

THEORY AND PRACTICE.

When the I. W. W. was formed it was equipped with a whole series of dogmas regarding labor unionism, based on the theory that labor unions were never known to change, but were governed by fixed principles. Not only were the various failings and abuses of the craft unions ineradicable, but the ideal form and tactics of the I. W. W. were permanent. They were fundamental principles. Evolution for a labor organization was held impossible, although the whole history of the labor movement proved the opposite.

The theory of rigidity was the very life theory of the I. W. W., for if it were admitted that craft unions could change for the better or that the I. W. W. could change for the worse, there would have been no excuse for the I. W. W. coming into existence.

Practice has shown the dogmas based on this fixity of type theory to be valueless. On the one hand the craft unions, under the stress of economic pressure, are repudiating many of their so-called fundamental principles. Everywhere they are adopting revolutionary ideals and repudiating the "harmony of interest" slogan and the Civic Federation.

Many of them are federating or amalgamating into higher forms of unions and are removing the classic evils of the contract by making joint contracts. The sacredness of the contract theory is also being given up, the St. Louis unions at present having placed a boycott on the musicians for not having violated their contract and struck in sympathy with the waiters.

Sabotage is becoming a recognized weapon. In short, the craft unions are rapidly departing from their "fundamental principles" and are placing themselves upon a modern basis.

On the other hand, the I. W. W. is no less rapidly evolving. Thrown by the Lawrence strike from the realm of theory into that of practice, it is casting aside as worthless many of its most cherished "fundamental principles." One of the more important of these is the well-known "no contract" plan. For years the I. W. W. violently condemned the labor contract root and branch as "the death warrant of the working class," and yet in the barbers' strike in New York it was forced to sign contracts, and there wasn't a ripple of protest from the erstwhile contract-hostile theorists.

The I. W. W. for years also bitterly assailed the A. F. of L. for keeping the workers out on long strikes. They had a whole series of fancy tactics as substitutes. Yet the four months long Paterson strike is a typical "dime against dollars" strike. The much boasted and theorized of "intermittent" strike, as ridiculously proposed so often in I. W. W. theory, has been found to be inapplicable. "A. F. of L. tactics" had to be used, however inconsistent.

And, worse yet, many I. W. W.'s would be glad to see part of the Paterson strikers go back to work and help support the rest, even though for years this practice by the craft unions has been labeled the rankest treachery by the I. W. W. And it's the same with the absurd centralization theory of the I. W. W. Practice has shown it, too, to be fallacious. The old fanatical cry of no autonomy is being succeeded by an intelligent demand for decentralization. Two of the I. W. W. four English papers are edited by avowed decentralists.

The old "fundamental" cry of "no leaders" in the I. W. W. is also falling into disrepute, as today the I. W. W. undoubtedly has more labor leaders than any union of its size in the country. Its progressive members are adopting the modern theory of the militant minority. The labor faker is also beginning to bloom in the I. W. W., though this was supposed to be solely native to the craft unions. And so goes the evolution of the I. W. W.

Nor is this evolution liable to cease. Not only are the craft unions going to modify themselves still more, but the I. W. W. also will change radically as it gets more experience. Now that Wm. E. Trautmann, the king-pin I. W. W. theorist, has been jarred from the official pie counter and has characteristically bit the hand that fed him for years, it may be expected that many of his theories, including the ridiculous "One Big Union" chart, with its freak and arbitrary industries and departments, will be repudiated.

The writer believes that in the crucible of practice the I. W. W., provided it secures any considerable membership, will eventually be forced to give up

even its ambitious theory of being the whole labor movement, and will be compelled to join forces with the craft unions. Seeing that the I. W. W. has already given up so many of its cherished dogmas and adopted so many erstwhile condemned A. F. of L. tactics, it don't seem impossible that this one step further should be taken. This step will be the easier, not only because the craft unions are showing such signs of progress that it will soon be a toss up between them and the I. W. W. as to which is the better union, but also because both will soon be in the hands of the Socialists.

As long as the I. W. W. represented all the labor union virtues and the craft unions all their vices, and these were supposed to be fixed attributes of both organizations, there was some excuse for the I. W. W. attempting to launch an entirely new movement. But now that the I. W. W. and the craft unions in practice are rapidly approaching each other in form, tactics, etc., and will continue to do so, there seems but slight excuse for the preservation of the last and master theory of the I. W. W., viz.: the need of a complete new labor movement.

It, too, will join the many other discarded freak theories foisted upon the I. W. W. by its utopian founders.

W. Z. FOSTER.

THE ORIGINAL CONSPIRACY.

Now, the original industrial conspiracy has been on the part of the strong to take the earth, and they have got it. They own it and all they need now is to get enough working men and women at a low price to make them as much wealth as they want. It is pretty hard to fill that market, they want so much; but that is all they need. And the conspiracy on the other side of the working men of the United States is the same conspiracy as the conspiracy of the working men of the world, and it has only one object. We may temporize; we may be content with a little; we may stop at half measures, but in the end it has only one object and that is for the workers of the world to take back the earth that has been taken from us.

Take it back, and have all the products of their toil; not part of it, but all of it. Now, it is a universal, worldwide conspiracy by the intelligent working people and their friends the world over to get the earth that has been stolen by direct action.

Now, no one who understands this question wants anything less, and the employer is right when he says if workingmen are permitted to organize they won't stop with that; and they won't. You may place every lawyer on the bench, and you may place a jail in every block and a penitentiary in every ward, and the workingmen won't stop. If they will they deserve to be workingmen forever.

CLARENCE S. DARROW.

(From "Industrial Conspiracies," a pamphlet, 10c, for sale by The Syndicalist.)

A MEMORIAL TO VOLTAIRINE DE CLEYRE.

America has already produced some great figures, figures that will stand out in bold relief upon the pages of history, where they will be seen by future generations even more clearly than the most clear-sighted of their own time saw them.

Voltaireine de Cleyre is one of these figures. A poet of wonderful, strange power, a clear thinker, a forceful prose writer, a true rebel, the type that always hews to the line, that is never lured from the straight, direct road to freedom.

Five hundred workers assembled in Bowen Hall, Chicago, Sunday, June 22, to commemorate the first anniversary of her death.

William Thurston Brown, Honore Jaxon, Hulda Potter Loomis, Julius Menke, Jay Fox, and Irving Abrams were the speakers, the latter speaking in Yiddish.

Subscriptions were taken for a volume of Voltaireine's writings, which will be published in the fall.

A collection of over \$19 was also taken up for the Paterson strikers.

FOR KANSAS CITY.

Kansas City Syndicalist Educational League has open headquarters and reading room at Schutte Building, room 8, 1209 Grand Ave. Open from 9 a. m. to 10 p. m. every day, all wage-workers welcome.