Labor Organizations in America

by Cyrus Crane

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The movement towards labor organization within the last century, grown to such enormous proportions that it is recognized by Political Economy as an important yet factor in the development of the economic life of the world. Although this rapid growth is of recent date, yet the organization of labor and cotton into distinct classes and societies dates far back in the world. History. Many of these old organizations are called guilds, but the guilds, strictly speaking, belong to Medieval times, in which they played an

eminent part.

At the dawn of economic history we find no evidence of labor organizations. Acquired, and before the economic conditions of to-day, for believing that there

existed both in Egypt and in Greece certain organizations of
Laborers. But in Rome, the fact that their existence is fully established, then they were called Collegia. They did a great work in protecting and strengthening the various trades and the account they were continuously opposed by the aristocracy.

After the downfall of the Empire labor organizations first appear as guilds, and they continue to grow in number and importance. The object of these guilds is similar to that of present labor organizations. In the United States Circular Reports on the Trade Guilds of Europe their object and purposes are fully set forth and are a model for applicable to labor organizations. In our own day that a quotation will be cut place, "guilds have always had a certain democratic character. They rise their origin to the existence of the toiling classes to free themselves from the "Machiavellian" stroke of prescriptive. Accio to acquire
to themselves and their country.
The privileges of citizenship, equality before the law, rights of labor and other inalienable rights. To secure
these ends organization was
necessary, for ideal ideals, acting
singly felled, were powerless
to achieve anything against a
tyrannical aristocracy, sustained
by wealth, royalty, and the sword.
Time time insecure, gold,
property and rank, as they have
been possessed by the aristocratic
necrocracy. Have had far more value
and influence than the toil of the
great majority, who held the reins
of the workshop and brought to light
the treasures of the world, and it is
very regrettable that the laborer and the
artisan have found it possible
to stand in the likeness and make
themselves felt in the social and
political destiny of the nation.
The guilds were of great importance
in the growth and development
towns and cities. The needful
ages. The guilds of Magdeburg
and Strasburg are particularly
to give the gild, and secondly, that a legal control over the trade itself should be secured to it."

By the revolution of 1642, years ago, the might and power of the latter part of the last century, the factory system came into existence. This system might produce a great change in industrial conditions. It gave birth to modern trade-unions. The unions were at first formed by the government, but afterwards they were legalized and have flourished ever since.

From this brief historical sketch it will be seen that the organization of laborers into societies for the purposes of assistance, support and protection is not new or peculiar to the present day. It will be observed that these organizations have been uniformly opposed by the wealthy and aristocratic classes, that they have flourished in commercial districts and in thickly populated districts, that they have...
In America, during the Colonial Period, there was no attempt at organization. The reason—sparsely populated—is evident enough. In 1790, when the first Census was taken, there was but one city with a population between 10,000 and 50,000. The precursors of the newspapers began to organize trade unions. In 1803, the New York Carpenters' Union was organized. The first labor strike in the city of New York, however, probably was a strike of the workers of the New York Typographical Society. On May 5, 1802, a strike occurred among the New York Carpenters. The strikers refused to work unless their wages were...
endeavored to do it by quitting work. New York, being the largest city, was the first place where organization was attempted, but in 1822 the Calicompiaua Charitable Society of Shipwrights and Carpenters of Boston and Charleston was formed. Until 1825 there were other organizations, similar in character, but they were very feeble and were rapidly dying out. In 1860 the trade was thrown open to all regardless of race, creed, or national origin. During this period frequent attempts at national organization were made. Accusations of political favoritism were made. New York and Boston were the chief centers of labor agitation. Local organizations were banded together and organized general councils in the leading cities. The immediate result was that the trusts, with their political influence, were successfully driven out. Their influence, it is stated, was that tariffs, duties, and taxes had national organizations
The Civil War brought many changes in the industrial conditions of the masses, and America identified with the National life. The rise of large-scale industries and labor organizations, because of greater chances for workers to achieve a decent livelihood with great commerce, worked to transfer power from large rural and urban industries to the rapidly growing cities, facilitating economic questions that were brought into public awareness. Large numbers of workers were gathered together in labor organizations, giving rise to the labor movement. To these causes, once traced the frequent economic growth of labor organizations. It should be weighed sufficiently (credibly needed) to actualize an organization of all the various
labor unions, societies and orders. It will suffice to make mention of that "most powerful and de
cerable labor organization in modern times, the Knights of Labor." Prof. P. F. Bly, says that its
inception was with S. Steere, a tailor of Philadelphia, who
called together eight of his friends
in the little firm the present powerful order had set out to organize, and
then its growth has been truly
marvelous. In 1883 the number
of members was 62,000; in
1884, 71,000; 1885, 111,000. The
present membership, though not
definitely known, is probably
three or four times a million.

Here when we come to inquire
what benefits these organizations
are, and whether they are main
the end for which they were estab-
lished—the elevation of labor or
the labor—the task becomes one
of great difficulty. For our
oscillating law not as a rule,
trates there see a practical way,
There has been, both prior to
political economists a great deal
of their own work to estimate
their real worth by balancing
their good features against their
their good features against their
weak and harmful characteristics.
Depriving of your estimate of
their value and usefulness, it is
become evident that the process
that "union is strength." needs
no proof or demonstration. The
question then arises as to the
use of the strength. For this short
space we have room for the Economic
unions but fewer political
unions to which organizations of labor have
been finer.

15. The Labor Market.
16. Revenue and charitable purposes.
17. Educational purposes.
18. Political uses and attempts to
secure wise favorable legislation.

1 It is now conceded by the best
political economists that the
frics of Labor is regulated by supply and demand. J.S. Mill abandoned the wage theory of value and gave his support to this doctrine. When many ordinary workers are influenced by the law of supply and demand, it is possible for laborers to secure the same price for their labor as that of skilled labor, while it is practiced. Isolated laborers are very seldom able to do this. Against these circumstances, organizations enable the laborers to find the best market. They have their own agents and laborers of various grades of labor are in demand. A good plan, according to English trade unions, which are rapidly being adopted into
our own, is thus stated by B. J. Cly:

"When the deceased for labor falls, it is the practice of the United States to reduce their wages to work below the usual rate of pay, and this its justice if the chief function of the Laborer is to maintain the standard of life of the Laborer, a wealth of life is necessary to the justification of political economy. For there is a decreed decrease of wealth, and a forced decrease of wealth would give rise to another. The labor organizations prefer to suffer their members reduce the labor market, than to suffer them each day than to work at reduced wages. This plan is in accord with the established principles of political economy and indeed seems to me beneficial.

The first thing a labor organization must be able to do is to protect the laborer in his work."
Deemed and the latter approved.
Without organization both of these
methods is regulation wages are
ineffectual. It possible for one
man cannot mediate with
a powerful corporation. No one
strike be successfully conducted
without resisted action. So their
credibility said that our organ-
izations are in favor of the place
of arbitration rather than strike.
Said, it is so his broken
Arbitration says that our
exceptions at the labor section
is the U.S. favor arbitration.
Failure is in an arbitration
bargain strike, then strike
are not always effective among
the rank and file is foolish.
Ecclesiastical destruction of society,
believing the other race. At least
shown that all strikes are not
justified. Race have ever been
productive of good. They are often
times necessary, and the very
possibility of their occurrence forces
wage-earners to act in the face
of employers. They are not always
Successful, and in many cases they have been and this fact is known to the laborers. There is an old saying in France: "One who speaks to the laborer, "When a man receives the order, "Don't go to work today," it is the order to live without work."...
In 1883, Mr. Adolph Straus, the
President of the Cigar Makers Intern
national Union testified——that
there had been 362 strikes
against the cigar makers, recognized by
his organization, of which 237 were
successful, 137 lost; 17 pronounced
dead; 10 three-eights, 4 22,
strikes in New York investigated
by the Labor Commission. Fifty-nine
were still pending, and of the
11,211 strikes, 57 per cent
were won, 43 per cent lost; 5
were terminated. The
accessories were pronounced
These statistics are not given in
defense of justification of strikes,
but simply to show that "sluttish
generalities" will not suffice
to convince labor that they are a
failure. Yet, in spite of many
successes through strikes, the
organization has not fared thus, and
the records of our labor organization
draw a depressing feature. The
number of strikes, it is said today
of the Great Majority—Quotariated.
The whole machinery of the Knights of Labor is designed to promote strikes. J. H. Ryan (whose quotes testifies that labor organizations shackle far worse the deep freezing classlessness and destructiveness in the proceeding strike).

M. E. W. Beecher says: "Strikes of promoting classlessness and anarchy, as nearly suppose our large, responsible unions do wish to represent. The recent outbursts in Belgium are attributed by various treatises, to the absence, in years past, of labor organizations, which would have raised wages, absolute industrial conditions so as to receive all excuse for violence. Strikes are called class bloodshed."

I cannot believe that once were attempts of the labor organizations to include the laborers in the class benefit themselves. Are industrial. Of this nature are, in fact, in principle, acts of refusal to work with. The militia law
2. Educational fees for handicapped children and charitable purposes.

English trade unions annually pledge large sums for the alleviation of the unfortunate and deserving. As in this, as in nearly all respects, our unions are modelled after theirs. The locomotive engineers had in 1867, 4,257 members and had paid out over $2,500,000 in sickness and accident in 10 years. The Knights of Labor now pay $500 in the death of a member. They also make the sick and disabled members of their organization. The local associations of the various orders aid needy members and disabled in this way from 50,000 to $100,000 annually. And in all the different organizations this feature...
and it is a good work in running
very quietly.
Last organizing law always
been frequentest in the agitation
for fear hourly labor and for warn
reform and kindly treatment of
employees. And it is largely due
to their efforts that beneficial changes
have been made. The New York
Street Car Drivers were completely
united in their efforts to secure a reduction
from fifteen to ten hours in the
length of a day's labor. In New
England, factory regulations have
been more gradual. Since the unions
become strong enough to make
themselves felt. The eight hour
recompression has received the
respect, not of all, but of a
majority of these organizations.
All the recent labor societies are
in her respect anestime
recent in the old guilds. They are
much near to the old guilds. All
accept the allegiance not only
skilled, but also the unskilled, lower
classes of labor. Thus their benefits
accord to all alike and affords the chance an opportunity to help the weak.

Educational rules

That labor organizations are great enemies of liberal educators is generally conceded by those who have given them consideration. And it seems evident that they would be free from very nature. There is always an educational and broad-minded influence to be derived from association. This is exemplified when the associated body makes it a practice to discuss questions of importance and matters which relate to its own interests.

Washington Gladden says truly enough: "It happens that a very large proportion of the workers of our labor organizations are ignorant workers, whose practices are easily excited. And whenever the lead to take very prudential and absurd views of the labor question, yet it is folly to reject such statements for it only aggravates..."
The laborers and does not do any good. Deliberation and discussion are educative and they ought to be encouraged. In these qualities, laborers are given priority in their best interests. Says Prof. Elly.

In addition to questions of public policy, the laborers in their organization are brought to Congress where they can be collectively and individually as laborers apart from governments to reinforce their position. This keeps a whole multitude of questions before every laborer, and as meeting records and the laborers, there is abundant opportunity for organized debate.

The value of the rights of labor as a temperance organization is too well known to need emphasis. Many organizations are fighting with great efforts to secure libraries and to gain a thorough, accurate knowledge of social and economic questions. This is a form of great benefit for the
Political economists claim that a thorough knowledge of economic laws would reduce much suffering. Aid would be of great assistance in the elevation of the laboring classes.

Political rules and attempts to secure more favorable legislation is here that labor organizations have made recently. Given their successes, aid in the preparation to the Constitution of the Rights of Labor, neglected with scarcely notable exceptions, is quite necessary in the light of past history. Then too when these organizations enter into politics, they are often faced with decrees and decrees and rules of industry as labor reformers.

In legislation their achievements have not been great, yet the freely facilitated factory legislation in England; and the attempts in the other direction indicate
United States, as largely due to the agitation of the labor organizations. On February 7th of the present year, and in that respect yesterday, the labor strike was organized at Cincinnati. This further opens up of various labor societies. A good progress has considerable strength. On the municipal and city elections of places, tickets are the political various cities and are given them in exact with success. What it will do in the future, none can tell. But I believe that this is a disgraceful procedure. Aside from the fact that legislation violates a great mistake when it tries to control the labor market or regulate the price of labor, it is disgraceful to have the organized labor bodies decline the control of a very few men. Mr. Roosevelt said in a recent speech that he would not exchange his present position for the presidency of the United States.}

Nicely, that it is always found able to liberty to have large masses who will blindly follow a chosen leader.

From these and other crises, I am led to believe that labor organizations are productive of very good than evil, that their evils and discouragements are rapidly passing away through the efforts of large numbers who are really interested in labor's cause. And it is I believe the duty of all thoughtful men to abstain and decry the attempts of the laborers to secure from their condition to assist them and to make these organizations a powerful weapon in the recovery of the workers, which still exist in greatly deplorable condition.

The result of labor's trial. We are called to that the organizations are the result of the good they did, not of the absence of the presence of these. Whether or not the workers are willing to suffer the result of their own action, the results that are of labor are as just as their intentions.
and for prejudice consideration of all classes of society. Prof. Thoreau Rogers, in his book "Eccentric Political Economy," says: "This leisurely progress of the money, through Channels of the production of one of the lower ranks to the artisan, factory, and factory operatives, and agricultural laborer, is the effective labor organizations in the principle of trade, and with considerable success, certainly in detail."

Cyrene Graue