling principles for all workingmen, they are as applicable to-day as they were in the first century. To that no right-thinking workingman will take exception.

But why were these words written two thousand years ago? The servants referred to were frequently enslaved to heathen masters who treated them with hardship and injustice, and when they became Christians, and hence “free-men” in

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Jesus Christ, it was a question as to whether they were obligated longer to remain submissive in their old relationship. The instruction was that they should continue to be faithful, because as Christians, they were really serving Christ. Such Christian slaves, rightly appreciating their relationship to Jesus Christ, would not feel it a hardship to serve their masters or employers faithfully.

The times in which these men lived must be considered. Slavery was recognized as a legitimate institution. It was taught by the greatest philosophers of the day. When Jesus Christ came, He struck the practice a terrific blow. From that moment, slavery as an institution began to tremble. But the time had not come for an open rebellion, especially by the slaves who had but recently embraced the new faith. It would have been for them an act of suicide. Hence, the command to be faithful and obedient to their masters, even though it implied the sufferings which were the result of unjust social conditions. But the sense in which it was originally intended, has absolutely no warrant to-day.

On the other hand, Christian masters

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were equally exhorted and commanded to treat their servants, even bond-servants, justly and kindly. They were accountable to Jesus Christ for their treatment of these servants. It is well here to call attention to what the Scriptures teach in James V as to the swift and certain punishment falling upon greedy and unjust employers heaping up treasures in the last days, while the hire of their labourers is kept back by fraud.

It is always safe to tie to the word of God, provided that a particular quotation is viewed in the light of its peculiar setting, both as to its context and the times or conditions under which it was written.

XIX

“ BE CONTENT WITH YOUR WAGES ”

IT was a great preacher who said it originally. There probably never was a greater than he, with the exception of Jesus Christ. At any rate Jesus said of him a few days after he preached that sermon, “ Among those that are born of women, there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist.”

But what did he mean? Did he imply that there should never be a strike or a demand for better conditions? Some unfair or ignorant agitators have insisted that the Bible and the church teach that doctrine, and they have flung into our faces with scorn the text of John the Baptist, declaring that it is vicious and degrading. Some employers in history have also quoted this Scripture passage, in order to point out that the Bible teaches absolute subservience on the part of the employee to his employer.

I am reminded in this connection of the

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smart young man who insisted that the Bible itself says, “There is no God.” But when he was compelled to look up the reference, he discovered that what the Bible said was—“The fool hath said in his heart—there is no God.”

Somewhat like this Aleck are the men who twist the Scriptures so as to produce all sorts of economic absurdities, warping out of their true meaning the greatest and most beneficent teachings of Christianity.

But let us look for a moment at the circumstances under which the words were spoken and the persons to whom they were addressed. The story is found in the third chapter of the Gospel by Luke. The fearless preacher—who afterwards was beheaded because he dared denounce the reigning monarch for his sin—was speaking to a great multitude that had come out to hear him. The burden of his message was summed up in the single word—Repentance. And it was noted that this repentance had particular reference to sins committed against men. As the preacher proceeded, the people began to ask, “What shall we do then?”

He answered, “He that hath two coats,

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let him impart to him that hath none ; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.” Will you note, by-the-way, that He said “two” coats—not “six.” Then came the publicans—the government grafters of the day—and said to Him, “Master, what shall we do?” The preacher answered, “Exact no more than the law demands.” Finally came the soldiers—often the brutal representatives, the policemen, of a foreign government ; men who were following the examples of their superiors by robbing the working people. It was a case of graft which was very much worse than anything unearthed in our day. “And what shall we do?” they asked. And John the Baptist answered : “Do violence to no man ; neither accuse any falsely : and—be content with your wages.” The emphasis was upon the word “wages.”

It was not intended to teach that workmen in every generation should be content with their wages. It was intended to teach that these brutal, conscienceless soldiers should not demand from the masses of the people, upon pain of bodily injury, that which did not rightfully belong to them, in order that they might add this

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money to the wages received from the government. The words, “Be content with your wages” must be viewed in the light of the spirit of the entire address. No one, not even the most radical agitator can successfully deny that the preacher was making a fight for the poor and the oppressed.

And so, instead of degrading the toiler, this injunction is actually a plea for fair treatment for the man who was powerless to resist oppression.

XX

THAT "NEEDLE'S EYE"

SOMETIMES workingmen insist that if rich men were to carry out the commands of Jesus Christ they would give away all their wealth, because Jesus commanded the "rich young ruler" to do so. And because they do not give away all their wealth, workingmen declare that these rich men are not Christians. They forget the circumstances under which this command was given. Jesus saw that the riches of the young ruler stood between him and the thing he seemed to desire, namely, "The gift of eternal life."

Some of the richest men in Bible history were considered the best men. Abraham was one of the wealthiest men in the world, and yet we are told in several places in the Bible that he was the "Friend of God."

It is true that riches frequently stand between a man and Jesus Christ. For this reason Jesus gave that unusual picture,

"It is easier for a camel to go through

the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God."

Of course, Jesus Christ did not refer to the eye of a sewing needle.

In those days, most of the cities were enclosed by a wall in which was a large gate that was open only during the day. Any one coming into the city after sunset was compelled to enter through a small gate which would barely admit a camel. Indeed, that it might enter, the merchandise and other trappings had to be removed from the camel's back. Frequently, it became necessary to tie about the camel's neck a rope which was pulled vigorously by a man inside the gate, while outside the driver of the camel belaboured the beast with a club in order to get it to pass through. Finally, after considerable grunting and strong opposition, the camel would squeeze its clumsy body through this opening, known as the "needle's eye."

This is the picture that Jesus Christ intended to impress upon the minds of His hearers. They were quite familiar with it. What Jesus Christ meant was—there is great danger that riches will prove to

86 That "Needle's Eye"

the rich man just such a hindrance as the merchandise on the back of the camel.

However, it sometimes happens that very small riches keep some men out of the "Kingdom of God." But that rich men are not Christian men, simply because they are rich, is an erroneous idea. I would not defend the rich man as such, still less would I champion the cause of the rich man who is a rascal and who abuses those in his employ. Jesus Christ had nothing but words of condemnation for such. But these men are not "the church"—they are the parasites in the church. They might better be out of it so far as the good they do is concerned.

XXI

“TALKING POINTS” FOR ORGANIZED LABOUR

IN arguing for the value of trades unionism, the average friend of organized labour frequently makes the mistake of discussing questions which are debatable, and concerning which there will probably always be a difference of opinion. No doubt these debatable questions have their place in a full discussion of trades unionism, but for the sake of a better understanding of the aims and objects of organized labour, it would seem to be more tactful and more logical to first talk about what it has accomplished. There are many matters with which organized labour has to do, concerning which there can be absolutely no dispute. Trades unionists would make more friends for their cause among the public, if they presented more frequently the ethical value of their organizations.

For instance, one might proclaim the fact that labour halls have come to be im-

portant social centres. Here helpful lecture courses on moral and economic subjects are frequently given. The labour press has its educative value. Many of the labour journals, especially those published by Internationals, give courses in technical training. A real moral uplift comes through the regular meetings of the union, because a man must present his facts in a definite, tangible form, if he hopes to win over his associates to his beliefs. Every man has a fair chance to preach his views, no matter how unpopular they may be. Nowhere does a man get a more patient hearing than at a labour union meeting. Here, too, he learns the lesson of subordination to the wills of others. He learns the value of “team work”—of co-operation.

In the labour movement the workingman learns the lesson of thrift. Rarely does a trades unionist apply to organized charity or any other form of charity for relief. Talk about the value of the trades union as a force for temperance. You can easily make a strong argument in this direction. The question of the education and the Americanization of the immigrant must be

discussed in favour of the trades union. The report of the Labour Commissioner in the *Bulletin* of January, 1905, clearly proves this.

Child labour, the sweat shop, unsanitary conditions in shop and home, are all questions concerning which trades unionism need not be ashamed to speak.

Having clearly established these points, it will be easier to discuss the measures through which these ends have been and shall be secured.

An intelligent presentation of the broader work of organized labour must win to its support the thousands of impartial men and women whose endorsement will be of great value to the cause.

XXII

DO RICH RASCALS RUN THE CHURCH?

IT has sometimes been said: "The church is composed of hard-hearted employers who are always grinding out the lives of their employees." There are more than seventeen million Protestant church members in this country. Of Roman Catholics there are nine million more. Surely they are not all of the employing class! Sometimes the rich control the churches where they are in the majority, or where they have been placed in official position by vote of the members of the church, but it does not always follow that because a man is rich he is hard-hearted and cruel. Furthermore, the poor man who has the necessary qualifications is usually given the place he deserves in the church, because the church is as ready to avail herself of a good man as is the merchant and the manufacturer.

It is admitted that some hard-hearted employers are in the church. They have

Do Rich Rascals Run the Church ? 91

come in because of the good company they will get into. "But," somebody says, "they are the men who support the church." Don't you believe it! As a matter of fact our churches and great charities are supported by Christian men and women of small means. When a rich man gives \$10,000 to a church the newspapers all over the country advertise it, and the impression has gotten out that the church is supported mainly by ten thousand dollar donations.

Without discussing the merits of the "tainted" money question, I wonder if workingmen have noticed that practically for the first time in his life the most noted financier in American business life has consented to discuss the matter of how his wealth has been accumulated. He has been absolutely silent to the criticisms of the press. He has apparently been indifferent to the decrees of the court. But when the church questions his methods, he instantly replies. And yet many workingmen have been scorning the only institution which has the power to move men to give an account of their stewardship.

XXIII

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

THIS is the era of the "common" man. During recent months the world has witnessed the passing of a power which for generations thought that its right to do as it pleased was absolute. Russia will never again be what it was. Crude and cruel have been some of the methods which accompanied the partial redemption of the masses in that country, but such is the harvest of hatred among men.

Happily the conditions in our own country are such that the people have it in their own hands to change whatever there is of evil or of injustice. These changes are rapidly being wrought. Impatient as the impetuous man may be, he must see signs of progress.

When Christ was born into the world the philosophers declared that "a purchased labourer is better than a hired one." They insisted that "labour is incompatible with nobility." But with the advent of

Jesus, standards changed. He discovered the individual. He showed the world how highly God values a human soul. Out of that teaching have sprung the great world movements which have ushered in the larger liberty and the fuller life which He came to proclaim. The message which the angels sang on the hills of Bethlehem on the first Christmas morning, is being taught more widely than ever before. At this Christmas-tide may it ring out more clearly : "Peace on earth ; goodwill among men."

Whatever the method, may that be the motive. And so the labour movement, squarely meeting its tremendous problems, is helping to bring about the day when men shall feel the force of the Christ spirit, which seeks to truly make all men brothers.

XXIV

LABOUR LEADERS IN THE CHURCH

WHILE it is true that a large number of workingmen are outside of the church and haven't much sympathy with it, it is not true that many of their strongest and best leaders are alienated from it.

It has been a source of great satisfaction to meet with the active church officers and members who are in the lead of the labour movement in the United States. Some of the strongest labour editors with whom I have talked, are members of the church and many are church officers. I sat one day in the office of a labour paper in a Western city, and in the course of an hour six men casually dropped in to see the editor about matters of business. I discovered that every one of these men was either a member or officer of some church in that city. Some time ago at a conference of ministers, to which had been invited the representative of the Trades Assembly of that city, it transpired that

this representative was one of the most active churchmen in town. The presidents of several labour unions which I have addressed, are Presbyterian elders. I recently talked with three national officers in three different labour organizations, all living in the same city, and I discovered that all three were the most aggressive officers in their particular churches.

I recently met the chairman of the Committee of Adjustment on a great railroad system, who was at one time talked of as the successor of Chief Arthur of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. He was then representing the engineers of that system, and he was an active man in the church to which he belonged. Indeed, he said with emphasis (and in his capacity as chairman of the Adjustment Committee he could speak with authority) that the labour problem would never be settled until the principles taught by Jesus Christ are applied to human society.

The national treasurer of one of the strongest labour federations in the country, is a Presbyterian elder. He has the confidence of the entire association, and to him

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was committed only the other day, one of the most delicate tasks that had ever been entrusted to a labour leader. He was selected to call on the President of the United States in company with another official in whom the association had not the same confidence. It was quite evident that the churchman stood very high in the estimation of his fellow unionists. In the same town I met another official whose name is known throughout the country as one of the most aggressive labour leaders. When I saw him he was looking for a preacher who could conduct a service in a little church in which he was interested. He told me of some things that he was engaged in with regard to the pushing of several lines of religious effort in his town.

The fact that these prominent labour leaders are Christian men would seem to indicate that the church of Jesus Christ is not against the workingman, or else they would not be in the church. These labour men are in the church because they believe that the church is a real help to the workingman. The church has trained them. It has given them the characteris-

Labour Leaders in the Church 97

tics which make them representative leaders. For this, the workingmen who are helped through their efforts are obligated to the church.

XXV

ORGANIZED LABOUR AND THE CHURCH

THE editor of a Western socialist paper accuses me of trying to "swing workingmen into the church," and immediately he declares that I am insincere in my motives.

I do not expect to make every reader believe that I am perfectly sincere. I do not propose to try it; but there is nothing like plainly telling another man just what you believe and why you believe it.

Recently I declared with emphasis that I stand for organized labour, and I gave my reasons for this position. I'd like to know why it is inconsistent for a man to believe in both the trades union and the church; and if I believe in the church, why should I hesitate to tell men so and try to persuade them that it is a good thing, just as I would tell them that trades unionism is a good thing?

I do not think for a moment, that any sane workingman would believe me if I

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pretended that I do not care whether or not he is indifferent to the church, and that for which it stands.

And so I would say without fear of losing caste with my fellows, that just as I stand for organized labour, so I stand for the organized church. And just as I would persuade a man to identify himself with one, so I should seek to have him identify himself with the other, because, however they may differ in some of their methods, they have very much in common.

The pledge of the man who unites with the American Federation of Labour, commits him to—"the emancipation of our class from poverty, ignorance and selfishness; to be respectful in word and action to every woman; to be considerate to the widow and the orphan, the weak and the defenseless; and never to discriminate against a fellow worker on account of creed, colour or nationality. To defend freedom of thought, whether expressed by tongue or pen. To educate ourselves and our fellow worker in the history of the labour movement. We promise that we will never knowingly wrong a brother or see him wronged, if in our power to pre-

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vent it. We will endeavour to subordinate every selfish impulse to the task of elevating the material, intellectual and moral conditions of the entire labouring class."

Every Christian man and woman could subscribe to these principles. There is nothing in them that is contrary to the pledge of the man who joins the church. Need I be ashamed, therefore, of asking a man to identify himself with an organization which stands committed to these high purposes?

When the church was started two thousand years ago, it was organized by a company of workingmen. Its leader was a carpenter. When it spread to other cities, it was received most cordially by the workingmen who formed the great labour guilds of the day—the labour unions we would now call them.

I can see no reason why workingmen should not again rally around the church of Christ, accepting Him as their leader and their champion. I believe the day is approaching when this will come to pass; when with the power that can come alone from Him, the pledge of the unionist and the vow of the Christian, looking towards

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the complete emancipation of the whole body of workingmen, physical, mental and moral, will be lived out for the sake of our brother men.

XXVI

A GREAT "DIVIDE"

COMMUNISM is peculiarly attractive to some men. In most cases it appeals to the fellow who would like to adopt for his motto: "All yours is mine; all mine is my own."

Unquestionably, there are noble features in connection with this social system. It has attracted some great minds. It has, however, almost invariably been a failure when put to a practical test. Where it has succeeded, it has been due to a strong moral or religious sentiment.

Some reformers who advocate communism insist that Jesus Christ endorsed their system, because it is said in the "Acts of the Apostles," with reference to the early church, that "neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common." They also declare that the frequent allusion to a "common" table in the history of the early church proves that this condition existed quite generally

among these Christians. As a matter of fact, in most instances the reference is clearly to the "communion" table, which has to do purely with a religious service. It is true that during the earlier days of the church a form of communism was practiced. It is forgotten by those who interpret these Scripture texts as teaching that communism is incumbent upon all men, that even during this almost ideal period when it was practiced by the early Christians, that the church recognized the right of private property, as was manifested in the case of Ananias. When this man tried to deceive Peter by bringing only a part of the money which he had received for his property, declaring that it was the whole amount, the apostle said to him: "While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own power? You were not under obligation to bring this money to me," thus plainly indicating that this was purely a voluntary arrangement.

Furthermore, those who entered into it were of "one heart and soul"; it was limited to "they that believed"—namely, the Christians.

XXVII

EVERY-DAY CHRISTIANITY

THE church has a great social mission. If I felt that it was not interested in the every-day affairs of men—in the abolition of the sweat-shop and of child labour; in the securing of better sanitary conditions for working people—I would cut out the church and line up with the trades union even more strongly than I do. It is because I believe that the church is concerned about these things that I shall continue to work through the church for the securing of better things for workingmen and their families.

It is an institution which not only prepares men for death, but, more important still, it teaches them how to live. Unfortunately, some workingmen have thought of it as something which has to do only with sickness, deaths and cemeteries, and that the preacher was a handy man to have around in case of a funeral. It is inter-

esting to note, by the way, that the average preacher usually responds to such a call.

Christianity believes in brighter homes, better schools, more beautiful cities and cleaner governments. If Christian men were in the majority in our great cities, most of the evils found in them would be wiped out. They are not in the majority, however, and never have been. This is sometimes forgotten when the church is sneered at by its enemies, who ask why it is that after so long a trial it has not succeeded in Christianizing the cities. While much has been done through its influence, Christianity has never really been tried.

The churches have become centres for the social and intellectual life of the people as well as for the development of their spiritual life. Open every night and nearly all day, as many of them are, for concert courses and lecture series, free dispensary and savings bank, sewing school and cooking class, boys' clubs and reading rooms, men's clubs and library, music classes and women's clubs, and everything else that is helpful and inspiring—so far as their means will permit and the com-

munity demand—these all indicate that the church has a vital interest in the “here and now” as well as in the “hereafter.”

Sometimes workingmen have said that the church is not doing enough for the needs of a certain community. They forget that as a rule the particular church which they are criticising is composed of their neighbours, who are no better off than themselves, but who are striving to supply church privileges for the people living in the district. If the average workingman believes in this work of the church, he can render his fellow men a great service by helping it through his personal efforts. For the question of helping the people in the neighbourhood is not so much a question of money as it is a problem of flesh and blood, viz. : the willingness of men to give themselves to the work of helping others. The high-thinking workingman best understands the needs of those with whom he associates and he can suggest many things to the minister who, with his coöperation, can carry out his practical plans for the betterment of the whole community. Almost any minister will gladly talk over with a workingman any plan

that he may have for helping his fellow men.

Anyway, try it and see how he will respond.

XXVIII

CHRIST'S SUPREMACY

NINETEEN centuries ago Pilate looked into the pale face of a Galilean and asked :
"Art Thou a king, then?"

To-day there is not a ruler in the civilized world but what would answer for Christ :
"Yea, He is a King."

If any ruler should deliberately attempt to dishonour Christ's name, or prohibit the homage which men universally accord Him, there would be instant rebellion in his domain. Neither courts nor armies could suppress the insurrection which would inevitably follow such action.

No legislator, no man in authority in any capacity would dare put himself in open hostility to the rule of Christ.

To what must this marvellous power be attributed? Napoleon has given us a cue. Exiled at St. Helena he one day turned to General Bertrand and said: "I know men, and I tell you that Jesus is not a mere man. Between Him and whoever

else in all the world, there are no possible terms of comparison. Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne, and myself founded empires, but upon what did we rest the success of our genius? Upon force. Jesus Christ alone founded His empire upon love, and at this hour millions of men would die for Him."

It is peculiar that Jesus appeals to men of all nations. Moses was a Hebrew, Socrates, an Athenian; Confucius, a Chinaman; Buddha, a Hindu; Mohammed, an Arab; Luther, a German—not only in blood, but in spirit.

But Jesus belongs as much to the African as He does to the American. He is loved by the Chinese as He is by the Choctaw Indian. To the Welshman, Christ seems to have been a Welshman. To the Arabian, Christ seems to have been an Arabian. No matter what a man's nationality he feels at home with Jesus.

Christ appeals to all conditions of men. Rich and poor, learned and ignorant, capitalist and labourer,—all have looked to Christ and found in Him that which satisfies. To have such a man as a friend, means a great deal to any one. For

workingmen to have Him—with His unlimited power—as their special representative, should inspire them with hope and courage, for the cause of such a leader is certain of victory.

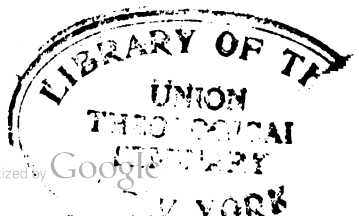
XXIX

WORKING WITH CHRIST

“LABOUR troubles” come as the result of an advancing civilization. Social unrest is sometimes an indication of social progress. There are no labour troubles in “Darkest Africa.” Therefore, the cloud on the industrial horizon has its silver lining.

Many are the signs of development on the part of the workingman, but most hopeful is the spirit of pride that he is taking in his position as a worker and as a citizen. Whatever may be said as to the condition of the toiler in some industries or in some countries, his position as the man upon whom rest the prosperity and the happiness of the whole people, is more and more being recognized. The brain of the country is paying tribute to the brawn. That being so, the workingman will soon come to his own.

It is in this respect that he has for himself, that he is winning the respect of others.



While it is true that the mass of men must of necessity belong to that great company who toil with their hands, nevertheless, the dignity of that toil has heightened the worker. It is an inspiration to realize that all toil—even the manual work of the artisan—may become as sacred as that of the preacher and of the priest. Men sometimes make a distinction between “secular” and “religious” work. Jesus Christ never did. To Him all work was sacred. Jesus Christ as a carpenter was just as divine as when He cleansed the leper or preached to the multitude. In every case He was carrying out the will of God. When Jesus stood by the River Jordan, and the heavens opened, and the voice declared: “This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased,” He had never, so far as we know, performed a miracle or preached a sermon. He had simply been toiling as a carpenter in the little town of Nazareth. He had pleased God as a carpenter.

Here is nerve for the arm and enthusiasm for the skill—“I am working with God in carrying on His world.” There was much more to the labour of Jesus than

mere food and clothing and money. The sound of that hammer meant more to the world than so many products in wood. Every nail reached down to the coffin lid of some old tyranny or superstition. Every chip of the chisel released a hundred slaves. Not so far-reaching will be the result of every worker's efforts in this century, but it is a privilege to have at least a part in the work of the world's redemption by being a co-labourer with Christ in whatever field He may send us.

Helpful the thought too, that in the daily grind we have One who has passed through it all, so that He can sympathize with us in the abuse, the misunderstanding, the bitterness and all the suffering that comes to us in the performance of duty

“This is the gospel of Labour,—
Ring it, ye bells of the kirk !
The Lord of Love came down from above
To live with the men who work.
This is the rose He planted
Here in the thorn-cursed soil ;
Heaven is blessed with perfect rest,
But the blessing of earth is toil.”

XXX

LABOUR DAY SUNDAY

ON the Sunday before Labour Day of each year thousands of ministers discuss some phase of the labour question as it affects the church. This indicates the importance of the problem. It also proves that these ministers are wide awake to this great world movement.

Just as Memorial Day, and the several "birthdays" show our appreciation of those who rendered patriotic service, and just as the churches' "holy" days do honour to those who have served mankind spiritually, so "Labour day Sunday" should be observed by the churches to honour the millions of toilers who daily serve mankind in the humbler places of life.

More union men attend church on that day than on any other day of the year. In many cities, Central Labour Unions attend the church services in a body. The daily press in practically every city gives columns of space to the sermons which are eagerly read by workingmen who are

naturally interested in knowing what ministers have to say with regard to their problems. The favourable comments of the Labour Press of the country indicate that the impressions made are good. In several instances the labour editors print the sermons in full.

As a practical result of these addresses many of the preachers are invited to repeat to local unions the addresses given in the churches. Invitations are received to come to the shops for noon hour meetings.

The fraternal delegate plan is meeting with hearty endorsement by the labour men who for the first time hear about it. Some ministers are discovering the great opportunity they have been missing in meeting with the men in the shops, the mines, and the mills. Many are invited to address Labour Day assemblies when they speak to thousands of workingmen and their families.

That the effort to popularize "Labour Day Sunday" among the churches, results in some very practical things is quite evident. Both sides are discovering that each has been misunderstanding the other.

Many a preacher in his study preparatory to the services gets a new vision of what the labour movement stands for, and many a workingman listening to his Labour Day address catches a glimpse of the purpose of the church which he had never dreamed of.

It is noteworthy that even the so-called rich men's churches fling wide their doors to welcome the toilers. Still more important is the fact that the preachers in these churches speak plainly of the sins of the employer as well as of the sins of the employee—and there are sins on both sides. Many an employer who has not studied very deeply into the history or the object of the labour movement gets a broader conception of what it all means. Many an employee whose sole thought has been that the labour question is purely a question of wages and hours sees that there are moral issues involved which affect him as well as his employer.

All these things will help to bring about a better understanding between men. Surely that is the first essential to the full doing of one's duty towards his fellows, and that will help the labour movement.

XXXI

SOME LABOUR HALL EXPERIENCES

“WHAT’S the use of talking about the moral aspects of the labour question?” indignantly demanded a socialist at a meeting which I recently addressed. “Don’t you know that all sin is due to poverty?” he continued. “Is that so?” I replied. “Then I suppose you would say that all the capitalists are saints.”

There were about a dozen of them—cigar makers—waiting in the ante-room for a special order of business.

They were talking about various phases of the social question, when the sergeant-at-arms remarked, with emphasis: “You fellows ought to study the Bible if you want to learn some of the greatest truths ever given mankind. Take such sayings of Paul’s as ‘Charity begins at home,’ and ‘Know thyself.’ Aren’t they great?” The crowd took it in very solemnly as the learned brother gave them a little sermon

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on the mystery of the latter text. There is no doubt that the Bible contains "some of the greatest truths ever given mankind," but if there had been a man present with even a Sunday-school scholar's training in the Scriptures, he might have made the speaker feel exceedingly small, for neither of his texts can be found anywhere in the Bible.

I was not responsible for the discussion, but after I had finished my address, the boys began telling me and the rest of the crowd why they had given up going to church. I was naturally very much interested in the reasons presented, although there really wasn't a new thing said. Finally, the business agent of the Brewery Workers remarked, with something of a blush: "Well, I suppose you have all told the truth about yourselves, but I want to say that I don't go to church any more because I just plain 'back-slid.'" And his candid expression discounted several of the fancy little speeches of his brothers.

He was long whiskered, loud mouthed, and he supported a bad breath. He hap-

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pened to be present because it was an open meeting. When he found his feet he gave us some pretty good advice—from his viewpoint.

He did say some fine things about the beautiful spirit of Jesus Christ, and he very earnestly reminded us that he had accepted the teachings of Jesus as the guiding principles of his life. But in the very next sentence, he declared, with fury: "If I had my way, I'd send every capitalist to hell!" At the conclusion of his fiery speech a very modest workingman arose and quietly remarked: "My brother, you had better go home and learn your lesson over again. You haven't quite caught the spirit of Jesus, if I know anything about it." And there were others in the crowd who agreed with the last speaker.

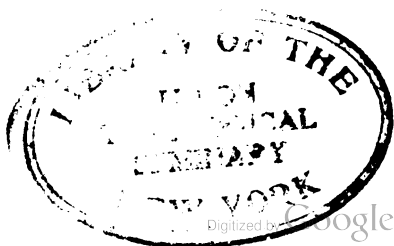
A delegate was reporting for his local.

"We initiated five candidates at our last meeting," he said, "and it required five different interpreters to obligate them."

I wondered what kind of a proposition it must be to get anything like harmony in that labour union, even under ordinary

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circumstances. I thought, too, of the report of the United States Labour Commissioner, in which he declared that the labour union is doing more to Americanize the foreigner than any other institution in the country.



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