

CHAPTER XII

NEXT STEPS

THESE changes of temper, of method, and of purpose open to society every chance that could be asked for the industrial and social renovation that in some way must come. The real peril which we now face is the threat of a class conflict. If capitalism insists upon the policy of outraging the saving aspiration of the American workman to raise his standard of comfort and of leisure, every element of class conflict will strengthen among us. When a despatch is sent to a Southern state, asking for a car-load of negroes to break a strike, we see in concrete form what this use of subject and lower races may mean. Every added cable, wire, ship, and railway which destroy space, make it easier for capital to turn the lower labor standard against the higher. The coming of these cheaper immigrants will be a help, if they are not used to break the power of the unions. Labor organization, in spite of every unhappy fault that can be laid to its charge, stands for the higher standard of living. To break it means longer hours, lower wages, and a bitterer competition among the workers.

A New York builder, angered by delays upon his structure, tells me: "If it were not for the union, I could finish it in two-thirds of the time. I could get

ten hours a day out of them, and I could get them one dollar and a half cheaper. I could bring in young fellows from the country, and everything would hum." Yes, that is precisely what he could do. He could have great speed, cheaper product, and fewer annoyances; but it would all be at the expense of that higher standard of labor for which the unions are making their desperate struggle. The cause of labor is, upon the whole, their cause. The harassing annoyance under which builders and architects, for example, now suffer, is the price we have to pay for a more democratized form of industry that somewhere in the future must come. Unless every ideal of a more equal life is to be given up, this passion should be welcomed for the uses to which it can be put. The way of safety is to educate it, the way of danger is to deride and defeat it.

We have only to humiliate what is best in the aspiration of the trade union, and then every worst feature of socialism is fastened upon us. There is no danger in socialism that for a moment compares with that part of its working propaganda, dear to the extremists — the class struggle. To make men believe in the fatalities of this social warfare is the deadliest work in which any human being can engage. To make men disbelieve it, by organizing agencies through which the luminous proof appears that men can do their work together, with good-will, rather than hatred in their hearts, is as noble a service as falls to us in this world. To show the possibilities of this more fraternal and peace-bringing process, I have laid much stress upon the changes in the German and Russian systems. There could be no better news

from Germany, for instance, than the new chances which these changes offer for the socialists and trade unions to work together rather than in enmity.

In 1890, there were perhaps two hundred and fifty thousand trade-union members. In 1899 there were nearly six hundred thousand. These can now fraternize politically with socialists in the common aim of securing legislative and industrial improvements.

Middle-class sympathizers of every sort can also join hands with social democrats for the same reforms. As the feeling of a purely class conflict fades out, the real unity will be seen to be, not one of vocations, but of opinion and purpose. The party has from the first owed its impulse and guidance largely to those who never were workingmen. Liebknecht, Marx, Engels, Lassalle, Guesde, Jaurès, Hyndman, Brousse, Ferri, Vandervelde, Kautsky, Denis, are but a few of the many to show what the party has gained from those who were in no sense proletarians. Indeed, no darker illusion has ever troubled the whole labor question than the assumption that there is an identity of interests in the entire body of wage earners as against some other class. The *Klassenkampf* rests on this illusion. This was one of the weaknesses of the Knights of Labor. General interests came into speedy conflict with special trade-union interests. The strength of the Federation of Labor is that it has thus far shown skill to avoid this error. It is admitted that the interests of separate unions, glass-blowers, stone-cutters, locomotive engineers, may at any time be much closer to that of the employers than to that of the miners, shoemakers, or printers. Large leeway is therefore given for the

play of special, as against general, interests. Every sympathetic strike brings this fact at once into evidence, so that some of the wisest labor leaders now unite in condemning the sympathetic strike.

Nearly one-half of the strikes in the last quarter of a century in this country are put down by Colonel Wright as "successful," but the sympathetic strike proper is an almost uninterrupted story of defeat. In warning the soft-coal miners not to engage in this kind of strike (1902) John Mitchell told his hearers he had never known a sympathetic strike to succeed. Trade unionism at its best has so far discovered the great fact of the solidarity of interests that it may easily be led to cooperate rather than to antagonize. If we are moved by reason and fairness, its whole massive strength can be turned against our greatest danger — the class struggle, as it may be saved from the worst error of the English unions, the limitation of output.

This is possible, of course, only through measures that are educational; that act slowly upon the habits of thought and action. But the word "education" leaves us in the air, until we know, with some precision, what it is to be, and how it is to work. This must first be made clear. At the Remuneration Conference, in London, 1886,¹ there was gathered perhaps as able a group of men for the discussion of the social question as has ever met for this purpose: statesmen, economists, business men, and artisans.

In an informal gathering, I heard an evening's dispute in which practically every point of view was represented: the individualist of every shade, the

¹ Report of Industrial Remuneration Conference.

single taxer, the positivist, socialist, and the business man, who was, as so often happens, by common consent, the gayest theorizer present. The result of the long symposium was what has often been noted—practical agreement as to the social ideal toward which effort should be directed. All alike wanted a society in which opportunity should be organized so fully and so fairly that each could have every chance which his character and ability, industry and good-will, made possible. There was general consent that society, as now organized, does not offer equal chances except to a small minority. The brilliant publicist, Frederic Harrison, after thirty years of hard work upon English social problems, said at the morning session, that the need of social reorganization had come to be so urgent that unless it could be brought about, we were to be left in a condition "which is hardly an advance on slavery or serfdom."

There was also agreement that society, through individuals, or associations, or laws, has power to remove much of this injustice. With one exception the agreement here came to an end. The causes of so much injustice, and above all the means for its removal, excited dissensions. The thing to be aimed at, the far ideal of social relationships, awoke no discords among the disputers. A society in which each may live out generously and gladly his largest and freest life; a society in which each capability may have free play, with the infinite social variety which that implies, was the Utopia in which all believed. Then came bickering and dissent of opinion over ways and means of reaching so fair a goal, and finally, to the common surprise, agreement again—agree-

ment that whatever changes befall or measures are adopted, the race must have a training and a discipline it has not yet received. Education, to which all alike looked forward, was thus the panacea and harmonizer. Happily, for the evening's peace, no one raised the question as to the *kind* of education necessary for this high service, and we went our ways pleased with the illusion which a stately platitude often gives.

That education must at least go hand in hand with social betterment, will be disputed by none. When, however, education is used as a stop-gap to every proposal, we shall, if we are intelligent, make objection. The hoariest commonplace ever used against reforms has the same character, "You can't do anything until you have changed human nature." What service this ancient saw has done from age to age against every hint of abuse to be overcome! That "golden conduct will not come from leaden instinct," has been thoroughly drilled into us.

We accept the admonition, but shall reply, if we are wise, that it does not greatly help us, unless something very definite is added about methods and details. A community that is civilized enough to tax itself for an education under which the bookish tradition should be accompanied by several years of first-rate art and manual training, under which the science, begun in the school garden, would make the farm as interesting as the laboratory or the artist's studio, would go far to wipe out a whole class of social dangers and inequalities. It would take a quarter of a million children from maiming industries and from street avocations, keeping them at habit-making processes until they were seventeen years of age.

This elimination of the child from bread-winning occupations would lighten the crushing weight of competition upon the very class that now staggers most heavily under it.

Clear and immense as the gain of this better education would be, it does not meet all our difficulties. There are in the meantime other duties to be met, and another sort of education for which our need is at least as great.

From an educational point of view, what is the most unanswerable charge that can be brought against our current industrial system? It is that, as a large part of this system now works it creates suspicion, aversion, or stolid indifference which may be worse. Great portions of our competitive business have come to act upon the wage earner in ways that train him neither toward sympathy with his employer nor toward a sense of social responsibility. The "great business," managed by agents under direction of absentee proprietors, has intensified this evil. A mine operator living on the spot said to me: "Our mining population has been getting worse and worse each year. They do not trust us nor we them, and I think one reason is that the direction of the business has so largely fallen into the hands of men who live in the big cities, and have therefore little knowledge of the workmen and little real sympathy with them. They have to trust to bosses and agents who, in order to make a good showing, have to take it out of the men."

But of far more than this special kind of industry, is the main fact true. I once showed to a manager of one of our largest department stores a summa-

rized plan of the coöperative method in the famous Bon Marché in Paris. By the very nature of its business organization it binds an army of clerks to the store and its interests. The American manager said, "I know the Paris store well; we can beat it in many ways, but in one way it beats us: their organization *educates* and ours doesn't." He was proud of the trained clerical efficiency in his own store, but by education under the coöperative influence he meant a discipline that brought an ever enlarging sympathy with the business in its entire social relations. If then, we are to use the word "education" as a remedy for industrial weaknesses, we should understand that all that is outside and apart from the *interior active business processes* cannot make in the workman those habits of thought and of action which society most needs. Neither our business nor our politics is any longer safe unless education means at least as much as this,—*the sum of influences which act upon the laborer continuously in his daily craft*. Much of our industry educates in the sense of producing every degree of skilled performance. It may do nothing to educate socially or fraternally. It has come very widely to do the exact opposite of this. There can be no "remedy" deserving the name that does not recognize the necessity of so modifying the relations of employer and employed that the daily work shall instruct both parties in those things that bind together, rather than antagonize. It is the obvious curse of a great part of competitive work that it now induces antagonism between manager and helper. It does this in an increasing number of industries not accidentally, but in the very nature of

the working relation between them. This autumn, in Milwaukee, Chicago, Detroit, Grand Rapids, Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati, I heard the testimony of business managers of affairs into which strong unions had come, but with no organized recognition by employers. The testimony was almost a unit upon this point. "The relations with our men are getting to be so strained and so delicate that they cannot go on without some change that is more than mere patchwork." The man standing at the head of his business in Chicago said, "It has been getting gradually worse and now is so nearly intolerable that I wonder why we do not all quit business." While blaming trade unions for this, every one of these gentlemen had come to recognize that the trade union could not be got rid of.

This situation has then to be faced,—organized capital and organized labor side by side, both alike growing in strength. For a quite indefinite future these must work together. In what spirit and through what methods is this inevitable fellowship to be carried on? I have just put this exact question to the second largest coal operator known to me. He answers thus, "It is my deliberate opinion that we must continue to fight the unions with all the strength we possess, it will be safer than any hopeless attempt to educate them into common sense."

I have tried to show that if he, and those who think with him, should do this and succeed, we should have an increase of stormy political socialism. But the attempt will be difficult. Public opinion will more and more demand that labor shall have every right of organization (with federation and representation)

to which capital lays claim. Late in the recent strike I found in a town of the middle West, the leading business men (in no way interested in bituminous coal) generous subscribers to the striking miners. Judges, bankers, editors, and even the president of a corporation were among the subscribers. One of the richest and most active business men told me, "I and most of my friends would have subscribed every month until those miners got their claims before a fair arbitration board."

This is the new force of public opinion with which the old dictatorial and arbitrary method of the employer (especially in semi-public corporations) will henceforth have to deal. In this surly fellowship between organized capital and organized labor, both parties have to be educated. The lesson for the employer is, that some way has to be found in which work can be carried on with complete recognition of associated labor. This will involve such modification of the familiar, arbitrary, and individualistic method as to admit what in most of the great business, is essentially the spirit of a partnership. In letter and in law this is still far in the future, but the spirit of it will have to be admitted and acted upon. I have given the consenting testimony of first-rate men of affairs upon this point. The coal operator, just quoted, said to me, "What I hate is, that we can't really recognize organized labor without getting into a box; our men would soon think they were in some way partners with us."

A soft-coal operator in Illinois, who has definitely recognized the miners' association, said, "It gives me the chills sometimes to hear my men talk as if they, too, were actually in the business." The process

may add fever to the chills, but it is the way through which the unwilling parties have to pass. We cannot encourage millions of low-class laborers to come to us without incurring responsibilities. From the first act of Congress at the close of the Civil War "to encourage immigration," to the action of companies to "assist in carrying out the intention of Congress," the class which makes much of our trouble has been encouraged to come. Anthracite operators welcomed the "Slav" because he could keep wages down and break strikes, as was done in 1887-1888. Those who have profited by these luxuries of "wage depressors" and "strike breakers" should no longer shirk corresponding responsibilities.¹

Moreover, once getting this polyglot multitude here, what has been done to civilize them by those who have grown rich from the miners' toil? In many journeys I have found two paltry gifts in all those blackened districts, calculated to civilize and soften conditions.

In one of the richest of the towns, washed by a noble river running too swiftly for safe bathing, I asked a citizen why, in such a place, there were no public baths. The evening had brought to the pretty banks hundreds of miners and their wives. I got this answer: "I live among the swells myself. We have a lot of them. They are sometimes here, sometimes in Europe. All their riches came from royalties, or in some way from the mines. I made a canvass for baths because the miners and their families have to live in such dirt and because the luxury could be given to thousands of these men and women at so reasonable an outlay. No influence

¹ House Reports, 50th Congress, 4147, 2d session.

that I possess can produce the slightest effect. We have some nobly charitable women and a few men who will give to the local hospital, but as for any sense of responsibility for these thousands of miners, it has no existence." Careful search might show some startling exception to this charge; but this gentleman's opinion is that of every investigator of this region. I have looked at scores of great industries at home and abroad, but nowhere have I ever seen a blacker contrast between great private gains and any sense of civic responsibility for the masses who wear out their lives in and about the mines. My object in calling attention to this ungracious fact is to show where ultimate responsibility must *also* be fixed for lawlessness and disorder that break out in time of great excitement. That kind of population, so long and so dangerously neglected, will develop some brutal types, as naturally as the miner's occupation tattoos him with scars.¹

In this industry as in many others, the time is now passed when patriarchal benignities, mere "doing something for the laborers," will meet the need. Less and less will labor be deceived by any dole of *patronage*. In the class of industries here considered, organization of employer and employed must now find a working relation that educates, because of the very nature of the affiliation in which they stand to each other. A common education must replace a one-sided benevolence.

Before reaching the details of this relationship, the frailties and offences of labor organization have to be

¹ For a vivid contrast in method and result, see Annual Report of the Sociological Department of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, 1901-1902.

stated. They are as real as any upon the side of capital, even if there is more excuse for them. The sin and the weakness of the trade union has been (1) in its attitude toward the non-union man; (2) in its sullen aversion to new inventions; (3) in its too willing assent to check the output of work; (4) in its tendency to discourage the best endeavor among the better and stronger workers; (5) in its too free use of the sympathetic strike; (6) in a far too reckless use of the boycott.¹ The worst of our unions are guilty of every one of these counts against them. The average union is guilty in the case of part of them, but the best and strongest unions have already risen pretty clearly and cleanly above them all. Enemies of the unions are fond of telling us that "if all unions were like the locomotive engineers, business interests would be safe." Yes, but that is what this body of workmen has slowly reached. Its earlier history is black enough. Other unions have grown safe only through experience and responsibilities. The advance guard of unionism is at the present moment in the United States one of the most conservative influences active among us. After life-long familiarity with the trade union, Commissioner C. D. Wright states that "as a rule trade unions oppose strikes"; that they "are growing more and more conservative." "As a rule they are friendly to machinery."²

¹ That the boycott is not in itself an evil is seen in the fact that most decent people boycott something. It may be the saloon, the brothel, and the gambling den, or a vicious play at the theatre. In a proved case of injustice or indecency this "organized disapprobation" has its moral justification. The trade union abuse of this lies in the fact of the too frequent, reckless, and indiscriminate use of the boycott.

² See *Contemporary Review*, November, 1902.

It has been shown that our trade unions have become socialistic, but it is a socialism that is safe, if we do our duty. It is safe because it asks for a tentative extension of city or state functions. It asks this, knowing that if a city cannot manage electric lighting, for example, better than a private company, the people are not in the least likely to continue that sort of socialism. If it prove that city management is more wasteful, less alert to apply new inventions, more reckless of the peoples' interest, they will not continue this inferior policy.

The kind of training which strong trade unionism (like the Federation of Labor) brings to the workers, leads them to understand how slowly and how experimentally these changes must be made. I have sat through a week's session of the Federation of Labor, learning there that nowhere is the socialist who makes silly or wild proposals so instantly and so summarily disposed of. Nowhere does a crank have a harder time of it. If we omit certain unions in the more corrupt cities, where the leaders learn bad habits by imitation and are too frequently bought and sold, there is at the present moment in this country no more powerful influence to train men for citizenship than the influences at work in the best and strongest labor organizations. This is true of the Federation; it is true of separate unions like the printers, trainmen, iron moulders; many of the longshoremen, and cigar-makers.

But especially do these older and stronger unions learn to check dangerous and revolutionary opinions. If there is any considerable threatening socialism of the latter sort in our midst, it has no such enemy as the trade union. As the trade union strengthens, its

influence against turbulent and revolutionary projects steadily increases. The only agency that will prevent the spread of this conservatism is the fatuous obstinacy which insists upon defeating completer labor organization.

No one can study the growth of the trade union in every country, where capitalistic organization within ten years has made its great strides, without seeing that the new ambitions and successes of unionism are probably as great an event socially and industrially as the "trust." The least astute must now see that the trade union has already won a strength that is neither to be ignored nor too much affronted. The puerile cry to "down" the trust is only matched for inanity by the cry to down the trade union. Both are attempts, through organization, to check certain evils which an unreined competition at last produces. Both equally must be accepted for their uses.

In the case of both, we have to learn that oldest and hardest lesson — to distinguish between uses and abuses. Has federated capital fewer abuses than federated labor? The abuses of the trade union are far more open and ill-mannered; they appear on the surface to violate more impudently social usages by which we set great store. But if both trust and union could have impartial analysis, there is no social good (like freedom and human rights) that would not be found to suffer in deeper and more dangerous ways from the abuses of certain capitalistic organizations than from those of labor. The problem is to check and eliminate the abuses of both. Legal procedure will play an indispensable part in

this, but education will play a part weightier still. Most of the stronger labor leaders in the United States are now ready to use their combined influence in favor of an organization that shall be strong enough and intelligent enough to put no undue check upon new machinery or upon the output of labor. They are more and more against a reckless use of the sympathetic strike. The best of them say openly, that the whole policy shall be to train their men into fairness toward non-union men. The head of the garment workers tells me, "You may say without qualification that this is our aim, and that we shall work steadily toward such an education of our men as finally to bring it about." The head of the locomotive engineers says expressly that they will in no way intimidate non-union men. Mr. Sargent of the firemen's union writes: "When strikes are declared, the men should go home and stay there. If any men can be secured to take their places, let them take them. In the past there has been too much coercion and too little instruction and education along these lines."

Mr. Gompers, John Mitchell, Harry White, give in the same strong testimony as to the purpose of educating their followers up to broader and sounder principles. In *The Garment Worker*, November 22, 1902, an editorial dealing with the unions contains these words: "Browbeating or violence on their part cannot be defended. Where that is resorted to, the ethical purpose of the movement becomes obscure, and hatreds are engendered that offset the brotherly spirit upon which it is founded. No matter how serious the evils to be combated, barbarism cannot be overcome

by more barbarism. If the benefits of the union cannot be made apparent to the non-member, and if the influence which they can exert collectively is insufficient to induce him to join, then their cause has little strength."

Aroused at last upon these questions, let the public take these men at their word; hold them to the responsibilities implied, and try to aid them in seeing that they are fulfilled. Merely to fight the trade union is to get back from it all that is worst in it and nothing that is best; merely to fight it, intensifies the very ills we most condemn. To help it educationally is to work in sympathy with its general purpose, while showing no quarter to abuses which the leaders themselves admit. Those who now direct labor organization have learned, within ten years, the almost resistless power of public opinion to determine the issues of a quarrel when that opinion is once awakened.

What the fighting class of employers has been slow to learn, is that they are losing their power of disciplining their own workmen. In industries where unionism is inevitable, the arbitrary rule of the employer has seen its day. The man who has power to discipline the workmen is more and more their own trade-union leader. In the work of education and of discipline, the employer must now actually have the help of his workmen's representative. There is happily nothing to invent or create anew in the *modus operandi*. The mechanism is already in use and the education has begun. It is among the printers, the longshoremens, the soft-coal miners, the iron moulders, and the Boston carpenters. It is the "joint agree-

ment" between employer and employed which involves complete recognition of labor organization. Contracts have to be made periodically between delegated committees as to wages and all important conditions under which the work is done. It involves systematized arbitration not from without but from within. It puts every natural difficulty in the way of the strike. It involves organized discussion between masters and men on every interest that concerns their common occupation.

In Chicago, that squally home of rough and undisciplined trade unionism, I was told by the able lawyer, A. F. Hatch, who some thirteen years ago drew the agreement between the printers and the Daily Press Association, that "it has worked upon the whole with the best of results. It has been put once to the greatest possible strain, but the men stood by their contract in spite of extreme provocation." The manager of one of the two or three largest stove manufactories in the United States told me: "We have tried it a dozen years and it has settled all questions on this subject for us. Its best trait is that, as it works, it trains the men to see the limits within which they can get advantages. It makes the men more conservative and it makes us more considerate."

The joint-agreement has had its severest tests among the low-class miners of the soft-coal regions. In much criticism that has been given me in Illinois from employers, the worst was that it made the miners "too aggressive for what they considered their rights." "They want to take too much of the business into their own hands, as if they were part owners." That the agreement should have worked so long among

these rough and untrained nationalities, is perhaps the greatest tribute to its future promise. The real irritation of these employers is that their old power of absolute decision is now called in question. In the long period that is now coming to an end, the employer has been dictator not only of his own business, but of interests which concerned his workmen as well. The laborer has now entered the fight to divide this authority. He insists upon taking his part in the discussions (as to hours, wages, conditions), which are strictly his business also.

The employer will long continue to fight for the whole power. The only limit he likes is implied in the phrase, "Take this work at a given wage or leave it." A thoughtful and law-abiding miner in Spring Valley told me in time of a strike: "I was brought here and urged to buy a home for my family; I have half-paid for it; we have a grievance which they will not arbitrate, but they tell me if I don't like the work to leave it. I cannot leave without sacrificing the savings of twelve years. They tie me to this spot and then tell me to submit or get out." This man was fighting for a chance to help decide the conditions under which he worked and lived.

This is what the employer now calls "interfering with my business." He expects sympathy when he asks, "Shall I manage my own business or not?" Yes, he shall manage his own business, but precisely what his own business is, calls for new definitions. It is here organized labor is carrying on its struggle. It is trying to determine what, in the business, should be decided by labor and what by employer. Where the trade union has become fair, it knows

and admits that the employer must have absolute and instant control over all that strictly concerns him as managing director.

This contest over ultimate decisions between employer and employed is so at the heart of the whole issue that I submit an actual instance, every detail of which is very recent history. An employer complains that the trade union objects to his discharging two incompetent workmen. If it were a fact, the union would deserve every rebuking condemnation that could be given to it. Scores of unions are constantly exercising these small tyrannies, but the employers have so long had the habit of making a charge of incompetence in order to get rid of trade-union men, that unions strike back in self-defence. In this instance, however, I give a letter which the secretary of a great group of trade unions writes to a local labor agent on this subject of what is the workman's business and what is not.

"Mr. —, foreman of —, informs me that your only reason for calling out the men was that he refused to continue in his employ two men laid off for incompetent work, and that even your business agent admitted that the work of the men was imperfect. If such is the case, your action in withdrawing the men was not justified. This office, as well as the National Union, is opposed to forcing upon an employer men whose work is not suitable. It is just that sort of thing that creates needless opposition to the union, and causes no end of trouble. Your union is the only one that would make such a demand. Where members are made to believe that they cannot be discharged, no matter what they do, they become

careless, and the poor workman falls back upon the protection of the union. The employer has got to sell the goods, and he assumes the risk, consequently he alone can be the judge as to the quality of work. As long as he pays the union scale and does not discriminate against active members, that is all you can expect of him.

"Now I trust you will not place us in a position where the General Executive Board will have to decide against you.

"Yours Fraternaly,

"HENRY WHITE, *General Secretary.*"

This is in no way an exception. It is a frequent decision of the chief officers affiliated with the Federation of Labor. What a critical public is slow to understand is that this is a powerful and increasing influence in most of our stronger trade unions. Under the joint-agreement, it will increase still more. I have known the head of a labor organization, after seeing that the employer was right, to force one of his own unions back to work by sending non-union men (scabs) to bring his men to reason. The worst and most dangerous forces of ignorance in the unions can be disciplined far more effectively by those who direct the unions than by the employers. Directors of those affairs into which unionism has come, must use this influence of labor leaders to preserve order, efficiency, and good behavior among the men. The cynical observers of the union have not learned the kind of power that the best leaders can exercise over their men. In a formidable strike I asked an employer why he refused to treat with the union. He

said, "The men have become bumptious and surly, and we had to fight it out." I then put this question to the trade-union official, "Would you make a definite public statement, and promise that if you were 'recognized' and the responsibility thrown sharply upon you of keeping your men peaceably at work, giving absolute power to the employer to discharge every incompetent and unmanageable workman, could you and would you take that responsibility?" His instant reply was: "That is precisely what we want. If the employer will not use these excuses to break our union, but will discharge only the men who are impudent, or disobedient, or do bad work, he shall have every assistance we can give him to clear out such men. We can make it hotter for those men than he can. They are afraid of our power, they are not afraid of his. Give us the responsibility with an adequate contract, and I will promise before the public to keep our men at work. I should like to have the full glare of public opinion thrown on us. We would promise publicly that if we cannot discipline our own men, and let the employer discharge every man fairly proved to be troublesome, lazy, or incompetent, we will confess as publicly that trade unions are a failure."

Now if we care for the thing called education, responsibility of this character must be given. "Fighting it out" is one resource, but it is stupid and objectless. The joint-agreement, practically adapted to each business after its nature and conditions, is not free from perplexities, but every step in its application and enforcement educates in the only possible direction in which industry must move, if it

moves in the way of progress. There is no ray of hope except in some method that forces the two parties to work more and more together, instead of more and more apart. There is nowhere a substitute for this compelling common action that teaches the employer what is just, possible, and right in the new claims of labor, and teaches labor the difficulties and the limitations within which modern business can be made a success.

Let the disciplinary influence of the joint-agreement do its work for some years, and "incorporation" will at least get the hearing which is now impossible. To reach this incorporation by the help and sympathy of the union is far safer than to imitate England's recent step of forcing incorporation. Force will merely increase the socialistic temper of the unions. To win them by the slower processes of education through added responsibilities is a far safer policy.

Toward this, the joint-agreement will help. I do not make the absurd claim that this systematized understanding between the two parties is a panacea. Because the word "panacea" is rejected, it does not follow that the more modest proposal may not have what is relatively a very supreme importance. The evidence is overwhelming that this importance may be fairly attributed to the joint-agreement if only employers will bring to it something of their real strength and sympathy. It gives us arbitration in its very highest form; that is, from within. It gives it in the one way to secure every enlightening educational advantage. It is to the joint-agreement that we must look for our best answer to all premature calls for trade-union incorporation. At present the

unions are right in rejecting it. Multitudes of men, especially among the newer immigrants, would see in this power of the court a reason for not joining the unions. Until they have reached a greater strength and stability, incorporation would hamper them in the best work they are now doing. But the point I urge is, that the joint-agreement does a far better educational work. To keep agreements voluntarily, is a much higher discipline than to do it under force. For many years unions have actually kept contracts when employers have genuinely and heartily cooperated with the joint-agreement.

There is no such convincing proof of this as the fifteen years' trial between masters and men in the Boston Building Trades. The agent of the employers, W. H. Sayward, who brought about this agreement, conducting it with growing success for eighteen years, allows me to say that under it scores of strikes have been prevented, millions of money saved, and the most delicate questions, like the limitation of output and apprentices, the use of the boycott, the conflicts between different unions, and the sympathetic strike, are now so far understood as a result of this education that they are no longer feared.

Speaking from the side of the employers, Mr. Sayward says: "My experience has convinced me that labor thoroughly organized and honestly recognized *is even more important for the employer than for the workmen*. It makes possible a working method between the two parties which removes one by one the most dangerous elements of conflict and misunderstanding."

It is from these building trade unions, in cities like

Chicago and New York, that many of our worst abuses have come. It is here that the architect, as between the devil and the deep sea, has his most tormenting experience. It is here that the bribing and buying of walking-delegates have done their pernicious work. Mr. Sayward says, "Not one of these evils is necessary, they can be educated out of the way." Where the union has been openly recognized under this joint-agreement, and the representatives of employer and employed have learned the habit of meeting difficulties as they arise, the terrors of the walking-delegate and the "scab" begin to disappear. The name "walking-delegate" is replaced by "business agent." Mr. Sayward says: "I no longer either fear or object to the walking-delegate. I see that he is a necessity to the best work of the union." In an address before the National Association of Builders,¹ Mr. Sayward criticises the employers for saying that they will not treat with the unions *until* they are improved. "This," he says, "is like asking the child to swim but not go near the water." The employer must take part in this educational work as a very condition of its success. In closing this address, Mr. Sayward said, "that either for the building trades or other lines of work, these intricate and involved matters will not take care of themselves; they cannot safely be intrusted to *one* of the interested parties alone; *both* parties must have equal concern, must act *jointly*, not only in their own interests, but, in effect, in the interests of the community."²

¹ Held in Washington D.C., October 28, 1902. Printed in the *American Architect* for November 22, 1902.

² See Appendix, p. 381.

For that trouble-breeding portion of industry here discussed, the joint-agreement is all that any "solution" can be; namely, the next best practical step toward a rational industrial method. These agreements are not of universal application. They apply at points where unionism is inevitable; where the wage system is under such strain as to require modification in the direction of a more democratized management. Every scheme that is not inherently educational is worthless, because the clash of the trust and the trade union is raising new issues for which an enlarged social morality is necessary.

I have seen an extremely decorous group of persons listening unshocked to the story of a corporation which had for years systematically debauched the local legislature and with cool deliberation brought small independent firms to ruin. It was said, "Oh, but the corporations must do it to avoid blackmail; and as for ruining other people's business, that is only the law of progress." When this same company heard an architect tell of the slugging of a non-union man, there was an instant spasm of moral exasperation. For a perversity of unfairness like this, the one need is light and larger experience. The embittered workman is often as fantastic in his unfairness. The story of a "heaved brick" at the scab shocks him as little as these prosperous diners were shocked by the greater sins of the corporation. There is little hope save in educational processes that enlarge the perspective of both.

Among educated folk generally, there is thus far apparently no hint of what the word "scab" symbolizes to the unionist. I write no word of defence for a

single abuse connected with it, but the time has come when some honest attempt should be made to understand a force of such extraordinary persistence and prevalence. Without such understanding, we cannot even conceive an educational plan, to free this feeling from its abuses.

A concrete instance will give more light than an argument.

During one of the strikes I had a guide through the collieries below Wilkesbarre. I found him in a modest cottage for which he had paid, in nineteen years, all but three hundred and seventy-five dollars. He and his wife had made a garden. Flowers were abundant, and vines had been trained into a pretty arbor. Here six children had been born. Here three of them had died. If associations that knit into sensitive tissue every deeper human experience influence any of us, they are not likely to have left unmoved the owners of this simple home.

This man and his mates had struck. They asked that their grievances be considered before some fair tribunal. The employers refused to arbitrate, but began forthwith to bring in outside labor to take the place of the strikers. I give this miner's view of the situation, not as a final answer to the hard question involved; I give it, confident that no answer is worth stating which does not carefully take his view into account. "We asked for months," he said, "that certain conditions under which we work be changed. The employers would not listen to us, and we struck. Now while we are simply waiting to have our dispute fairly settled, they bring in outside men and take away our work. I was brought here by the last

foreman and urged by the company to buy our home. It cost us years of saving. Now they tell me to get out if I don't like the work here. I can't get out. This is my home, with all my friends, my church, my union. There is no other industry here except the railroads, and they won't look at a man fifty-four years old."

No fair person, with the imagination to put himself in another's place, will believe that the letter of legal justice meets all that there is in this case. Neither will such person fail to understand why this miner was bitter against the outside workman who was willing to come in to take the miner's place during the dispute.

In this special strike, who was this outside non-union man (the scab)? Hundreds of them were men in other industries steadily at work. It was the time when republican orators were saying with much truth, "Every man is at work." These men were hired for a better wage to leave their work, to take the job of another who was for a time asking to have his demands considered. There are now men in our cities whose business it is to hire themselves out as "strike breakers." Asking no questions as to the right or wrong of the strike, they are ready to go hither and yon to take the places of other men. I have seen miners who had learned from those inside the mine that those who had taken their places were brought from a city outside the coal region where they were regularly employed. It is a terrible strain upon average human nature to look upon this with the coolness and self-restraint of the disinterested observer. In spite of the provocation, personal vio-

lence should be met with the swiftest stroke consistent with justice. Scarcely a value of our civilization equals that of law and order. But the real rights of these miners are not settled in this instance, after the law has done its work.

A question remains which is not yet settled. Morally, and on grounds of good policy, we have still to meet this issue of the non-union man in time of strike. No generalization is yet possible, but in cases like the above, when troops of men have been expressly encouraged by the company to buy their houses, non-union men should not be brought in to break the strike until every fair resource of arbitration has been exhausted, even if it drives us to compulsory arbitration. To refuse arbitration, and then hire private retainers of the Pinkerton type, will not long be tolerated by a fair public. The irritants and the dangers are not only too great, they are not necessary. The joint-agreement avoids them. Under its provisions, work is not stopped until the forces of arbitration have done their work.

We repeat the phrase, "Oh, if the trade unions only had really competent leaders." Let us learn another phrase that is quite as apt, "Oh, if the great business had leaders competent enough to avoid the unnecessary sources of suspicion and bitterness among their workmen."

A wise use of the joint-agreement, made elastic and practically adapted to varying conditions, is one long, sure step toward such leadership, and toward the common educated good will upon which industrial peace depends.