

# The New Magazine

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## American Labor Wants Deeds, Not Words

PRESIDENT GREEN of the American Federation of Labor is in one respect, at least, different from the late Samuel Gompers. William Green is more talkative than the "old man" and resorts more often than his predecessor to the use of NICE WORDS to conceal his ugly purposes.

It is for this reason that the forty-sixth annual convention of the A. F. of L., which opens its sessions in Detroit on October 4th, may be expected to say words and pass resolutions which under Gompers would not have been possible. But the practical results will be the same. The bureaucracy in control of the convention is hopeless as far as progress is concerned in the American labor movement.

This fact should move the left wing and the progressives to greater activity and more strenuous efforts. Above all these elements must strive toward better organization and more unified action. The opportunities for a successful drive against the reactionaries in the trade unions are becoming more favorable very day.

Do not permit Green and company to get away with empty words and meaningless phrases. Demand action. Demand concret, practical deeds. And let the American trade unionists see where Green stands on that. There is one particular matter which the bureaucracy always handles and destroys "diplomatically." It is the question of organizing the unorganized. The reactionaries do not dare to oppose it openly but their opposition and sabotage is just as real as if they had proclaimed it from the housetops.

Just now the organization of the masses of unorganized workers into unions on a large scale is becoming a practical possibility. The conditions in industry are favorable for it. The masses want it. What is needed is organized effort and leadership. The left and progressive elements must raise this issue in such a manner that would make it impossible for the reactionaries to forget about it on the morrow after the convention.

—ALEX BITTELMAN.



"THESE MUST BE HEARD."

By Jerger

## On the Organization of the Unorganized

By THURBER LEWIS.

THE comparative figures of the number of organized workers to the total number of workers employed in ten of the largest and most important industries in the country tell a graphic story that is of all the more interest because of the convention of the American Federation of Labor, now in session in Detroit. The delegates to this convention have it in their power to apply the remedy that can go a long way towards changing the sorrowful story told by the figures below.

### Iron and Steel.

IN 1920 there were 375,000 workers in the steel mills of the country, while 41,660 slaved in the blast furnaces. A total estimation in 1923 gives the number of workers in the steel industry as 497,330. In this keystone industry of American capitalism (a safe estimate now is a half million workers) there are 11,400 workers organized into the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin workers, a union composed almost exclusively of skilled men.

### Automobile.

RECENT estimates for 1925 give the number of workers in automobile factories alone as 329,563, while 300,000 more are engaged in the manufacture of parts and accessories. There is no union in the A. F. of L. with jurisdiction over this industry. The theory is that each of the crafts engaged in the automobile plants are to organize on their own hook. The result is that

an insignificant number of workers are so organized. The unaffiliated Auto and Aircraft Workers' Union now has no more than 1,500 members in its ranks. The industry can be looked upon as completely unorganized.

### Textile.

FIGURES for 1923 credit industry with 1,021,864 workers. But of this vast number of workers in an industry in which positively the most degrading conditions of work prevail the United Textile Workers' Union has 30,000, to which must be added the recently acquired 8,000 from the Passaic strike, while the unaffiliated Federation of Textile Operatives has no more than 10,000 members. In 1920, when there were three times as many members in the U. T. W. as there are now, the percentage of organized workers to unorganized was placed at 10 per cent.

### Metal Mining.

THE Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers' Union, the unworthy successor to the militant Western Federation of Miners, has now a membership of some 8,500. Available figures for the metal mining industry, which includes all mines except coal and corresponds to the jurisdiction of the above union, are 151,792.

### Rubber.

IN 1925 it was estimated that 115,000 workers were employed in the manufacture of rubber tires. It is estimated 161,530 was the number engaged in 1923 in the production of all rubber and composition goods. None are organized.

### Maritime Trades.

THE marine workers were at one time well organized. The International Seamen's Union in 1921 had a membership of 103,300, while the 1920 membership of the International Longshoremen's Union was 74,000. Now, however, the longshoremen are down to 31,800, while the seamen have been almost annihilated, reporting 16,000 members to the 1925 convention. There is also a small union of masters, mates and pilots, with a membership of 3,900. There are, therefore, only 50,000 workers organized in this very important industry, once powerfully organized, in which there are almost 200,000 workers.

### Lumber.

ASIDE from the short-lived and weak Timber Workers' Union that had at its peak 10,000 members, was affiliated to the A. F. of L. and died in 1923, the Industrial Workers of the World is the only organization that has made a consistent campaign to organize the loggers. But at the present time it is doubtful if the timber workers carrying I. W. W. cards number much over 1,000, the sole organization in the field. The industry is a huge one. In 1923 the number of lumbermen and wood-choppers employed thruout the country was 205,315.

### Communication.

THE powerful telegraph and telephone companies employ 343,397 men and women. Of this number it has been estimated that not more than 15 per cent are members of the Electrical Workers' Union, the only one in its field and one of the largest in the building trades industry.

### Food.

THE membership of all unions in the food industry total some 56,000. There are four, the International Union of Bakery and Confectionery Workers, 21,800; the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of America, 12,200; the International Union of the United Brewery, Flour, Cereal and Soft Drink Workers of America, 16,000, and the unaffiliated Amalgamated Food Workers, not over 6,000. The industry is one of the biggest in the land, employing almost a half million workers.

### Leather.

THE leather industry is given credit for having in its employ 383,209 workers. Of this number the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union has 36,000 organized. There is a small unaffiliated Shoe Workers' Protective Union as well as a glove workers' union, a pocketbook workers' union and a leather workers' union, all with a few thousand or less members. Amalgamation is a crying need in the boot and shoe section of the industry, the largest branch, in addition to extension of organization.

Such are the figures. They show that no serious attempts are being made by the American Federation of Labor to extend itself in these basic industries. A more complete survey would show that what unions there are in these industries have declined rather than grown in recent years. The question of organizing the unorganized workers in these great slave markets is a paramount one, for the delegates of the Detroit convention.

# THE THEATER

## "THE VAGABOND KING."

YOU will enjoy a good deal of the first act in this musical play. You may or may not enjoy the rest.

The first act opens with a tavern scene. Vagabonds, crooks and hold-up men make as colorful a crew of singing cut-throats as you could wish to see. Francois Villon, poet and vagabond kind of this motley crew, is played by Dennis King. You will not get a characterization of Francois Villon you had hoped for, but there's a dash to the performance of the actor that literally sweeps you along—for a while. It is Villon, a Frenchman, but without French dressing, perhaps. You can blame the authors. Again they are not concerned so much with intelligent characterization as they are with the kind that they feel "the public will like." And they do like it! The ladies "just love it" and it is—well the music is good.

Dennis King leads the company in "The Song of the Vagabonds." They sing it often thruout the night, and I can assure you they do it with a dash and whole-heartedness that will send you home singing it if there is a single note in your throat. The music as a whole has life and a liting gayety. You'll surely like it. The singing is

fine. Dennis King does more for the play than the poor thing deserves.

In the second act there's a little gem we want you to watch for if you go to see it (at the Great Northern in Chicago). The police are coming! The tavern full of bragging, singing scoundrels becomes quiet. As the police pass they sing a little song without accompaniment about "a rope around his neck." (If you recall your history, "necking parties" were quite popular in 15th century France.) The song is not listed in the program, but we'd give a lot to learn it. There's a dash and irresponsible swing to both words and music.

Rudolph Friml wrote the music for this play. It is music well worth hearing. The play is based on the story "If I were King."

Business is business. The theater art can go hang for all the producers care. All the music, the splendid song, the scenic artistry and beautiful costumes are but hand-maidens to the box office—not to intelligent pleasure. This musical play is but added proof of the fact, altho it is by no means without a good deal of pleasure. But Shakespeare was wrong, comrades—dead wrong. "The Pay Is the Thing!"

W. C.

## "BLACK VELVET."

By Willard Robertson. Playhouse Theater.

"BLACK VELVET": from the dramatic viewpoint, a sloppily constructed, melodramatic piece of work. In content, a foul, loathsome play, reeking with race prejudice and written and presented in a spirit well calculated to produce race riots and lynchings.

"Black Velvet" is a good piece of work only in that it reflects with some accuracy the prejudices and limitations of the mind of the typical white southern planter. So befuddled is the play with racial feeling, so low the opinions expressed of the Negro race, that some of the audience were under the impression that the scene of "Black Velvet" is laid before or immediately after the Civil War. Only by pointing out the type of costumes worn by the actresses was I able to convince the comrade who was with me that the date of the play is 1926, and the conditions it depicts are the conditions which prevail today in that swamp of ignorance, our southern states.

The scene of the play is the garden of General John William Darr, the owner of a plantation in the "yellow pine" belt of the South. (This belt runs thru Georgia and South Carolina.) The plantation seems to have been little affected by the Civil War and the reconstruction; the land is still poorly cultivated, the timber only half utilized; the region is peopled by the children and grandchildren of those who had been General Darr's slaves.

When the play opens Patricia Harper, a northern girl, is visiting Alice Darr, the general's granddaughter. Patricia is the type of young lady who graciously excuses herself and delicately flutters away whenever the "gentlemen" discuss business matters or matters not too "pleasant." (Up to last Saturday I had thought this type of young lady extinct, even on the stage.) Mr. Harper, Patricia's father, a northern capitalist with a large paunch and a mouthful of phrases about the "ideals of business" and the "vision of industry," is arranging with General Darr to set up a sawmill on the plantation and cut down the timber. General Darr's grandson, John William, is in love with Patricia, and is attempting to get rid of his former mistress, a mulatto girl, by name Cleo. (This is the "black velvet" woman who gives the play its name.) Cleo is portrayed as a sloppy, slouchy, lazy woman who cares for nothing but to attract the caresses of this, that, or the other man. Later on we meet Calhoun Darr, once the general's slave, now a local preacher—a typical "Uncle Tom" (damn the whole tribe of Uncle

Toms!)—slavish, servile, docile and devoted to his white "mas'r's" interests; "Yeller" Richmond, a mulatto from the North, of whom I shall have more to say later on, and Smith, an unscrupulous labor agent, recruiting Negroes for work in Northern cities.

The keynote of the play is the remark of the Northern girl, Patricia Harper, that in spite of all the beauty of the South she is constantly oppressed by a sense of something horrible and loathsome, coiled up and ready to spring. This leads to a conversation with the General, who expresses his conviction that "the white man is the master, and must remain so;" that "terrible things" would happen in such communities as his, where the blacks outnumber the whites, if the white man did not constantly assert his mastery over this "race of children and gorillas." This belief is constantly reiterated thruout the play.

The play begins to move when Mr. Harper, the Northern capitalist, comes in with the news that a labor agent is persuading the Negroes of the plantation to come North with him, promising them steady jobs at \$10 a day. The Negroes, Harper reports, are very much excited; they are preparing to leave immediately, vacating their houses, piling their possessions on the streets. (This description is correct—just such scenes as this took place in hundreds of southern towns during the great Negro migrations that began in 1916.) The northern capitalist is worried about a possible shortage of labor for his sawmill, and the general, pretending a paternalistic interest in "his people," interviews the labor agent, Smith, asking him where he is taking the Negroes and how long his job will last. Smith answers that the Negroes will know where they are going when they get off the train; that the job will last about six weeks, and that he doesn't give a hang what happens to them afterwards.

At the same time "Yeller" Richmond, the northern mulatto, has come to town to visit Cleo, his former sweetheart. This Richmond—who, it is fair to assume, was intended by the author to typify the northern Negro—has the face of a beast of prey and the walk of a gorilla. He makes love to Cleo by the gentle method of seizing her by the throat. Richmond finds out that another man has been living with Cleo, and determines to have his revenge if he finds out who it is.

John William, in the meantime, has been making ardent love to Patricia, but she (pure maiden!) is frightened by the thought of anything more than a kiss, and John William is driven into the arms of Cleo. The general learns

# A PEEK EACH WEEK AT MOTION PICTURES

## "ACROSS THE PACIFIC."

IN our search for good pictures we were obliged to see many that were simply awful—so awful we thought that here at last was the worst. But now we have come upon one that for pure, unadulterated rot is the greatest crime ever perpetrated on the motion picture art. Attempting to cash in on the wave of patriotic revival and glorification of American history, due to the Sesqui-centennial, this is a picture glorifying one of America's great "achievements"—the conquest of the Philippines.

Around the history of the event they have built a cheap melodrama that will prove difficult even for a 100 per cent klu-kluxer to swallow. So strenuously do they work the patriotic racket in this picture to cover its absolute lack of a single redeeming feature that one is reminded of the old days when George Cohan sent his chorus girls out in red, white and blue tights to draw applause from a soured audience. Monte Blue plays the leading role—and a few others contribute acting that is bad enough to be suited to the picture.

The story deals with the capture of Aguinaldo. His aids are fighting a Chinese villain and another who looks like a German. In the fighting (in which scenes are stolen from "The Big Parade" and done stupidly) an American soldier makes this appreciation of the Philippine people in his dying gasp: "Come on out in the open and fight, you yellow-bellied rats." And to prove the valor of the fighting American soldier he is shown thumbing his nose at the enemy as he dies. I swear, comrades, that for sheer side-splitting stupidity this is unequalled in the history of motion pictures the world over. Four critics of Chicago's papers (in which a paid advertisement for the picture appears) were loud in their praise of this inexcusable hokum. To these four (who are not so

stupid but who know where their wages come from) and to the producers, the Warner Bros., we award a delightful bouquet of decomposing onion tops, for the production and the promotion of the worst picture ever shown in America—barring none.

—W. C.

## "ALOMA OF THE SOUTH SEAS."

MOTION, not emotion, is the feature of this picture. Gilda Gray, former Follies girl, dressed in a dainty brassiere and a heavy coat of tan, proves herself a good actress—when she dances. The Charleston made the shimmy less profitable and this shapely maiden pursuing art "where she pays" has become a movie actress. I should not say "become." Not yet.

You know the story. They took it off rack No. 13 marked "South Sea Stuff" and had Gildie shimmy her (e)motions thru a "stirring drama" where the heart-broken white-man goes to the islands after losing his lady. He drinks everything. In fact, he goes thru a happy "pie-eyed" existence until Aloma, the coy native maiden, spoils all the fun for the poor fish. And that's that.

The scenery will make you terribly homesick for Los Angeles. So will Gilda Gray. If you have ever seen the South Sea Islands, don't go to see this picture. You are likely to burst a rib laughing at it.

In Person.

Together with a Samoan group of singers and dancers, Gilda Gray appeared in person before the showing of the picture at the Chicago Theater. She appears in person and in very little more. Brother—she dances! It is easy to understand why the college boys have gone raving mad about her. The lights are dimmed, Gilda "does her stuff," and you go away convinced more than ever that this little movie actress should be in the Ziegfeld Follies.

—W. C.

"THE PASSAIC STRIKE"—Don't miss it or you will never forgive yourself.  
 "VARIETY"—Splendid (Roosevelt)  
 "MOANA"—Beautiful.  
 "MARE NOSTRUM"—Abominable stuff.  
 "THE ROAD TO MANDALAY"—Junk.  
 "MANTRAP"—Yes and no.  
 "SON OF THE SHIEK"—Valentino's last one.  
 "THE AMATEUR GENTLEMAN"—Good photography, well acted (North Shore)  
 "TIN GODS"—Interesting (Central Park)  
 "UP IN MABEL'S ROOM"—A comic in a chemise.  
 "LA BOHEME"—Worth while.  
 "THE BAT"—Spooks—if you like them.  
 Note: Only Chicago theaters showing a program for one week are listed. Pictures of current week changed Monday.



GILDA GRAY in the PARAMOUNT PICTURE "ALOMA OF THE SOUTH SEAS"

of this, and expresses his horror that a white man should hold a colored woman in his arms.

Up to this point the play has depicted correctly the feelings of the white southerners towards the Negro. But this indignation of the general at sexual relations between white men and colored women is completely out of character. The white man of the south, both during slavery times and afterwards, has considered the Negro woman his lawful prey. Where did the thousands of mulattoes and even lighter-skinned Negroes come from, anyway? The typical white southerner has a horror only of miscegenation between white women and colored men, and of legal marriage between the two races, which is expressly forbidden by statute in southern states.

Richmond, finding out that John Darr has loved Cleo, strikes him a heavy blow. The blood of the southern white men is up; they gather rope and torch; the bloodhounds are heard baying off-stage. A little later, the sheriff comes back with the news that Richmond has been hanged in the middle of "nigger-town;" a collar about his neck proclaims that "he struck a white man!"

The author of this play, Willard Robertson, has been busily trying to defend himself from the charge of race prejudice. In an interview in the

Chicago Defender September 11 he is quoted as saying that he wrote "Black Velvet" because "he was disgusted and ashamed of conditions in the South and his motive was to expose thru the play the hypocrisy of the white man." And it is true that certain portions of the play are delightfully ironical. I am thinking particularly of the general's conversation with his former slave, Calhoun, in which he recalls how he sold Calhoun's wife to a trader, but gave the money to Calhoun himself—for the sake of sentiment(!). And there are other bits in the play equally revealing.

But why, if Willard Robertson is friendly to the Negro, does he show every one of his Negro characters as either subservient or loathsome? Why is Cleo, the only colored girl in the play, depicted as lazy, loose, slouchy and entirely lacking in pride? Why is "Yeller" Richmond, the chief Negro character besides Cleo, shown as bestial and uncontrolled, at one moment engaged in a brutal "love"-making, at the next moment indulging in cocaine, and then turning to assault a man with fist and knife?

It is just possible that Willard Robertson is really "friendly to the Negro race." All I can say is, he has certainly hit upon a most remarkable method of showing his "friendship." Edith Black.

# The A. F. of L. Convention

By WM. Z. FOSTER.

IN Detroit on October 4 will open the 46th convention of the American Federation of Labor. It finds the labor movement in a real crisis, ideologically and organizationally. The victorious employers are on the offensive on every front. They have shattered the unions on the railroads, in the mines, and in many other basic and key industries. The retreat of the unions, begun during the great struggle of 1919-23, still continues. The reactionary trade union bureaucrats, intent only on protecting their own petty group interests, have abandoned all semblance of a fighting policy and are seeking to subordinate the unions to the employers by multiplying class collaboration schemes in every sphere, such as "new wage policies," B. & O. plans, Monroe Doctrines of Labor, Watson-Parker laws, trade union life insurance, and the like. They are company-unionizing the American labor movement.

## What the Convention Should Do.

IN the midst of this far-reaching crisis the A. F. of L. meets in convention, ostensibly to take stock of the situation and to adopt the measures necessary to safeguard the workers' interests. Were the convention actually of a mind to do this it would have to revamp the policies and personnel of the organization from top to bottom. The T. U. E. L., in its statement addressed to the convention, has indicated what must be done to really put the American labor movement on its feet as a fighting organization.

First, the very basis of the policy of the bureaucracy must be changed. Instead of class collaboration there must be class struggle. Instead of a policy of crawling to the employers and giving up all resistance, there must be developed a militant fight on all fronts in defense of the workers' standards of living and to make fresh conquests from the employers.

In carrying thru this fundamental change of policy a whole series of measures are necessary. In the forefront stands the gigantic task of organizing the millions of unorganized workers. This touches the very heart of the weakness of the trade unions. So long, as at present, only a fraction of the workers are organized, and these mostly skilled workers, the unions cannot hope to be a real factor in the economic and political life of the country. To bring in the masses of unorganized workers, especially the unskilled in the great basic industries, is the major task now confronting the labor movement. Upon its achievement depends the development of all real power and progress of organized labor.

But there are many other problems of a burningly urgent character awaiting solution. The breaking of the present alliance of the trade union bureaucracy with the old capitalist parties and the formation of a labor party constitute a task the importance of which can hardly be overestimated. The alliance with the old parties poisons the trade unions with corruption and class collaboration. It's a dagger in the heart of the labor movement. The establishment of a labor party will represent a tremendous step forward by the American working class.

Besides initiating a labor party and launching widespread campaigns for the organization of the unorganized, the convention should carry thru a whole series of other measures and movements, such as a declaration in favor of nationalizing the railroads and coal mines, the repudiation of American imperialism root and branch, a war to the finish against company unionism, active support of the British mine strike by money and an embargo upon coal, real efforts should be started to defeat the injunction evil and to secure the release of all political prisoners, the fight to save the miners' union should be made the concern of the whole labor movement, steps should be taken to eliminate the poisonous corruption with which the labor movement reeks, Negro workers should be admitted freely to all organizations, the A. F. of L. should support world trade union unity, send a

delegation to the Soviet Union and demand the full economic and political recognition of that country, the whole labor movement should be thoroly centralized and placed under rank and file control.

ing of all opposition to this policy. This means more class collaboration and more war against the left wing. Concretely, the convention will support the class collaboration drift by extending its blessing to all the newer



Wm. Z. Foster.

This is the line of action necessary to revivify the trade union movement, to give it the life and power not only to resist the attacks of the employers but to deal smashing blows against these exploiters.

## What the Convention Will Do.

HOWEVER essential the foregoing program may be for the building up of the American trade union movement it will nevertheless get short shrift at the Detroit convention: It is safe to state that hardly a single plank of it will go into effect. The reactionary bureaucrats controlling the A. F. of L. have other plans in mind. They do not want to make the A. F. of L. into a real fighting machine; they want to degrade it into an auxiliary of the industrial and political organizations of the employers. Their whole program at the convention will go in this direction.

The serious business of the convention will be directed to setting up new and more "friendly" relations with the employers, and to the ruthless smash-

forms of trade union capitalism and the B. & O. plan. It will not reject even the scandalous Watson-Parker law. It will continue the firm alliance with the capitalist parties and seek to strengthen it. Against the left wing it will apply the iron fist. It will seek to condemn left wing leadership in the needle and textile industries. It will continue its war against the Soviet Union (altho this time, under heavy pressure, it will have to consider seriously the sending of a delegation to that country).

Aside from putting into effect this general policy of surrender to the employers and of war against the left wing, the convention will be of the usual stupid quality. The conventions of the A. F. of L. are notorious the world over for the low level of their business and discussions, from a working-class standpoint. A serious analysis of present day society and the problems of the working class would be altogether unintelligible to the body of delegates. They look upon the convention principally as an enjoyable

vacation. When the delegates can tear themselves away from the systematically organized constant round of pleasure and dissipation long enough to spend a few hours in the convention hall they will waste their time by listening to stupid twaddle from capitalist politicians, priests and employers; they will wrangle endlessly over asinine jurisdictional quarrels between the various unions, adopt a still-born resolution or two about organizing the unorganized, or the release of political prisoners, or the "value" of the union label, and they will finally wind up by electing the same old gang to control the A. F. of L. and by selecting some other summer resort or "wet" town wherein to hold next year's convention. If anything progressive, not to say revolutionary, gets by the convention it will be a seven day's marvel.

## The Road to Progress.

THE situation in the United States would be a dismal one indeed if the blackly reactionary A. F. of L. conventions truly reflected the understanding and aspirations of the working class, or of even the organized section of it. But this is notoriously not the case. The A. F. of L. conventions do not represent the rank and file. They are dominated by a hard-boiled bureaucracy, which in many instances maintains itself in power with ruthlessly autocratic measures in the face of widespread rank and file opposition and discontent. Who, for example, will attempt to say that the John L. Lewis clique represents the viewpoint of the country's coal diggers? Or that Hutcheson is a true representative of the carpenters? The growing revolts in their organizations answer these questions. And what is true of Lewis and Hutcheson is also true of the great bulk of the bureaucrats who make up A. F. of L. conventions. They do not represent the viewpoint of their union membership.

The rank and file, under the pressure of low wages, long hours, and ruthless speed-up systems, want to make their unions into fighting bodies. This they have shown times innumerable in the inner union struggles in the miners, carpenters, machinists, needle trades, etc. But this is not to say that they are class conscious or revolutionary. The great bulk of organized labor rank and filers are what may be vaguely classed as "progressives." They want to struggle against the employers and the reactionary bureaucrats, but they have only the most hazy ideas of how to go about it. They are disorganized and demoralized. The so-called progressive leaders are weak, programless, and sickly tools of the firm-willed right wing reactionaries.

No intelligent left winger will expect much of a progressive nature to be accomplished at the coming bureaucracy-packed A. F. of L. convention, nor will he be disappointed if nothing is done. He must look elsewhere, among the masses, for progress. And the situation is increasingly promising. The masses of workers are gradually reviving from the slump they fell into after the big defeats of 1919-23. They are turning an ever more ready ear to the propaganda of the left wing organized in and around the Trade Union Educational League. Even the collapsed "progressive" leaders are beginning to show some signs of revival and of organized opposition to the right wing. Signs of this are the opposition slate to the Lewis machine in the miners' election and the formation of the trade union delegation to the Soviet Union in spite of official condemnation by the A. F. of L.

The broad policy of the left wing in the present situation is clear. It is to mobilize the rank and file masses in the unions around the basic slogans outlined in the T. U. E. L. convention program, to stiffen up the progressive forces generally and to make united front movements with them on minimum programs against the right wing and the employers. If the left wing will concentrate upon this policy and apply it intelligently and militantly, it will not be long before there will be some surprising shatterings of the old bureaucracy. It is the way to progress in the labor movement.

## Safe and Sane in Spite of Sherwood

"Russia is the only country in the world where man no longer exploits man." Sherwood Eddy, International Committee, Y. M. C. A.

The American Federation of Labor denounces the whole Communist philosophy which is superimposed on the Russian Soviet government." Resolution of forty-fifth annual convention of the A. F. of L.

*Stoop and stuff your mouth with glass-hot sand,  
Reach, and scorch your fingers on the gridiron of the sky.  
Do not sear your eyes with staring for a fertile land,  
But surrender to the heaving heat and die.*

*An oasis in the desert? Some bespeak it.  
Their bones are all about you. Look and learn  
It is better, far, far better, not to seek it,  
But to parch here, and to bleach here, in your turn.*

*Their bones may serve as milestones to the mountains?  
Mirages! Close your vision to their call,  
And your ears to distant fluting of the fountains.  
Your hope is here to perish—that is all.*

—J. S. WALLACE.



# History of the Catholic Church in Mexico

By MANUEL GOMEZ.  
CHAPTER IV—Concluded.

AMERICAN editorial writers comment on the present church conflict in Mexico with a certain amount of bewilderment. Eventually, they protest, the church must win out, for 90 per cent of the Mexican people are Catholics. Their logic continues to bear up rather remarkably, considering the shocks that it receives with every day's news.

As a matter of fact, the editorial logic referred to above has been proved false by all the events of history, not only European but also Mexican. (This is quite aside from the fact that while a great majority of Mexicans are Catholics, the percentage is by no means as high as that indicated in the religiously padded membership figures given out by the clergy.) It has been precisely in "Catholic countries" that the most bitter struggles against the church took place. Could the reformation have swept over nearly all Europe in the closing years of the middle ages if it were impossible for Catholics to overthrow Catholicism?

Mexicans were early obliged to strike at the swollen power of the Catholic hierarchy. As far back as 1822, the year after independence from Spain, it was decided to occupy the buildings of the Philippine missions and to confiscate the funds accumulated by the Spaniards for clerical activities outside of Mexico.

On Nov. 23, 1855, a law was passed cancelling the immunity from civil prosecution formerly enjoyed by priests. The clergy fought this law savagely, but it did them little good. In June of the following year the government decreed the abolition of entail of church property. A precedent for interfering with church property had been created in 1822, as we have seen, but the decree against entail aroused the clergy to fury.

From the bloody war that followed the church emerged still worse off. With Benito Juarez at the head of a triumphant liberal government, the constitution of 1857 (referred to at length in a previous chapter) was put into effect, and in July of 1859 the reform laws were promulgated, suppressing all monastical institutions and prohibiting the exercise of functions by all except secular clergy. In the same month civil marriage was established; on July 31 cemeteries were taken away from church control, and on Aug. 11 religious holidays were denied recognition, and government officials were forbidden to take part in religious ceremonies.

And thus right on down thru the latest revolutionary period.

During these last fifteen years or more the influence of the church among the masses of the Mexican people has been declining rapidly. In the north and along the Pacific and Gulf coasts, many of the churches will be found standing empty. Organized labor has broken away almost completely from clerical influence. The same thing is noted among wide sections of the petty-bourgeoisie, the governing bureaucracy, intellectuals, etc. Even the peasants of the central plateau, while still the backbone of Catholic strength, are beginning to develop anti-clerical movements.

In the present conflict the church has found extremely little active support against the Calles government except among the wealthy reaction-

aries. The division is along class lines, with organized labor marching in the forefront of the anti-Catholic forces.

What will the outcome be? It is indicated for us in the fact that the church has always pushed against the forces of history. What is against history must eventually be destroyed by history.

President Calles insists that his government is attacking the Catholic church not as a religious but as a political institution. But what is political? What is left of the Roman Catholic church in Mexico after the new laws and regulations are in effect? No right to hold property, no foreign officiates, no services of any kind outside of the church buildings assigned for that purpose, no right to wear ecclesiastical vestments on the street, no control whatever over elementary education, no polemical press. The process has been going forward at unprecedented speed since the overthrow of Porfirio Diaz.

What will take the place of Catholicism—whether it will be a modified hierarchical form, or something else—remains to be seen. Last year an attempt was made, with the covert and sometimes the open support of the government, to set up a Mexican Schismatic Catholic Apostolic Church, as against the Roman Catholic. The "cismaticos" entered upon the scene with spectacular energy, but their attempt appears to have failed. It is possible that the peasants, the masses of whom are still religious, will eventually group themselves around their local priests. One thing is certain, Mexico's reformation will not and cannot follow the classic European lines.

The plight of the church should surprise no one familiar with the basis of its original power. The whole course of modern Mexican history tells us that the present movement is part and parcel of a great Mexican revolution which could not reach fruition while leaving the feudal church intact.

The End.

# The State Jewish Theater in Moscow

By RUTH EPPERSON KENNEL.

THE new play of the season at the State Jewish Theater, "The Tenth Commandment," described as "an operatic pamphlet," while not superior to "200,000" and "The Witch," is different in its burlesque on present day politics. Like the other plays, it has that complete harmony of rhythmic movement characteristic of these remarkable players, the music is gay, the costumes daring (being, like the sets, a bit futuristic) and only the brilliant witticisms are lost to some extent on those who do not understand Yiddish. Being a political satire, an understanding of the lines is more essential in order to follow it than in "200,000," which is more a rhythmic pantomime.

The playwright walks about with his arms full of manuscript, interfering when the play does not go to suit him and appealing to the fat director for help. But the devil, a gay cynic in brown breeches and soft collar, a high scarlet hat and red cape, is bent upon making a tangle of the play, and



succeeds. The lady falls in love with a young man and appeals to the devil to get rid of her husband. The devil agrees and proceeds to make a deal with the husband, who promptly disappears from Berlin and is mourned as dead. He turns up in Palestine, which has become Anglicized, with the British flag and two British policemen in the foreground and in the background (only as decoration) a classic figure symbolizing old Palestine. The widow appears looking for the grave of her husband. In the international chorus which sings in this scene, the league of nations, the Locarno cabinet and individual statesmen figure. Yellow banners wave in the meeting of the Second International, a gay woman from Broadway represents the United States and Vanderveke and MacDonald, quite lifelike and singing in Yiddish, dance solemnly. Finally everything gets into such a hopeless tangle that the whole company commits suicide. Wings are provided and they mount the golden stairs to heaven. St. Peter, questioning the new arrivals as to name, occupation and sins, becomes horrified when he learns that the Tenth Commandment has been broken and consults God on the telephone. They are condemned to remain in heaven, but the devil comes to their rescue and conducts them to his home below. The first scene in hell is Europe, and here the guests are well pleased to remain.



GRANOVSKY  
Head of Jewish Theater.

## THE CO-OPERATIVE SURGE

By JEANNETTE D. PEARL.

IT is now becoming apparent that the tiny atom has stored within itself an infinite amount of latent energy, which, when once released, will just astound the world with the tremendous magnitude of its power and possibilities.

A similar discovery is now coming to light from an element of quite a different sort. An element not so tiny as the atom, but almost as much obscure, the hitherto submerged working class. This huge labor body also has stored in its cells infinite latent energy, which too, when once released, must amaze mankind with the magnitude of its power and the extent of its possibilities.

A glimpse of this latent energy of the labor call is now being revealed in the huge co-operative enterprise, initiated, begun and being completed by members of the working class for members of the working class. The co-operative dwellings are much more than a mere attempt at cheaper and better living conditions for workers. These buildings, scientifically constructed, artistically designed, breathe a living spirit—the spirit of working class solidarity—a feature new in the social life of the worker.

This co-operative surge is not a whim. It is not an experiment. It is the signal of the workers' will to power—to mass action, mass effort, mass achievement. It is the assertive expression of a repressed force taking definite course. It is not sporadic. It is deep-rooted. It is not confined to any one city. It is nationwide and worldwide.

It is not an abandonment of the class struggle, but an intensification of it. In collective activity, workers will be trained for co-operative life, co-operative hope, co-operative efficiency. It is an additional channel in the means for labor emancipation. It is an added bridge for the revolution to cross. In co-operative enterprise

worker's will see concretely the goal toward which they must strive—emancipation—and embrace the means for its preparation. Here lies the secret of the workers' success and the philanthropists' failure.

Philanthropists built so-called co-operative homes for workers. They called to the working class to live in them. But the workers were not beguiled. They saw thru the humanita-

rian purposes of their benefactors. They felt in that move an effort at the perpetuation of wage slavery, an attempt to undermine labor morale, to weaken it, make it grateful to its owners and more dependent upon them. Labor saw thru it and would have none of it. Philanthropic co-operatives passed on to the smug comfort to the petty-bourgeoisie.

## THE TINY WORKER

A Weekly.

Edited by "Bunny" Palatnick, Roxbury, Mass.

Johnny Red, Assistant.

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### MY LIFE

The Autobiography of a President by BUNNY PALATNICK

I was born in a city, in a bed, in a year and a day. When I was twelve years of age I was promoted from ash-man to a swill-man which meant less pay and more hours. When I was thirteen I went to work in Gary's factory for nothing thus becoming a millionaire.

One day a doctor pronounced me loco in the coco. When Gary and the rest of the grafters heard about this they elected me president of the U. S. A. and I became their office boy.

A POEM AND A GOOD SUGGESTION

By Tillie Lurye, Chicago, Ill.

Workers Are Reds. Capitalists are blue I joined the PIONEERS

### JOHNNY IS GLAD AGAIN

EVERYBODY WROTE IN and we got 47 contributions. Fine—keep it up. Look what we got by

ROSE HOROWITZ

DEAR JOHNNIE RED:

I'm awfully sorry I made you cry but the reason I didn't write was because school opened with a lot of bunk and I was trying to sort it out but it comes along so fast that I got too anxious to tell you what happened so far.

In economic class my teacher (while discussing reasons for choosing a vocation) said that every man that chooses a vocation ought to be able to support himself and his family, so I said, "Well let's take the textile workers of Passaic as an example. They got paid very little and many of them starve to death because the bosses won't pay them enuf to support themselves and even NOW the bosses want to give them another wage cut so they are striking. Now, how can they support themselves if such bosses exist?" She thot it over a while. Then said, "Well, if you can find the answer to that, you are very smart because there'll always be some people living a happier life than others. It will ALWAYS be so." So I said, "Oh, no... not ALWAYS." but just then the bell rang and I wasn't able to complete my statement. I was intending to tell her that as soon as we'll have a SOVIET form of government, all sorts of cheating will cease.

Why don't you?

OOOH—GOOD THINGS COMING!

Because Johnny Red cried last week we got so many nice things. All these will be printed from week to week but we need a lot more. Come on — shoot them in Tiny Reds.

SCHOOL BUNK  
By Bernard Masarov, New York City.

At school our teacher told us that Coolidge was a poor boy but worked hard and thru work and prayers became president. Who did he pray to? The guys that paid for his campaign expenses?

WELL?  
How much bunk did you get in school? Rose Horowitz and Bernard Masarov and a few others sent in what they got. First come first printed!



## A. F. OF L. EXECUTIVE COUNCIL RUBBING SHOULDERS WITH COOLIDGE



Wilson Noonan Green Rickert Coolidge Morrison Duffy

## PRE-CONVENTION ATMOSPHERE—A Letter From Detroit

By P. S.

AN atmosphere is either light or heavy. It ranges from very light to very heavy in obedience to the law of physics. But there is also a non-physical variety, known in popular language as an atmosphere of gloom. This, too, may vary from very thin to very thick. It is the latter very thick kind that is enveloping the official leaders of the organized labor movement of Detroit on the eve of the American Federation of Labor convention which opens in this city Monday, October 4.

The reason for the thick gloom is the defeat suffered by the Detroit Federation all along the political front this early fall. Every one of the candidates, on the republican ticket, for the more important offices, including that of governor, endorsed by the federation went down in defeat in the primary elections held on September 14. A jitney ordinance sponsored by it permitting the operation of jitneys on the streets of Detroit also was voted down two to one.

Until the year 1923 the Detroit Federation of Labor stood in the forefront of the progressive central labor bodies fighting for the modern form of organization, the industrial form, for the organization of the unorganized, and for independent political action by the workers in alliance with the farmers. Disheartened by the meager first results and threatened with reorganization by the late Samuel Gompers, the Detroit Federation turned about face even as the other progressive labor bodies have done. Once about face, it kept going in that direction until now it is way out of sight of its former position.

The most sensitive ear will hear not even a whisper with reference to the modernization of the form of organization, any more. As regards the organization of the unorganized, however, it cannot be said that nothing is being done in this field. Many of the older unions are making some progress and a number of new organizations have been established. But the center of gravity of the new activity is along the craft lines if janitors and teamsters can be called craftsmen nowadays. And the worst feature of the recent organization campaigns is the admission into the A. F. of L. of retail dyers and cleaners, small laundry owners and the jitney drivers, who really are



THE GRAYSON, A. F. of L. Convention Hall in Detroit.

little business men and have no place in the labor movement. The automobile industry is being sadly neglected in this center of the automobile industry, which has some 300,000 workers employed either directly or indirectly.

The admission of the 400 or so jitney men not only brought about a rift in the federation between the administration and the street carmen's union, which has about 4,000 members, but it also culminated in adding to the political defeat of the leadership of the federation when the jitney ordinance mentioned previously was voted down. The sponsoring of this ordinance also terminated the alliance of the federa-

tion with Mayor Smith, who opposed the ordinance with all his might. If not for the defeat of the ordinance and the vigilance of the progressives in the streetcar men's union the old conservatives would have withdrawn from the Detroit Federation.

But it is on the field of political office that the federation has sunk to the lowest depths. Since it reverted to the Gompers policy of rewarding friends it has applied the theory both ways. It rewarded republican friends provided the republican friends first rewarded the friends of the federation machine with political jobs, or at least with promises of jobs. This policy

proved quite successful for the machine and its henchmen until now. Almost a dozen influential trade unionists, if not more, are holding office as court clerks, factory inspectors, etc.

However, just when the leadership of the Detroit organized labor movement was congratulating itself on the rapid progress made in this field of so-called practical politics something went wrong. The machine had administered to it a stinging defeat from which the leadership will not recover so soon. In the pursuit of its opportunistic policy the Detroit Federation endorsed those candidates which the leaders thought had the best chance to win. In this election they seemed to have guessed all wrong. Not one of the more important candidates won.

But the gloomy atmosphere must not be permitted to prevail too long. Something must be found to distract the attention of the movement from the political defeat. And so we have a good deal of the time and energy of the leadership devoted to the gathering of a fund for entertaining the delegates to the A. F. of L. convention. Several thousand dollars are being sought for this purpose. Entertainment is expensive, and while the taste of the delegates may be deficient in quality no one can say that it is deficient in quantity.

### A Suggestion.

SUPPOSE the Detroit labor movement raised a fund of \$10,000 and presented it to the convention as an initial fund for the organization of the automobile workers. This idea is alien to the present leadership, and may even have a disastrous effect upon the delegates. But there is a group in the labor movement which could conceive of such an idea and which believes in the possibility of success in such a campaign. The belief in success is strongly reinforced by the remarkable popularity of the Ford Worker, published by the Ford shop nuclei of the Workers (Communist) Party, which now has reached a circulation of 15,000 copies per month.

The time is not very far off when the militant and truly progressive forces in the labor movement will assert themselves more strongly and thus give the American workers a real fighting leadership.

Get a copy of the American Worker Correspondent. It's only 5 cents.

## How Southern Farm Tenants Live

Federated Press Review.

"If that there gal's any good a-worken she can have twenty-five cents an hour, and the woman too." So Ellen Chesser is soon walking ahead of the men in the field, dropping a



tobacco plant first to the right and then to the left in the mud. Her father, Henry, has taken up the farmer's offer of three dollars a day for a week's work "and that there house over in the place to stay in. Leaks a little, hardly to speak of." And later he accepts the farmer's further proposal of:

"I'll give you twenty dollars a month in cash money and the house rent free to live in and I'll furnish you-all with your lard and side meat and wheat for flour, all at cost figure,"—the tenant's place on the farm. But later Henry comes to the shack sullen and tells his wife and Ellen: "Hep Bodine thinks he owns a man that works on his place. I won't stand none of his jaw." And soon they move on to another farm. "Croppen

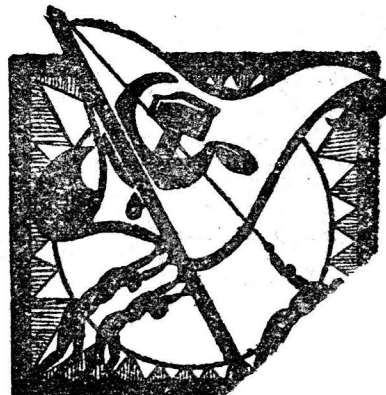
on the shares is a sight better contract," declares Henry, and they are given a kitchen with a stove and a cow besides. But the house is damp.

"The Time of Man,"\* by Elizabeth Madox Roberts, is a finely written story of a Kentucky mountain migrant farm girl's life. It is simply told, thru the moods of the girl, and reminds one of Knut Hamsun's great picture of peasant life in Norway, "Growth of the Soil." It is one of the best books of native life the United States has produced. It is even more rare in that it depicts the life of common people, work people, poor people, with a strong impression of authenticity. Their hard, unlovely life is poetically handled.

The author is a native of Kentucky herself, who went thru the University of Chicago. There she came under the

influence of Robert Morss Lovett, literature professor, an editor of the New Republic and friend of Federated Press.—E. L.

\*(Viking Press, \$2.50.)



# The Labor Day Number of the Federation News

A REVIEW—By P. L.



THE Chicago Federation of Labor, comprising around 300,000 organized workers, has done itself "proud" this year in its celebration of Labor Day. Disdaining such out-worn and old-fashioned

Labor Day features as parades, demonstrations, picnics or mass meetings, it has extended itself to bringing out a special enlarged number of its official organ, the Federation News.

Sixty pages this Labor Day issue contains, but in reality it contains only half that number since fully half the magazine is (in Saturday Evening Post fashion) taken up with advertisements. Advertisements of and for unions? No, not at all. The advertisements are of banks, real estate concerns, construction companies, insurance houses, undertakers, manufacturers, etc.

Let us see what the leaders of labor have to say to labor. On the very first page we have an article by John Fitzpatrick, president of the Chicago Federation of Labor. Reading thru this article, we find that Fitzpatrick's inspiring message for Labor Day is—actually it is—that the popularized use of the automobile has greatly increased the vacation value of Labor Day. You don't believe it? Then listen to Fitzpatrick himself. He writes:

"When labor day was first inaugurated it was celebrated on each recurring occasion by great demonstrations, parades, picnics and speech making were among the many laudable activities—but since the development and popular use of the automobile union men and women have been able to devise ways and means more to their liking for the enjoyment of the holiday.

"The automobile has made it possible not only for the bread winner to participate in Labor Day activities, but the entire family from the oldest to the youngest."

Fitzpatrick goes on to ecstasize about how the automobile affords the working man the opportunity for "three days' recreation and enjoyment out in the country, breathing the pure air and enjoying God's sunshine, getting back to nature, living the natural way intended by the creator of mankind, instead of the artificial way created by man, which results in the housing of ourselves and our families like rats in a trap."

Doesn't this seem childishly pathetic, coming as it does from the ostensible leader of 300,000 workers? One wonders whether Fitzpatrick really believes that the bulk of the workers own automobiles? Does Fitzpatrick forget the problems that face the workers on their 300 or so real labor days? Is there no message from the leader to the workers, on Labor Day, other than that an automobile makes this day worth while?

Incredible tho it may seem, it is so.

Let us now pass on to the Labor Day message of another leader, this time the head of America's organized workers, President William Green. What is his message? It is this:

"Two main issues of far-reaching importance should be emphasized on Labor Day. They are:

- "(1) An intensive trade union organization campaign.
- "(2) The non-partisan political campaign of the American Federation of Labor."

Only half bad, a progressive one would be inclined to think after seeing this. But reading a little further along would cause him to change his mind, for Green, in arguing for the necessity of organizing the workers, brings forward the remarkable reason that it is the only sure way of maintaining industrial peace. Green does not want the workers organized so that they can put up a stronger front against the bosses, so that they can enforce their demands—but so that they will submit to the boss. Unfortunately for Green's wish, and for-

tunately for the workers' interest, organization does not tend in that direction—the Green's leadership certainly does.

In regard to non-partisanship political action, Green declares that labor should be sure to vote and vote for candidates who will be loyal to the people! Mind you, not loyal to labor—that would be skirting too close to the edge of a labor party—but to the people. Can a more empty, and illusory and vicious Labor Day message be conceived of?

In the very next column to Green's message we have one from that guardian angel of the miners' union—John L. Lewis. Lewis devotes his space to lamentations over the tendency of the operators to "break their agreements—and to shove the workers backwards and downwards—by wrecking and destroying their only real protectors, the union."

"What good has come of it all?" he plaintively asks. Then answers: "None whatever."

"Let us all hope that next year will see the end of this assault upon the integrity of industry and business. (What the hell does the faker mean by this?) Let us all strive for the attainment of harmony and good feeling in industry."

Lewis is unconsciously frank in this instance. This is precisely what he is striving for in his role as president of the miners' union, and as the be-

trayer of the miners' interests. Lewis is doing his utmost to stake the assault "upon the integrity of (the coal mining) industry and business," by wrecking the miners' union.

There are other "inspiring" messages from the "leaders of labor" contained in this notable Labor Day issue of the Federation News. There is also a summary of the A. F. of L. program, including the "advanced" position it takes on such issues as Communists

in unions, recognition of Soviet Russia, the Labor Party, amalgamation, etc., all of which are "emphatically repudiated, rejected and condemned." Also, on the very last page, we are treated to the sight of Brother Green and a whole retinue of his fellow leaders; grouped around smiling Cal Coolidge and "cordially discussing the problems of labor."

It's a grand issue from cover to cover.

## In the Next Issue:

Karl Marx, Personal Recollections by Paul Lafargue. With photographs and illustrations.

A New Generation in the Making by Nat Kaplan. Of particular interest to young workers.

A Lesson from the Holy Scriptures. Humorous drawings and comments on the struggles of the Mexican Church.

"The Scab," a Story by the young proletarian writer Max Geltman. With illustrations.

Tom O'Flaherty begins a series of lively articles on the senatorial slush funds. Illustrated by Hay Bales.

The British Trade Union Congress. An Editorial.

A Sport Column.

Movie and Theater Reviews. Also the third article by Ruth Kennel on the Theater Season in Moscow.

Drawings by Jerger, Vose and Bales.

Poems by Oscar Ryan.

And Other Features.

## A WEEK IN CARTOONS By M. P. Bales

