The Ladies’ Garment Worker, Volume 9, Issue 4

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Contents

Questions of Importance before Next Convention.—B. Schlesinger.


Local Unions of 500 Members—A. Rosebury.

Progress of the Kimono and House Dress Workers—Fannie M. Cohn.

American Labor Movement in Present Crisis—A. R.

Local News and Events—M. D. Danish.

Five Years of Whitegoods Workers' Union—F. M. C.


In the Basement (Story)—J. Rosenfeld.

International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union
31 Union Square, New York.
# Directory of Local Unions (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Union</th>
<th>Office Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40. New Haven Corset Workers</td>
<td>393 Columbus Ave., New Haven, Conn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. New York Wrapper and Kimono Makers</td>
<td>22 W. 17th St., New York City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. Cleveland Cloak and Suit Cutters' Union</td>
<td>314 Superior Ave., Cleveland, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Chicago, Ill. Cloakmakers</td>
<td>1815 W. Division St., Chicago, Ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Syracuse, N.Y., Dressmakers</td>
<td>913 Almond St., Syracuse, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. Petticoat Workers' Union</td>
<td>22 W. 17th St., New York City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. Denver, Colo., Ladies' Tailors</td>
<td>244 Champe St., Denver, Colo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. Italian Cloak and Skirt Makers' Union</td>
<td>231 E. 14th St., New York City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. New York Children's Dressmakers</td>
<td>22 W. 17th St., New York City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. Montreal, Canada, Custom Ladies' Tailors</td>
<td>387 City Hall Ave., Montreal, Can.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. Los Angeles Ladies' Garment Workers</td>
<td>218 S. Broadway, Los Angeles, Calif.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. Chicago Raincoat Makers</td>
<td>409 S. Halstead St., Chicago, Ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56. Cleveland Waist and Dressmakers</td>
<td>314 Superior Ave., Cleveland, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57. New York Waist Buttonhole Makers</td>
<td>80 E. 10th St., New York City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58. New Rochelle Ladies' Tailors</td>
<td>106 Union Ave., New Rochelle, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60. Montreal, Canada, Cloak and Skirt Pressers, 37 Prince Arthur E., Montreal, Can.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61. New York White Goods Workers</td>
<td>35 Second St., New York City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62. Cincinnati Cloakmakers</td>
<td>411 Elm St., Cincinnati, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63. New York Buttonhole Makers</td>
<td>112 W. 21st St., New York City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64. St. Louis Skirt, Waist &amp; Dressmakers' Union, Fraternal Building, St. Louis, Mo.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65. New York Box-az Embroiderers</td>
<td>103 E. 11th St., New York City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66. Toledo Cloakmakers</td>
<td>813 George St., Toledo, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67. Hartford Ladies' Garment Workers' Union</td>
<td>16 Loomis St., Hartford, Conn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68. Philadelphia Cloak Finishers</td>
<td>244 S. 8th St., Philadelphia, Pa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69. Toronto Skirt and Dressmakers</td>
<td>194 Spadina Ave., Toronto, Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70. Chicago Ladies' Tailors</td>
<td>291 N. Hoyne Ave., Chicago, Ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71. Baltimore Dress and White Goods Workers</td>
<td>1023 E. Baltimore St., Baltimore, Md.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73. Vineland Gownmakers' Union</td>
<td>37 Prince Arthur E., Montreal, Can.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74. Toledo Ladies' Tailors</td>
<td>505 Reed St., Philadelphia, Pa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77. Waterbury Ladies' Garment Workers</td>
<td>54 Burton St., Waterbury, Conn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78. St. Louis Cloak Operators</td>
<td>Fraternal Bldg., 11th and Franklin Aves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79. Ladies' Tailors, Alteration and Special Order Workers</td>
<td>725 Lexington Ave., N.Y.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80. Chicago Cloak and Suit Cutters</td>
<td>909 N. Homan Ave., Chicago, Ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81. N. Y. Cloak Examiners, Squares &amp; Bushelers' Union</td>
<td>228 Second Ave., N.Y.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82. Toronto, Canada, Cutters</td>
<td>110 Augusta Ave., Toronto, Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83. Toledo Ladies' Garment Cutters' Union</td>
<td>425 Parker Ave., Toledo, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84. Cincinnati Skirtmakers</td>
<td>411 Elm St., Cincinnati, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86. Custom Dressmakers' Union</td>
<td>Forward Bldg., 175 E. B'way, N. Y. City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87. Toronto, Canada, Cloak Pressers</td>
<td>110 Augusta Ave., Toronto, Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88. Cincinnati Skirt Pressers' Union</td>
<td>411 Elm St., Cincinnati, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89. Chicago Waist, Dress and White Goods Workers</td>
<td>1815 W. Division St., Chi., Ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90. Baltimore Ladies' Tailors</td>
<td>1023 E. Baltimore St., Baltimore, Md.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91. Montreal, Canada, Raincoat Makers</td>
<td>1138 Clarke St., Montreal, Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92. St. Louis Ladies Tailors</td>
<td>110 Augusta Ave., Toronto, Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93. Baltimore Ladies' Garment Cutters' Union</td>
<td>1023 E. Baltimore St., Baltimore, Md.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94. Montreal, Canada, Ladies' Waist Makers</td>
<td>314 Superior Ave., Cleveland, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95. Cleveland Raincoat Makers</td>
<td>314 Superior Ave., Cleveland, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96. Montreal, Canada, Ladies' Waist Makers</td>
<td>1271 Clarke St., Montreal, Canada</td>
</tr>
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</table>
The delegates will come to our International convention in Boston in a spirit unlike that which prevailed at previous conventions. We shall not come there to heal wounds, ventilate grievances or straighten out internal feuds. This time we shall assemble at the convention with the main purpose of doing constructive work—planning new departures and ascending new heights which we had no time or opportunity to approach before.

The question of week work will probably occupy the first and foremost place in this program of constructive work. After a long campaign of agitation, of education through our press and by mass meetings the New York Joint Board has submitted the question of week work to a referendum vote of the workers in the cloak trade. The great mass of cloakmakers have learned to understand the inequality inherent in the old piece work system and the absolute necessity of replacing it by a system of week work, and they will express their convictions in this referendum vote.

Then will begin the most important work for the International Union, and this remains for the convention to deliberate upon. In theory week work is a necessity and a good thing. Week work will render it possible to build up a strong organization. It will enable the union to have complete control over the shops and factories. It will do away with nine-tenths of all shop troubles growing out of disputes over prices. It will save the workers' money and energy. It will remove the cause of friction and ill-feeling between individual employers and their workers and between one worker and another of the same or of various shops. Week work inspires the hope that in time it will be possible so to organize the trade and so to arrange the work, as to distribute it more or less over the entire year, and this would be a blessing to the workers.

All these points we had made clear to the workers by a prolonged agitation before we submitted the question to the vote. But as already mentioned, this is only the theoretical side of the question. It will devolve upon the convention to consider its practical side and elaborate the details of effecting the change.

We shall have to consider the proposed scale of wages for the workers of the various crafts and must outline a mode of procedure with the manufacturers in presenting the demand, defining the nature of preparations in case we encounter unforeseen obstacles. So far, it is not certain what attitude the employers will take upon the question. Obviously, if the workers think that
week work will benefit them it might not please the employers. If the workers expect to derive advantages from the proposed change it might arouse the employers' suspicions. Therefore the convention must decide on certain preparation for all kinds of trouble with the manufacturers and map out a plan of action.

* * *

The question of week work is an old one and may be regarded as half completed. I want to discuss now two new constructive propositions that the convention will have to dispose of because they are of the highest importance.

1. The introduction for all the members of our locals of benefit funds directly controlled by our International Union.

I have spoken and written of benefit funds on many and various occasions. I have always believed that a union should enter thoroughly into all questions touching the workers' economic life. An active, vigorous union must hold its members closely attached to itself not only with the bond of improved wages and hours in the shop but with all other bonds of importance to the life of the worker and his family.

The union must regard it as part of its task to help and protect the worker in all his needs and difficulties. It must consider itself as the worker's mainstay in life, and make it possible for him to come to the union whenever he is in trouble and distress, and leave in its hands the fortunes and destiny of his wife and children if fate should deprive them of his life.

This should be the ideal of every great and powerful labor union. The worker's needs and economic problems by no means end with the shop or his wages. True, the shop and his wages are of primary importance, but they are not his only needs. The trade union which fails to take into account all other needs and material requirements of its members saps its own vital strength. Only that union is truly strong which takes an abiding interest in all that affects the worker and his family at all crucial moments of their material existence.

All the great unions of the country recognize this principle and all of them have sundry benefit funds based on the peculiar circumstances surrounding the trade and the members. In trades where the workers are subject to tuberculosis the unions provide cures in sanitariums. Where unemployment is rife and the slack seasons are very long, there have out-of-work funds. Sick funds are very general. The principle of insurance against sickness and distress is widely recognized, and every organization strives to give effect to it as far as possible.

In our union the vital principle has been almost neglected. Until recently we have not looked at the affairs of the union from this comprehensive point of view. We have regarded the union from the narrow, confined limits of strikes and wages. For this our special circumstances are mainly to blame. So long as an element of insecurity entered into the situation, so long as the union rested on an unstable foundation, it was impossible to devote time and attention to matters outside wages and hours. We were in duty bound to concentrate on one thing—assure the foundation of the union.

Now, however, the situation is altogether different. Our locals are firmly established. We are regarded as one of the exemplary labor organizations in the land. Now it would be criminal to neglect these reforms. Now it is our duty to provide for a systematic protection of our members against recurring slackness and hardships.
At the convention, which will begin in Boston next month, our International Union must make a start in introducing benefits for its members. I do not believe that it is necessary to effect this reform at one bound. We should proceed slowly and deliberately, but we must make a beginning without delay.

If only a beginning is made the movement will grow and succeed.

The convention ought to decide that upon the death of a member in good standing, if affiliated with the union for a year, his family should be paid from the treasury of the International Union the sum of $500, and such payments should be covered by a special assessment levied on the entire membership at the end of every three months.

Thus, for instance, if in course of any three months twenty deaths should be recorded, the families of the deceased members—their widows or other legal heirs—should be immediately and without delay paid from the treasury of the International $500 in each case, and the total sum of $10,000 should subsequently be covered by a tax on the entire membership. At the end of the three months the International Union should publish the names of the twenty deceased members and the names and addresses of their heirs to whom the money has been paid. The 100,000 members of the International Union should then be called upon to cover the disbursed sum of $10,000 by a levy of 10 cents on each member.

This is, perhaps, not the best way of paying death benefits. It would be better to have a fixed assessment or dues for this purpose regardless of the sums disbursed every three months—an assessment sufficient to cover all possible expenses incurred in connection with this benefit. But as a beginning the system of distributing the assessment in proportion to the payment would be more practicable. First, because it will thus be possible to ascertain what the average assessment should be. Secondly, every member will know that he pays just as much as is necessary to maintain the fund. It will not be suggested by anyone that the union profits by the system. Thirdly, the special assessment every three months will bring home to the members the good and useful object achieved by this fund. Those who will pay the assessment will feel that their dimes have gone to help widows and orphans of their former fellow workers and will strengthen their faith in the importance of keeping up the fund. Then, as the membership will grow accustomed to the mortuary fund, it will be possible to arrange it on the same basis as other regular payments to the union, for the regular payment system is really the easiest and most practical way of running a benefit fund.

* * *

2. The second important proposition that will come before the convention is not altogether new. It was discussed at previous conventions and partial solutions were decided upon. But the time was not ripe to put those solutions into practice and they had to be postponed. Now, however, the time has come to carry out a fundamental reform. It is urgently necessary that the existing wasteful and injurious system should not be permitted to continue.

I am referring here to our press. Our locals and the International Union are now spending more money on various local publications than any other international union, and we derive less benefit from our press than other unions from their publications.
A number of our big locals have each their own local organ. Some locals are publishing several organs in English, Yiddish and Italian. Independently of these the International is publishing its official magazine.

The result is that avoidable misunderstanding and disharmony are created. The editor of every publication regards himself as the responsible person to impose his opinion on the union as to what should be or should not be done. If the editorship falls into the hands of a certain clique the paper is apt to stir up passion and friction among the members of the various locals and place the entire organization in jeopardy. I have no doubt that many of the troubles that have occurred in the Cloakmakers' Union would never have been so serious if not for these separate publications.

Secondly, the locals having separate organs are incurring an unnecessary expense. There is not a single international union in the country which throws out so much treasure on printing papers and journals as the locals of our International Union. Tens of thousands of dollars are thus wasted every year.

Thirdly, this system does more harm than good. The object of trade publications is to broaden the members' views, teach and educate them. But under the present system the effect produced is the opposite of that intended. The separate local publication confines itself to narrow craft interests and the reader fails to learn about the wider interests and more general labor questions affecting the members of the International as a whole. Psychologically the cloakmaker is apt to become a more confirmed cloakmaker by reading his local organ exclusively. Similarly is the case with the waistmaker, and so forth.

This must be changed. All the present publications must be merged into one general International weekly organ having various departments for the various trades and a general department for general trade union and international questions. A publication of this kind would be a true educational medium for our members. By means of such an organ they would become conversant with the whole organization, its various trades and activities in all centers of industry.

So long as there were inner disputes within the union it was hard to carry out this reform. The effort to effect it might have been misinterpreted. The International officers might have been charged with making an attempt to "suppress" the opinions of a section of the members, to deny them the right of free press, and so forth. Consequently we postponed the matter and have waited. Now such a charge can not be made. Peace and harmony prevails in all the local organizations. It cannot be insinuated that there is politics behind the plan. All the delegates will now consider the question logically and with unbiased minds and will have to admit that we are right in demanding this reform.

We must have one general great union organ edited by capable journalists and writers—an organ which should reach all our members and inform them of all that is happening in our extensive organization. It should also be the medium for educating our members in all general questions which have a close and vital bearing upon the workers' life and labor.
The Reorganization of our Locals

By AB. BAROFF

If we had a 100 per cent, organization; if our locals succeeded in abolishing the evils from which we suffer; if our large membership took an abiding interest in all the affairs and activities of our local unions, no new issues would arise. Then it would be impossible for false messiahs to mislead our members.

Many suggestions have been made for improving the labor conditions of our members, and while we are seeking to remedy the evils and benefit our organization, we are met by the fact that the present form of our local organization is largely responsible for our failing to reach a 100 per cent, membership and for the lack of interest in their local unions on the part of the members.

In the LADIES' GARMENT WORKER for the months of January, February and March the question whether our form of local organization is the correct one is taken up clearly and logically by a well-informed contributor.

The writer calls attention to many truths, and as I am almost sure that this earnest question will come before our next convention, I suggest specially to the prospective delegates to the convention to make a thorough study of the articles alluded to, so as to become familiar with this and other questions discussed in our official journal.

The form of organization proposed by this writer is that of small locals not exceeding 500 members—an idea which is new to us.

Section 4 of Article II Explained

Instinctively we have always supported the idea of small locals. At all our conventions the resolutions calling for one big union have been defeated. Our delegates have felt that the big local is not the best form of organization. If so, why have they embodied in our constitution Section 4 of Article II, which reads: "No more than one charter shall be granted to any branch of the trade in any city or locality without the consent of the existing local union"?

As first glance it seems that this law prohibits small locals, because it has been construed to mean that all engaged in the local trade shall belong to one local. But it is almost certain that the authors of this law were actuated by another reason. They feared that if more than one local was permitted to exist in one city, it would hinder the enforcement of equal wages and piece prices, or a uniform standard of labor conditions. Each local might present separate demands to the employers. This would cause destructive competition between the members of the locals and cause misunderstandings which would divide their forces and benefit only the employers. Thus the aforesaid law was adopted to insure unity among the workers in the trade.

It should be borne in mind that at the time the said paragraph was made part of our constitution no one could foresee with any degree of certainty how the form of our organization would develop and work out in practice. Joint boards were a new feature in our unions and it could not then be foreseen how this delegated body would regulate the relations between its affiliated locals, or with what skill or efficiency it would guard the interests of the workers and carry on negotiations with the manufacturers.

Joint Boards the Connecting Link

Now that we know that the joint boards, in the last eight years, have demonstrated their ability to protect the interests of all their members of whatever local and to maintain the integrity of the union, the idea of one big union in every city or branch of trade has outlived its usefulness. Now it is desirable to enquire whether the reorganization of our big locals into smaller units would not bring new life and spirit into our members.

The indifference of our members to the union and their non-attendance at meetings has caused me many a sleepless night. At such times painful and
gnawing reflections would trouble my heart and mind: namely, "Perhaps we are totally mistaken; perhaps our wish to have stable unions is only a dream, for the masses do not attend the meetings and are indifferent."

But soon the gloom would be dispelled by the memory of a chain of remarkable struggles waged by the same members. Visualizing their tremendous enthusiasm, their persistence and devotion in great strikes, my optimism would return. Surely, I told myself, our members are capable of evincing enthusiasm for the ideal of unity and of appreciating the meaning of solidarity in time of peace. Surely there is a cause for their present indifference. We have hoped that in time the situation would improve, but as there has been no change we have finally come to the conclusion that the only means of stimulating our members to an intelligent interest and activity in our organization is through smaller local unions.

Hoping That Others Will Do It

It is simply impossible to get in touch with all the members of a big local and arouse their interest in its affairs or move them to attend the local meeting. The very knowledge that the local has thousands of members provides everyone with a ready excuse. Everyone thinks that the meeting will have a large attendance without him or her. Everyone hopes that his or her duty will be performed by someone else; and those who attend the meeting feel disgusted because of the small attendance. Almost at every meeting one of the items for discussion is how to stimulate the interest of the members and secure their attendance at meetings. Gradually the disappointment with this condition grows to such an extent that even those who attended the meetings become remiss in their duty, telling themselves that they do not achieve any purpose by their attendance, and that the officers and executive board will take care of the members' interests. The suspicious member, on the other hand, is disposed to blame the officers for this state of affairs. It seems to him that the officers do not want the members to have a voice in the management of the union. This aggravates the indifference and leads to demoralization.

But if our local membership did not exceed 500, it would be possible for the secretary to be in frequent correspondence with every member. He would know who attends and who does not attend the meetings, and would communicate with the latter and so arouse their interest.

Our Members Active in Other Organizations

Furthermore, our locals require a certain number of active members, to serve on the executive boards and on committees. In a local of thousands there is no opportunity for all active members to be chosen as executive board officers; hence we find in every local only a certain number of active spirits who nearly always serve on boards and committees, whether the local consists of 300 or 10,000 members. For in the big locals the initiative rests solely with the officers, and there is a tendency for the smaller locals to follow in this respect the example of the former. Consequently many of our members are active in various political and progressive organizations. They have energy and enterprise, but as they find no outlet therefor in their local union, they gravitate to other fields of activity. I do not mean to say that other organizations connected with the labor movement are not sufficiently important, but I wish to stress the point that we simply lose many intelligent persons who would be helpful in the active work of our union if an opportunity were afforded them.

In smaller locals such members would find an outlet for their energies. In many locals a larger number of members would find an opportunity to serve the cause and share the responsibility for the welfare of the union.

Smaller locals afford an opportunity for closer contact between one member and another, resulting in new ideas and plans for the benefit of the union.

Let us not look at this new idea of smaller locals with fear and suspicion. If carried out it is sure to be attended by beneficial results—closer unity, a more efficient control and a greater interest in their local affairs.
In my first article "Our Next Convention," published in the Ladies' Garment Worker for February, I promised to touch upon a long list of questions, and I shall deal with them briefly here.

**The Question of Education**

Almost at all our conventions many resolutions call for educational activity. At our last convention it was decided to create a special Educational Committee and an annual outlay of $5,000 was appropriated for the purpose.

The Educational Committee will, no doubt, present its report to the convention of the work accomplished in the six months of its active life.

To me it is clear that if our aim is the intellectual development of all our members, $5,000 a year is an insignificant sum. Our educational work is a long process. The bulk of our membership do not seem eager to seize the opportunity we are now affording them.

Why are most of our members indifferent to our educational endeavor? Why this contradiction? When we meet in convention a loud, insistent cry is raised that we must provide educational facilities. But when we establish a university for the members it is received with indifference.

There are, of course, psychological causes. One of these in particular is the growing anxiety to make ends meet. Our members are so weighted down by this all-absorbing care that their souls' longing to shake off their ignorance is practically benumbed. Therefore we shall have to reconsider the aim of our educational work.

If, however, we aim to keep up the present educational department for individual members only, the sum appropriated for the purpose may be utilized successfully in enabling individual members to get the necessary education which will fit them as local leaders.

**Our Monthly Magazine**

The question of our monthly magazine will surely crop up again at the forthcoming convention. The General Executive Board feels that an International Union like ours must have its own official publication. Yet with all our efforts to improve the literary and trade features of our official journal, we have not accomplished the desired results. We have therefore reached the conclusion that our International Union should publish a weekly paper instead of some of our locals publishing their own local organs. The present state of affairs is not conducive to the formulation of one uniform policy by the International for the entire industry and all its locals. For this reason it is absolutely necessary to amalgamate all our publications and create one weekly organ which should express the policy of our entire organization—an organ which should reflect as in a mirror the life and activity of all the locals of the International Union.

It is to be hoped that at this convention the delegates will deal with the question of our press intelligently and decide upon a wise and practical course.

**Co-operative Enterprise**

Since recently the co-operative idea has been to a limited extent acted upon in two of our locals—the Waist and Dressmakers' Union, Local No. 15 of Philadelphia and the Cloak Pressers' Union, Local No. 35 of New York. The limited form of co-operation has created much enthusiasm among the membership of these locals.

Co-operation is one of the important things that our International Union should encourage among its members. By co-operative enterprise we might guard our people against the exorbitance of the food speculators who rob them of their earnings. All our gains in wages shrink as a result of the speculators' predatory methods. And if we decide that our International Union shall encourage and stimulate our locals to engage in co-operative enterprise I feel sure that the members will thereby be brought into closer touch with the union.
Local Unions of 500 Members

The Smaller the Local, the Greater the Friendship and Solidarity

By A. HOSEBURY

In the preceding two articles I endeavored to prove that our present system of big locals has radical defects and that if we want to remedy these defects our big locals must be reconstructed to consist of not more than 500 members.

The unity of our big locals is maintained by artificial means. Now, the membership of every local is held together through the local office where their names are registered. They are assumed to be united through their local officers, whose duty it is to visit the factories and "control the shops." Theoretically they are held together by their executive board and, in a sense, by the Joint Board.

Need for Fellowship

But are they united or are member with another in thought and feeling? Does every one of the 10,000 members of a certain local realize that he is affiliated with a group of congenial people who are allied in a bond of fellowship, friendship and brotherhood? Do we sometimes hear our cloakmakers, skirtmakers, waistmakers, dressmakers, and so forth, refer to the union in private conversation in such fond terms as associated workers in past years spoke of their small society or club? Our locals have had and cannot have such a powerful attraction as the group or social circle of years past, simply because the group and the circle were small in number. There, all were personally acquainted; close friendship prevailed, while in our locals this is physically impossible.

In some of our locals the impersonality has reached so far that the members are spared even the only duty that had formerly brought them together face to face with their local officers and the union headquarters. I mean the sacred duty of paying their dues. In some of our big locals the entire burden of this duty has been thrown on the shoulders of our true and devoted shop chairmen or "chair ladies." Thus paying dues has been turned into collecting dues. In such locals it is the duty of the shop chairmen to collect the dues and bring them to the office of the union, otherwise most of these dues might not be paid. And in thousands of cases the members do not know what really the union means—the chairman or chairlady is to them all that the union stands for.

In such locals the shop chairmen are the real union men and women; and it has been often stated quite correctly that the shop chairmen are the supporting columns on which the entire foundation of our union rests.

Utterly Dependent on the Shop Stewards

Of course the shop chairmen and chairladies render great and valuable services. We cannot speak too highly of their disinterested work as the spokesmen and representatives of the workers in the shops. But when the organization reaches a stage where the shop stewards are of paramount importance, while the masses of workers are hardly of any account except as dues payers, which often does mean that No Chairman, No Union, it is time to take stock of the situation.

In smaller locals, which feel and bear the entire responsibility for the existence and success of their local union, a much better system can be developed. In smaller locals there is no need to throw the burden of collecting dues upon the shoulders of the shop stewards. For, at best, this system is fraught with confusion and irregularity. Quite often the collections get so mixed up that it is impossible to tell whether it was "Bessie," or "Gussie" that paid them. Smaller locals can render their weekly meetings so interesting and attractive that members will look forward to them eagerly and pay their dues gladly, conscious of performing a great, sacred duty, involving their benefit and protection.
In some of our big locals where the members take their dues personally to the office of the union they have to wait in long lines. Under this system the personality of the member is completely overshadowed by the amount of money he has to pay or the number of dues stamps to which he is entitled. This is a cold, mechanical, soulless arrangement, in which the human being does not count at all.

Present Trying System of Dues Collection

Smaller locals can dispense with such an impersonal and unfeeling system. In a small local there is nothing to prevent the introduction of a monthly system of dues, which would save the secretary hours of writing and adding up figures; which would eliminate the frequent disputes with certain members who hotly claim that their payments were not entered, while the secretary, searching the records, cannot conceal his annoyance. In smaller locals it is possible to make the members feel such an absorbing interest in the union as will move them to save the time and labor of the secretary and other officials. There is no reason why such groups, joined in real fellowship, should not agree to lighten the officers' burdens and eliminate a tangled and confused system which is trying to the nerves and creating annoyance and bad blood.

A Change—for the Better

But how are the smaller locals to be organized and constituted? Will the locals maintain harmony among themselves? Will not every local seek to foster separate interests, in the way of a separate office, a separate scale of wages and a separate policy? Will this change mean a revolution in the organization? Will the functions and duties of the locals, their executive boards and joint boards have to undergo a radical change? Will it be necessary to change the laws of the constitution in regard to local autonomy, local management, shop strikes, local finances and local enterprise?

There is one answer to all these questions. The reconstitution of the locals certainly means a change, but—for the better, for the good and welfare of every local. The duties and functions of the locals, the executive boards and joint boards would remain the same: namely, to improve conditions and strengthen the union. There is no need to change the present form of local autonomy. Every local should be free in strictly local matters, yet closely allied with the rest of the locals in the same branch of trade through a joint board, in all matters affecting the general interest. So far as the policy of the union, minimum scale of wages, maximum number of working hours, general strikes and other questions pertaining to the entire industry are concerned—these matters should remain, as at present, in the hands of the joint boards and the International Union.

New York—a Knotty Problem

The most difficult part of the problem will naturally confront us in New York. In referring to joint boards, the New York Joint Board of the Cloak and Skirt-makers at once occurs to the mind. This Joint Board is now, too, a large organization. At present it consists of ten locals and every local is represented by five delegates. Under a plan of smaller locals it would consist of about 100 locals, each local represented by one delegate. Notwithstanding an increased number of delegates, its work would still be conducted on the same principle as at present. The main thing is that the locals shall be properly constituted; then its problems will be less grave and complicated. If the bricks and mortar and girders and other material of a structure are of the best kind, and jerry-building is guarded against, the building must naturally be strong and solid. Let the locals consist of true and devoted members, permeated with the spirit of genuine labor solidarity, and the joint board would reflect this condition. Then its task will be performed with less anxiety and worry than at present.
How It Would Apply to Local 25

The change would be felt mostly in the government of the local. Take, for example, Local No. 25. Today its executive board is composed of thirty members, besides officers. Thus the government over its 25,000 members is in the hands of some fifty persons. From time to time this government consults with the 600 or so shop stewards. From time to time a branch meeting is called and is attended by the fifty board members and office holders, a certain number of shop stewards and a small number of interested members, especially those who are by nature disposed to be critical of and questioning the policy of the "government." In Local No 25 it is understood that if the mass of the membership could only thoroughly realize three essentials—regular payment of dues, lodging complaints for cause and joining in strikes whenever called—it would be an ideal membership. At present only ten or fifteen per cent. of the membership record their votes at the local elections.

But under the new plan there would be fifty locals in the waist and dress trade of New York, each local having a chairman, vice-chairman, financial secretary, recording secretary, three trustees, two auditors, an inner guard and an executive board of nine members. Thus the government of every local would consist of nineteen members. There would be a joint board of all the locals in the trade and a number of business agents. So that, instead of the fifty members now governing Local No. 25, the government over the 25,000 organized waist and dressmakers would be in the hands of about 1,000 members for a period of six months. In a small organization a semi-annual election is an easy and simple matter and need not be attended by noisy agitation, confusion or disorder of any kind. Thus the organized waist and dressmakers would enjoy a larger measure of genuine democracy, their local life would be more sociable and every member would be more interested in her local; yet the waist and dress trade would by no means be scattered into fifty factions. Through its joint board attending to all complaints, trade disputes, shop matters and strikes, its membership would be more solidly united than at present.

Proper Use of Clearance Cards

It is self-evident that a presser, for example, would be ineligible as a member of an operator's local or a finisher of a presser's local. In this connection no change is needed in the constitution. If a presser should be compelled by circumstances to transfer his membership from one presser's local to another, he should without difficulty be released from the one and admitted into the other. Clearance or transfer cards should only apply where a member goes from one city to another, or when a skirtmaker takes work at waists and dresses, or when a ladies' tailor goes to work in a cloak shop, and in similar cases.

There need be no change in the present shop organization and system of shop meetings, and if, as it is to be hoped, week work and a minimum wage is going to be introduced in the near future, the system of small locals would make for a bond of unity between them. There is no reason why there should be any desire for separateness. As regards the trade, wages, hours of labor and organizing work throughout the country, there is every reason for closer unity and greater solidarity than at the present time. The membership would then feel as members of a great international union and not as members of a big local, which, under certain circumstances, might feel tempted to defy the will of the entire organization.

In the next article we shall consider certain objections against the proposition of smaller locals. All the objections are based on the fear of someone losing personal influence. One very important result of this reorganization is bound to be an increase in the number and personnel of the local government. Today a small number of officers have considerable power. In smaller locals a larger number of members would share in this power. We have touched the very spot where genuine democracy in our locals is a signal failure. A union founded on democratic principles should have leaders and executives. But when the bulk of the membership holds aloof from the executive control the leaders tend to become autocrats.
Progress of The Kimono and House Dress Workers

By FANNIA M. COHN

A group of members of the Wrapper and House Dressmakers’ Union, Local No. 41, assembled in the office of their union on a Saturday evening and celebrated the first anniversary of the existence of their Educational Club.

It was a very impressive scene to view the group of young women and young men, members of the club, sitting around a table covered with a white cloth on which was a varied assortment of food. One could not escape noticing the shining faces of the assembled, their eyes directed with pride to a case in the library containing hundreds of good books. From this library the entire membership can draw books and keep them for two weeks free of charge. In addition to this the members of the club assemble once a week and spend the evening for self-culture. The two hours are spent either in discussing social, economic, industrial or political questions from different points of view, or one of the members reads a chapter from a book, such as Spencer’s “Education,” and afterwards it is discussed by the members.

What strikes one most is that the activities of this Educational Club are not directed from above. The club is not only organized, but also managed by these young women and young men. Needless to say that such kind of activities develop the workers mentally and broaden their views. They strengthen their character, develop initiative and ultimately inspire them for further activities in the interest of the labor movement.

The Story of Local No. 41

While watching the happy faces of the members of the Educational Club of Local 41, the whole history of this local since 1909 came to my mind—how a group of girls working on wrappers somewhere in a basement in Brownsville assembled in a room and began to discuss conditions of this trade. The earnings were going down, the treatment by their employers was beyond endurance, and an idea came to their mind that it would be a mighty good thing to organize the workers into a union, which once or several times had existed before. The girls, inspired with the idea, began a campaign. In August, 1910, during the historic Cloakmakers’ strike, they issued a leaflet calling the wrappermakers out on general strike, and were successful in getting out the workers of Brownsville and Williamsburg. I remember how in the midst of the strike, the then General Secretary-Treasurer of the International Union ordered the executive board of the local to send a committee to answer charges for calling a general strike without the knowledge of the International officers, especially while the Cloakmakers’ strike was in progress. The committee succeeded in convincing the general officers that the strike was confined to the contractors of Brownsville and Williamsburg only. We carried on the strike single handed and won. The victory, of course, meant only the beginning of the formation of the present organization.

The first victory brought the wrappermakers an increase in their earnings from 15 to 20 per cent, and a reduction in the working hours from sixty or more to fifty-four and in many instances the abolition of fines and paying for thread and needles.

The Strikes of 1913 and 1916

But a real strong union was not organized till February 12, 1913. After a six weeks’ strike of all the workers of the trade in Greater New York, the manufacturers’ association formed during the strike, was compelled to sign an agreement with the union, which provided for a grievance board, composed of an equal number of manufacturers and employees, and in case of disagreement every case was subject to review by a board of arbitration. This was considered a great victory because the manufacturers who formed the association had never recognized a union in the trade.
and had bitterly opposed any movement among their workers for organization. The important gains were the shortening of the hours to fifty, increasing the earnings from 10 to 20 per cent, and placing upon the association the responsibility for their contractors. Until then the wappennakers employed by the contractors had never been certain of their pay, and it had often happened that such employers had disappeared with two or three weeks' wages.

The International Union then conducted strikes in several industries employing mostly girl workers, and the wappennakers were the first to be called out. Soon they were followed by the waistmakers of Local No. 25, white goods workers of Local No. 62, and children's dressmakers of Local No. 50. The uprising of these girls called public attention to their appalling conditions and interested such persons as ex-President Roosevelt and others. People learned that in this trade there still existed the five system, and in many cases the workers had to pay for needles.

Since then wrappers have given place to house dresses. The new garment, the house dress, began in a short time to dominate the market, and simultaneously the wrapper workers also changed. The men more and more deserted the trade and the women workers had a chance to become more skilled. This change in the trade and the fact that the higher class of house dress resembles a dress, brought new manufacturers and contractors into the field.

The result of all this was that the workers in this trade underwent another general strike in February, 1916. President Schlesinger of the International succeeded in bringing the employers to arbitration through the then Council of Conciliation of which Dr. Felix Adler was chairman. As the result of that arbitration the house dressmakers won a working week of forty-nine hours and a substantial increase. The agreement also provided for a board of arbitration and made the manufacturers responsible for the contractors.

This Year's Increase Without a Strike

This year Local No. 41 has secured another increase in wages, but this was due to their success in building up a strong union that is now feared and respected. Before the agreement expired, March, 1918, the employers realizing that the local was in good condition and that the members had learned the value of organization and therefore would be ready to stand by the union till the last, they were wise enough to avoid a fight by agreeing to give the workers a $2.00 increase. They also agreed to register the contractors with the union. This gives the union a chance to enforce union conditions in the outside shops. A compromise was reached in regard to the demand for a forty-eight hour week to the effect that the decision of the Arbitration Board in the waist and dressmakers' industry shall be followed.

The Fruit of Tireless Work

This is a very brief review of the struggles and gains of a group of workers employed in a trade that was formerly the most exploited. I remember the time when the wappennakers were ashamed of their trade. It is natural that workers employed under such conditions as the wappennakers before 1910, should not boast of their occupation.

There is one very important thing that the members of Local No. 41 must do that will tend to make the union strong and its position safe, and this is, to create a defense fund. For this an educational campaign should be started at once among the active members of the organization, to enlighten the members on the necessity for such a fund.

The older members of the organization, men and women, who have devoted the best years of their life to building up this local and who loyally took care of it in the first years of its existence, who many a time gave away their last few dollars that made it possible to keep up the office—I feel that the best compensation for these members is the success of the local. The history and struggles of this local will serve as an inspiration for the younger members of the union.

If these old members could have seen the bright faces at the banquet table they would have been amply rewarded. All this is the fruit of tireless work since 1910.

One cannot but feel delighted with the standing of these workers in the progressive labor movement.
THE AMERICAN LABOR MOVEMENT
IN THE PRESENT CRISIS
By A. R.

LABOR STANDARDS AS PRESCRIBED
BY THE GOVERNMENT

Millions of workers are now engaged on
all sorts of work for the government, and
it is interesting to know how the govern­
ment desires that the workers shall be
-treated. A correct idea of this may be
gathered from a perusal of General Order
No. 13, issued by the Chief of Ordnance for
arsenal commanders and manufacturers.
The order has been hailed in labor circles
as the most enlightened ever issued by a
government in time of war. Briefly it is
to this effect:

The order is prefaced by the statement
that *vigilance is demanded of all those
associated with industry, lest the safeguards
with which the people of this country have
sought to protect labor should be unwisely
and unnecessarily broken down. These
safeguards are the mechanisms of efficiency.
Industrial history proves that reasonable
hours, fair working conditions, and a proper
wage scale are essential if the produc­
tion of the country increase.

Daily Hours—The day's work should not
exceed the customary hours in the particu­
lar establishment or the standard already
attained in the industry and in the commu­
nity. It should certainly not be longer than
ten hours for an adult workman.

The drift in the industrial world is toward
an eight-hour day as an efficiency
measure.

Overtime—The theory under which we
pay "time and a half" for overtime is a
taut recognition that it is usually unnec­
essary and always undesirable to have over­
time. The excess payment is a penalty and
intended to act as a deterrent. There is
no industrial abuse which needs closer
watching in times of war.

The working period on Saturday should
not exceed five hours. Any additional
hours, if essential, should be regarded as
overtime and paid for on that basis.

Holidays—The observance of national
and local holidays will give opportunity for
rest and relaxation which tend to make
production more satisfactory.

One day of rest in seven should be a uni­
versal and invariable rule.

Standards in Workrooms

Protection Against Hazards, and Pro­
visions for Comfort and Sanitation—Exis­
ting legal standards to prevent danger from
fire, accident, occupational diseases, or other
hazards, and to provide good light, ade­
quate ventilation, sufficient heat, and proper
sanitation, should be observed as minimum
requirements. Toilets should be sanita­
tary and readily accessible. Temperature
conditions should be as nearly normal
as possible. If any light is at the level
of the worker's eyes, it should be shaded
so that its rays will not directly strike the
eyes.

Wage Standards—Standards already es­
lished in the industry and in the locality
should not be lowered. The minimum
wage rates should be made in proper rela­
tion to the cost of living, and in fixing
them it should be taken into consideration
that the prices of necessities of life have
shown great increases.

(Negotiation between employers and em­
ployees is urged as a great need.)

Standards of Employment for Women

Efforts should be made to restrict the
work of women to eight hours.

Prohibition of Night Work—The em­
ployment of women on night shifts should
be prevented as a necessary protection,
morally and physically.

Rest Periods—No woman should be em­
ployed for a longer period than four and a
half hours without a break for a meal, and
a recess of ten minutes should be allowed
in the middle of each working period.

Time for Meals—At least thirty min­
utes should be allowed for a meal and this
time should be lengthened to forty-five min­
utes or an hour if the working day exceeds
eight hours. Meals should not be eaten in
the workroom.

Saturday Half-Holiday—The Saturday
half-holiday should be considered an abso­
lute essential for women under all condi­
tions.

Sears—For women who sit at their work,
seats with backs should be provided unless
the occupation renders this impossible. For
women who stand at work, seats should be
available and their use permitted at regular
intervals.

Lifting Weights—No woman should be
required to lift repeatedly more than
twenty-five pounds in any single load.

Replacement of Men by Women—When
it is necessary to employ women in work
hitherto done by men, care should be taken
to make sure that the task is adapted to the strength of women. The standards of wages hitherto prevailing for men in the process should not be lowered where women render equivalent service. The hours for women engaged in such processes, of course, should not be longer than those formerly worked by men.

Tenement House Work—No work shall be given out to be done in rooms used for living purposes or in rooms directly connected with living rooms in any dwelling or tenement.

Standards for Employment of Minors

Age—No child under fourteen years of age shall be employed at any work under any conditions.

PROSPECTS OF RAILROAD WORKERS

It is interesting to hear that Secretary McAdoo, Director General of the railroads, has appointed W. S. Carter, president of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen, as Director of Labor in the new railroad administration. In well-informed circles it is believed that this appointment is a real step in the direction of democratic control over the industries over which the government is extending its control.

Mr. Carter has no executive power, but he has charge of all railroad labor questions, acting in an advisory capacity to Mr. McAdoo. But his appointment is considered a gain for all the organized workers, including the unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. Under the old railroad administration the managers were hostile to the unions and their organizing work, and bitter strikes occurred from time to time. Now, the Federation unions have reached an understanding with Secretary McAdoo, agreeing to suspend for the time of the war certain union rules as to overtime and apprentices or non-union workers. In return for this they will have every opportunity to bring the unorganized into line.

The Railroad Wage Commission, appointed some time ago, has just presented its report. It recommends an increase in wages to some two million railroad workers amounting in the aggregate to $3,500,000. The railroad unions now have a splendid opportunity to place their organizations on a strong foundation both as regards numbers and reasonable control over their conditions of labor.

SHALL TOM MOONEY DIE THOUGH INNOCENT?

When a person commits a crime he must pay the penalty of the law. If, however, his enemies have framed him up and the perjury of bought witnesses is clearly proven—what then?

Tom Mooney's trial in San Francisco was such a frame-up. The perjury of the witnesses was so clearly on the surface that Judge Griffin refused to pronounce sentence, even though the jury found Mooney guilty, of course, on the perjured evidence.

It is a disgraceful scandal and a slur on the public opinion of that city and state, all the more so because Mooney is admitted to be the victim of a conspiracy. So are his colleagues, W. K. Billings, Israel Weinberg and Mrs. Mooney. Edward Nolan, one of the group, was acquitted.

Mr. Bourke Cockran, the principal counsel for the Mooney defense, speaking at a meeting in New York last month, said:

"What is proposed, is the execution of an innocent man—not through mistake resting upon doubtful testimony, but in the light of clear admissions by competent authority that the testimony on which he was convicted is perjury and the result of a conspiracy. The execution of a man under these conditions would be a calamity graver than if at this moment shot and shell were rained from the enemy's ships on this and every other city of the Atlantic seaboard.

"I say to you, and I think I speak the language of moderation, that, while there have been miscarriages of justice under every political system, while there have been perversions of justice, while innocent men have been condemned not merely through mistake, but through conspiracy, nevertheless I state deliberately that this conviction of Thomas Mooney is the most glaring perversion of justice in the whole history of jurisprudence in America or in England or in any other country in the world.

"Every other execution or conviction has been attended at least by circumstances which justified the pretense that the Judges were executing the law. Here the constituted authorities themselves agree in declaring that a conviction involving the life of a human being has been brought about by perjury, and the Supreme Court of the State declares that it can only examine the record of what occurred at the trial; that it has no power to consider subsequent disclosures, which show that that record is a record of perjury and crime.

"According to their decisions, the court, created to defend the lives and liberties of
the people. Announce themselves powerless to meet and overthrow a conspiracy between a few wretches of the underworld and some leaders, so-called, of the upper world.

"Judge Griffin is a courageous and a bold jurist," said Mr. Cockran. "I believe that he has the power to prevent this infamous wrong from being accomplished. He has the power to prevent the murder of an innocent man by perjury which he recognizes to have been committed in his courtroom. He has control over the record of this trial, and he may, in my opinion, purify it of the perjury, which he knows to be the only testimony against Mooney. Judge Griffin has indicated that he has some doubt as to this power, but I believe that his investigation will convince him that he possesses it and that he will grant the motion when it is made.

It is believed in some circles that Mooney's life can be saved only by Governor Stephens of California granting a pardon. In this connection it is interesting to note that Mooney himself demands justice—a new trial—rather than a pardon.

TWO INTERNATIONAL UNIONS JOIN FORCES

Seattle, Wash.—Last month two international unions held a joint convention at the Seattle Labor Temple and brought about an amalgamation. They were the International Shingle Weavers and the International Timber Workers, and the united organization will be known as the International Union of Timber Workers.

Last fall these workers in the lumber camps and mills lost a strike for the eight hour day and this has stimulated an agitation for the amalgamation just brought about.

In the program adopted at the convention the new organization pledges support to the national government in this time of stress. It urges acceptance by the employers of the principle of collective bargaining. It insists that wages should be commensurate with the increasing cost of living. It declares its belief in the principle of the eight hour day. It refuses to surrender the right to quit work to enforce legitimate demands, though believing that the strike should be a last resort, after all other means of securing justice have been exhausted. It declares its rigid adherence to agreements governing industrial conditions and declares its affiliation with the American Federation of Labor.

AMERICAN LABOR MOVEMENT ISOLATED

In all thoughtful labor circles, in America, as well as in Europe, there was much surprise and disappointment at the fact that President Samuel Gompers of the American Federation of Labor had, in the name of the American labor movement, isolated our movement from the advanced labor movement of Europe. Recently a conference of Socialist and labor representatives of the Allied countries was held in London. Every allied country was represented at the conference. The American labor movement, however, had made itself conspicuous by its absence.

President Gompers has advanced the explanation that he had received the invitation too late. Here follows a statement from the "Jewish Times," published in London. Referring to the conference, the "Jewish Daily Times says:

A contributory factor in the pessimistic atmosphere was the letter of Mr. Gompers, stating in the name of the American workers that they would not be represented at the conference because now was not the time to talk of peace. The pro-war press added that Mr. Gompers had written to say that the conference was under German influence. The friends of the conference felt that this was a blow given in the back, and it was doubted whether the conference would recover from the blow.

Thus the conference had to work under very unfavorable conditions. But to our joy it surmounted all difficulties. Gradually all the delegates assembled in the conference hall and immediately repudiated the assertions made in the name of Mr. Gompers. Vandervelde of Belgium very aptly pointed out in a splendid speech delivered at the conference that one should not only take into account the acts of the Bolsheviki, who had discredited Internationalism, but one should also take into account the great thing achieved by the Russian revolution for Internationalism and Socialism at its grandiose beginning. . . . Faith, confidence and hope in the conference continued to mount, and the conclusion was grandiose. A peace program was issued in the name of the Socialists and working classes of all Allied countries, and the program is one that may really serve as a basis for a general democratic peace.

The well-known memorandum of the British Labor Party served as a basis for working out the general democratic peace program, and nearly all the points of that memorandum were adopted. Only in several instances slight changes were made.
WOMEN DO HEAVY RAILROAD WORK

At a meeting of Director General of Railroads McAdoo's wage commission, Miss Pauline Goldmark, sister-in-law of United States Supreme Court Justice Brandeis, gave figures to show that women are being employed in increasing numbers to do heavy railroad work.

"One railroad employs 400 on one division and another has a total of 1,517 women workers," she said.

Miss Goldmark declared women were lifting weights of as much as fifty pounds as drill press operators.

She told of investigating conditions at a factory in Zanesville, O., where many women are employed.

"The majority of women at this point," she said, "are engaged at hard labor, such as loading scrap iron, sorting scrap iron, wheeling iron castings in wheelbarrow, etc. The women are loading scrap and sorting it out in the yards, with no protection from the intense rays of the sun or from the weather. These women wear overalls and large-brim hats. They hand the iron up from the ground to others in the cars, who pile it. The hours are nine a day and forty-four a week, with one and one-half hour for lunch. Wages are twenty cents an hour and $1.50 is deducted each month for relief purposes. Men are paid twenty-one cents an hour for the same kind of work."

LET GIRLS MAKE HOMES

The feminine war helper, who dons a nobby uniform to drive a motor truck, was frowned upon by the National Congress of Mothers and Parent-Teachers' Association in annual convention in Atlantic City. A report on this subject said:

"The preparing of women to be automobile drivers, truck chauffeurs and for other masculine lines of work, is not half so important as preparing for wholesome, economic home making and wise and loving child training." The committee declared its position on this question is not a hobby, and asked:

"Where can the second line of defense better be established than in wisely directed homes?"

THIRD CAMPAIGN FOR LIBERTY LOAN

STARTS THROUGHOUT NATION ON APRIL SIXTH

Secretary McAdoo Names Anniversary of First Year of Entrance into War as Date for Opening the Next Big Drive

(By W. G. McAdoo)

The campaign for the third Liberty Loan will be opened on the 6th day of April, 1918, the first anniversary of the declaration of a state of war between the United States and Germany.

The amount, terms and conditions of the loan have not yet been decided because these features are dependent upon further legislation. I expect to ask Congress at an early date to grant the necessary additional authority.

Of course, the opening date of the campaign is somewhat dependent upon the new legislation, but it is hoped and believed that the matter can be considered and determined in ample time to begin the campaign on the date suggested. April 6 will forever be a consecrated day in American history and it seems peculiarly appropriate that the opening the second year of our participation in this war should be celebrated with a nation-wide drive for another Liberty Loan. The campaign should begin with great demonstrations of patriotism in every city, town and hamlet in the country that will truly express the spirit of aroused America. On this date every American should pledge anew to his government the full measure of his resources and resolve to make every required sacrifice in the same fervent spirit that impels our gallant sons in the trenches of France and on the waters of the Atlantic to shed their blood in America's sacred cause. To carry forward America's essential part in this war for righteousness and justice every man and woman in the country must lend their available means to the government, and I know of no more fitting beginning of the second year of the war.

The campaign, in all probability, will last three or four weeks and announcement of the opening date is made at this time in accordance with my promise to make pub-
lic all matters connected with the loan as soon as determined, in order that ample time may be given each community to prepare for the event. I earnestly hope that parades and patriotic meetings will be held in all parts of the country. The treasury department will endeavor to make the observance of the anniversary of the declaration of war as memorable as was the patriotic observance during the second Liberty Loan campaign of Liberty Day on the 24th of October, 1917.

ENGLAND AND AMERICA

For their respective first three months the American War-Savings Campaign is running ahead of the English campaign. America is pouring into the Treasury at the rate of about $2,000,000 a day—over $75,000,000 up to date.

The direct comparison is:

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>ENGLAND</th>
<th>AMERICA</th>
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<tr>
<td>First month</td>
<td>$5,172,000</td>
<td>$10,236,451</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second month</td>
<td>2,719,000</td>
<td>24,559,722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third month</td>
<td>3,402,000</td>
<td>41,148,244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$11,293,000</td>
<td>$75,944,417</td>
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The $75,944,417 of spending already put at the service of the Government by the buyers of War-Savings Securities has transferred from millions of patriotic, saving citizens to the National Treasury command of the labor and materials to build a fleet of about one hundred 5,000-ton ships.

UNITED HEBREW TRADES OF NEW YORK REVERSES ITS POLICY

At its meeting held March 12 the United Hebrew Trades approved the recommendation of its executive board to authorize its secretary, Max Pine, to co-operate with the Federal Liberty Bond Committee in the campaign for the third issue of Liberty bonds.

This is practically a reversal of its previous pacifist policy. Recent events in Russia and the sympathetic utterances of President Wilson are largely responsible for this change of heart. All freedom-loving people feel that they must range themselves on the side of the nations whose struggle for democracy and against autocracy.

A GOOD CREED

You can't make a real success without making real enemies.

You can't hold a strong position without strong opposition.

You can't seem right to any if you don't seem wrong to many.

A useful life can't be entirely peaceful and carefree.

You must do your duty as you see it.

Every earnest man in every generation has paid the price of individuality.

You can't dodge.

The greater you are, the greater the penalty of your progress. The farther you go, the wider your range, the more you increase the points of contact, with which you must reckon, and therefore you multiply your battles against misconception and slander and envy and malice.

You can't avoid or evade your allotted destiny—you can only hold down your share of troubles by holding back.

In every sphere men gibe and sneer—even the peace of the ditch digger is threatened by the unemployed laborer who covets his job.

So long as you aspire, others will conspire—so long as you try, others will vie.

You'll have hostility to face at every place and at every pace.

Go straight ahead to your goal.

So long as your conscience isn't ashamed to acknowledge you as a friend, don't you give a rap for your enemies.—Ex.

WOMEN WAR WORKERS

There are approximately 1,266,061 women in the United States engaged in industrial work which is either directly or indirectly necessary to carry on the war, according to an estimate based on surveys made in fifteen states for the National League of Women's Service by Miss Marie L. Obenauer, with the sanction and assistance of the Department of Labor. There were approximately 3,500 women engaged in munition factories in 1910; the number is now 100,000, according to Miss Obenauer, who states that this is a conservative estimate. She includes aeroplanes when speaking of munition factories. Most of the women, it is stated, are engaged in weaving, sewing and preserving food.
Local News and Events

(In this department, which is a regular feature of this journal every month, local life and movement is being reported for the information of our members and readers.)

Compiled by M. D. DANISH

LADIES' & MISSES' CLOAK OPERATORS UNION, LOCAL NO. 1

Secretary Wm. Bloom writes:

"The cloak trade in New York is extremely busy. In fact, we are having an exceptional season and all the cloakmakers say that we have not had a spring season like this in many years, and that it exceeds by far the past fall season. Many people ask what the cause for this swing of business from the fall season to the spring, which has been manifest for the last several years, means. In explanation the following facts are offered: There seems to be little difference during the last few years between the quality and weight of spring and fall clothes in general. It is a matter of fact, you will find that manufacturers even use fur trimmings on spring clothes, and women's garments and styles conform even less to seasonal changes than men's clothes. In other words, the light weight garment is getting into the market very strongly as a selling commodity and is taking the place of the heavy winter garment. Again, during the last few years, the use of furs has become very prevalent. Of course, the rich use the real, genuine furs and the poor use the imitation astrakan garments which are usually made in the fur shops. This, to some extent, affects the fall season in the cloak trade. But for spring and summer women use nothing but light cloaks and suits, and the demand for these is much greater than for the winter cloak, which accounts for the expansion of the spring trade.

"As regards our organization, I can say that it is really in a blooming condition. We already have over eight thousand members in good standing, and as there are altogether not more than ninety-five hundred or ten thousand cloak operators in New York City, of whom about 1,000 are still working on military garments and a number were transferred to Local No. 17, you can judge for yourself that we control 100 per cent. of the operators in the cloak shops in New York.

"Dues paying is going on on an unprecedented scale. Early in March, by a decision of our Executive Board, dues were raised to 25 cents a week, and true was given for the membership to pay up in arrears until the last week in March. That partly explains the tremendous rush at the dues windows of our local. This raise in dues met with very few objections among the rank and file of our union. First of all, all the other locals of the International already raised their dues a considerable time ago, among them also Local No. 17, and it is daily becoming clearer to our members that a local union which has as many obligations to fulfill as our organization, cannot exist on a 10 cents per week rate. In addition to that, the very fact that the price of all commodities has been going up for the last few years has reconciled our membership to the necessity of raising the dues.

"The referendum vote on week work is going on briskly in all the Joint Board offices. It must be explained that only piece workers are participating in this referendum, so a clear show of opinion from these men is wanted on this question. The prevalent opinion, as far as we have been able to ascertain, is for week work, in spite of the good season in the trade. The only argument that is being advanced against week work is the fear that it may lower the earnings. On the other hand, it is argued that only a small fraction of operators make big wages in a good season, and even these are often paid in advance for work that they finish up after the season on the cut-off tickets. This is true particularly of finishers.

"The operators are apparently making up their minds to get rid of settling prices.
Even if some of them should, as is maintained, earn less, they want no more bargaining and bargaining for each and every garment, a system which causes loss of time and energy, and which creates bitterness and strained relations. Years ago, before the union was established, the employers settled prices on garments in accordance with their own sweet will, and made the workers earn their living by long, drawn-out overtime work. Later, when the union came and the principle of collective bargaining was introduced, the workers began to have a say in the settlement of prices, but this brought with it a system of eternal bartering in price fixing. The third stage must be work which will give the workers a more settled and definite way of earning a living in our trade.

The handful of designated disrupters has now lost every vestige of influence on the men, and is hardly heard from. Like a bad dream, they have passed out of the minds of the operators, and it is sometimes hard to believe that anything like that which took place in the Cloak-Operator’s Union last year really existed and held sway over the interests of our men. The officers of the Joint Board who have worked hard and faithfully to help bring about a successful movement to a successful conclusion must be given full credit for their work. Today practically all the shops have been reorganized and are well controlled.

“There are cheerful prospects in the trade that this season will last well into May.”

BALTIMORE CLOAKMAKERS, LOCAL
NO. 4

Organizer Anna Near writes:
“We have been busy during the last few weeks in a little town, Cumberland, Md., with organizing work, in which we had the assistance of the local Women’s Trade Union League. The Baltimore Dry Goods House, one of the biggest concerns in the City, opened up a cloak shop in that town, and, of course, its prime intention was to beat the union and to operate on a non-union basis. We, however, succeeded in going after and getting the girls (most of the workers in that shop are women), to join the union and we organized them into a local of their own. We received a charter from the International for these cloakmakers, and they are now Local No. 38. The shop is increasing in numbers and we expect to exert good control over it, with the help of the Baltimore Joint Board.

“In Baltimore proper, the organizing work is going on apace. The cutters’ shop is coming back to life and we have no doubt that Local No. 72 will be a strong factor in the future than it has been in the past. The Joint Board of Baltimore has taken a charter from the International and is now a recognized element in the local trade union life.”

BOSTON CLOAKMAKERS, LOCALS NOS. 12, 24, 56 AND 73.

Manager H. Harowitz writes:
“Conditions are pretty bright in Boston. There is plenty of work in the shops, and all the cloakmakers in Boston are busy. The news that the members of the International voted for Boston as the Convention City for 1918 brought a lot of enthusiasm into our ranks. The Joint Board organized a special committee on convention arrangements from all the six Boston locals of the International, which committee had its first meeting on Sunday, March 3rd, with General Secretary-Treasurer Baroff and Vice-Presidents Halpern and Wander. All the necessary sub-committees were elected and have already started work.

“The Boston locals are of the opinion that they can make this assembly of the 25 delegates to the convention the most successful and most interesting in the history of the International Union. A number of enterprises will be undertaken and carried through during these two convention weeks, among which we expect to have a great mass meeting, a banquet, a sight-seeing trip and probably a theatre party. We expect another visit from the Arrangements Committee of the International in the near future, to complete the plans that we have laid. The convention will take place in the big hall of the Musicians’ Union, and it is expected that the surrounding neighborhood and also the sections where the Boston Jewish workers live will be decorated in honor of this big gathering. It is the ambition of the Arrangements Committee to see that during the last week of the 20th of May a welcome flag is displayed from the house of every Jewish
work for the two as a token of the
collection of the local
the constitution of our International

A special meeting of the local members will take place on Sunday, March 10th, at 331 Washington Street. At this meeting the special interests of the members in the local shops will be taken up for discussion. The meeting will be addressed by

President Halpin, who is the manager of the New York Cloak Finishers' union, Local No. 26.

CLEVELAND CLOAKMAKERS, LOCAL NO. 26

Sec.-Treas. P. I. Reifstein writes

When we speak of Cleveland, it is about time that we had made up our minds that as long as there will be no official acting upon the union by the local manufacturers, the organization will have no standing. It may come to life at the beginning of each season, but it is sure to fall apart before the season is over.

In order to gain the recognition of the union in Cleveland a general strike is absolutely necessary. Some time ago the local cloakmakers again began to hope for a strike of such a calibre and so strong that the manufacturers would recognize it. The conditions in the trade, however, prevented the International from undertaking such a step at that time, and the more active local men thereupon decided to wait patiently until the next fall season and to keep the trade meanwhile in a state of expectancy. As the convention is near at hand, the local people are expecting the convention to pass upon this matter definitely, one way or another.

To show you how the local manufacturers ignore our union, I will cite just one fact. When, through the efforts of President Schlesinger, Fuel Administrator Garfield rescinded the Monday closing order so far as it affected the ladies' garment factories, the Cleveland manufacturers refused to take advantage of this opportunity simply because it came through the efforts of the International Union. You may imagine how difficult it is to keep up an organization under such opposition and animosity.

"The Cleveland local is going to call a conference of the Middle Western locals of the International in order to solidify their

organize for a general strike in Cleveland. In order to get ready for the coming fall season the local people have begun to organize the shop of Landesman & Hirschmann, one of the largest in Cleveland, employing largely Jewish workers, a shop where the employers, while antagonistic toward the union, were protecting its interests. They allowed even more of the union to organize themselves on their own advantage and they exempted each time from conferences with the employers as a result thereof. But now a strike has been declared against this shop, and the factory is being picketed. Sooner or later the workers in that shop will come to their senses, and, together with the other Cleveland cloakmakers, will do something practical for the general improvement of the local trade."

CINCINNATI CLOAKMAKERS, LOCALS NO. 39, NO. 63 AND NO. 98

Sec.-Treas. P. I. Reifstein writes

The season in the local cloak trade is not bad, particularly in the larger shops where there is plenty of work and the workers make decent wages. In the smaller shops things are not quite so good, and in some instances the cloakmakers employed there had to stop for a day or two during the last few weeks, as the employers could not get sufficient goods to fill their orders.

The organization in general is in very good condition, the membership is in good standing. They attend the meetings of the local and of their shops unusually well. We have a rule here that members (men) must attend no less than one meeting a month, and members (women) must attend no less than one meeting a month, under penalty of fine. We have that this works well, and the attendance at the meetings is excellent. The locals are getting ready for the next season to begin an organization campaign in the few shops that were not organized during the general strike.

"We have also been busy here collecting money for the War sufferers. We worked the entire day on Saturday, the 23rd of February, and devoted the earnings of that afternoon to the war sufferers. The success of this undertaking was unusual, as it was carried out faithfully even in those
shops where there was little work and where the workers could not be well attended to contribute to this evil. The spirit of frivolity on the part of the local cloakmakers in this instance proved quite as bad as the spirit of the shop of Bishop, Stern & Stein, and the latter has been very particular in this respect, and their action deserves censure. The firm of Bishop, Stern & Stein, in particular, conducted as the last thing was submitting prices which showed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employees of Bishop, Stern &amp; Stein</th>
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<tr>
<td>Employees of American Bank Co.</td>
<td>350.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employees of Bloom &amp; Nonkowitz</td>
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<td>Employees of Fosther &amp; Co.</td>
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<td>Employees of Lowry &amp; Cloak Co.</td>
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<td>Employees of London &amp; Cloak Co.</td>
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<td>Employees of New York Cloak Co.</td>
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<td>Employees of Papers &amp; Co.</td>
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<td>Employees of Western Garment Co.</td>
<td>19.74</td>
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<td>Employees of Rosenthal Tailors &amp; Co.</td>
<td>23.62</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employees of Merit Cloak Co.</td>
<td>12.00</td>
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<td>Employees of Standard Cloak Co.</td>
<td>33.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>A Pressey of Universal Tailor Co.</td>
<td>20.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employees of Superior Tailor Co.</td>
<td>53.70</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employees of Western Cloak Co.</td>
<td>38.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Pressey of Ohio Skirt</td>
<td>44.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees of Epstein Cloak Co.</td>
<td>13.83</td>
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<tr>
<td>Union of Epstein Cloak Co.</td>
<td>13.47</td>
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<tr>
<td>Designers in the Local</td>
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$81,364.44

TOLEDO CLOAKMAKERS, LOCAL NO. 67

Secretary S. Kaplan writes:

"After all, the old saying, 'Where there is life there is hope,' is true. We have had some trouble in one of our shops, the Codde Cloak Company, which involved a re-settlement of prices on some work. After the operators had worked a few weeks on certain garments they began to complain that they could not make a living. They came to the Executive Board and requested us to help them resettle prices on some garments. This demand was granted and a committee was sent to the firm on that matter. The firm refused to listen to receive the General Executive Board of the International, and I believe that we were quite successful in our aim to make them pleasant for them. On Sunday the 25th of February, we celebrated the ninth anniversary of Local No. 67, and our speakers were President Schlesinger, Secretary, President Hargis, and a number of other presidents. As was to be expected, the prestige of the union has materially increased since that time, and now our organization consists of fully 100 per cent of the local cloakmakers and pressers, in good standing. People who had long stood grievances against the union for years are now back to the organization and we go to them with open arms.

We have no written agreements with the employers, and our relations with them resemble the ancient tactics which the Stoics pursued in their war with Amalas. When Moses held his hands up high, the Israelites prevailed; when Amalas held his hand down, the Israelites were defeated. Our members have become convinced that as long as they will keep watch for us in their ranks and will come regularly to the meetings of their organization, they have the upper hand, and that no agreement will help them if they stay away from the union.

"President Schlesinger had a conference with one of the chiefs of the firm of Cohen, Friedlander & Martin, Mr. Goldman, who is president of the Western Cloak Manufacturers' Association. Mr. Goldman complained to our president that we were not reasonable and that we demanded too high prices, and in consequence the firm will be compelled to move from Toledo.

"As Brother Friend, president of Local No. 67 and the shop chairman of that shop, present at the conference, he reports to us that President Schlesinger had defended our position in a masterful way.

"During the week of February 25th, we had some trouble in one of our shops, the Codde Cloak Company, which involved a re-settlement of prices on some work. After the operators had worked a few weeks on certain garments they began to complain that they could not make a living. They came to the Executive Board and requested us to help them resettle prices on some garments. This demand was granted and a committee was sent to the firm on that matter. The firm refused to listen to

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the committee, and as a result, a stoppage was ordered in the shop. After striking for three days, a committee consisting of B. M. Johnson, Russell, and myself reviewed the prices on the work and raised wages ranging from 10 per cent to 15 per cent. We also paid the workers, to the committee's satisfaction, at the end of the strike.

Just recently we taxed ourselves, according to the duty of each man and woman, for the Jewish war sufferers, and we sent a check for $214.75 to the International Union. While this may seem a very small sum, it must be taken into consideration that Washington's Birthday is not a legal holiday in Toledo and the money was contributed from our own pockets. Besides, our season is already at an end.

In closing, I want to say that there are still certain improvements lacking in our local. Our members still pay 15 cents an hour, and the more active members in our organization are starting a movement for higher dues in order to cover the immediate needs of the organization. It is to be hoped that this work will be crowned with good results."

ST LOUIS CLOAKMAKERS, LOCALS NO. 78 AND NO. 16
Organizer Ben Gilbert writes:

"Things are quite lively and interesting in the Cloakmakers' Union today. Since our last strike in 1913 most of our members have been under the impression that in order to improve the condition of the cloakmakers and to get the employers to recognize the union, only one method is available—that is, a general strike. At every one of our meetings we talked of nothing but strike, and it really seemed to us that there was no other way out of the situation. When President Schlesinger visited us in January, he showed us how to improve the condition of the cloakmakers and how to gain the recognition of the union without a general strike. We have followed his advice, and today our union is in a better condition than it has ever been since we began organizing in St. Louis. If we go on along the same lines and if nothing untoward occurs, the organization of the St. Louis cloakmakers on a 100 per cent basis is a matter of the very near future."

"Just recently we got rid of the S.A.S. factory here in St. Louis. It was a subsidiary and it gave us plenty of trouble most of the time. Our cloakmakers will surely not regret this fact, it will give them a better opportunity to ask for decent prices in the inside shop of the same firm.

"We have decided to levy a tax of $200 on each member in order to increase our treasury, and we are confident that our members will respond to this tax with a will."

MONTREAL CLOAKMAKERS LOCALS NO. 13, NO. 19, NO. 61 AND NO. 102
 Reporter on Labor conditions summarizes:

"In my previous reports I have dwelt in particular on two conditions which prevailed in our local trade since the last general strike, i.e., the small prices at which the workers get for their labor and the long hours of overtime they are compelled to work in order to make an existence at the present high cost of living. The cloakmakers in Montreal seem so deeply interested in their work that they overlook the fact that they are the most exploited men and women in the shops of this city. They have not even noticed the striking difference between their earnings of last year, when they had a strong union, and their earnings of this season when their organization is not complete. Some of them must have figured that they would rather spend the hour or two at the shop and local meeting than in the factory at overtime to enable them to increase their earnings.

"Their illusions were, however, rudely dispelled at their last big meeting when President Schlesinger and Vice Presidents Metz and Koldofsky addressed them and pointed out to them the crime which they were committing against themselves and their own families by staying away from the union. Even during the busy months of the present season they are earning hardly enough to make a living, let alone saving for the slack time that is to come."

"On Tuesday evening, the 5th of March, we had a meeting of delegates from all the shops. Vice-Presidents Metz and Koldofsky listened to the shop reports, and, almost without exception, the conditions reported were uniformly bad: 75 hours of
work during the week did not amount to more than $30.00.

A mass meeting of the union was held on Wednesday afternoon and the attendance exceeded our expectations. Prince Arthur Hall was crowded, and the speeches were delivered with great enthusiasm. The speeches that the President Schlesinger, and Koltowski, and Cohen who were in full voice at the meeting were received with applause. My impression is that the effect of the speeches was much better than the more apparent. It is to be hoped that after the next general meeting we may have much better than ever before. Shop question interest and eagerness, and it is to be expected that after the next general meeting the workers will be in a position to give the employers the work better working conditions than they have had during this past season.

T ORONTO CLOAKMAKERS, LOCALS
NO. 14. NO. 70 & NO. 92

Vice-President Koltowski writes:

The biggest occurrence of the last month in the history of the Cloakmakers of Toronto was the decision to raise the dues of the members to 30 cents for those who belong to the Sick Benefit Fund, and 20 cents for the other members. This decision was adopted by a large majority at a membership meeting on March 17. The question was discussed from every angle. It was shown that the bigger and smaller strikes frequent in the cloak trade entail a large expense and that the 15 cents paid until now were absolutely insufficient to cover the real expense of the union. Of course, our locals have been used in the past to appeal to the International whenever they were in need of assistance, but it is becoming apparent that it is not the right method to pursue and that we must henceforth rely upon our own financial resources in our struggles. A union must always have a fair sized treasury to enable it to look into the future without fear of financial stress and embarrassment. This is particularly true of the Cloakmakers' Union when friction with unscrupulous employers is frequent. We are compelled to bargain with our bosses day by day on the prices of the work and we must be ready to assist our members to fight for their existence.

'The cloak industries in this city are working along in a perfectly normal way. The majority of the shops are organized and the workers are loyal and devoted. At our last general meeting it was decided to raise a special fund to organize the workers of Eaton's shop, as the proposition is meeting with favor.

There is enough work at the shops and the workers are being paid regularly, and new members are coming in daily. Our union has accomplished a number of improvements for the workers—chiefly, higher earnings. Of course, we did not get this without conflict at price settlement.

'The prices have, however, in a quiet but systematic way, improved prices in work in the shops. The skirt and dress makers have had more trouble and much earnest fights with some employers. They have, however, gained a considerable increase in weekly earnings for all the workers. In some cloak shops prices are being raised even now. This resettlement of prices, while it is a test of strength between the workers and the employers which the workers are the victors because of the season, in the long run, a lesson for those manufacturers who want to realize the slack time to force the pre-committees to accept hunger prices.

'Of course, things are still far from being perfect, and more unity must prev in our ranks to secure improvements in the shops. Take, for instance, the question of overtime. It is a matter of common knowledge that long hours are injurious to the health of the workers. However, the employers drag out the settlement of prices for weeks, even though they already have the orders and materials. This is done to increase the difficulties of the workers and get them to make the work cheaper. The members cannot withstand the temptation of overtime and it remains for the union to fight against it until we can abolish it altogether.
Five Years of Whitegoods Workers’ Union
Local No. 62

By F. M. C.

One of the important achievements of our International Union is the growth and development of a strong Whitegoods Workers’ Union, Local No. 62.

Fifteen years ago there was practically no organization in this trade at all, and not many believed that there ever would be. "Why," many said, "how in the world could there be any organization in this trade that would count?" This kind of reasoning was based on the fact that not only is this a trade where 90 out of every 100 workers are women, but also on the fact that these "women" are mostly young girls and many of them of school age.

The skeptics lived long enough to learn that a union in the white goods trade could not only exist, but they also had a chance to watch it grow and realize that after five years' existence it became a factor not only in our International Union, but within the progressive labor movement as a whole.

I shall here attempt to review its short but interesting life. I shall content myself with a bit of its history that dates back as far as 1912, although a charter had been issued to the white goods workers in 1909.

Two years after the charter was issued, when an organizing campaign was staged among the white goods workers, there were only a few dozen members within the organization. The first few shops which the union controlled, were the B. Aphetaker, the Puritan and Chelsea. The workers of these shops were the pioneers and they were a great factor in organizing the entire trade. This justifies the contention of many that it is worth all the efforts to get one or two shops organized in a trade for a start. Because this is really the foundation of the future Local Union.

After an intensive organizing campaign had been carried on among the white goods workers, a call for a general strike was issued on February 9, 1913, and those who watched the stream of 8,000 young women pouring from the factory districts from all over the city into the different meeting halls and heard their young voices loudly ringing with pro-singing labor songs full of hope and inspiration and cheering the speakers who addressed them will never forget the scene.

A close observer could have noticed how these young girls from day to day became more and more serious, and how they were transformed into mature women who realized how difficult it is to get justice from a society that is built on exploitation.

We remember how the manufacturers of the white goods trade, who are classed among the wealthiest in the Ladies’ Garment Industry, refused to meet the representatives of their workers, the same workers who produced for them the wealth they enjoy. The employers refused to discuss the demands for a living wage, for the reduction of working hours that were as long as fifty-eight a week, and the abolition of fines. They refused to parley with the representatives of their workers, whose earnings were as high as $200 and $300 a week and whether it was right and just that these girls should pay for the repair of machines that did not belong to them. They refused to discuss whether it was just that their underpaid workers should pay for slaps, needles and in many instances for thread and power.

They refused to hear grievances as to the way these young girls were treated by their foremen. To all these demands of the strikers the manufacturers gave one answer, "There is nothing to arbitrate!" After a five weeks' bitter strike, during which time hundreds of young pickets were beaten up by sluggers, hundreds arrested by police officers and locked up in police cells together with suspicious persons, and many of them, half starved, spent their days either on the picket line or in the meeting halls—after these trying weeks the strikers were just as determined to fight to the bitter end as on the first day of the strike.
When the employees saw this determination they agreed to meet the representatives of the strikers and discuss their demands. As a result, the employers agreed to grant some of their demands, but absolutely refused to recognize the union of their workers. The employers could stand the material concessions which they were compelled to grant to the strikers, but they would not agree to recognize a shop chairman representing the toilers in their shops. They agreed to part with some of their profits, but they refused to modify their authoritarian power. They refused to recognize the union of their workers that would change their absolute power over their employees.

I remember the scene when the leaders of the union submitted the offers of the employers to grant many of their demands, but the recognition of the union. The leaders, in submitting this proposal to the strikers for decision, tested their determination. I shall never forget the scene that followed after the offer of the employers was read in Cooper Union Hall that was packed with strikers. It was a scene that filled the heart of every honest and earnest worker with joy and pride.

It was a magnificent spectacle to see these young working men, many of whom were seemingly in their teens, formulating an answer to the powerful employers who hoped to subdue them into submission. The answer of these young proletarians was "we shall not return to your workshops until you will recognize our union," and with an assurance that they were determined to carry on the fight indefinitely until victory.

After the employers learned that they were not going to recognize the union served as a stimulus for the strikers to continue the strike with new vigor and enthusiasm, and that they entered on the sixth week of the strike with more determination to win. They realized that such a fight might ruin them, and therefore decided in the middle of the sixth week to meet again the representatives of the strikers. The result of the meeting was that the union was officially recognized by the Cotton Garment Manufacturers' Association and the whitegoods workers not only won material improvements, as the shortening of hours and an increase in the earnings, but also established a minimum wage for learners of $0.60 a week instead of $1.50 or $2.00. But the most significant accomplishment was the fact that a union was organized in the trade.

Now, at the fifth anniversary of the existence of the Whitegoods Workers' Union, we find this local in very good condition. The local succeeded in establishing the eight-hour work day; it enjoys the respect of every intelligent person and has a standing in the progressive labor movement.

Every movement of a progressive and radical character in accordance with the Labor ideals is getting the cooperation and assistance of this local. But I wish to remind the Whitegoods Workers that they have neglected to introduce activities of a cooperative and educational character. We should like to see the White Goods Workers' Union initiate such activities that will tend to develop the members, cultivate fellowship and strengthen their character; activities that would inspire them with zeal for the labor movement. There is among the whitegoods workers plenty of energy that could be utilized, if properly directed, for the benefit of the local.

The White Goods Workers' Union, as all our other locals, was confronted with the problem of having all its members participate in the nomination and election of local officers. Therefore, not being able to induce its members to participate in the formation of its government, they worked out a system by which every shop is represented at nomination.

A conference of all shop chairmen and two workers of each shop is arranged. At the first meeting of the conference nominations are made for all the officers of the union, including executive members. At the second conference objections are entertained. But in the election the entire membership participates. This system gives all the workers of the shops a chance to be represented.

A few months ago the whitegoods workers demanded an increase from their
employers. For a time the employers seemed to ignore the union's request. Four weeks after the approaching of the fifth anniversary of the general strike of the white goods workers in 1913, refreshed the minds of the members of the American Cotton Garment Manufacturers' Association. February, 1913, was the month when the white goods workers had deserted their shops. So the employers were wise enough to give one dollar increase to all their workers, although the agreement does not provide for it.

One of the achievements of the White Goods Workers' Union is the establishment of the eight-hour day in their trade. The credit of achieving this reform belongs to the officers and leaders of the local union and to the steadfastness and vigorous enthusiasm of a loyal and devoted membership.

White Goods Workers —we expect that at the beginning of the sixth year of your existence to open a new page in the history of your union.

REDUCTION IN WAGES PREDICTED BY BANKERS TO FOLLOW END OF THE WAR

Reductions in wages and widespread unemployment are being predicted as after the war certainties by New York bankers and corporation directors.

One reason why Wall Street bankers are urging a campaign for thrift among wage-earners is their desire that the workers shall be financially able to endure the wage reductions on which they are counting the moment the war stops.

To prevent the most disastrous industrial depression in our generation, many far-sighted men in the United States and England are insisting that opportunities on the land be opened to the millions of returning soldiers and munition workers who will find themselves out of employment when peace comes.

In Wall Street the coming industrial depression is today being planned for and discussed in the most matter-of-fact way. Says the financial editor of the "New York Evening Post":

"If workers, by investment in government bonds, do not become used to higher living, it will be less difficult to get them to consent to a reduction in wages when that is made inevitable by peace. What is more important, the workers will have saved something, which will enable them better to bridge over any interval of unemployment which may come during the period of readjustment."

In other words, Wall Street wants the workers to insure themselves out of their present earnings against a bad future. If the wage-earners can be induced to give up "luxuries" (such as meat, eggs, milk, and sugar), during the war, then after the war they may submit to wage reductions, unemployment — anything — without revolt ing. According to this line of reasoning, every penny saved by the wage-earners during the war will be saved to bankers and employing interests after the war. Every dollar the wage-earner can draw from his savings can be subtracted from the amount of his pay-check.

Organized labor knows there is a better way. It is fast coming to a realization that the only hope for the workers is to remove the underlying causes of low wages and unemployment. And the greatest of these is the privilege of owning land or other natural resources and using the mere fact of ownership as a means of extorting tribute. Never will the world be in such need of the products of labor as after the war. Food, clothing, better and more houses, will be sorely needed. And they will not be forthcoming because the bankers and landowners will find it more profitable to keep the natural resources and the plants which depend upon these resources for raw materials idle and out of use, until they can be sure of big profits over and above the cost of producing.

BIG PROFITS IN STEEL

The annual report of the Republic Iron and Steel Company shows earnings last year equal to $51.89 a share.

After deducting $9,878,657 for excess profits, a sum equal to almost 30 per cent. on the common stock, net profits were $15,857,196. In 1916 earnings were equal to $47.95 a share, so that in the two years ended December 31, 1917, the company has earned $99.83 a share.

Total profits were $28,769,024 last year compared with $16,893,212 the year previous. Surplus for the year was $12,475,737, compared with $9,891,298 in 1916.
London, March—The national executive of the British Labor Party, always working in conjunction with the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress and thus securing the labor movement from the economic as well as from the political standpoint, is now building itself up for parliamentary action at a rapid rate. The two committees have just now taken special offices in the central part of London, and a portion of these have been formerly occupied by Winston Churchill, the Minister of Munitions, who has cleared out for still more commodious premises elsewhere. Under the wonderful driving power of Arthur Henderson, who is labor’s leading politician in this country and who since he broke with the Government and retired from the War Cabinet, has been working ceaselessly for the creation of a great Parliamentary labor party in the House of Commons (to arise after the next general election), the movement is making rapid headway. Henderson and his colleagues of the Labor Party, together with Bowerman and his colleagues of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress, are using as the main factor in the situation the passing of the Representation of the People Act.

This new measure has created an entirely new situation. The number of Parliamentary voters in this country will be increased from 8,000,000 to over 16,000,000, and about 6,000,000 of these new voters will be women, who will for the first time in this country at the next election exercise voting power. It is to meet this factor that the Labor Party is developing its entirely new constitution and it wants to use the new political force it expects to obtain in order to tackle powerfully and successfully the great problems of reconstruction after the war, whether these problems be political, social, industrial or economic.

It is declared that no treatment by mere politicians will meet the case, no mere compromise will serve: no desire to get back once more to the old lines of safeguarding selfish bourgeois interests will satisfy the masses of the people. For the first time in this country “the will of the people” is to be no longer an empty phrase. When the reconstructed Labor Party gets its new political force behind it in the House of Commons, it will want to secure, it declares, for the producers by hand and by brain the fruits of their industry. The producers are no longer going to be satisfied with the crumbs which fall from the rich man’s table; therefore the Labor Party wants to be able to force the most equitable distribution of the fruits of industry that may be possible on the basis of common ownership of the means of production. The Labor Party’s program insists that the nation should take one step backwards from the present policy of controlling the great industries and services.

At the moment, of course, the new constitution is before the various constituent societies of the Labor Party and before the bodies also affiliated with the Trade Union Congress. A few weeks more must pass before the final decision is known as to what form this eventful constitution will take; but what I have forecasted can be reckoned to be generally accurate, although details to meet individual cases may here and there be modified.

The Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress and the National Executive of the Labor Party, meeting in joint committee, declare that they have reached decisions of considerable importance affecting the methods of representation of British labor at future international conventions. Separate representation of British Socialist organizations is to be ended. That should mean that in future the Independent Labor Party, which has about 30,000 members, the British Socialist Party, with about 20,000; and the Fabian Society, with 30,000, will no longer themselves send direct representatives to these international Socialist and Labor conventions. They will have to take their chance now of getting their own special delegates through with the general labor delegates.
A run.. 191«

however, Socialists of resources are
and at the head of affairs in both im-
portant trade unions and in important
positions in the national executive of the
Labour Party, probably things will not
change much in actual character until
several months after

An important deputation left London
for Paris recently. It was composed of
Arthur Henderson, M. P.; Ramsay Mac-
Donald, M. P.; J. McGurk and Sidney
Webb, representing the Labour Party;
and C. W. Bowerman, M. P.; J. H.
Thompson, M. P.; Will Thorne, M. P.,
representing the Parliamentary Commit-
tee of the Trade Union Congress, to dis-
uss international labor and war affairs
with the French labor organizations.

A very interesting attempt was made
by Bishop of Peterborough, England, to
bring up the question of labor and its
proper rewards before the upper house
of the convocation at Canterbury, which
is the ecclesiastical authority governing
the Church of England. Usually such
meetings of bishops and other
church officials concern themselves
mainly with questions of church doc-
tment, discipline and government. Grad-
ually, however, a different and broader
tone is showing itself. At the above-
mentioned meeting the Bishop of Pet-
erborough brought forward the question
of industrial reconstruction after the
war and moved the following resolu-
tion:

That it is incumbent upon the
church at the present time to do all
in its power to second the efforts
now being made in many quarters
to inaugurate a truer fellowship,
both in spirit and in organization,
both in the industries of the nation, and par-
ticularly in view of the critical pe-
riod which will follow the conclusion
of peace.

The Bishop quoted from a statement
of Arthur Henderson, in the London
‘Times,’ to the effect that at no period
during the war has the industrial situa-
tion been so grave and so pregnant with
disastrous possibilities as it is today.
Yet, he said, the stress of the situation
did not lie only or even mainly in the
present emergency. Today seven mil-
ions of our wage earners were engaged
in war work. The moment peace was
attained every effort would be made to
stop this expenditure and gradually to
reduce this work to more normal di-

mensions. This would probably mean,
unless the utmost care and foresight were
exercised, unemployment on a colossal
scale, reduction of wages and lowering
of standard rates owing to the glut of
labor available, and this at a time of
great discontent with our industrial sys-
tem. If ever the nation had the need
and the right to call to the church for
spiritual help, that would be the moment.

There must be a determination in the
church as well as in the state frankly
to face the difficulties. In the nation and
in all classes there were men who could
only be described as anti-fellowship men,
including the profiteers and reactionary
employers, men who showed themselves
wholly out of touch with the sentiment
and outlook of the workers, and were
planning to make a few leisurely repairs
in a powder magazine which might at
any moment explode and blow them to
pieces.

At the present time the church’s con-
science was fast leaping into life and if
the state had carefully thought-out plans
for the coming days of peace so must the
church. Their first duty was to think.
Let them all bring fresh minds to fresh
problems. Such thought would lead at
once to a revision of values. It would
show up the absurd importance which
during the last 100 years had been at-
tached to money. Hitherto the church
had been content to acquiesce, not merely
in the exaggerated estimate of money,
but in the spending of it. Before the
war we were rich with an almost nau-
seating ostentation. Bond street (Lon-
don’s fashionable shopping thorough-
fare) reeked with luxurious irrelevancies.
Yet we were too poor to build either
houses for our townspeople or decent
cottages for our laborers. The revision
of values would lead to the conception
of industry as a national service rather
than a private adventure for profit.
The nationalization of the railways after
the war was to be desired from an economic
point of view. He did not deny that the
views he had expressed would be strong
meat for some. People might shout
“Socialism” at the top of their voices.
He had never been a professed socialist, but he had come to believe that we were being urged along such a path as he had indicated, not merely by the spirit of the age, but by the spirit of Him who was the King of the Ages.

So much for the Bishop. The resolution, however, was withdrawn by request, as the Convention was nearing its close and very few delegates were present. It will be brought up at the next Convention meeting.

LEGITIMATE BOYCOTTING

A story is extant in which French profiteers got a taste of American methods. The story comes from a seaport "somewhere in France" and is as follows:

"The landlord of one of the principal hotels, finding his rooms taken by American officers, considered that the law of supply and demand justified in his case a considerable increase in profits. The price of rooms was doubled; meals and drinks went up in proportion.

"Rear Admiral Wilson waited upon the mayor, who regretted the fact, but found himself unable to interfere with the freedom of commerce.

"Admiral Wilson ordered the officers living there to move out and placed sentries in front of the building with orders to keep every American soldier away.

"The argument was decisive. The landlord begged that the interdictions be removed, but thus far Admiral Wilson is obdurate and the hotel is most empty."

It will be noted that the admiral first had recourse to the law and got nothing. Then he resorted to the good old American expedient of boycott and got results.

The boycott time and again has been decreed by its victims as unfair, even though it is employed against unfairness. Court after Court, in writing subservience to capital, has forbidden its use by labor to enforce just, fair and reasonable conditions, but no court could ever make the workers support an unfair concern. Court mandates do not reach that far.

Admiral Wilson's first thought when the law failed was the boycott. Everyone of fair mind and normal thinking powers will applaud his act, express satisfaction at what he did and say it was just the right thing to stop profiteering and punish a greedy and unpatriotic landlord.

But in America where the admiral is the representative of a labor organization and the landlord the representative of the large employers, it would not be easy to find a judge to declare the boycott unlawful and issue an injunction against it because it interfered with the process of private gain.

But where lies the moral difference in boycotting this profiteering landlord and boycotting, for instance, a theater, a transfer company, a printing establishment which opposes, for its own profit, a better standard of living for the people whom it employs? The landlord tried to take advantage of his customers to swell his profits. In other cases mentioned advantage is taken of the workers to compel them to work cheaply, thus enhancing unfairly the profits of the employers and keeping down unfairly the wages of the employees.

Where lies the difference between the boycott established by the admiral and a boycott, for instance, against a company which has adopted a policy of favoritism toward a few scabs, in the hope of breaking down the power of collective bargaining, and keeping the manly man in its employ from securing the real wages which every American worker should enjoy?

A boycott is a boycott. But its operation unimpeded of the law depends upon who is exercising it—an American Admiral or a bunch of American workingmen.—Ex change.

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GENERAL OFFICERS

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In The Basement
(A Story of Long Hours in a Russian Shop)
From the Yiddish of Jonah Rosenfeld by A. R.

It was winter, and at two o'clock the dark had begun to grow out of the corners. By frozen white window-sills, sunk deeply in the ground, became darker and darker.

"I cannot see to do my work," a voice was heard.

"Nor can I.

"Let someone light the lamp.

"Outside there is still full daylight.

"But here it is quite dark.

"Here it is dark all day long.

Thus they threw at each other short phrases. They all talked with irritation and annoyance. No one wanted to begin the night so early, and even though they did not see to do their work the workers' eyes were as if glued to the blocks of wood in front of them. They took a few minutes, took another peep out of the window and again started complaining that it was dark.

Josh sat down on the bench. He would like to see the lamp burning all day. He sat quietly without moving a limb.

"Naphtal," someone called, "how much do you want to go down into the 'hole'? in the cellar below the basement?"


The "hole" was believed to be the abode of ghosts. But though it had no more light at any time Naphtal, in the daze, undertook to go down there for no more than 25 rubles.

All sat down on their benches and a long silence ensued.

"How is it outside?" someone broke the silence.

"A hard frost.

"And a wind?"

"Well, what shall we do? He will soon come in and find us sitting on the benches."

"Let someone light the lamp."

"I have still some work to do."

"And I, too."

The lamp was lit.

They worked about an hour or an hour and a half, when Naphtal looked at his pocket watch. He continued looking at it for a full minute, as if not believing his own eyes and growing peevish, finally exclaimed horror-struck.

"The devil, is it going slow?"

"What is the time?" all asked and glanced up surprised.

Naphtal, still looking at the face of his watch, said almost in a whisper, "Only half past four."

"Half past four?" all asked anxiously and alarmed.

"Impossible."

"Never upon this earth."

"It must be much later."

The workers imagined that they had been working by lamplight ever so long. Their hearts grew heavy and sad, as if they had just heard the blackest tidings, and their work became burdensome, disgusting. They were all seized with the desire to run away quietly somewhere, far, very far.

"Do you know what? Your watch is slow."

"An onomer, not a watch," Nyman said petulantly. "Your watch is a liar like yourself."

Zeleg burst out:

Naphtal stood downcast, feeling guilty. He looked sadly at his doomed watch which was just declared as being cheap and worthless. He gazed at its fingers and seemed debating with himself whether to slip it back into his pocket or fling it away.

Suddenly Nyman crossed over and, wresting the watch from his grasp, examined it, put it to his ear, listened to its ticking and looked extremely bewildered.

"It's going."

"The watch is going?"

"It stopped."

Nyman did not answer, as if he had not heard the questions. Again he looked at the face of the watch and listened to it. It seemed to have a faint ticking. He was stirred by an impulse. Perhaps it was losing? Finally he returned the watch in silence, restrained his annoyance, walked back to his bench and lazily resumed his work.
Silence supervened in the basement. A forced but growling illness pervaded all hearts. The feeling of an enchanted blackness was akin to that of a snake encircling the heart, sucking its life blood, crushing the very soul, the heart becoming empty and the soul finding a vague longing.

Josh groaned. This element did not laugh, though the old comical man. It seemed to the younger that the groans came from a long distance and were uttered by thousands of men like himself—men who had spent all their vital strength, their whole life.

Josh suddenly discovered that his lathe was running with a heavy motion. He flung a curse at it.

All the workers exchanged glances. It seemed to them that their lathes, too, were revolving with heavy motion. These old-fashioned machines seemed to be likewise overwrought.

Silence again enshrouded the atmosphere. It seemed more oppressive than ever. They stopped the machines, examined and oiled them and oiled the cedal, but the groans went on. They all felt as if following a corpse to its grave. The walls of which the grimy ceiling, draped in a sort of cobweb frills and tangles, were revolving with a vague motion. They were all absorbed in their gloomy thoughts. They all felt lonely, God-forsaken alone in a cell, in sadness on the black dirty floor.

"Naphthal, please look at your watch," begged Josh.

"A quarter past six," Josh suddenly discovered that his lathe was running with a heavy motion. He flung a curse at it.

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"Naphthal, please look at your watch," begged Josh.

"A quarter past six."

"Only a quarter past six," they all asked with surprise.

Again they resumed their work, each one of them evincing much impatience in his own way. One stamped with his foot, another cut deep rows into his block of wood in sheer annoyance, yet another uttered curses. When the force of the inner excitement had run its course silence again prevailed and only the sound of the machine was heard in the room.

"Naphthal, what time is it?" someone asked.

"Seven o'clock," Naphthal announced and, putting the watch to his ear, exclaimed with joy, "It stopped, the watch has stopped."

"To be sure, it must be more than seven. I said before that the watch is slow," observed Nyman.

"It must be nine o'clock already," Naphthal exclaimed with joy.

"I should not be surprised," Nyman observed with a smile.

"It is time to scrap that watch and get a new one."

"Josh, stop your groaning."

"Josh, Josh" all repeated.

Josh replied with a mild glance, as they all poked at his expense. But it took it all good-humoredly. All of them made for the door. No one wanted to remain in the shop. Suddenly, the door opened and the door entered, wrapped in a fur coat.

"Where are you off to?"

"What do you mean 'where'? Home?"

"Home! Crazy. What is the occasion?"

"He looked at his watch. You crazy heads, all of you. Going home quarter past seven?"

"A quarter past seven?"

"Have you ever? Going home ready?"

Their countenances fell and they resumed their work, each one of them evincing much impatience in his own way. One stamped with his foot, another cut deep rows into his block of wood in sheer annoyance, yet another uttered curses. When the force of the inner excitement had run its course silence again prevailed and only the sound of the machine was heard in the room.

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### Directory of Local Unions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Unions</th>
<th>District Office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 New York, Chain Operators</td>
<td>288 Fourth Ave., New York City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Philadelphia Bootmakers</td>
<td>241 S. 80th St., Philadelphia, PA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 New York, Pullers</td>
<td>9 W. 35th St., New York City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Baltimore Bootmakers</td>
<td>205 E. Monument St., Baltimore, Md</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 New Jersey, Bootmakers</td>
<td>144 Broadway, Union Hill, N.J.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 New York, Bootmakers</td>
<td>164 2nd Ave., New York City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Boston Bootmakers</td>
<td>48 Congress St., Boston, Mass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 San Francisco, Ladies' Garment Worker</td>
<td>902 Pikes Ave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 New York, Ladies' Garment Factory</td>
<td>228 Second Ave., New York City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 New York, Ladies' Garment Factory</td>
<td>242 2nd St., New York City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Boston, Ladies' Garment Factory</td>
<td>750 Washington St., Boston, Mass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Boston, Ladies' Garment Factory</td>
<td>750 Washington St., Boston, Mass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Montreal, Canada, Bootmakers</td>
<td>941 St. Paul Ave., Toronto, Ont.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 St. Louis, Bootmakers</td>
<td>2182 Broadway, St. Louis, Mo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 New York, Bootmakers</td>
<td>1457 Broadway, New York City</td>
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**Named shoes are frequently made in Non-Union factories**

**Do Not Buy Any Shoe**

No matter what its name, unless it bears a plain and readable impression of this UNION STAMP, all shoes without the UNION STAMP are always Non-Union

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