

THE SYNDICALIST

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WHOLE No. 55

The Passing Show

THE EUROPEAN SITUATION.

The dispatches tell us that all Europe is at a high pitch of fear lest the big nations fly at each others' throats. The Balkan Christians conspired to drive the Mohammedans out of Europe and steal their property. The job was planned by Balkan capitalists, army contractors, and Russia. They were the real conspirators, who saw a chance to get more wealth without risk, for the fellows who were to do the fighting would also pay the cost, after they got back. And the tens of thousands who fell on the Mohammedan fields would make good fertilizer for future Christian crops.

War is simply a business, and there is no sentiment in business. Wars are never accidents. The men who run the world order the wars, and they will sit at their round tables and plan wars involving the lives of millions of workers without the least show of human feelings, with a cold perversity of sentiment that will very soon set the whole world ablaze with the fire of mutual destruction, unless the workers quickly awaken to a realization of the terrible situation and refuse to kill each other.

The Balkan workers—Christian and Mohammedan—who are now pitted against each other in a terrible death struggle, mowing each other down with the latest implements of science, have been well prepared for the fray by centuries of religious teaching. There are two gods where there should not be any.

A fine human sentiment has been perverted and called religion. Another has been distorted and given the name of patriotism. These two human emotions gone to seed are the chief instruments of war.

Without them no king or president could sit in his palace and order men to kill each other for the enrichment of his capitalist friends. Men would laugh and call him an idiot who would thus expect them to commit such folly, such outrage against the first principles of humanity, and civilization, and common sense. The men who profit by war will never abolish it. On the contrary, it is they who suffer who must refuse to obey the bugle call.

The masters of Europe are loading the people heavier each day with the weight of war. France is about to add a year to the time of compulsory service, making it three years, and bringing its standing army to 800,000. Germany, in a similar way, is increasing its standing army to an equal number. England is considering compulsory service in the army. Other governments are concocting equal outrages against humanity, all building ponderous engines of destruction on sea and land.

The United States is following in the trail of Europe and is fast becoming a military power.

There is nothing on earth that will put a stop to this madness except the strong arm and the loud voice of labor.

THE VALUE OF STRIKES.

The British miners are now going to make a move for a five-day week. That is the most sensible move ever made by a labor organization. High wages benefits only the man who has a job. It encourages the introduction of machinery and "speeding up," thus lessening the number of jobs.

The shorter workday helps the man without a job. It helps everybody. It gives those who work time to read, while enabling the unemployed to get a crust without charity.

All attempts at higher wages and shorter hours are, of course, mere patches on the punky pants of the present order. But we encourage them only because they enable the workers to squeeze a bit more out of the master class, while they are preparing themselves for the movement that will entirely abolish that class.

Indeed, these strikes in themselves, apart from their material benefits, are the greatest educational instruments we have got. They teach us the power of concerted action, and reveal to us the great strength we possess. They draw us together in the close bonds of solidarity.

They drill us in tactics and lead us gradually from the isolated factory trade strike up to the great general strike, when with one tremendous blow we will break the back of capitalism.

We have found that only through strikes have we been able to show the least sign of resistance to the master class. We have found that with the extension of the strike comes increased power, and we propose to follow up the idea and eventually make the strike universal, and see what kind of a row that will start.

This is a natural evolution, crude and very often uncomfortable, as all things natural are, and no amount of fancy round-table phrases are going to affect it very much. Where we have given ear, temporarily, to the elegant speeches of lawyers and preachers who have come down to teach us, we have always lost. After trying their way we have had to come back to our own.

Now we are through with all their fads and fancies. We have learned that we cannot argue nor steal our liberty back. The masters are too slick to be caught by such tricks. We have learned from experience that every level road leads to a lemon tree. So we have passed up the dreamers, with their paper and air, their ballot and speech.

Now we are getting down to reality, and you see us building on the ruins of the past, real concrete unions, with the factory as their foundation. You see us taking off our coats and rolling up our sleeves. We are getting ready to start a "rough house."

THE TURMOIL ACROSS THE LINE.

Complications in Mexico are becoming more complicated. Honest men are fighting for their liberty; and scoundrels are at work, using every means their cunning can devise to keep them from getting it.

Huerta is making no progress in his gentle way of bringing peace by extermination. He

is more decidedly up against it than was Madero. Evidently a bluffer is quickly "called" in Mexico nowadays. Zapata and Orozco are still parleying for their own terms of surrender.

The state of Sonora wants to start out on its own hook as an independent, which is foolish. It has got to sink or swim with the rest of the country. This may be a move on the part of the annexation bunch, who, after getting it separated from Mexico, would colonize it and hand it over to us, as they did with Texas.

Verily, the plots and counterplots to keep Mexico from returning to the hands of its people are thickening.

THE NUDE AND THE PRUDES.

"A nude figure is no more indecent than a bare tree. Men and women are not born with overcoats on."

That was the caustic testimony of O. D. Glover, an artist, in a Chicago police court, where an art dealer named Jackson, was being tried for exposing a copy of Paul Chapas' celebrated painting, "September Morn," in his store window.

A couple of prudish women swore the picture suggested sensualism and that it should not be exposed to public view.

The jury thought different, and each member was presented with a copy by the defendant, and with the congratulations of every clean-minded person present.

Now, to the horror of the fuzzy-wuzzies, everybody is buying the picture, and all are grateful to the puritan ladies for thus calling public attention to such a beautiful work of art.

REVERENDS AND THE REVOLUTION.

The preachers seem to be worming their way into the I. W. W. press, as they have into the A. F. of L. and the S. P. I see "Solidarity" sporting a "Rev." on its front page.

A preacher may become a good revolutionist. I make allowance for extraordinary men. I know some. But none of those I know carry the "Rev." around. They "canned" it with the rest of the Christian junk. I agree it throws a glamor of respectability and safety over a paper or a person.

The title "Rev." is a rope with which one secures himself to the rock of conservatism when he goes wading in the turbulent waters of the revolution.

In appealing to the Supreme Court from the decision that allowed Mylius, the English rebel, to land here, the government is showing how faithful a member it is of the international union of slave owners.

The hangdogs of the law are striving to send some of the Little Falls strikers to prison. It's a crime for a worker to do anything in his own defense. Submission is the order of capitalism.

Only one of the kings engaged in the Balkan war has been killed—so far.

JAY FOX.

THE SYNDICALIST

FORMERLY THE AGITATOR

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**Nature is higher than Progress or Knowledge,
Whose need is ninety enslaved for ten.
My word shall stand against mart and college:
The planet belongs to its living men.**
—John Boyle O'Reilly.

SYNDICALISM—WORKING CLASS CONCEPTION OF SOCIALISM

French Syndicalism, which in reality is the origin of the international Syndicalist movement, formulates its aims in the statutes of the French Confederation of Labor as follows:

1. To organize the wage earners for the defense of their moral and material, their economic and professional interests.

2. To organize, outside all political parties, all the workers conscious of the struggle for the abolition of the wage system and employers.

These two paragraphs contain the fundamental claims of Socialism, without distinction of school or party; and every member of a Socialist party, whether Social Democratic, Anarchist, or other, can fully accept them.

Under this banner French Syndicalism in less than fifteen years has united over 600,000 members, 400,000 of whom are paying their contributions to the Confederation of Labor. This huge army of Syndicalists is organized on the lines of autonomy of the respective Syndicates and their federations, whether local or national. The same autonomy extends to each individual member, who outside his Syndicate is entirely free in his political conceptions, and can belong to any political party for parliamentary or municipal elections; but nobody has the right to take part in them in his capacity as a Syndicalist or as a member of a Syndicalist administration.

The fundamental formula of Syndicalism, with its exclusion of parliamentary action, defines clearly its place among existing Socialist and Anarchist parties. It is evident that Syndicalism cannot be put under the banner of Social Democracy or any other parliamentary party. On the other side, we cannot say that these formulas are purely anarchistic, because, as we saw, Syndicalism allows its members individually to take part in electoral agitation; whilst anarchism obliges its followers not only to abstain from working in elections, but even to expose the futility of parliamentary legislation. This point must be kept clearly in mind.

Beside the definition of aims and tactics, Syndicalism evolved a real workingmen's conception of a future society where production will be organized and controlled by the autonomous federations of syndicates of producers.

From this short exposition of Syndicalist aims it is evident that though Syndicalism cannot be ranged under any of the existing Socialist parties, the members of all those parties, if sincere Socialists, revolutionists, and honest trade unionists, can fight together in a Syndicalist organization for their social and economic emancipation. This is all the more true, as Syndicalism not only unites the workers in the struggle against the individual capitalist master or company, but also against the municipality or state as employers of labor.

DIRECT ACTION TACTICS.

As tactics of the daily fight against all forms of exploitation, Syndicalism adopted so-called direct action in opposition to the indirect action of parliamentary legislation, the weapon being the strike in all its forms—including the general strike of all trades of the whole country.

This definition of tactics was not a dead letter. The history of the last ten years in France shows a new spirit in the working-class movement. We recall only

the strike for an eight-hour day in 1906, organized by the Confederation of Labor, which brought the Syndicalists in collision with the government; the building strike in Paris, the strikes of the postal employes, of the railway men, and of the seamen and dockers. All these strikes were remarkable for their revolutionary character and the wonderful solidarity among the workers all over France. This new spirit affected even the state officials, and the syndicates of the railway men and the postal employes, and recently the Teachers' Union affiliated themselves to the Confederation of Labor, in spite of the persecution by the government.

But Syndicalism not only brought a new life into the economic struggle; instead of the old-fashioned trade unionism with its sectional strikes, it propagated the industrial organization of the workers, so that in case of a strike in a trade the workers of the whole industry to which that trade belongs will fight together. For instance, in the building industry many trades are concerned; formerly each trade union, as that of the bricklayers, masons, carpenters, etc., would fight each for its own demands; whilst, according to the Syndicalist conception, all those trades in the building industry will be federated and make common cause for each to obtain their claims.

If we remember its Socialistic aims, its concentration on the economic struggle, its frankly revolutionary spirit, we must admit that Syndicalism has succeeded in creating not only a powerful weapon for social and economic emancipation, but also a new mode of organization capable of embracing all the producing classes.

COMBATS POLITICS.

Syndicalism also rendered good service in breaking up the deadly stupefaction and reaction of parliamentarism and legalism, which for forty years has paralyzed the Socialist movement of Europe. In the "sixties" of last century Socialism stirred the working classes, especially of France and England, to great activity. The English trade unionists, at that time were not yet legalized; and they fought for their rights by demonstrations, riots, and strikes, until, helped by advanced Liberals such as John Stuart Mill, Frederic Harrison, and others, they obtained the legal recognition of their unions. The suffrage was extended, and the idea of parliamentary labor representation was suggested for the first time (see J. S. Mill's letter to Odger in the Beehive) in 1870.

From that time the tactics of direct economic struggle were little by little abandoned; respectability and legality became the watchwords of the trade union leaders. Parliamentary representatives of labor continuously increased in number, and the influence of the officials and leaders of organized labor began to dominate. Instead of fighting by strikes, the idea and practice of arbitration grew apace; the leaders began even to praise compulsory arbitration in labor conflicts, and it was realized in the young democratic English colonies, Australia and New Zealand. The energy of the working classes in the economic struggle diminished, and consequently in many branches of work advantages which had been won by fighting were lost, and wages lowered. With growing parliamentarism, "Trade union activities were slackened down * * * the energies of some unions were put nearly entirely into parliamentary and political channels," says W. C. Anderson in the Socialist Review, October, 1911.

At the same time, in 1870, the Franco-German War broke out, the terrible suppression of the Paris Commune followed, and the finest representatives of the French Socialist workers were massacred. France, humiliated by disasters, was oppressed for the following ten years by a military and clerical reaction. The discouraged survivors of the Commune, some of them Socialists, instead of the direct economic struggle, adopted legal parliamentarian tactics. The so-called "Parti Socialiste," with its "programme minimum," began to develop and to claim the monopoly of Socialism, systematically opposing any independent working class organization for economic direct action. At the beginning the Syndicalist movement found its greatest enemies not so much among the employers or authorities as among those would-be Socialist parliamentarians, with their formula, "by legal parliamentary political action to arrive at a social transformation."—Freedom.

FOR CHICAGO.

In the Open Forum, Masonic Temple, every Sunday night, Jay Fox precedes the regular lecturer with caustic comment on the passing show.

On April 27 he will be the, lecturer; subject, "Sabotage."

ON THE ROAD

Minneapolis, a city of 300,000 inhabitants, sitting astride the Mississippi River, in the center of the great wheat fields of the Northwest, is the great grain market of the country and the biggest flour maker in the world, having a yearly output of over \$63,000,000. Besides, it has the largest lumber output in the world, reaching annually over \$10,000,000.

But it is not a strong union town. There is practically no organization among the millers, or lumber men. The skilled trades are fairly well organized. The transport workers' unions are weak. Still, the I. W. W. has made little headway, owing, I was told, to the natural indifference of the workers to unite for their mutual protection. I am satisfied, however, that if the proper efforts were put forth, the toilers of Minneapolis could be gathered together.

The time is now at hand when the organized workers must step in and by a systematic effort gather the unorganized into the unions. It must be plain to the union workers that no progress can be made while such vast numbers remain outside the pale of organization. A regular crusade should be started at once, a special fund provided, and a number of organizers sent out to agitate. A few hundred thousand dollars spent this way should bring astonishing results.

The average working man lacks initiative, he is quite powerless to start anything new. He is so used to being told, he waits for the word of command. But it seems quite unreasonable to assume that if approached by his fellow workers he would, at this age of general intelligence and high cost of living, refuse to organize in his own behalf. What he needs now is the stimulus, the help; and it is up to the organized workers, in their own behalf, to give him that help.

One of the questions asked in our well-attended meeting in the the Federation Hall was: "What form of labor unions will you have under Syndicalism?" In answer, I explained that Syndicalism is not a system, but an idea; that it is not a creation, but an evolution; that it didn't germinate in the brain of some philosopher, but that it is the offspring of the toilers' own experience in mill, factory, and on the farm.

Syndicalism is a sociological mode of motion produced by a series of thoughts arising out of the experience of the working class. It, therefore, has no charts, and no special form of organization. While it favors the industrial form as the one most suitable to combat the present capitalistic form of industry, it does not depend for its success so much upon the card a worker carries in his pocket as upon the idea he carries in his head.

Organization, at its best, is merely a tool. Syndicalists use it for a two-fold purpose: first, education, second, action. Given the knowledge of how to act, the mere form of an organization is not going to keep men from acting. As a matter of fact, it has been the lack of knowledge rather than the form of organization that has kept the workers from acting together. In France, where they have the ideas, the form of organization doesn't bother them. Craft and industrial unions work together. Among the railroad shop men of this country, among the building trades, where the industrial idea is dominant, they act industrially, while having craft unions.

What the Syndicalists wish to emphasize is, that the form of the unions will adjust itself automatically as the ideas take possession of the rank and file, and that it is not necessary to waste any time or energy attempting to reshape them, or to build new ones on advanced models, while the work of education is so badly needed.

One critic was sadly disappointed because he heard nothing new. The I. W. W., he said, stood for the ideas I put forth, and he saw no need of my complicating the labor situation by introducing a new method of propaganda.

I think the distinction is very clear between the I. W. W. and the Syndicalist mode of propaganda. And this distinction was ably shown by the I. W. W. lecturer. Fellow Worker Spielman, at their hall, later in the day, when he pointed out, that, while he was an I. W. W., he was not blind to the fact that the Syndicalists had their field and were penetrating into the environs of the old unions with the revolutionary ideas, where the I. W. W. could not hope to reach, by reason of its form and tactics. His own personal experience, as a member of the bookbinders' union, no doubt has contributed largely to this practical opinion which he has set up against I. W. W. theory.

These hungry Northwesterners gobbled up all my literature, and I landed in Chicago without a book.
JAY FOX.

LEAGUE No. 1, NELSON, B. C.

Robert Hunter, the well-known millionaire Socialist; is extremely busy these days tearing "direct action" all to shreds, and has run to seed in several long screeds in the National Socialist.

He is extremely worried about the "limited and faulty conception of political action" held by the "direct actionists," viz., "to stick wads of paper in a box," and to this opposes the "fierce, unbending logic, the passionate and unadulterated Marxian philosophy" of Jules Guesde.

Listen to the logic!

"Political action is necessarily revolutionary. It does not address itself to the employer, but to the state. * * * Industrial action does not attack the employer as an institution, because the employer is the effect, the result of capitalist property."

From which he wishes us to believe that the state is the fountainhead of capitalist property; that capitalist property existed as an institution in the state before the employer came upon the scene. "The employer is the effect!" he says.

Guesde shows an extremely faulty understanding of the Socialist doctrine of economic determinism, which states that economic conditions determine the social, political, religious, and moral ones. This is so clear that even Hunter should be able to grasp it. Even capitalist history shows that capitalist property existed in the employer before it became a state institution; and going no further back than the industrial capitalists, it is but lately that the English capitalists (the original germ of the modern species) wrested the state from the landed aristocracy, and made their form of exploitation a state institution. They did not originate in the state. And, anyhow, all political struggles have been to supersede one form of exploitation by another.

We don't want a new form of exploitation. *We want to abolish exploitation*; or, at best, reduce it to a minimum to begin with. We Syndicalists (or direct actionists; if you like,) are thus directing our energies to capture the stronghold and stranglehold of the exploiters, the instruments of production and distribution. Give us these, and you will find your state, *your powers of government*, a dream castle up in the air, guarded by dream soldiers, and without a base.

Guesde takes exception to our "identifying political action with parliamentary action."

Words are merely used to convey impressions; and today political action conveys the impression of action through Parliament or its subsidiary powers. And further, the political action of the Socialists manifests itself through Parliament, through the election of candidates to that place of ill-fame, and thus down to "sticking wads of paper in a box."

It is true that industrial action does not always attack the employer as an institution, any more than does the election of Socialist mayors; yet these strikes for better conditions tend to solidify and educate the workers, and imbue them with the spirit of the class struggle. This is their chief value at the present time.

Our aim, Messrs. Hunter and Guesde, is the overthrow of capitalism, or any other ism which spells exploitation.

SECRETARY.

SUFFRAGETTE ON DIRECT ACTION.

The following interview with one of the leading English suffragettes is a most remarkable revolutionary declaration of principle. It leaves us men away in the rear by its grasp of the real social value of sabotage as a weapon of revolt, and in its repudiation of the bugbear of male minds—public opinion.

"How is the militant movement getting on?" asked the correspondent.

"Admirably. We have the whole country in a ferment. The business men in every great city of Great Britain are furious. We have cut their telegraph and telephone wires and played havoc with their important business interchanges. They want to murder us, and we want them to want to murder us. That is what we are here for."

"Then you do not care much about the sympathy of the public?"

"On the contrary, we do not want the sympathy of the public. We had that for a very long time and it amounted to exactly nothing. We might have gone on for a thousand years enjoying the sympathy of the public and never getting one step nearer the vote. Now, the fundamental theory of our campaign is to outrage and defy public sentiment."

"But won't you get yourselves into serious trouble—won't some of you get badly hurt?"

"I should think so. I hope so—if it is necessary. We have come to a point where we are not afraid. Do

you understand what it means to be not afraid? Do you understand what it means to resist a large element of the public which is not afraid? We shall go on destroying property. We shall continue to outrage and defy. Some of us may get killed. Personally, I always have thought that we should never win the vote in this country without the sacrifice of much life. We are ready for this test."

"Have you any idea when you are going to succeed?"

"I regret that we have not. We are making the government exceedingly uncomfortable. We are making the public exceedingly uncomfortable. In short, we are bringing about an intolerable situation. Perhaps it is not intolerable yet, but it will be before we are finished."

"Your campaign is war minus slaughter?"

"Precisely. If we are killing any one, we are killing ourselves—so far. Those things which happen to property in times of war we intend shall happen to property in a time of peace in the United Kingdom pending the removal of incorporated injustice to our women. Men do not make war so gently. They bombard cities, for example, and what does a bombardment mean? It means houses in flames, innocent women and children killed, babies shot or burned in their cradles. Do we look so bad, as compared with these warriors, when we destroy windows and golf greens and telephone wires and orchids? Let me tell you something. Not a tenth part of the damage we are doing to property is reported in the daily press. Only something picturesque in the way of destruction reaches the public through the ordinary channels. We are destroying thousands of letters that the people do not know about. We are inflicting injury on property in scores of ways about which nothing is said. The victims of this campaign cannot stand it a great while. One of these days they are going to go to the men who rule this country and serve notice on them that they have got to put an end to the fiasco of their attempted government of taxed and unrepresented women."

ROBERT HUNTER, HISTORIAN?

Hunter has constituted himself the historian of the general strike. He elected himself by acclamation. He was the unanimous choice of the meeting of Hunter. So he journeyed off to Europe to gather the dope on the general strike.

Hunter was unanimous for the history, but how was he for the subject? He was unanimous against the subject. Therefore he wrote the history. Hunter is one of those purpose historians who trim the facts to fit the purpose.

He is not alone in this. He has the company of the grand galaxy of historians who before him ate the masters' pie as they penned the immortal stuff. So that history is really a romance woven around the rulers and masters of the world.

Hunter's object wasn't pie, but the subject was pie for his object. Politics may be a nobler pursuit than pie, but in the end they amount to the same thing. At least so far as the perversion of history goes the object of the perverter matters little. Perversion is perversion, malignity is malignity, vilification is vilification, dirt is dirt.

Hunter uses the "injective" method of reasoning. He tells us that Briand was once a violent advocate of direct action. Then he injects the idea that we must beware of advocates of direct action, for their object is to split up the Socialist party and leave the workers hopelessly divided among themselves, then jump onto the government juggernaut and ride over them. You must not ask him to account for Millerand, the mild advocate of the ballot, who sits beside Briand on the soft government seat.

You see, Hunter is writing a history of the general strike for the benefit of us poor working stiffs, whose brains are so calloused we don't know what we want and are as liable to follow the eloquent Briands as we are the eloquent Millerands unless we receive a timely warning.

Hunter is a great humanitarian. He is afraid he may hurt some poor defender of the system if we start something in the direct-action line. Then we might get scratched ourselves. And what is the use of it all when we can, by a touch of the magic ballot, lift the poetic Debs or the prosaic Hunter into the presidential chair, and lo! the guns are all spiked and heaven is here.

To accomplish this magic end you surely will allow that all means are justified. Hunter is going the limit.

A DIRECT ACTIONIST.

The man who holds that without which I cannot live is my master.

SYNDICALIST LEAGUE OF ST. LOUIS AND VICINITY

Headquarters, 1214 Franklin Ave.; Open 7 to 11 p. m. Week Days; also Sunday Afternoons and Evenings.
Business Meeting Every Saturday at 8 p. m.

LOCAL NO. 20, WAITERS' UNION:

After accomplishing great results in organizing the waiters, the local has now established regular educational meetings to discuss all topics that will educate the membership, especially those new ones who are coming in at every business meeting. The local realizes, that for an organization to be powerful, it must have uniformity of ideas, and the best way to bring this about is to establish an open forum, where the members can discuss all questions of vital interest to the organization. The idea is good and is being considered by the militants in other trades of this locality.

The League.

Interest is more and more being shown in the league, and radicals of different unions are beginning to appear at headquarters. Syndicalists who dropped out of the league eight months ago are once more coming to headquarters and promise to give it their support from now on. The league will soon hold a series of agitation meetings, as it is one of the best means of reaching the militants of the different unions. The Syndicalists are working quietly and practicing revolutionary tactics, which is more effective at this stage of the game. Revolutionary talking from the housetop is all right in its place, but, like the preaching of solidarity, your tactics must be of a kind that will produce that solidarity. The man who preaches solidarity and advocates dual unionism is the most dangerous man in the labor movement, and nine times out of ten it's the "revolutionary" politician back of him.

SOCIALIST PARTY SPLIT.

In the convention of the Socialist party of Washington, held in Tacoma, a stalwart conservative rose and declared: "A small faction of anarchists would make the qualifications for the party such that no self-respecting man would enter it." Then another delegate took the floor, and in equally emphatic language said: "I am a Socialist. I believe in economic revolution. I do not know whether it will come tomorrow or whether it will come for years yet, but I, Millard Price, will break every law on the statute books to bring it about."

Then George Boomer came booming down the aisle and flung this boomerang into the midst of the "yellows": "Laws?" he sneered. "What do I care for the laws. All laws are made by the dominant class for the purpose of oppressing the working class."

Whereupon the "yellows" withdrew, hired a hall, and started a respectable Socialist party, where the cut of a man's coat won't affect his standing, provided it's in the latest style, and where "the class struggle does not mean class hatred."

Such is the farce comedy of politics; and the tragic part of it is that there are honest, intelligent working men in the Socialist party, held there by the mere force of habit. For they grasp the significance of the Marxian formula regarding the economic foundation of society.

Still events are the great teachers—great because they are real, actual, concrete, while theories are thin air. The theory of capturing the state is getting thinner with each recurring party split and each recurring ray of light shed by passing events.

DARROW'S DEFENSE.

Darrow's famous speech that got him an acquittal at the first trial has been printed in a pamphlet of sixty pages on fine paper, with a portrait on tinted paper. Price, 25 cents. Order from The Syndicalist.

THE REVOLT OF LABOR

According to recent press reports, the I. C. and Harriman strike is approaching an end. The officials of the I. C. have had a conference with the officials of the System Federation and offered an agreement in which the System Federation would be recognized. (This recognition was the chief demand of the strikers.) The System Federation officials, however, refused to make any settlement that would not include the Harriman strikers. The committees of the Harriman roads and the Harriman System Federation will meet in the near future to discuss terms of settlement. From all indications, the historic strike (which marked the epoch of the system form of federation) will soon come to a close. The action of the I. C. System Federation in refusing to jeopardize the interests of their fellow workers on the Harriman roads is in line with the rare solidarity shown by the striking unions throughout the eighteen months' strike. Though they have been sorely pressed, (the strike has long been considered utterly lost by most rebels), they have steadfastly refused to yield to the bosses' blandishments and make individual contracts. They have stuck to their System Federations through thick and thin. It is to be hoped that their perseverance will finally be crowned by victory.

President Carter of the Brotherhood of Railroad Firemen and Enginemen has recently somewhat startled railroad unionists by advocating a nation-wide federation of the various railroad brotherhoods. There is a profound discontent in the rank and file of the railroad unions at the way these organizations are being played one against the other by the wily railroad managers. Unless something is done shortly to allay this discontent by placing the organizations upon a more modern footing, a big revolt of railroad workers against their union officials can be looked for. Indeed, this revolt is already afoot, and is rapidly spreading. The principle manifestation of it is the Railroad Men's Nonpartisan Political Association. This is a general organization of railroaders of every category, "from the section hand to the engineer," having the avowed purpose of combating legislation inimical to railroad men. It is already exerting a tremendous influence on the internal affairs of the various railroad unions. The Railroad Men's Nonpartisan Political Association (in spite of its name) is the most important development among railroaders since the A. R. U. In a later issue we will give more details regarding it. President Carter of the B. of L. F. and E. is one of the far-sighted ones who can see the coming storm and are taking constructive measures to avoid its fury.

Two Chicago unions (machinery movers and pile drivers) have just obtained charters from the International Association of Bridge and Structural Iron Workers. Speaking of the affiliation, President Ryan somewhat naively says: "There are many unions whose work overlaps that of another. This was the case with the machinery movers. The building trades department of the A. F. of L. has adopted a policy favoring the amalgamation of trades that conflict with each other in order to prevent jurisdictional strife. In line with that policy the machinery movers joined our international." Many wise theorists say that the craft autonomy of the A. F. of L. unions precludes all possibility of any settlement of the jurisdictional quarrels between them. They overlook the fact that similar quarrels prevail in lesser degree between similar craft unions in every labor movement in the world, and that one sure specific—amalgamation—has been found for them. It is not surprising that this specific is also coming to be recognized and applied in the A. F. of L.

In a vote soon to be taken, it is authoritatively stated, the bricklayers will decide to affiliate with the A. F. of L. The bricklayers number 85,000 members. Their craft is one of the strongest organized and occupies one of the most strategic positions of any in the country, yet they are confessedly being forced to get into closer touch with the labor movement. The same forces that are propelling the reluctant bricklayers into the A. F. of L. will also compel the A. L. of L. unions to come into closer relations with each other. They will compel these unions to gradually federate and amalgamate until they approximate the industrial form of organization.

The long expected general strike in Belgium is now scheduled to begin April 14. The government has categorically refused to grant the workers the ballot de-

manded, and, as a consequence, the strike seems inevitable. The labor movement of the whole world is awaiting this strike with intense interest. Never was a general strike so thoroughly and deliberately planned. Never was it so popular with the workers. And never did one so nearly have the support of the whole revolutionary movement—Socialists, Syndicalists, and Anarchists are all working together in preparation for the strike. Great things can be looked for from Belgium next month.

The amalgamation movement in England, to which the Syndicalists are devoting great efforts, goes on apace. The five largest unions in the garment trades are now voting on the proposition of fusing into one union. The transport workers' unions are also greatly influenced by the movement for greater solidarity. Their representatives recently met and favorably considered the propositions of consolidation. Details are now being worked out. A similar consolidation is also being voted on by the building trade unions. It is high time that an organized amalgamation movement be started in this country.

At its recent meeting the executive committee of the A. F. of L. instructed President Gompers to "encourage the federation of all organizations whose members are employed in kindred and closely allied trades, and to encourage the amalgamation of unions where it is mutually agreeable to them." Thus, the reactionaries in the A. F. of L., while openly combating the avowed industrial unionists, even in the A. L. of F., recognize the trend towards industrial unionism and are gradually falling in with it.

By a majority of 60,000 the British miners have declared in favor of a five-day week. The proposition is also being voted on by the miners in the various other countries, having been submitted to them last year at the international congress of miners in Amsterdam. The coming convention, next year in Vienna, will probably take definite action on the matter.

Two of the most important strikes now on are those of the Akron rubber workers and of the Paterson silk workers. Both strikes have settled down into grim tests of endurance, the workers pitting their solidarity and ability to suffer privations against their masters' pocketbooks, brutality, and cupidity.

According to recent official figures, the membership of the A. F. of L. at the end of January was 1,979,420. This is the largest in the history of the A. F. of L., and an increase of 204,660 since the Rochester convention. At this rate it may take the A. F. of L. several years to die out.

The difficulties of the 5,000 Chicago switchmen have been referred to a sort of temporary arbitration committee. A strike still threatens.

WM. Z. FOSTER.

SOCIETY NOTES.

The first principle of the saboteur is not to get caught.

* * *

Where you expend one penny and cause the boss to loose a thousand is considered good sabotage.

* * *

A copper nail driven into the heart of a tree will cause it to gradually die. Many trees were so treated in San Diego during the free speech fight. They are beginning to "ripen off."

* * *

A mouse in a loaf of bread was the direct cause of Health Commissioner Young of Chicago closing a bake shop. The owner said the presence of the mouse was due to spite on the part of his employees.

* * *

Golf club houses and the very newest and most up-to-date railway stations in England are still being assisted skyward, and the suffragettes are making no protest.

* * *

During the present rubber strike at Akron the sheriff had his nose smashed with a brick. Did he not know that rubber manufacturers sell a rubber nose guard for the protection of rough house football players?

J. A. JONES.

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A VOICE FROM ENGLAND.

The Syndicalist line of action towards existing organizations, composed of genuine workers, is unassailable. We do not blame human beings because their organizations and their individual actions have not been of such a revolutionary character that some will say that by working through them we cannot reach the goal of a pure communist society. I believe that, working through the existing trade and industrial unions, composed of bona fide wage slaves, we can demonstrate to them by logic that industrial solidarity and Direct Action on a broader and more comprehensive scale will better their conditions here and now, and also that in the existing organizations, backed up by the revolutionary minority, will develop the real class struggle. Thus, by our direct action, we will show to the workers that the class war is more of a reality than they have heretofore thought; never failing to point out that Direct Action covers all phases of the present struggle of the wage workers to attain their final emancipation.

The Syndicalist propaganda has spread to such an extent that we are not surprised at anything happening now in England. For instance, the North-Eastern Railway men's strike, where 10,000 men laid down their tools over one man. And they won the day. There are four other strikes, merely passive, taking place in London now on similar lines, besides the happenings in the provinces. And the crowning point is that at a mass meeting the Railway Workers' Union unanimously declared for a general strike on the railroads to stop victimization.

This is an industrial union, the outcome of the amalgamation of three craft unions that took place a few weeks ago.

DAVE ARMSTRONG.

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