

The Woman Today

What the Women Did in Flint

BY MARY HEATON VORSE



Never Too Late

BY LEANE ZUGSMITH



What the Amalgamated Has Done for Women

BY DOROTHY BELLANCA

1937

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The Woman Today

MARCH, 1937

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What the Women Did In Flint

By Mary Heaton Vorse

"We must give our boys air," cried the wives of sit-down strikers. The boys got air, food and support. Here's how their women did it.

TEN WOMEN WITH red tams and red arm bands with E.B.—Emergency Brigade—filed onto the cat-a-cornered stage in the Dodge union hall in Hamtramck. It was my first sight of the Women's Emergency Brigade of Flint, destined to make labor history in America. Mrs. Garrison of the Flint auxiliary was speaking:

"Our Women's Emergency Brigade is ready for action day and night; we take food over to the sit-down strikers in the plants and we are on guard to protect our husbands. We can get fifty women together at a moment's notice; we expect and are ready for any and all emergencies."

Mrs. Bessie Garrison is slender, attractive and dark, with a humorous smile, and is a natural speaker. Many a practiced speaker could envy her manner, although this is a first experience.

Mrs. Lamb spoke next, a big woman with twinkling eyes and a face that shows she knows how to be firm, when to get angry and how to laugh; a woman that the young men strikers instinctively call "Ma."

"I'm the mother of nine children and I have three grandchildren. I am on the Emergency Brigade. I want to tell you about the battle of Flint. We call it 'Bull's Run,' because the police ran away. They tried to stop us from getting food to our boys. They were shooting and throwing gas bombs and some of them we threw right back at them. They came at me with the gas.

"Come right ahead," I said, "I've been gassed and I can stand some more, but you're not going to stop me from getting food to my boys."

"My daughter is down at the kitchen, on guard all night. She hasn't been home for three days, but we are going to see that no vigilantes break up our kitchen."

You could feel life flowing into that meeting. The women of Flint had mobilized and they were in the fight for good. These were the women who baked the pies, helped the children off to school and kept the homes going. They were now defending these homes. One felt a completeness about them, the satisfaction and wholeness that people have when they are

using all their powers instead of letting four-fifths of their potentialities rot, unused.

WHEN I NEXT saw Mrs. Lamb she had just been through another gas battle—the battle in front of Chevrolet 9. She wiped her eyes continually and the odor of tear gas hung around her. She paused a moment to tell me about the fight.

"Our coming stopped them. There would have been lots more trouble if we hadn't come."

Ever since the four union organizers were kidnapped in Bay City and their cars



"Our boys must have air!"

sideswiped and wrecked on the road to Flint, sending three of them to the hospital, there has been a demand for action among the Flint workers.

Chevrolet then began discharging men for union activity. Chevrolet workers held excited meetings; there was a demand for action. On February 1 Chevrolet sat down. Through a move of clever strategy, a demonstration was held in Plant 9 to divert the company police and the extra thugs from Plant 4, which can tie up all production.

A call came to the women's auxiliary holding a meeting in Pengally Hall. The Emergency Brigade sprang into action. Down went the "red caps" to Plant 9. The American flag at the head, staves in their hands, down they marched. They

could see the fighting dimly; gas bombs were being thrown.

"We must give our boys air."

"We mustn't break the windows," some one cried.

"We've got to break them; they've got to have air."

They got air, all right.

The sound car begged the women to go back to the hall to recuperate from the tear gas. They went unwillingly, but only to return a little later to picket Chevrolet 4.

Mrs. Genora Johnson's voice came from the sound car:

"We women don't want violence; we don't want trouble. But we are going to protect our husbands. The women of the Emergency Brigade are soon coming back."

The new sit-downers of Chevrolet 4 cheered. Some of those women were to remain throughout the freezing night, picketing the plant. There was no disorder, the pickets soon resolved themselves into a compact, singing line. Fires were built in tin cans.

Nevertheless the sheriff and the mayor called for the troops and a cordon was thrown around the plant. No one was allowed past and the women were not even allowed to go for coffee at a nearby restaurant, nor were the sit-downers allowed to give them water. Nor was food allowed to the sit-downers until nearly twenty-four hours later, when the Emergency Brigade triumphantly escorted in truckloads of food to the sitters in Chevrolet 4.

TWO DAYS AFTER this, Woman's Day was celebrated here in Flint. This day marked the launching of a movement which is destined to spread among the working women of the country. An Emergency Brigade had already been formed in Detroit and a large contingent came wearing green caps. Although there was almost no notification for Woman's Day, delegations came from Lansing and even Toledo.

The first parade ever held by the Emergency Brigade walked through the heart

(Continued on page 29)



"Our boys must have air!"

NEVER TOO LATE

By Leane Zugsmith

Life may begin at forty, eighty or any age. It depends on you.
If you want to start over you always can, as Mrs. Albee shows.

ALTHOUGH old Mrs. Albee had been a steady churchgoer as a young woman, she had ceased to find time to attend services after the first of her eight children had arrived. Now that she was seventy-one and a great-grandmother and a widow with ample time on her hands, she had not yet got round to rejoining the congregation. Some said Paul, husband of Lily, her fifth daughter, with whom old Mrs. Albee now lived, was responsible; but old Mrs. Albee merely responded with a serene smile to such accusations. If as a girl she had possessed the usual number of romantic notions, she had mislaid them among the years. By now, she had no censure for the antics of her grandchildren. She did not even take part in the ferocious battles waged across the bridge table by the elderly women with whom she played cards. Although they gambled for microscopic stakes, they became so acrid about paying up that the scorekeeper of the afternoon regularly went home without saying good bye. Lily, who laughed herself sick at the procedure of the game, was convinced that if one of the grandmothers were caught cheating, old Mrs. Albee would greet the discovery with nothing more than her tranquil smile.

The great-grandchildren were too young to appreciate her. The grandchildren adored her and were always sending her gifts to signify their devotion. Despite the fact that old Mrs. Albee loved to receive packages, she invariably stored away their contents. Negligees, cigarette holders, inexpensive jewelry, vanity cases, silk lingerie and even the sensible wearing apparel she carefully confided to the large closet in her room. She always explained that she would use, or wear, the gift next season. She had early learned to be frugal for herself; and she was uncomfortable in something new.

While Lily never tried to persuade her mother to make use of these articles, Paul often hoped to bait her by asking her when she was going to hold the rummage sale of all that stuff in the closet. With composure, old Mrs. Albee would reply:

"I'll let you know when, Paul."

SOME OF THE children had been afraid she would not get along with Paul, yet old Mrs. Albee had been living in his home for five years and never had a word to say against him. She seemed to know that men

who had retired from business, and whose children have gone off, had time to indulge their crotchets. Paul always had been the worrying kind, and now this disposition of his was more marked.

One of Paul's favorite theories was that everything was chaos and due to malevolent chance. When he read about a disaster in the newspapers—and he was always on the lookout for one—he would stride up and down the room, shouting to his wife and mother-in-law:

"That's a fine thing, isn't it? Eleven innocent men and women killed in a train wreck. And people say there's Some One Looking Out After Us All! Who looked out after *them*? Not even the paid motor-man of the train!"

Lily would murmur: "That's terrible, isn't it?"

Old Mrs. Albee's response would rarely exceed a facial expression of sympathy.

"And do you know, Mother Albee," Paul would point his finger at her, "people are happy when they learn of things like this happening. Yes, ma'am, you wouldn't believe it, but they're *happy* because it didn't happen to them!"

"Now, Paul, that's not so," Lily would say absently. Old Mrs. Albee's attentive expression would encourage him to continue.

"I remember when the *Slocum* went down, hundreds of innocent children perished!" he would cry out. "And a man came into my office that day and had the audacity, yes, the audacity, to say there was a reason for it, everything happened because of one Big Plan. I told him the reason for it was rotten boilers and a rotten boat, that's what I told him. I wouldn't give him any business either, the fool!"

If guests were present, Lily might laugh at this point, saying: "Isn't Paul terrible? Mama went to church practically all her life until he started this talk."

Sometimes old Mrs. Albee would say: "I stopped a little before that." More often, she would only smile.

"And people like to hear about it!" Paul would exclaim. "I know they cry and they oh-and-ah but secretly they're tickled to death, because it didn't happen to them. I remember when I was a boy, nineteen years of age, in Philadelphia. I used to go rowing on the Schuylkill with some young men of my age. We were all

swimmers with good broad shoulders—"Paul would flex his arms—"but one day we took along my little brother Henry. He was only twelve, I remember very well, because I had given him a course of swimming lessons at the Brigadier Natatorium for his birthday present. We got out in the middle of the Schuylkill River, and the boat sprang a leak quicker than you can say Jack Robinson. It capsized." Paul would overturn the boat with his hands. "A crowd gathered on the bank, a boat put out to us. When we got to shore, dripping, a lady ran up to me and, with the most exquisite *pleasure* in her voice, she asked: 'Was a little boy drowned? Was a little boy drowned?' 'No, ma'am,' I said. 'Are you sure?' she said, with the pleasure in her voice changed to the most acute disappointment. 'Are you sure a little boy wasn't drowned?' I drew myself up. 'Go to the devil, ma'am,' I said. But I tell you, that woman's enjoyment was ruined for the day!"

"Now, Paul," Lily would say. Old Mrs. Albee might laugh.

PAUL never worried much about his mother-in-law's independent jaunts round the city until the evening she was late for dinner. At first, he was merely exasperated about the delay in eating but, as six-thirty passed into seven, he began to prophesy gloomy sequels to Lily's permitting her poor old mother to wander about all by herself. He telephoned old Mrs. Albee's cronies and, when he learned that none of them had seen her since the day before, he went out on the sidewalk to watch for her. By the time he gave up his vigil it was almost seven-thirty and Lily was disturbed. Paul took out his watch and gave his mother-in-law fifteen minutes, at the end of which he would telephone the hospitals, the Missing Persons Bureau and the newspapers. Before he could do so, old Mrs. Albee appeared, tidy and apparently unharmed.

"For God's sake!" Paul shouted, springing towards her. "*Where have you been?* You've had us out of our minds! I was just lifting up the phone to call the police."

Old Mrs. Albee made a small gesture of revulsion; but her voice was calm as she said: "I'm glad you didn't do that."

Even Lily spoke. "I wish you'd called us, Mama. Do you know what time it is?"



She did not even take part in the ferocious battles waged across the bridge table.

"I really didn't think of the time." Old Mrs. Albee sat down. "I went to the Bijou and sat through the second show, because I had fallen asleep and missed part of the first."

"Through the second show!" cried Paul. "She sat through the second show while our blood pressure went up, worrying about her."

"Well, forgetting the time can happen to any one," said Lily conciliatingly.

"I MIGHT have been earlier, only just as I got out," said old Mrs. Albee, smoothing her neat black gloves, "I heard quite a commotion at the corner, so I walked towards it. A number of large and quite mean-looking policemen were hitting young boys and girls with their nightsticks. Those children were badly hurt because, I learned, they were parading with signs in order to get better working conditions."

"Hurt?" Lily repeated in an astonished voice.

"You stand there calmly and tell us that!" Paul's face was almost purple. "You might have been killed. You sit through two shows in a movie house so that you can be killed in a riot!"

"It wasn't a riot," said old Mrs. Albee, "it was policemen attacking those boys and girls. I saw them marching quite peacefully before I went into the Bijou."

"For God's sake. For God's sake." Paul shook his head wildly. "I don't know how you escaped."

"Well, Paul," said old Mrs. Albee, "some one was looking after me."

For nearly half a minute, Paul stood stockstill, his head thrust forward, his mouth open, his eyes bulged out. Then he shook himself and in a partially controlled voice, spoke.

"Perhaps you will be good enough to tell me, Mother Albee," he said, "just where you were in this riot that wasn't a riot so that you could escape injury by the bounty—by—through the Great Plan—that you could be taken care of by this Some One—"

"His name is Crowley," said old Mrs. Albee. "He looked out for me quite well; we got into a doorway. He's connected with the union, that's why we exchanged names so that I can testify as to what I witnessed." She smiled sweetly. "In court."

"You hear? You hear?" Paul called to his wife. "She's taking up with rioters now. There isn't enough risk in life so that, at the age of seventy-one—! I think we

ought to take her to a doctor, a head doctor."

"Paul," said Lily, reproachfully.

"Don't Paul me!" he bellowed. "I was never more serious in my life. I want to save her! I might have seen what it would come to when she sits through two shows, won't even wear a new gadget, hoards things—" he turned to his mother-in-law—"Maybe you're going to hold your rummage sale in the middle of Erie Street!"

"Not quite in the middle of Erie," said old Mrs. Albee. "We thought we could get a vacant store for nothing, Mr. Crowley and I."

"What?" Paul's roar was hollow.

"Yes, that's our plan to make some money for the union. With other contributions and what I have in the closet, we hope to make quite a little for those boys and girls. Our plan is to start the sale early next week."

"You mean you're actually going to hold a rummage—" Paul finished out the feebly articulated sentence with a flutter of his hand.

"Well, Paul, I always told you I'd let you know when," said old Mrs. Albee, and she gave a soft friendly little laugh, deep in her throat.

THE MOSCOW THEATRE FOR CHILDREN

By Thyra Edwards

IT WAS TWO O'CLOCK. Several hundred children romped through the buffet and various game rooms at the Moscow Theatre for Children. The performance would begin at three, but they had come an hour earlier to enjoy themselves. In the broad foyer a group of boys and girls played with wooden guns. A glee club was formed around the piano and began singing children's songs.

The bell rang, just as in any grown-up theatre. Everybody scurried inside—a brief rustle locating their seats—the taller ones seated in the rear, smaller ones to the front.

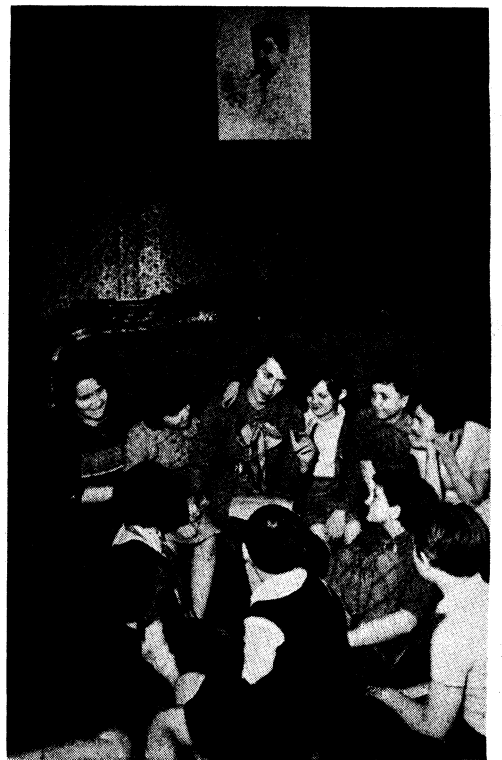
The curtain rises on a bright drop, all patch work in primary colors. This gives way to a fairy castle, swans and naive figures. The performance is the opera "Tsar Sultan" from Pushkin's poem, with Rimsky-Korsakoff's music. A jolly old lady in a bright shawl, frilled cap and spectacles, comes forward with her knitting. She explains to the children, from time to time, just what is going on on the stage. The opera proceeds. Throughout I sit on the edge of my chair, as thrilled and fascinated as any child in the house.

Eighteen years ago when 15-year old Natalia Satz set out to organize the Moscow Theatre for Children, she, perhaps,

unwittingly, established an institution and created a new profession. For the Moscow Theatre for Children is first and always a professional theatre, with directors, stage managers, wardrobe designers, producers, playwrights, technicians, composers, and a permanent staff of fifty adult, trained and experienced actors. And in addition there is its corps of teachers, pedologists, psychologists, game leaders and song leaders.

In the beginning there were no plays; so plays had to be created. And here, as in the grown-up theatre, the audience is the test of the play—but a much more closely studied and analyzed and intelligently catered to audience. And this is where the teachers, the psychologists and the pedologists function.

Plays are developed for particular age groups. The repertoire of the theatre is classified for children 7 to 9 years, 9 to 12 years, 12 to 16 years and 16 to 19 years. Children under 7, according to Dr. Arkins, pedology professor attached to the theatre staff, should not attend theatres and cinemas. They should have rest and quiet and the puppet shows and simple entertainment furnished in the kindergartens, but not the organized theatre.



"Auntie Natasha (Natalia Satz) entertaining a group of youthful Soviet critics. (The Soviet children have a way of addressing their elders as Uncle or Aunt.)"

Each new play is carefully rehearsed and discussed at least three months. And then it comes to the test, the young audience. Unseen and unobserved, pedologists and psychologists are stationed at observation posts to note on charts the incidents in the play which provoke laughter, tension, enthusiasm, or which lose the child's attention. If laughter or tears or any other response is provoked at an illogical point, a staff conference is held and the play is reworked in relation to the recorded reactions of the children.

THEN THERE are the conferences into which the children are called. Announcements are sent to each of the schools that a conference is scheduled and naming the play to be discussed. The children then elect their representative to the conference. These representatives do not limit their criticism to what merely pleased or entertained them. The older children are particularly observant and critical of technique.

Each month approximately 4,800 children come into and are influenced by the Moscow Theatre for Children. In twelve years the theatre gave 4,500 performances to 3,500,000 children. Each child of 7 years or over must have an opportunity to see each play. Therefore, only three new plays are produced each season. There are, of course, repeated performances of the classics and of old favorites demanded by the young patrons.



There is the fat old king who listens to the gossip of the ugly ladies-in-waiting and casts his lovely bride and the infant prince out upon the sea.

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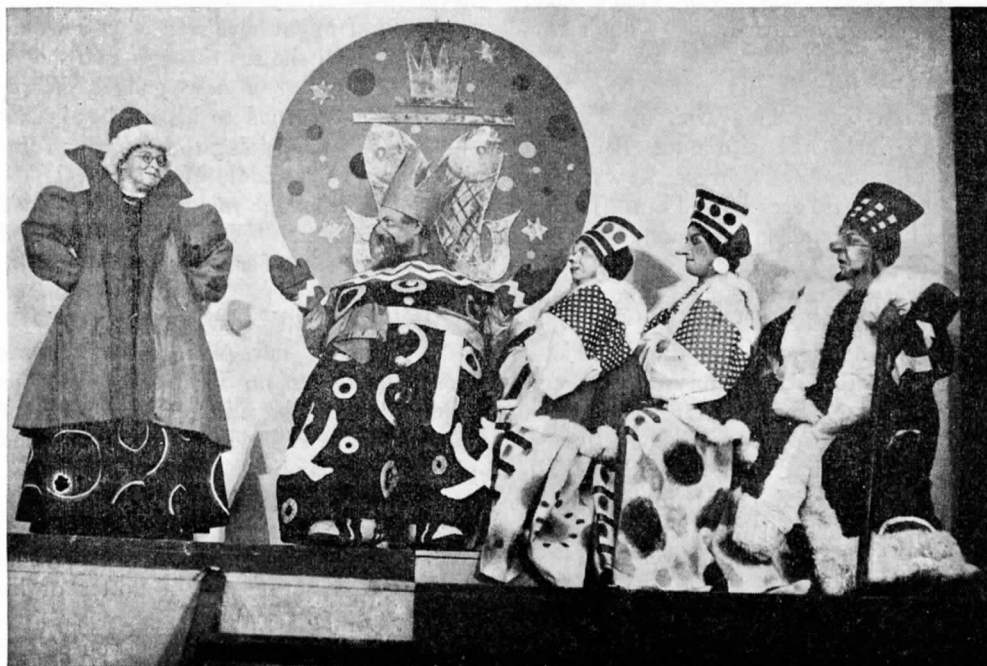


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There is the fat old king who listens to the gossip of the ugly ladies-in-waiting and casts his lovely bride and the infant prince out upon the sea.



Honored Artist of the Republic, Natalia Satz, creator and director of the first permanent professional theatre for children.

The same children rotate to the theatre about once a month. On this particular day the opera "Tsar Sultan" was being witnessed by 800 youngsters from a distant village. I say "distant" advisedly, for they had walked 7 kilometers to the station and then an hour's ride by the electric to the city. But they were there, dusty and smiling and laden with yellow field flowers, which, I discovered, were their offering to "Auntie Natasha" (Natalia Satz).

Besides the performances inside the theatre these versatile actors of the children's theatre give performances in parks children's clubs, on boulevards and street corners and in hospitals. I am recalling a particularly satisfying scene. It was in the sanatorium for children afflicted with tuberculosis of the bone and who must remain ever in bed. The theatre's staff had worked out a very simple little story about an old woman and a Pioneer, quite simple, for a hospital ward affords neither space, stage nor sets, and taken out of what might have been an incident in the life experience of any one of them. What a picture it was. All the gay little heads stretching themselves from their pillows and forgetting for a brief hour at least the gnawing misery of tubercular bones.

[The Young Pioneers is an organization of young people, 8 to 16 years old, boys and girls together. Theirs is a program for the development and training of Soviet youth to carry on and extend the new socialist society.]

This children's theatre also functions

frankly as a politically integrating force. The child mind is trained on the life about him. In the Soviet Union there exist many races—Eskimos, Orientals, Slavs, Eastern peoples. There is constant talk of these national minorities and autonomous republics in Pioneer papers, in magazines, in school books. And so the young patrons instructed their child delegates to raise the question at the Children's Conference, "How do our brothers live in the Soviet republics along the borders of Asia?" And in response to this the theatre commissioned N. Y. Shestakov to make an extended tour of Turkmenistan. Out of this journey he built the play "Aul Gigzhe" (Gidzhe Village), describing the life of the peoples on the Asiatic border.

AGAIN the child delegates asked: "And how does our Brother Negro live outside the Soviet Union?" In response Natalia Satz created the story of "The Negro Boy and the Monkey." The children never tire of this one. They crowd backstage to meet the little Negro boy and to see if the monkey is a real monkey or only the actress Claudia Koreneva all "monkeyed up."

I attended a number of performances at the Moscow Children's Theatre. Once there was no play at all but two merry clowns brought out a great, gay chest, raised the lid and a Jack-in-the-box sprang up bearing a crayon portrait. Time after time he dived in and came up with these chalked sketches of the masters of Russian literature: Pushkin, Greboyedoff, Turgenyev, Gogol, Kriloff. And each time the audience, on this occasion 7 to 9 year olds, recognized and called out the names.

These were followed by portraits of characters from the poems and fables of these writers, many of which they have already seen staged in their theatre and recognize as readily as they do their authors. All this was interspersed by recitation of poems from these writers, with happy recognition and participation on the part of the children.

In this way, it was explained, the children are introduced to the classic Russian writers and many children from 2 to 6 years old recite the poems of Pushkin. They especially love Pushkin and I learned from a 9-year old that it was because "he was the first of the classic Russian writers and he gave to Russian literature its form, and besides he was a Decembrist, a political rebel in his time."

Today there are 100 professional theatres for children in the Soviet Union—in Tiflis there are three in three language groups, Georgian, Russian, Uzbek. A special technicum has been established for training actors for children's theatres. Members of the staff of the Moscow Children's Theatre are lecturers on the faculty of this technicum and students at the technicum come to the children's theatre for observation and "field work." Periodically there are special institutes for directors of children's theatres. Directors from the children's theatres from all over the Soviet attend. In this way they achieve unity of direction.

The Moscow Children's Theatre is an institution for political, social, artistic, educational, moral and international development. To this end each performance is constructed; but close attention is always given to theatrical technique, beauty and form.



Great mechanized waves toss back and forth across the stage as the children follow the amazing trials of the queen and the young prince, who are tossed about in a keg for twenty years.



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frankly as a politically integrating force. The child mind is trained on the life about him. In the Soviet Union there exist many races—Eskimos, Orientals, Slavs, Eastern peoples. There is constant talk of these national minorities and autonomous republics in Pioneer papers, in magazines, in school books. And so the young patrons instructed their child delegates to raise the question at the Children's Conference, "How do our brothers live in the Soviet republics along the borders of Asia?" And in response to this the theatre commissioned N. Y. Shestakov to make an extended tour of Turkmenistan. Out of this journey he built the play "Aul Gigzhe" (Gidzhe Village), describing the life of the peoples on the Asiatic border.

AGAIN the child delegates asked: "And how does our Brother Negro live outside the Soviet Union?" In response Natalia Satz created the story of "The Negro Boy and the Monkey." The children never tire of this one. They crowd backstage to meet the little Negro boy and to see if the monkey is a real monkey or only the actress Claudia Koreneva all "monkeyed up."

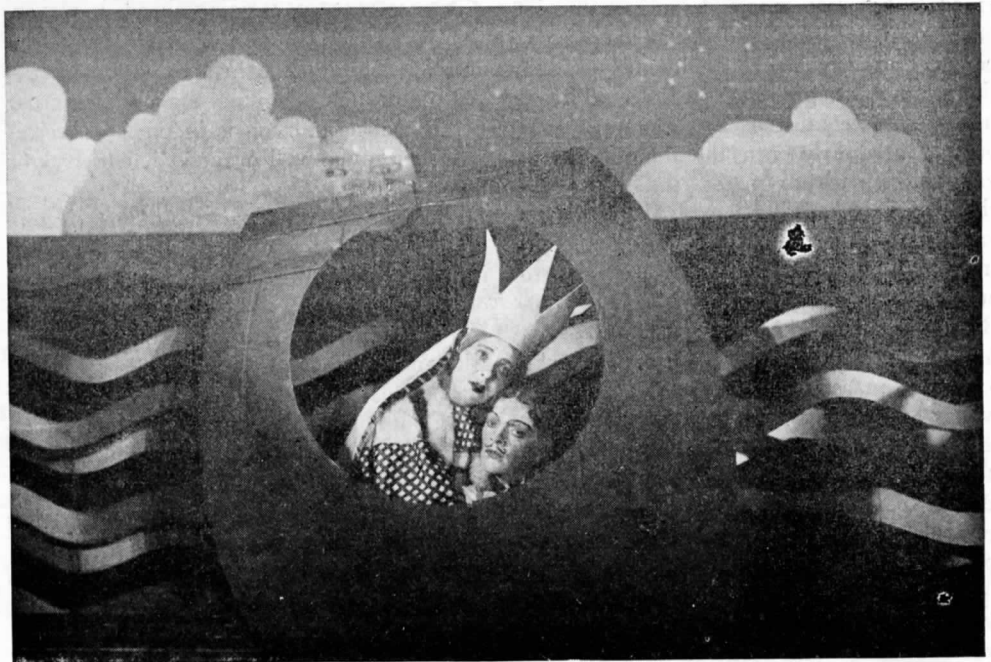
I attended a number of performances at the Moscow Children's Theatre. Once there was no play at all but two merry clowns brought out a great, gay chest, raised the lid and a Jack-in-the-box sprang up bearing a crayon portrait. Time after time he dived in and came up with these chalked sketches of the masters of Russian literature: Pushkin, Greboyedoff, Turgenyev, Gogol, Kriloff. And each time the audience, on this occasion 7 to 9 year olds, recognized and called out the names.

These were followed by portraits of characters from the poems and fables of these writers, many of which they have already seen staged in their theatre and recognize as readily as they do their authors. All this was interspersed by recitation of poems from these writers, with happy recognition and participation on the part of the children.

In this way, it was explained, the children are introduced to the classic Russian writers and many children from 2 to 6 years old recite the poems of Pushkin. They especially love Pushkin and I learned from a 9-year old that it was because "he was the first of the classic Russian writers and he gave to Russian literature its form, and besides he was a Decembrist, a political rebel in his time."

Today there are 100 professional theatres for children in the Soviet Union—in Tiflis there are three in three language groups, Georgian, Russian, Uzbek. A special technicum has been established for training actors for children's theatres. Members of the staff of the Moscow Children's Theatre are lecturers on the faculty of this technicum and students at the technicum come to the children's theatre for observation and "field work." Periodically there are special institutes for directors of children's theatres. Directors from the children's theatres from all over the Soviet attend. In this way they achieve unity of direction.

The Moscow Children's Theatre is an institution for political, social, artistic, educational, moral and international development. To this end each performance is constructed; but close attention is always given to theatrical technique, beauty and form.



Great mechanized waves toss back and forth across the stage as the children follow the amazing trials of the queen and the young prince, who are tossed about in a keg for twenty years.

Union Behind The Counter

By Clarina Michelson

"MY JOB is pretty good. We work 39 hours a week, get a \$21 minimum wage, have two weeks vacation with pay, and are not afraid of being fired." If you heard a department store worker say that, after seeing the Ohrbach and May department store picket lines, and after reading Leane Zugsmith's book, "A Time to Remember," you would think you hadn't heard right. But the employees at Cooperative Distributors, in New York, are saying just that. The answer is *union*. They are not only 100 per cent organized, but Cooperative Distributors makes every effort to promote and sell goods made under union conditions. All hiring is done through the Department Store Employees Union, Local 1250.

The good conditions achieved in this small store are an added incentive to organization in the large stores—in Macy's, where mass lay-offs often mean that from 8,000 to 10,000 workers are fired at a moment's notice, forced to try to get jobs in other stores that are also discharging workers because a slow season is setting in; in Hearn's, where the owner, Maurice Levin, has the effrontery to tell his employees, who get \$14 and \$15 a week: "My four and one-half years of association with you in the development of Hearn's has left many happy memories burning in my mind and heart, like a soft, perpetual flame, which the winds of destiny cannot altogether blow into nothingness. . . . We must be ever ready to pour our sweat freely into the building of a greater Hearn's to meet the flux and change of a changing world. Tomorrow's value of Hearn's stock will depend on the smiling and efficient service we render to our patrons today and every day"; in Bloomingdale's, where extras are hired for \$3 a day, and then told that they are "lucky to be put on as regulars, but of course the wages are \$2 less a week," and who are then fired after a few weeks; at *all* the stores where the employees work under a terrific speed-up, are constantly in fear of losing their jobs, and are forced to work extra hours without pay.

Agnes worked for many weeks for \$3 a week for an employer who told her she was "learning" and lucky to have the job. Belle and Janet were fired because their employer was able to hire a female rat to

report union members. The union and not-yet union people in the stores have countless hardships and difficulties, not only in their working and living conditions, because of their low wages and fatigue from long hours and speed-up, but also in building the union.



ORGANIZATION is going ahead, however, in spite of the many attempts of the employers to block it through various methods of intimidation, stool-pigeons, their use of the police and courts in times of strike, and their own well-organized, closely knit associations.

The control of department stores is getting into fewer and fewer hands, making it easier for them to deal with strikes and other actions that jeopardize their profits. For example, the same corporation owns Bloomingdale's in New York, Abraham & Straus in Brooklyn, Filene's, White's, and the Continental Clothing Stores in Boston, and F. & R. Lazarus in Columbus, which jointly employ 13,000 workers. Louis E. Kirstein, who is closely associated with Lehman Bros., bankers, is the director of all the stores except F. & R. Lazarus. The president of Stern's, in Manhattan, was formerly with Abraham & Straus. And they have plenty of money. The *New York Times* reports a 10½ per cent increase in department store business in the

past year. Percy Straus, of Macy's, struggles along on a salary of \$118,425, besides income from other sources.

The union has received help from such organizations as the League of Women Shoppers, Progressive Women's Council, Women's Trade Union League, Consumers' League and others in its campaign to maintain the 40-hour week, which has been kept in Ohrbach's and Hearn's because of the existence of the union. Support has been given in strikes and lockouts. These organizations also help the union by showing both employees and employers that there are thousands of consumers who prefer to buy from organized employees who work under good conditions. A campaign has been started for shoppers to carry small printed circulars in their pocketbooks, to be given to the people from whom they buy, stating that as consumers they would rather buy from organized workers.

THERE WAS THE time when the Saturday matinee performance of a Theatre Union play had to be called off because almost the entire cast was arrested for picketing with the strikers at Ohrbach's 14th Street store. When, with many misgivings, the management announced that the play could not go on, the audience applauded! There was the time when the Irish Catholic cops, ready to go into action with clubs swinging, in front of Ohrbach's, held their sticks high in amazement as a large delegation of Catholic workers appeared, bearing picket signs inscribed: "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth. Don't Buy at Ohrbach's!"

Department store workers are on the move. Two years ago this month 1,000 workers of the Boston Store in Milwaukee were out on strike. Truck drivers and building service employees struck in sympathy with the clerks. A strike of several thousand has recently ended in Philadelphia. Support came from the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and other unions. A council of the eight locals which had members in the five stores involved was set up. The League of Women Shoppers picketed. There was practically no news of the strike in any of the local papers, in spite of the fact that Market Street was full of marching pickets. The papers do not want to antagonize store heads because of the advertising. Workers in a store in Washington, D.C., recently went out on strike.

Department store workers are fed up with their low wages, long hours, speed-up, and insecurity. They have shown their militancy, courage and endurance in the Ohrbach, May and other store strikes. They are on the move. With your support, the support of consumers, they will go places. Watch them go!

UNION
DON'T BUY AT
OHRBACH'S
NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL UNION
OF AMERICA
A.F. of L.

ONE WAY
BWAY

Ohrbach's





WHO PICKS YOUR CLOTHES?

Concluding the article by Willson Whitman

THE RENAISSANCE was a gaudy "prosperity" period in which ladies of wealth trailed about in velvets and gold embroidery, while their boy friends wore feathered headgear. Clothes of the common folk

were doubtless more practical but the stylists picked for revival the rich costumes of museum portraits, and ad writers whooped with joy over a return to elegance, glamour and so on. The catch is, how do velvets and gold embroidery and plumed hats look going to work at eight o'clock in the morning? Yes, that's how they did look, and why sensible women would have none of them despite all persuasion.

In judging the worth of a derived fashion we must consider the purpose of the original design. That is why movie fashions are so seldom good for general wear, and why the influence of pictures on styles is usually deplored. Screen styles are designed for what theatre people call "flash"; often it is the literal flash of sequins to catch the light and help the star to twinkle. Other theatrical reliances are sharp contrasts between black and white, big bands of fur or ostrich, or even the famous chicken feathers they used to hang on Marlene Dietrich. None of these things are good design in themselves, and well-dressed women no more dream of copying them than they would copy the spangles of a graceful young girl on a flying trapeze.

On the other hand, Hollywood styles—things worn off the screen by movie people

or other comfort-seeking Californians—are often good. Garbo's polo coats and the flexible ventilated oxfords called "Softies" both started on the West Coast and moved east.

The functional test bars another influence that can't be good, ever. That is the military motif. Women's suits, nipped in at the waist, braided and befrogged like the tunic of a Death's Head Hussar, will always look as silly as they should on a sex that should oppose war. And the same goes for hats of martial inspiration.

The exaggerated shoulders that have marred many clothes for several seasons are military in origin; that's one thing wrong with them. To an artist's eye they are as bad as bustles, except that like high

heels they can be said to represent feminine aspiration towards better physical development. Of course they are inexcusable on women naturally broad-shouldered, as are high heels on women naturally tall.



There are some colors—purple is the outstanding example—which are all right if you have lots of clothes and can afford many changes, but which can't be endured every day. It is an axiom that well-dressed women choose a neutral basic color and stick to it, with variations only in accessories. I know one who has debated for two years the possibility of going from brown to black.

To keep to the same general line, and a single basic color, may seem dreadfully dull; but actually the possibilities are still endless. You can play with all the little things, buttons, clips, scarfts, boutonnières, and go in for contrast in blouses or sweaters. If you stick to brown in winter and blue in summer you can now have matching shoes instead of the dismal black ones of an earlier day.

Good clothes need never be expensive. "Good" shops may be, but it's well to educate your eye, if it needs education, by looking at "classic" models in the windows, at least, of the best shop you can find. Then you can recognize them copied in the cheaper shops or on sale at a season's end for half price or less.

HERE ARE A few tips from an old hand at bargain hunting, who went confi-

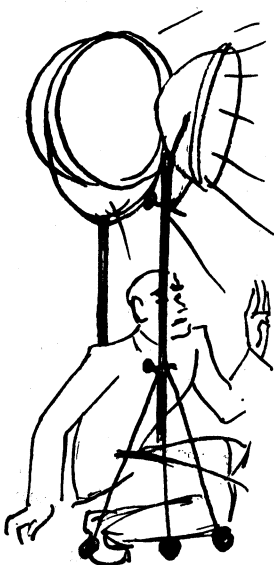
dently and happily to a tea for Mrs. Roosevelt wearing a four-year old hat and a dress picked up for \$5 two seasons before.

Dresses: The plainer the better, if lines are good. For day dresses, pay as much as you can; a twelve or sixteen-dollar dress at half price is worth two snappy little \$3.95 numbers.

Consider, if the dress is good but too fussy, whether offending ornaments can be removed. If trimming is fragile, count the cost of changing it.

If you're hard to fit, learn to make necessary alterations. Also cheap dresses should be bought in large sizes and cut down, to keep them from being skimpy.

(Continued on page 29)



The Social Security Act

By Dorothy Douglas

What will the Social Security Act do for you when you are aged or out of work?

IN TODAY'S *New York Times* (January 2, 1937) I read: "U. S. Recovery Acclaimed by World Labor Office," and then this radio broadcast by the director: "Great countries like the United States and Canada have been obliged to establish systems of social security. This means that when the next depression comes there will be less distress and destitution because the workers will have resources to fall back upon."

So the depression is officially over—over, that is, in terms of business activity and profits, though many millions are still unemployed and hundreds of thousands of others are struggling desperately to hold on to vanishing W.P.A. jobs. But is it true that, when "the next depression" comes (which, under present conditions, is quite rightly accepted as inevitable, and not so far off either), the unemployed and aged will really have "resources" to fall back upon? Alas, these hopes are largely illusory.

The Social Security Act makes three different kinds of provisions for the workers of this country, all of them inadequate. Two of them are for the aged, one for the unemployed. For the aged there are the so-called Old Age Annuities (the "monthly

check to you when you are old", about which we have been reading so much) and, supplementing that, grants-in-aid to the several States to help them pay their present forms of State old age pensions.

For the annuities it can be said that they are at least a nation-wide system, not chopped into forty-eight different jurisdictions. But their basis is one that has never been tried by any civilized country before: it attempts to make the present young workers and their employers pay the whole cost not only of their own old age benefits but of those of middle-aged workers as well. The Federal Government, which alone can reach the wealthy taxpayer adequately, through income, inheritance, and corporation taxes, contributes nothing.

Naturally, with such a narrow base the old age annuities are bound to be inadequate in amount.

Take the case of a young girl starting to work now, in 1937, at the age of 15. Each week her pay will be docked year after year in increasing amounts, for her old age. (Which she may never reach. But let us suppose she does reach it.) Suppose she averages \$12 a week wages throughout her working life. And suppose she is never sick, never laid off, never unemployed



Here are a farmer and his sons praying for rain. There are 6,300,000 farmers in the United States. All are excluded from the Social Security Act.

a single day for 40 years! At the end of the 40 years, in the year 1977, at the age of 55, let us suppose she is discharged. She then gets nothing. She has to wait another 10 years. In 1987, at the age of 65, she will receive \$7.46 a week, just about the same as an old age pensioner under our better State laws today would get free, without having had her pay docked all those years.

Or suppose that the woman in question earning \$12 a week and beginning to have her pay docked for her annuities today is not a young girl but a woman of 35. Suppose she, too, never misses a day or is out of a job for a day throughout her working life. Suppose she, too, is discharged at the age of 55, that is, in twenty years from now. She, too, will have to wait ten years, on nothing; and then at the age of 65 she will get \$5.30 a week! And in order to get even that much, the younger girl will have been helping pay for her.

But this is all on the assumption that these women will work in occupations covered by the law. Actually, a majority of our working women fall outside. Taking employed men and women together, about half of them all told are covered. The whole farm population is left outside (hired hands, tenants and croppers along with farm owners), so are domestic servants and casual workers, public employees of all sorts (from public school teachers to bus drivers on municipal trolleys) and all persons working for charitable, educational, etc., organizations that are not run for profit. (That includes everybody from trained nurse or social worker to typist and janitor who works for such organizations.) Now it so happens that a disproportionate number of women work at these excluded



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Right: A family of evicted onion pickers. There are over 3,000,000 farm wage workers in the country who are excluded from the Act.

Above: A family of transients. These people who most need security are excluded from benefits.

occupations: women constitute almost all the domestic servants of the country, and a majority of the teachers, trained nurses, social and clerical workers for non-profit enterprises. So a disproportionate number of women will get no annuities. In the case of Negro women workers, four-fifths of them fall in the two excluded occupations of agriculture and domestic service.

AS TO HOUSEWIVES, by definition of course they fall outside the payroll annuity scheme altogether. All their lives long they have worked without a wage, so there is nothing to dock: hence how (the defenders of the Act would blandly ask) can they be having any reserve built up for them for their old age? Married men are given no allowances for dependents in their annuities, so where a wife has the misfortune to live to old age alongside her husband, she will halve his pittance.

Roughly speaking, at average wages prevailing throughout the country today, a young worker would have to be not over 20 years old now in order to hope to get enough at the age of 65 (supposing he was employed *without a break* from now, for 45 years, until he reaches that advanced age!) to take care of a wife as well as himself at a level of about \$45 a month for the two of them combined.

Naturally, then, a majority of the aged population will continue to have to be provided for outside the annuity scheme altogether (about two-thirds, it is estimated); and of those who do receive some annuities, the majority will have to have them supplemented by other aid.



Here is where the Act's grants-in-aid feature comes in. The Federal Government is to make outright grants—just simple, outright grants without any life-long docking, bookkeeping and building up of individual "accounts"—to the several States, to supplement the States' own pension schemes for their "aged needy." The grants are on a matching basis, 50-50.

BUT THERE is an upper limit of \$15 per month per person from the Federal Government. Hence there is every inducement for the States in no case to give over \$15 a month themselves, thus making a \$30 a month or \$7 a week legal maximum. Moreover the Act sets no minimum. So cases may continue such as the writer saw in Arkansas last Winter where destitute old people were receiving \$1.50 a month as their State old age pension! Only now, thanks to the meticulous partnership of Uncle Sam, they would get all of \$3 a month. And everywhere the amount, whatever it was, would be given to the aged only after a "means test": they would receive it not as of right, as workers, but as "needy persons."

So much for the aged. The unemployed have even less satisfactory provision. For them there is no nation-wide law at all. The Act simply imposes a tax upon employers (3 per cent of payrolls) against which can be credited any contributions they may have to make under any State unemployment insurance laws. In order to keep their money at home, 35 States have accordingly qualified now by setting up some sort of legislation. What sort is left up to them: *no standards* are set nationally; *no contribution* to the fund is made by the Federal Government; the States are mere-

ly warned not to promise benefits in excess of collections!

Here again the amounts set aside are grossly inadequate. On a 3 per cent payroll reserve, States are cautioned to restrict their benefit to a *maximum* of half of wages (no allowances for dependents) and the benefit period to a *maximum* of 15 weeks for any individual after a "waiting period" of 4 weeks during which he would draw nothing. But in order to draw even this niggardly maximum a worker would have to be steadily employed for a long period first. Those suffering from irregular employment would benefit for only a few days or weeks, and those already unemployed, not at all: being on no one's payroll, no reserves would have been built up for them.

THE EXCLUDED CLASSES in the case of the unemployed are even larger than in the case of the Old Age Annuities: not only all workers in agriculture, domestic service, public employment, casual employment and non-profit-making enterprises, and not only, as there, the self-employed of all sorts, but also all those who have not been long resident in the given State, in some States even those who have not worked a specified number of months for one employer, and in all cases, those who work for employers of less than eight persons. All told, it is estimated that not more than one-fourth of the gainfully occupied at most are covered. In the case of women, the proportion would be even smaller.

Taking matters at their best, take a man or woman who really would qualify: who has been in the correct type of employment and who has been employed steadily and for a long time. Say his wage is \$15 a

(Continued on page 36)



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1935 Convention of the Progressive Women's Council.

Women's Clubs Come Alive

By Gudrun Borg

While your husband wins higher wages through his union you can win lower prices through the Progressive Women's Council.

BACK IN 1923 our husbands and brothers seldom talked about women's clubs. And when they did bring up our sewing circles and peace societies and Wednesday Literary Lunches they made jokes of them. In 1937 many of these men speak of their women's organizations with the same drive and vitality in their voices as when they talk of their own unions.

What has brought about this eloquent change of attitude? Why have the once-despised women's organizations become a potent and respected force in American life?

We are going to answer these questions with a story, the story of the growth and development of one of the first and most important of this new kind of women's clubs—the Progressive Women's Council. It is a story bigger than any tale of love or individual drama . . . more full of color and unbreakable human courage. For the Progressive Women's Council is part of the vanguard of a mighty mass movement, whose growth and forward-flow is beginning to weld a whole class of women to strength and power.

The Progressive Women's Council is primarily an organization of housewives, with about seventy-five branches in New York,

New Jersey and Connecticut. After all, the greatest number of working women in America are not employed by industry. They are the women who cook and sew and wash and bring up babies. During the last fourteen years these women have come to play a more and more important role in the labor history of the United States.

The council started from a little group as simple as bread and butter. After the World War prices went up and up. Women whose men worked in factories and stores, and even the wives of doctors and engineers, began to find their household money strangely shrunken. Their dollars wouldn't pay the rent and buy enough food and clothing to keep their families comfortable and healthy.

All over New York City women got together and began to form protest groups. Almost spontaneously there were mass meetings, parades, consumer strikes. The women discovered that if they stuck together and fought hard they could win a measure of success in keeping down the cost of living. Their combined buying power could be forged into a dangerous threat to neighborhood tradesmen who profiteered. They decided to organize into a permanent club, and from this grew the Progressive Women's Council.

Every month they mapped out new campaigns. They learned to boycott. On the picket line they felt the thrill of solidarity and fellowship. They got up nerve to petition senators and canvass from house to house for new members.

SOMETIMES they won their struggles to keep down the prices of the bread and meat and vegetables that meant strength to their children. Sometimes they lost. They found they were not strong enough to win really big city-wide fights, or contests with powerful monopoly interests. Being wives and mothers of workers, and workers themselves, they would never accept price reductions that were taken out of the salaries of other workers, clerks and cashiers and errand boys.

Every experience gave them food for thought. Who were their natural allies in this struggle against the high cost of living? Where were the numbers who would unite with them, who would and could help them? What victories they had won had come through organization. On what new groups should they draw for strength?

Over supper tables, at meetings, doing their marketing, they couldn't help puzzling over it, talking about it. These problems

(Continued on page 26)



1935 Convention of the Progressive Women's Council.

Have You a Mother-In-Law?

By Jean Lyon

ONE OF THE most prevalent types of mother-in-law is the type who is sure that she knows just exactly what her son likes best to eat. And if you are his wife, it grows annoying.

This mother-in-law loves to watch you cook. "Oh, you mustn't put that in," she'll say, when you pick up the salt cellar. "Harry never eats salt in his spinach." And of course you want awfully badly to answer back. But you mustn't. That's not the way to break in a mother-in-law.

What you should do is to count ten before you say a word. While you're counting, remind yourself that Harry probably ate spinach without salt for twenty-four years before he met you, and that naturally his mother thinks that's the way he likes it. If you happen to know better, just keep it to yourself.

When you've finished counting ten, try to get the discussion on a different level. Tell her that Harry is so good-natured that he doesn't mind the mistakes you make. Or try to get recipes from her. Recipes are always safe.

If, however, she can't be gently kidded out of her bad habits, you'll probably have to make a definite truce with her. Let her cook dinner her own way on certain nights, if she promises to let you do it without interference on the other nights. She ought to be able to see that that's fair enough.

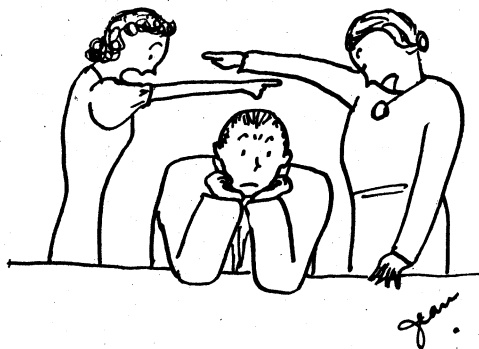


She insists on telling you how your husband likes his food seasoned.

IF YOUR MOTHER-IN-LAW starts to mumble things about the way you neglect your home every time you step out to a meeting, it grows pretty discouraging. "I never went to meetings when I was first married," she'll mutter over her darning. "I never let my children play in the streets, or my husband go hungry for any old meeting."

Now of course there are hundreds of answers to this—especially if it's a meeting of something important, like the trade union. But if you stop to give all the answers at once, you'll miss your meeting.

It's much better to begin gently and work up gradually, anyhow. You could start in by telling her that naturally she didn't go to meetings when she was first married, because she wasn't lucky enough

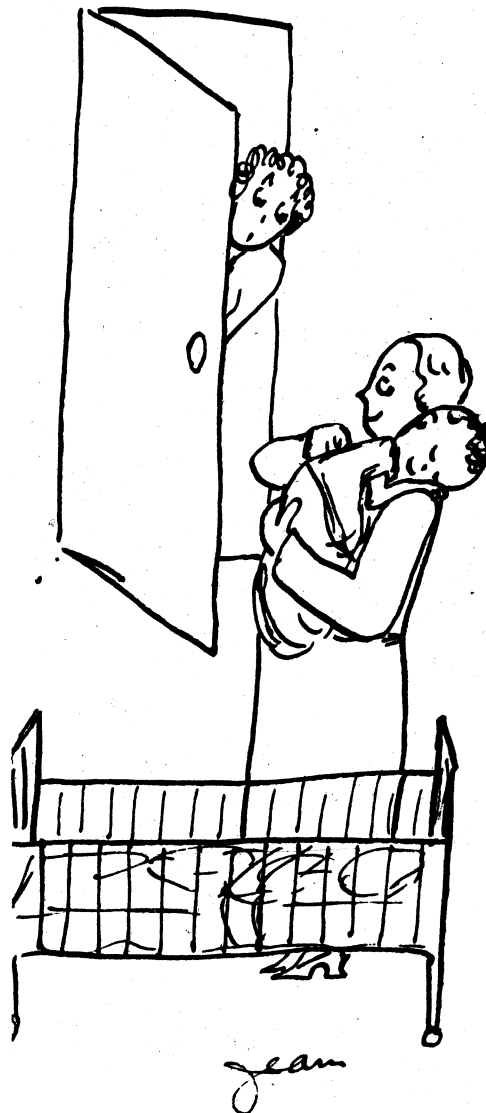


It's what you'd call putting him on the spot.

IF MOTHER-IN-LAW and daughter-in-law can't get along, there's one thing they should never do about it—and that is to ask the man, whose wife and mother they are, to arbitrate. Making him listen to both sides is what you'd call putting him on the spot. If he favors his wife, his mother will be broken-hearted. And if he favors his mother, his wife will go around for weeks saying he doesn't love her any more.

And you can see for yourself that either way you'd all three be worse off than you were before.

No, it's best to keep the fight strictly between the ladies, and let your husband figure it out if he wants to, or forget it if he can.



When you catch your mother-in-law picking up the baby in the middle of his nap.

ANOTHER TYPE OF mother-in-law who is difficult to break in is the type who spoils her grandchildren. No matter how often you explain to her why candy isn't good for Junior in the middle of the morning, or why when the baby cries you don't believe in picking it up, she never fully understands. Underneath she always thinks that you're just a little bit cruel about children. And when you aren't looking she'll stuff chocolate bars down Junior's throat.

If you definitely forbid your mother-in-law to pamper the children, you're licked. The pampering will go on in secret, and your modern ideas of bringing up the children will turn to ashes.

Better than that is to give your mother-in-law definite permission to pamper the children—if she'll promise to do it within certain hours. Tell her she can pick the baby up all she wants to between five and six. Or give her ten minutes after every meal when she can ply the children with sweets. You'll find that grandma will be much easier to manage that way, and the children will only be spoiled in spots.



DR. EDWARD BARSKY

Surgeon in charge of hospital unit in Spain.

You Can Help The Spanish People

(Copy of cable from American Medical Unit in Spain)

SEND IMMEDIATELY SURGEONS AND NURSES
STOP URGENTLY NEED TRAINED MEDICAL
PERSONNEL STOP MALAGA DEFENSE HEAV-
ILY TAXING HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATIONS
AND AMBULANCES STOP IMMEDIATE REIN-
FORCEMENTS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY . . .

Cable Address—Health Department, Valencia.



FOUR AMBULANCES with a staff of six-
teen doctors and nurses and a com-
plete operating room, sent over by the
Medical Bureau of the American Friends
of Spanish Democracy, are now perform-
ing their humanitarian duty on Spanish soil.

By March 1, a second unit including
special equipment and personnel for aid to
children, will be sent to Spain. The civil-
ian population of Madrid, especially the
child victims of the bombardment, need
your help.

To organize this work and to secure
funds is the urgent moral responsibility
of every thinking woman today. We have
organized a committee for this special pur-
pose.

Write and send contributions to:

WOMEN'S COMMITTEE
Medical Bureau

20 Vesey Street, New York City

*Above: This group of nurses and doctors is
already in Spain. Help to support and send
more like them.*

*Below: You can help send an ambulance
like this to Spain.*

The Medical Bureau is holding an
Eastern Seaboard Conference on Sunday,
February 28, at the Academy Building,
2 East 103rd Street. The conference will
organize work on a broader scale for med-
ical relief. Please communicate with us and
send delegates from your organization.





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What the Amalgamated Has Meant to Women

By Dorothy J. Bellanca

*General Executive Board,
Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America*

THE WOMEN WORKERS in the shops that are in contractual relations with the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America have been a great factor in the struggle for security and industrial liberty which has gone on steadily since the Amalgamated was formed. Women members have always stood shoulder to shoulder with the men in the struggle to secure better wages and better conditions and more protection on their jobs. As the years have passed, a growing number of them have not been satisfied with being just members in the union, but have become active leaders, sharing a great part of the responsibility and doing much of the important work of the day-to-day activity.

There is not an organization of the Amalgamated, whether it be in a large industrial city or in a small country town, where the work of the Amalgamated women has not stood forth both in vitality and importance. In the clothing workers' organizations in Baltimore, Chicago, Philadelphia, Rochester and other cities, groups of women have been broadening their influence, holding office, and strengthening the links that bind them to the entire Amalgamated organization.

In the shirt industry, which has come to be in recent years a very considerable portion of the Amalgamated membership, young girl chairladies have carried and are now carrying remarkable loads on their shoulders, and discharging their responsibilities with energy and judgment.

Women members are doing important organization work, carrying the union's message to other women in the industry; they serve on executive boards and joint boards and act as business agents. Women have received no favors for being women, but, on the contrary, they have won their places in the union on their records as members. This is as it should be. A voice in leadership should only come as a reward for active service.

As the years have gone on an increasing number of women have earned themselves a place in the executive branch of the Amalgamated, and our experience shows that the same intelligence that led so many thousands of women out of the sweatshops by organizing their mass power in a union has led them each year to more active work, not only in the Amalgamated but

in the labor movement as a whole. It is in the organization activities of the Amalgamated that women have particularly made their influence felt. For years it was claimed that women couldn't be organized because even when they were in industry they didn't expect to remain there and, consequently, the argument presented as to the importance of their protecting themselves and improving their wages and conditions did not have the same effect upon them as it did upon men, most of whom expected to remain in a particular industry all their lives and provide for their families through their toil.

There was perhaps some validity in this argument two decades ago but certainly it does not hold good today. Many women have been compelled to continue work even after marriage and many other women after rearing families have been compelled to re-enter the factory. The protection of the union is therefore most vital to them and an ever increasing number of women workers are understanding this.

If it were true that women were as "unorganizable" as some writers on industry claim, then organizations in the garment industry would certainly have been less powerful than they are today. As a matter of fact, the garment industries employ a

much larger proportion of women than men, and no one can deny that these industries are among the best organized in the country.

SINCE I WAS fifteen years old and a worker in a garment shop in the city of Baltimore, I have taken part in many strikes; strikes in which both women and men took part. I am not holding a brief for one sex against the other; both the men and women involved in these strikes were of the sort who have brought what decrease in hardship has come to the workers in the country; but in this article I am stressing the part which the women have played.

In staying quality, in all of my experience, women have never proved inferior to men. They have borne every hardship just as cheerfully as their male co-workers. And in some ways, in reaching out to organize the women workers outside the union, they have been even more successful. They have been particularly efficient on the picket line and many times while I have been marching with them in the small hours of the morning, sometimes in the intense cold of the Winter, I have secured inspiration which nothing else has ever given me in my work as an organizer.

(Continued on page 28)



Members of the Amalgamated picketing a shirt factory.



Members of the Amalgamated picketing a shirt factory.

Dressmakers Union Local 22

By Jennie Silverman

Member of Executive Board,
Dressmakers Union Local 22, I.L.G.W.U.

Thirty thousand women in New York enjoy culture and recreation as well as better working conditions because they belong to the International Ladies Garment Workers.

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

To be good union members, so that the union can do most for us and we for the union, we must know what it is all about. We must make a real effort to understand the ideals, aims and methods of the labor movement. We must broaden our social viewpoint and extend our understanding of questions that are of such vital concern to us.

● SPORTS and RECREATION

All of us like to play. We are all fond of a good time, especially if it can contribute to our health and well-being. We all like sports and athletics, games and recreation.

● CULTURE

Many of us are greatly interested in music, singing, dancing and dramatics. We like these activities not only for the enjoyment we get out of them but also for their value as cultural expression otherwise denied us.

All of these things—knowledge, culture, sports and recreation—the union is offering to you free of charge. The Educational Department was established to achieve these purposes. Our aim is to serve you, to help you make yourself a better union member and human being all around.

● REGISTER NOW!

Why don't you take advantage of all these educational and recreational opportunities that the union offers you? Our program for the coming season is bigger and better than ever before.

REGISTER NOW!

By mail or in person at ROOM 508, 232 WEST 40th STREET
at any branch office of the union or with your shop chairman.



Jennie Silverman with one of her classes.

the class in American history—mature women, with many cares and a background reaching back to some corner of Europe, sitting side by side with young girls who are beginning to understand that there are some things they should know which they didn't learn at school. Or look into the class on "Europe Today" where over 150 students representing a cross-section of our membership follow week by week the world-shaking struggle between the forces of socialism and fascism. Or the advanced

class in trade union problems where shop and building chairmen and active members study the background of the present crisis in the labor movement, the problems and perspectives of the C.I.O. Or the class in social psychology—or the classes in English and public speaking, combining technical training with education in unionism.

At our center school, housed at union headquarters, there is an enrollment of about 1,000 members and attendance has grown with each term. On the same principle we run several neighborhood schools in districts where our members live.

A cultural and sports program supplements our educational work. Many hundreds take advantage of the instructions given in swimming, calisthenics, boxing, wrestling, tennis, handball, basketball, baseball and soccer. Many more participate in the dancing, dramatics, choral and music groups we have set up.

Our shop chairmen, our picket captains, our executive board members and Union Defenders (squad of rank and file members who patrol the district to prevent overtime violations) of the present and of the future, have been benefiting by these educational activities. They have been made into more effective fighters and so our union as a whole has profited by it. And we're working for a constantly larger and more varied educational program that will draw in more and more of our 30,000 members into the work of the union and thus also into the labor movement as such.



Mature women with many cares sitting side by side with young girls who are beginning to understand there are things to know they didn't learn in school.

A CONSIDERABLE PORTION of New York's melting pot population is employed in its largest industry of women's apparel. Thirty thousand of these are members of Dressmakers Union Local 22, I.L.G.W.U.

To belong to a union is to learn the first lesson in class consciousness. When one has to pay weekly dues, he is bound to ask: What for? And he is bound to check up whether his money is used for the purpose his chairman says it is.

It was amazing to find how quickly the benefits of unionism are learned by all engaged in the industry. While serving on the membership committee of our union, I found that every applicant, from the American born 18-year old twins, who were entering the industry as cleaners, to the woman who spoke only Arabian and had to get herself a translator, to the 70-year old Polish born Jewish cloakmaker who was joining our union, each knew what the minimum wage scale of his particular craft was.

This, to me, is the most important lesson of unionism, to know and to fight for the conditions won by the union. But there's another lesson which runs it a close second but which is not so easily learned. And that is—that to gain better conditions a union must be built, maintained and strengthened all the time. To teach members this lesson, our Educational Department was established because, to carry out these tasks, one must speak the language of his fellow

workers; one must know trade union and labor history and economics. One must learn to follow and understand current events of interest to the labor movement. To be of greater help to himself and his union, a worker needs to school himself in the art of understanding labor problems and meet them as they come along.

OVER 75 per cent of our members are women and they naturally predominate very considerably in our classes. Look into



A class in calisthenics restores some of the pep and vigor lost after a hard day's work.



Many participate in the music groups set up by the union for its members.

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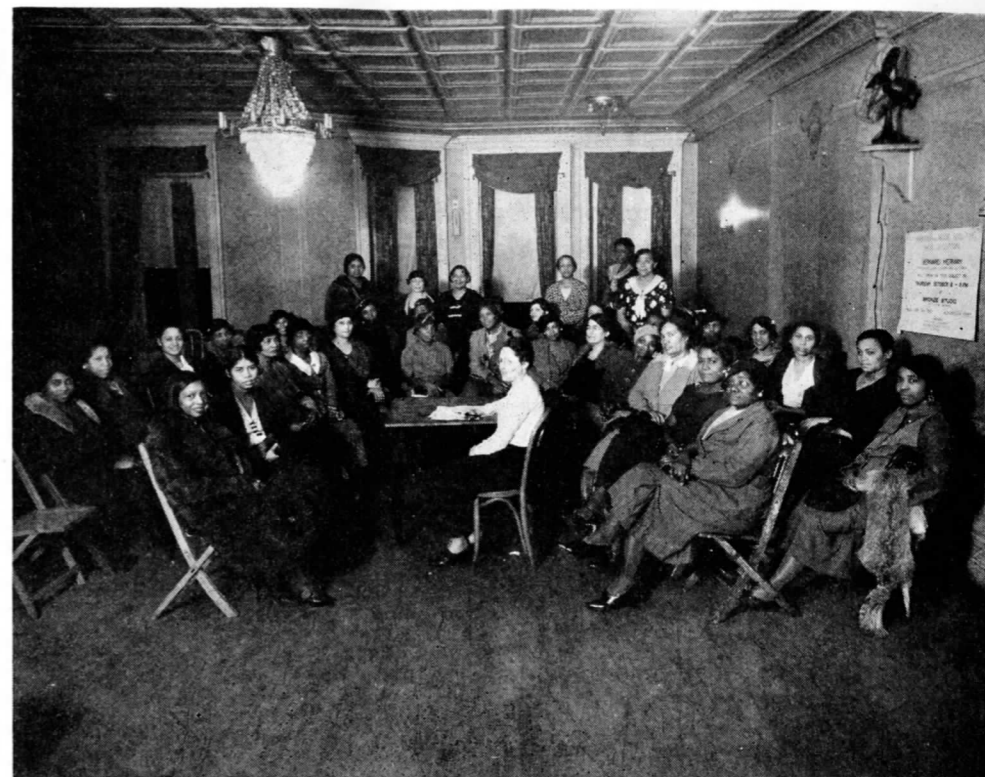
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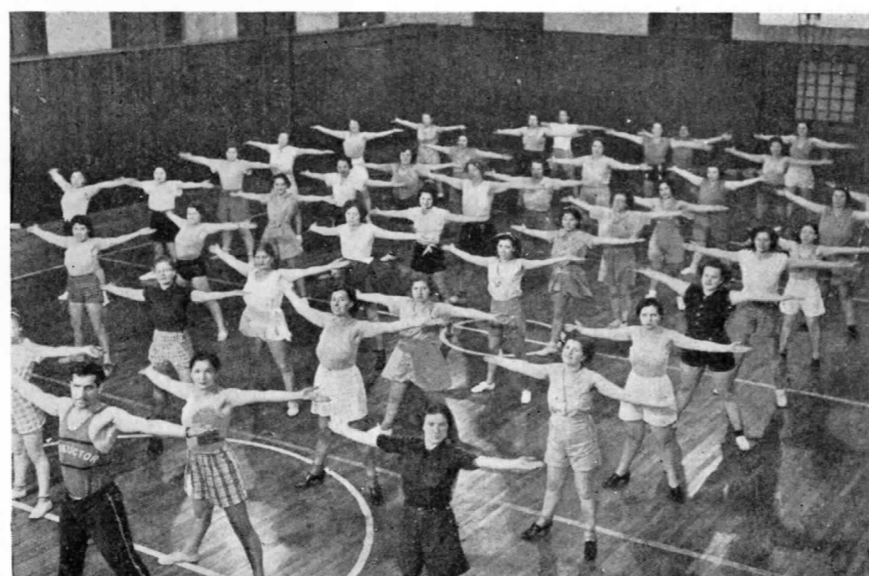
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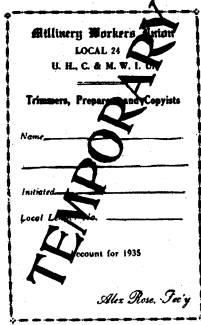
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Discrimination in Millinery Union

By Erma L. Lee

"Temporary" union cards given to women members turn out to be permanent blacklist in actual practice. Shameful labor practice.



A SMALL GROUP of women have been carrying on an unceasing campaign for democratic rights in Local 24 of the Millinery blacker chapter exists Workers Union. No

union than this unwarranted and to in the story of any American labor labor union than this unwarranted and to tally unnecessary discrimination against these women. These one hundred women members must pay all union dues, all assessments—which are frequent, we are told—and assume all the responsibilities of union membership, yet they are denied all the privileges: they cannot vote, they cannot attend union meetings, cannot act as shop chairmen or on shop committees, even though the shop members elect them.

Across their union cards is stamped the word "Temporary," as shown in the picture on this page. What does this mean, and how does it affect them in earning their livings? Listen to the story as one girl told it to me:

"I found a job in a big shop and gave my union card to the chairlady. I am a skilled finisher on hats, never had a complaint about my work. That night the boss came to me and said: 'You are a fast worker, Miss. Your hats are good. Come in tomorrow; you have a steady job.'

"I worked the next day; no complaints; but that night the boss said: 'Sorry, Miss. Have to lay you off. Yes, your work is good and we are busy; I could use you, yes, but—your union card says "Temporary" doesn't it? I was told that "temporary" means you aren't in good standing with the union. I don't want any trouble so I guess you'll have to go.'

"I pleaded and argued but it was no use. He was afraid to keep me. For nearly five years we have been living through this. We are the last ones hired and the first ones to be laid off. They won't let us alone!"

Of course all trade unionists have heard of employers' blacklists; a United States Senate committee is at present conducting an investigation into so-called detective agencies who compile and collect blacklists and sell them to employers, who then weed out the active unionists in their plants. But did you ever hear of any organization

which forced members to carry their own blacklist with them—for how else does this temporary card work?

The union membership of sixteen thousand no doubt would end the discrimination but they are not allowed to hear the story, a but they are not allowed to hear the story, as the one hundred girls are forbidden to attend union meetings even though not one of them has even been placed on any specific charges. In July, 1936, the General Executive Board rendered a decision in favor of ending the temporary cards. In October, 1936, their international convention ordered a speedy settlement of the temporary card scandal. But the local officials refuse to act.

In this period of the amalgamation of craft unions into unified stronger organizations many mistakes are made on all sides; by officers, members and groups. We should correct those mistakes and then re-

Genora Johnson

By Mary W. Hillyer

IN THE HISTORY-MAKING sit-down strike in Flint where militant members of the United Automobile Workers held three plants of the General Motors Corporation for forty-four days, the Women's Auxiliary and its Emergency Brigade played a most important part in bringing the strike to a victorious conclusion.

Slim and tall, with soft brown eyes and curly hair, Genora Johnson, captain of the Emergency Brigade, was always to be seen in her red beret and E. B. armband on call for strike duty, picket work or Socialist activity. By her side was tall, blonde, grey-eyed Kermit, only these days they were separated for Kermit was the loyal leader of the sit-down in Chevrolet No. 4.

Before Genora married Kermit, she worked long hours for low pay in a department store, but these last years, she had been with her children, Joddy Gene, aged one, and Denny Bob, aged five, her home, the union and the Socialist party.

It was father-in-law Johnson, another active union man in Chevrolet No. 4, who four years ago brought Genora and Kermit into the Socialist party.

member only that they were made by workers, our brothers and sisters, struggling toward a stronger labor movement. The milliners' union has taken one progressive step; they have combined their forces and become stronger. Recently they are securing much better and many more union contracts. But that is not enough. If they are to be the large, important union they can be they must put their own house in order. Strength depends upon unity of the membership and that comes only when every member can secure his full democratic rights and privileges; when each is equal before the union law.

We call on you, officers of Local 24 of the milliners' union, to wipe this black spot off your records. Carry out the mandate of your international convention. End the temporary cards and grant to every member the same rights you have for yourselves.

Genora realized that workers do not become politically conscious over-night so with all her charm and quiet determination she planned with her auxiliary a long range program in Flint.

"The Emergency Brigade must be ready to fight on the picket line," said Genora, "but all of us in the auxiliary must also learn today the reason the picket line is necessary and the way Flint and the country can be organized so that picket lines will not be necessary. This means classes in labor history, public speaking, the trade union movement and workers' political movements. And the auxiliaries of our union from all over the country must work together. United we can build our workers world of security, peace and happiness."

The women's auxiliary and Genora were front page publicity all over the country during the strike but modest Genora was the first one to tell you that it was not she who was important. It was the organized strength of the brave, militant band of women who marched together with her for the Automobile Workers of America that helped to bring about the signed and sealed agreement with General Motors.

THE WOMAN TODAY

The Fight For Peace

By Eleanor Fowler

Labor Secretary, Women's International
League for Peace and Freedom

Our country went into the last world war for the profit of a few rich people. Will we be drawn in again to make millionaires?

“ARMS RACE THREATENS WAR AS 1937 OPENS,” says a January 1 headline of a leading Washington newspaper. It states very tersely the miserable outlook for peace which faces us. The constant advance of Japanese imperialism in the Far East, the German-Japanese alliance, the recognition and help accorded the fascist rebels in Spain by Germany and Italy, the end, on December 31, 1936, of all limitations on naval armaments—these are the most serious danger points.

This tense international situation must be of the greatest concern to us in the United States. Our country was drawn into the last World War for the profit of a few munitions makers, bankers and industrialists. Will we be drawn in again to make more millionaires? This question will be answered in part by legislation at the present session of Congress.

The organized peace forces of the country are backing with all their strength certain bills now before Congress in the hope that they will prevent the United States entry into another war.

First on the peace program comes neutrality legislation. The present neutrality law will expire in May. It is a mandatory law which requires the President to impose embargoes on shipments of arms and munitions and on extension of loans and credits to both sides in an international war. The peace forces are convinced that this bill does not go far enough. Such organizations as the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, the National Council for the Prevention of War, the Emergency Peace Campaign, want to add a provision for the embargo of raw materials basic to war industry.

Originally it appeared that an embargo on loans and credits would automatically cut to nothing purchases of American goods by warring nations. Last Fall it was reported that foreign nationals hold about seven billion dollars' worth of United States securities. In case of war these holdings could be liquidated and used to buy American products. The embargo on loans would therefore not prevent purchases by foreign belligerents, at least for some time after the outbreak of war.

Peace groups all over the country want a neutrality bill which would embargo shipment of basic raw materials to belligerents. They are somewhat divided as to what the character of the bill should be. Some groups think that the President should have sufficient discretion to allow him to support collective action against an aggressor nation, should that be undertaken. They would be inclined to support



SENATOR NYE

His committee suggests a bill that provides for a national referendum in 1938 to decide whether Congress shall have power to draft men for service abroad in the future.

a bill which Senator Thomas of Utah has introduced (S.J.Res. 47) which provides for consultation with other nations before the issuance of the neutrality proclamation. Under the Thomas Bill also the President is given discretion as to whether he shall extend the original embargo to other nations that become involved.

OPPOSED TO THE discretionary school of neutrality advocates is the mandatory school. Their influence appears to be stronger at the moment. They want a complete automatic embargo applicable

equally to all belligerents, and giving the President no discretion. They would prefer to call this legislation an “embargo” law rather than a “neutrality” law. They do not believe that decent people can really be neutral in a situation involving injustice, but they think that the most important thing to do now is to keep the United States out of war, just or unjust.

They believe that drawing distinctions between nations engaged in war is likely to draw in the United States. They believe that leaving discretion in the hands of the President materially increases the danger of our becoming involved in another war because even Presidents are not immune to pressure from big industry. They recall, moreover, the dilemma in which President Wilson found himself at the beginning of the last war when imposing an embargo on both sides after the war had broken out would in fact have been of great advantage to Germany, because only the Allies had access to our markets. Imposition of the embargo, once the war was under way, would therefore have appeared to the Allies as a distinctly unfriendly act. Decisions of this magnitude, advocates of mandatory legislation say, decisions which may involve suffering and death for millions of Americans, should not be made by one man during a crisis. They should be made by the representatives of the people in advance.

The Nye Committee, Senators Nye, Clark, Bone and Vandenberg, have been supporters of the mandatory school. Unfortunately at this writing (February 1) their neutrality bill has not been introduced. In the House the Koppelman Bill is mandatory for the most part, but it leaves to the discretion of the President the naming of the list of raw materials which are to be embargoed.

The administration has always wanted wide discretionary powers for the President. Curiously enough, just as there is so far no bill entirely satisfactory to the peace people, there is also no bill which suits the administration. The very different bills introduced by Senator Pitman and Representative McReynolds are neither of them administration measures. The chances

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SENATOR NYE

Frances Wright

By Theresa Wolfson

It's not as new as some of us think for women to step from the kitchen into public life as Frances Wright's story shows.

IN one of the scenes of the W.P.A. play, "Injunction Granted," Frances Wright was portrayed as the champion of the American workers in 1828. Few in the audience remembered that name from their history and yet Frances Wright was a vital personality who rose like a meteor and shot across the American horizon, leaving many vital reforms behind her. She fought for social and political rights for women. She lectured the length of the country for a "rational, inquiring education free to all and free from the superstitions and shackles of dogma." She studied the causes of poverty and economic inequality in a country which was proudly calling itself a democracy, and urged that workers organize themselves into a political party. In fact, the first workingmen's party of New York State in 1830 was called the Fanny Wright Party. She fought valiantly for political democracy, for the abolition of slavery, and then for economic democracy. Into each cause she threw her vitality, a keen intellect, her enthusiasm, and her personal fortune.

This champion of freedom was born in Dundee, Scotland, in 1795, in a period when Europe was in the throes of a political crisis. Her father, James Wright, was a liberal, who came under the government's censure because he promulgated the famous pamphlet of Thomas Paine—"The Rights of Man." Frances, her sister Camilla, and her brother Richard were left orphans at a very early age, well provided for to be sure, but thrown pretty much on their own mental resources. Frances was a precocious child, eager to learn about the world in which she lived. At the age of eighteen she was well versed in Greek literature and philosophy. Her study of Plato's "Republic" attracted her to the concept of political democracy, and the United States became a sort of beckoning light to her. Europe, she knew, was too steeped in ancient traditions and customs ever to realize real political democracy. The United States, she felt, was a country "consecrated to freedom in which man might awake to the full knowledge and exercise of his powers." In the Spring of 1818 she and her sister set sail for America to see for themselves the Utopia they dreamed about.

FRANCES WRIGHT and her sister traveled by stage coach and boat through



FRANCES WRIGHT

New York, New England and part of the South. Her impressions of this visit were charmingly described in a little book entitled "Views and Manners in the United States." She was impressed with the political intelligence of the man of the streets, and with the hospitality and frankness of the people she met. She was deeply shocked by the system of Negro slavery. Her enthusiasm for the potentialities of the United States was undiminished.

Her book earned her much criticism and many friends. Jeremy Bentham, the philosopher, invited her to join his circle of friends. General Lafayette became her admirer and a beautiful friendship developed between the old man who had lived through several political revolutions and the young Scotswoman who so passionately appreciated political democracy. She helped him in some of his "underground" work in behalf of the new political movements which were springing up on the Continent.

In 1824 she and her sister returned to the United States with General Lafayette.

In her travels through the South she became impressed with the need for starting some constructive movement to emancipate the slaves. She was critical of the abolitionary movement which she felt was too religious and too sentimental. Jefferson had shown her that slavery was an economic institution and that slaves could not be freed unless they were able to support themselves. As a result of her studies of the subject she recognized the social and economic interdependence of the Negro slave and the white plantation owner. They were both caught in the network of an economic system that was veering toward bankruptcy.

SHE BOUGHT a large tract of cotton land in Tennessee and in 1825 set up a colony consisting of Negro slaves who were to purchase their own freedom through labor on the plantation. She established a school where crafts were to be taught to the Negroes. Cooperating with her in this experiment were Robert Dale Owen, General Lafayette, Thomas Jefferson and many other liberals of the day.

The experiment failed but not before it attracted much attention. Criticism was leveled against Frances Wright and her motives by Southern plantation owners. The colony was labeled an experiment in free love and miscegeny. Frances Wright then felt that the only solution to the Negro problem was a gradual amalgamation of the race by the white race.

From Nashoba, the Negro colony, Frances Wright turned to New Harmony, the Owen cooperative experiment in Indiana. She was vitally interested in free education of a progressive nature which she felt was essential to a real democracy. The school which was conducted at New Harmony was a combination of practical skills and theoretical courses.

FRANCES WRIGHT found that she had the ability to express her ideas from a lecture platform and from 1828 until 1830 she toured the country as one of the first woman lecturers. She was among the first to advocate birth control among working class families—for she argued big families mean neglected children and increased

THE WOMAN TODAY

Free Engraving



Frances Wright.

FRANCES WRIGHT

poverty among workers. She was the first to advocate that the rights and property of the wife be recognized and protected by law. She advocated free public schools for all children in the United States and urged that the State assume the responsibility for their education and care from infancy to maturity.

She established a paper in New York City called *The Free Enquirer*, edited by Robert Dale Owen and herself and dedicated to the causes which she sponsored. She was a brilliant writer as well as lecturer and the country seethed with discussions about her ideas and criticism of her personality. Throughout the country, groups of free thinkers organized themselves into Fanny Wright societies.

The years 1828-1830 were turbulent years for the working class. The conspiracy trials had resulted in breaking up some of the craft unions. Hours of work were long, wages were low, and the opportunities for education were limited. The need for legislation to protect the workers' wages and to shorten the workday seemed paramount.

Workers in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Boston began organizing themselves into political caucuses for the purpose of making themselves felt in the coming elections. On April 23, 1829, a public meeting of mechanics was called to

initiate a movement for a ten-hour day. Frances Wright had come to recognize the "worst blight and curse which ever was or ever can be upon a country—the slavery of the laboring class." The movement developed into a political party which was alternately called the Workingmen's Party, the Fanny Wright Party, or the Agrarian Party.

Although Frances Wright herself was not active in the political campaign of 1830 her followers supported the Workingmen's Party and her paper espoused its cause. The campaign was accompanied by a volley of newspaper calumny and vilification against Thomas Skidmore, Robert Dale Owen, and Frances Wright for the role they played in leading and organizing the mechanics and artisans, and the threat they constituted to "property rights." The Workingmen's Party, however, went on enlisting the sympathies and cooperation of farmers as well as workingmen throughout New York State. In several up-state towns the Workingmen's Party succeeded in carrying the local elections. Meanwhile Tammany Hall became uneasy at the success of the party and proceeded to undermine its activities wherever it could. In fact it succeeded in capturing a number of important offices at the Convention of the Workingmen's Party and also set up rival parties with candidates calling themselves the "Workies'" representatives.

EVEN as in the political campaigns of today the newspapers were used to attack the character and motives of the leaders of the opposition. Frances Wright had the remarkable ability of shedding these attacks and continuing with her work. There was, however, a limit to human endurance and just before the elections of 1830 she sailed for France in an effort to eliminate her personality from the elections, hoping that this would give the Workingman's cause a chance for success. There were tangible planks in their platform for which she was responsible: the establishment of a free school system for all children subsidized by the State, as well as the shorter workday. She hoped that a few of these planks would become laws in the election of 1830. As a matter of fact these planks did become laws but not until several years later.

In France she continued her interest in the revolutionary movement of 1830 and in the role that Lafayette played. She married a French educator, Phiquepal D'Arusmont, and had one child, a daughter, Sylva. Several years later she returned to the United States and again took up her pen in opposition to the monopoly control which the banking system had upon the economic life of the country. She died in 1850 in Cincinnati, a weary and disillusioned woman whose contribution to social progress was all but forgotten.

Our Readers Write

MINUTE WOMEN IN AUTO

Detroit, Mich.

THE MINUTE WOMEN IN AUTO, that's what one of the first groups of women called themselves when the auxiliary idea got going in Detroit. The women proved their mettle in the first sit-down strikes, at Midland Steel and Kelsey-Hayes. This pointed the way for women's action in General Motors strikes in Flint and Detroit.

Mrs. Dorothy Krause, in charge of setting up soup kitchens wherever the strikes take place, immediately gets in touch with the Minute Women. They help in cooking, in soliciting food from stores, taking collection cans to other plants for donations to the strike fund, in distributing literature or whatever else needs doing. Don't get the idea that only the Minute Women do the work. The girls on strike and other womenfolk of the strikers are also on the job.

MARCH, 1937

Our auxiliary drive opened January 29 with Miss Jean Carter of Bryn Mawr College addressing the women on the purpose of auxiliaries, followed by a social affair. We publicized through all locals of the auto unions, the auto paper and the *Labor News* (Detroit Federation of Labor).

Not only do we sign up women in the auxiliary, but we sign up the women workers in the auto unions. We go to the strike committees with proposals for special meetings of women, keeping in the closest contact with the men's unions. And **THE WOMAN TODAY** goes over big!

HELEN GOLDMAN.

FIGHTING THE FLOOD

Du Quoin, Ill.

I HAVE MY hands full helping in this terrible flood and can't write much now. One thousand refugees are here from

Cairo and Mound City. This morning the call came to all W.P.A. workers of Du Quoin to report at the City Hall to go to Mound City as the dam had burst and in one hour's time the water was ten feet deep in the city. It is very pitiful to hear the cries of the refugees, wondering what became of some of their dear ones left behind. And now the families of our W.P.A. workers here in Du Quoin are worried, for if the other dam breaks, it may mean the lives of their menfolk.

The basement of the colored church is filled with these poor people. The homes of the poor, and especially the Negroes, didn't have a chance, being always in the worst places. The people here are showing real solidarity, regardless of color or anything, just like in our big strike of the miners. Our W.P.A. workers need the Illinois Workers' Alliance now more than ever, and they see it. More later.

KATHERINE DE RORRE.

EDITORIAL PAGE

International Woman's Day

ON MARCH 8, International Woman's Day, thousands of American women will hail THE WOMAN TODAY as a vital force in their work toward a better America and the strengthening of the international fraternity of women. The occasion marks the first anniversary of THE WOMAN TODAY, launched on this historic day in 1936.

International Woman's Day is of American origin. Initiated in 1908 by American women Socialists, it became an annual demonstration against laws and customs subjecting women to political, economic and social inequalities. It soon took on an international character. Because it was the idea of Socialist working women, it was linked with the larger struggle for workers' freedom.

On International Woman's Day in 1917, it was the Russian women, pouring out of the factories of Petrograd, demanding bread and freedom, that turned loose the tide of economic forces that swept the Czar into oblivion and culminated in the October Revolution and the first Workers' Republic.

In our own country, soon after the World War, an International Congress of Working Women met in Washington, at the call of the National Women's Trade Union League of America. So magnificent was the response from the women of many nations, a second Congress was held. What an inspiration it would be to our sisters in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, indeed to the women of all countries, to revive this congress in 1937.

The proposed Women's Charter of today may prove the rallying point for women the world over. Already from far away India comes the word, "Hurry the charter movement along, the women of India need it so badly." It is of real significance that on this International Woman's Day the Women's Charter will be widely discussed.

Through the pages of THE WOMAN TODAY have spoken not only the women of the United States but the heroic women of Spain, the women of South America, France, Sweden and the Soviet Union. On this International Woman's Day, we rededicate ourselves to the building of a strong and noble solidarity of womanhood.

THE WOMEN'S CHARTER

By ELISABETH CHRISTMAN
Secretary Treasurer of the National Women's
Trade Union League of America

The Women's Charter presents an opportunity for all women to get together on a common program. Perhaps all women will not agree on all the details of the proposed charter. Now is their opportunity to study it and find out how its principles would affect them in the different aspects of their work and their lives.

The charter is still in tentative form. It must be considered with the needs of all women in all countries in mind. If after study of the charter the women of the United States can unite and adopt a common platform of worldwide significance and can combine with their own needs and aims the needs and aims of other women, in as simple a statement as the proposed charter, a great step forward in international cooperation will have been taken and a new technique developed for securing combined action of great social importance.

Who Is The Woman Today?

JUST WHO IS the woman today? You are her in many places. Keyed to huge industrial machines; bending over desks and counters; on duty beside hospital beds; creating and exploring in the arts and sciences; training young minds in the classroom; busy with the home and children; laboring in farm, home and field. The woman who builds, creates, serves. Youth and experience, the white woman, the colored woman, all united in a common purpose.

She is the woman alive to social forces and the woman just awakening. The woman militant, fighting for protection of childhood, for security of job and home. She is in the unions, the auxiliaries, and all progressive organizations. A woman of widening horizons, she senses her kinship with the women of all lands. She refuses to compromise with the labor of children anywhere, with any discrimination because of sex, with poverty and war.

Out of this unity of purpose THE WOMAN TODAY came on the American scene one year ago. The outgrowth of long years of women's devotion to the cause of social justice and human freedom, THE WOMAN TODAY perpetuates the best traditions of those American women who pioneered in the suffrage cause and the early trade union movement.

Victory in Auto

LATE NEWS IS the settlement of the auto workers' strike, with recognition of the Automobile Workers Union as bargaining agent and immediate negotiation on hours, wages and conditions. The winning of a major strike in the mass production industries is a great gain for all labor.

Outstanding features of the strike itself were the near perfect organization of the mechanics of the struggle: The courageous Women's Brigade which smashed the plant windows to let in air to the sit-downers" who were being gassed by company thugs, and afterwards forced their way through with food when an attempt was made to starve those inside; who, like veterans, hurried wherever their men needed help, and always in an organized manner, under the direction of the sound trucks. All workers should study carefully the organization of these workers' protection brigades and the relaying instructions by the sound trucks.

And, just for our workers' records, nothing inside the plants was damaged by the sit-downers although some things were used to build barricades against attacking General Motors thugs and their poison gas!

This strike is but the beginning and places a responsibility upon us all. We must have unity: And complete democracy in the unions! This is no time for division of the labor movement. There is another struggle just ahead!

GREETINGS TO THE WOMEN'S CHARTER

By ELIZABETH GURLEY FLYNN

Greetings to the Women's Charter, women's Bill of Rights in a world darkened by reaction and threats of war. It affirms our established rights and calls upon women of all parties and all organizations to rally for those not yet obtained.

The Women's Charter will give confidence to women, increase loyalty to their sex and their class and stir their minds on to the great struggle for emancipation, of which their activity is an important part.

What Shall We Tell Our Children?

By Frances Lipscomb

Do you find that your children think it's queer when you go on the picket line or take an active part in the labor movement?

EDDIE'S DIGNITY was affronted by the sight of his mother marching in a picket line. According to his 12-year-old sense of propriety, it was no place for one's mother, who should be spending her time at something quieter, like visiting with the neighbors. Personally and privately he admired her, and understood, since she had explained it all to him, that in the long run such activities were for his own good. He knew that picketing was for better wages, so that there would be enough money left to pay the dentist and such things. He tried to keep remembering that in the end it was to give workers the right to decent conditions, so that he need not be ashamed of being a worker's son. But his companions at school were always kidding him about it. And in the funnies strikers were always long-haired, wild-looking bearded men, shouting from soap-boxes. In the movies none of the good people ever picketed. And of course he couldn't be sure, but he felt that his teacher thought he must be a little queer because his mother was in the picket-line. She seemed to think it wasn't quite respectable. He figured he had better tell his mother about it all.

Mrs. Patterson was surprised and troubled by this admission. "It's not that I think it's wrong," he told her. "It's just because it makes me feel left out of things, and I don't like being different from all the other kids." And Mrs. Patterson concluded that what he needed was some kind of group support to prevent the pressure of the antagonistic forces in his environment from overwhelming him and forcing him into their own mold.

Eddie's dilemma is that of thousands of children whose fathers or mothers are active in labor unions. Such parents want to give their sons and daughters a feeling of respect and pride that they are engaged in militant action for decent wages and working conditions. They want their children to share their enthusiasm for the workers' struggle to gain a fair portion of the goods they produce, and would impress upon them a sense of the essential dignity of that struggle. But they find themselves fighting a constant battle against the influences which produce such attitudes as Eddie's. And often they do not realize the full extent of the forces which keep their

children's interests foreign to their own.

But the most sketchy examination of influences which bring themselves constantly to bear upon the average child will reveal that they are charged with antagonism or condescension toward organized labor and its activities. The movies he sees, the books he reads, the radio programs he hears, the comic strips, are thoroughly filled with a set of values which glorify the leisure class and look down on the workers. Directly or indirectly they make many forms of exploitation seem desirable and commendable so long as the end is one of growing rich or powerful. Such ideas have



so saturated the atmosphere in which he moves that he can no more escape them than the air he breathes.

Eddie has small chance of remaining proud of being in the company of militant unionists when Little Orphan Annie of the comic strips dins constantly into his ears "Nope—I'll never scream for anybody to boost *me* up—I'll do my own climbing . . . All I ask is that no smart-alec tries to pull me down." The fascist tendencies of this self-righteous little funny-paper heroine became so flagrant a few years ago that a number of newspapers canceled their subscriptions, with the result that recently its

anti-labor propaganda has become somewhat indirect but no less insidious.

A NEIGHBORHOOD moving picture house manager recently attempted and with great difficulty discovered the source of a gift of four anti-labor shorts sent free of charge for showing at his theatre. He found they were furnished by an association of manufacturers in his city. Eddie's schoolmates doubtless think these are "good stuff" and he, himself, is probably puzzled to know why union leaders are never shown in the role of heroes in the movies.

Radio programs too frequently have the same kind of anti-labor bias, or ignore organized labor altogether. Labor's broadcasting station WCFL, operated by the Chicago Federation of Labor, was restricted to a very limited area of influence by the zoning provisions of the Federal Communications Act of 1934, and only at the last Congress were these restrictions repealed. A young radio listener, however, still has practically no opportunity of becoming acquainted with workers as heroic or with labor leaders as sympathetic characters.

It is popularly believed that schools are places where all opinions may be discussed without bias. But a study made recently by the American Federation of Teachers has shown that too many public schools teach ideas unfriendly to organized labor. Henry Harap, writing in the *American Teacher* for March-April, 1936, on the tendencies shown in this report, states that an analysis of 82 courses in social studies for junior and senior high schools in all parts of the United States showed that 73 did not devote a single line to organized labor. Out of 4,000 pages examined only nine pages dealt with this theme. Teachers' attitudes, tested by their reaction to significant statements by laborites and anti-laborites, revealed an "overwhelmingly anti-labor point of view" on the part of instructors. Replies to the questionnaires were received from a representative national cross-section of teachers of social studies and showed that only 3 per cent were in complete agreement with labor, whereas 23 per cent were in complete disagreement with labor. Mr. Harap concluded from a careful analysis

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Organizing Steel Auxiliaries

By Mineola Ingersoll

*Director Women's Activities, Calumet Area,
Steel Workers' Organizing Committee*



ALMOST DAILY the women's auxiliaries in the Chicago steel region receive letters from Michigan, Pennsylvania, Arkansas and other States, asking how we organize the wives, daughters and sisters of steel workers. Notes, hastily written in Croatian, Polish or English, indicate that women everywhere are eagerly snatching a few minutes from their washing or cooking to find out how they can assist their menfolks in getting security and happiness.

In workers' homes it is the women who manage to eke out for the family the bare existence that wages permit today, for they are chiefly responsible for solving the problems of feeding, clothing and educating the children, in the face of rising prices. In many instances it is the woman who decides whether or not the man will join the union. Not educated to the economic value of the union, the wife often says, "We cannot afford this dollar." Many of our best volunteer organizers admit they kept their husbands out of the steel unions before they knew what it meant to be organized.

Our auxiliaries are being organized in the great drive of the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee. We affiliated with the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, which is becoming the industrial union in steel.

How do we go about organizing the women? The men's local must take an interest in this work. After passing resolutions to form auxiliaries to their particular locals, committees of men are appointed to assist the women. Union members are urged to tell their wives and daughters of the importance of this work, also when and where the auxiliary meets.

IN THE BEGINNING small groups may meet in homes, but it is better for the organizing committee to select some neutral place, a centrally located hall. At first there may be fear or dislike of the union hall. If only a few women respond, the auxiliary should be immediately organized. Many times one woman may belong to a large organization, social or civic, that can be committed to support the union.

Under the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee, both the union and the auxiliary must organize without regard to race, color, creed or nationality. Those same

steel barons who exploit the Mexican, Polish and Negro worker exploit alike the native born American workers. Real collective bargaining and all its benefits will come only through one powerful, industrial union.

At the second meeting at least temporary officers should be elected to permit the organization to function. The first officers may be: President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Secretary (these two may be combined). Also a social chairman and a reporter.

Charters are secured through the local union, if proper blanks are filled out and submitted. Any woman over sixteen years of age and of good moral character is eligible for membership in the steel auxiliaries. No initiation fees or dues are required for membership. Eligibility, dues, initiation, etc., vary according to the rules of each particular union or auxiliary.

Two meetings a month, on alternate weeks, prove best in most cases, with one a business meeting, the other social. Occasionally joint meetings and joint socials of union and auxiliary are held, helping to build up attendance and further good relationship between both organizations.

The business meeting deals with matters of interest to the welfare of the union and auxiliary. It is the auxiliary's first duty to aid the union in all possible ways. For instance, our most important point now is the organizing of the men into the union. By building the union, we build the auxiliary. We visit wives of steel workers, address other organizations, explaining what unions mean in terms of better homes, security and education.

ONE OF THE steel auxiliaries organized a conference of women's organizations—trade unions, fraternal, civic, social and neighborhood groups, to acquaint them with the purpose of the drive and enlist their support. A friendly committee, representing various community organizations, was set up, meeting monthly to discuss ways and means of broadening the campaign.

Irregular shifts of their husbands' work virtually tie the women to the kitchen. The company saves money by constantly changing the shifts. The women enlist public support of the men's demands for better conditions. Sometimes it is impossible for mothers to leave their children for meet-

ings. Auxiliaries may be able to secure teachers from the educational division of the W.P.A. for a nursery school. If not, certain members may be induced to supervise the children.

COMMITTEES must always be chosen to see that resolutions are carried out. The membership committee, perhaps under the vice-president, plans ways of getting new members and checks on attendance of old members. When committees report at business meetings, the whole membership shares the responsibility for the success of the work. The social chairman is assisted by a committee, likewise reporting to the meeting. The financial secretary keeps strict account of every penny going in and coming out, making monthly reports, with her books always ready for inspection. The reporter or publicity chairman sends news to the union paper and the local press.

When a sufficient number of auxiliaries within a given territory are organized, a council, made up of the principal officers of each local, may be set up to direct and coordinate general activities.

The American Federation of Women's Auxiliaries of Labor estimates that approximately six billion dollars of union-earned money is spent annually by women members of union homes. Wives and relatives of union men should insist on the union label, patronizing those companies supporting labor's demands.

Steel auxiliaries are in the fight against the increase in Chicago gas rates, a campaign being developed by a united conference of Chicago women's organizations.

We women of steel are determined to become, as someone has said, a human dynamo, generating union spirit, helping our men build a strong and powerful union, the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, so that we, in the words of Mr. Van Bittner, may live the life we want to live and not the life the corporation wants us to live.

Pink Slip

By Selma Marion

If you are the wife of a W.P.A. worker you know what worry is.
There is only one cure for that anxiety, as this writer points out.

ANXIOUSLY THE WIFE of the W.P.A. worker scans the newspapers—"30 Per Cent Cut in W.P.A. Planned," "No New Cuts in W.P.A.," "17 Per Cent Cut in W.P.A.," "Over 700,000 Have Been Dropped from W.P.A." Fearfully she opens the letter box and quickly notes each envelope to see if it comes from the Works Progress Administration. Day after day she looks for the "pink" dismissal slip.

During the moment when she can get outside this gnawing fear she is reminded of the dark days of 1930 before her husband lost his job. Each week he would come home and tell her of the other men at the office who had been laid off. Each pay day she watched the muscles around his mouth twitch and the creases grow deeper between his eyes. She heard the sharpening edge grow in his usual soft, patient voice as he spoke to the babies. And then one Friday in March he came home, handed her the household allowance, and in a tense voice (she could hear it as though it were yesterday) said, "Better hold on to it, it's the last until I get another job."

That was all; but she knew he did not expect another job. She knew that the search that followed day after day was merely a matter of going through the paces. There were no jobs for engineers.

Yet, one day he heard of a job for a young man—shipping clerk. He left the house at six in the morning and found five hundred "young men" between sixteen and sixty on the line ahead of him.

Now they must go through all that again—the anxious waiting for the last pay check (they call it security wage), and then the barren weeks in quest of a job, any job.

They had reconciled themselves, verbally at least, to the fact that when the dismissal slip did come they would have to apply for relief—relief with its endless investigations, starvation allowance, and slow moral deterioration. There were no savings on which they could fall back as in 1930. And yet she wonders, this W.P.A. wife, as she scrubs her kitchen floor, why her husband, who has always held down a job, who is good at his profession and loves it,

is not entitled to a job by human right just as we assume that he and his children are entitled to a roof over their heads and food enough to keep alive. Work is life to him and without it she fears the death of his spirit more than of his flesh. Grimly she reflects that work not charity had been the pre-election promise that had buoyed their courage with the overwhelming victory of Roosevelt.

With hidden bitterness she has accepted the inevitability that they will go on relief. She believes that they will not utterly starve. But because she dreads this death to his spirit, she flinches before the threatened "pink" slip. She knows that he does too—he and the hundreds of other professional workers in the W.P.A. who are scheduled for lay-off because they are not yet on relief. They will risk anything, their health, their lives, rather than lose the slender opportunity to work.

During the months of December and January when so many men and women were stricken with influenza and pneumonia, more than 50 per cent of the men on many projects came to work in a condition such that they were a menace to the health of their fellow workers and them-

selves. Many came to the job on Monday morning after spending the week-end in bed with mustard plasters on their chests. Some came even though they were running temperatures. Coughing and sneezing was prevalent throughout the offices. Not only was the men's own resistance greatly lowered but the W.P.A. workers became a means of spreading infection, a danger to community health.

WERE THESE MEN all fools? No, they were simply the victims of two rulings of the W.P.A. administration. Because they were on "security wage" they were not permitted, if they worked thirty-nine hours per week, to make up the time lost due to illness. There was no sick leave, and most of them could not afford the loss of wages that would be incurred if they remained at home.

Loss of wages without being allowed to make up time—no sick leave—accounts for men sticking to their jobs without counting the effect on themselves, their families, their co-workers or the community. But a much greater danger menaced them even than loss of wages, namely, the

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WOMEN'S CLUBS COME ALIVE

(Continued from page 12)

were on their minds; like a stimulant and a hope, the need for solution drove them on. They talked it over with their husbands and brothers. Some of the men were contemptuous, but others were moved and interested. "Our unions would help you if they trusted you," a man would say now and then, "but women's clubs have always been such total losses . . ."

"We must help the unions and win their confidence!" the pioneers decided. So they began to function as a relief organization for strikers. They took part in strikes. They brought food to the strikers' families, gave courage and support to their women. As consumers, they began protest-picketing. And they learned, too, the feeling of a militant union bent on justice to its workers. They saw why their husbands should go on strike even if it meant hardship and bitter suffering.

BUT UP TO 1931 the program and plans of the council were not consistently or effectively formed. In 1931 they recruited a new member. Her name was Rose Nelson. She had worked in white goods and millinery factories and been active in their unions. She was a little brunette, quiet but hard to move once her mind was made up. A woman with a drive that forced her mind ahead of other people's and her thoughts into actions. A true leader!

Soon Rose was elected a member of the executive board of the council. Then executive secretary. And as she went on with this work, she began to vision its scope. She began to see what could happen if the millions of housewives of America could be banded into organizations to back up organized labor; what results might come if the women reinforced the unions and the unions reinforced the women. What a force for progressive thinking and improvement in the position of Negro and white women might come of such a movement!

In 1931 and 1932 the council, helped by the trade unions, kept down the price of bread without bringing wage cuts in Brighton Beach, Coney Island and Middle-Village.

In 1934, when the Borden and Sheffield Milk Companies, with their millions of dollars, tried to raise the price of milk, the Council defied them with mass protest. Demonstrations so dramatic and militant were staged that newspapers in whose pages the milk companies advertised couldn't help printing stories about them. The council had learned to make news in a big way.

MAYBE YOU never heard of the Progressive Women's Council before

reading this article. But we'll bet you remember how the price of meat went up and then came down in 1935!

When the cost of beef and pork and lamb began increasing twice as fast as wages or re-employment, the council started the most widespread and vigorous fight of its career. Local conferences were held with every sympathetic woman's organization. Women all over New York City were shown that if they stuck together and put up a real fight, they could keep meat within reach of their pocket-books. Joint-action committees, open and indoor mass meetings, picket lines a block wide, every sort of agitation brought tens of thousands of women into a decisive boycott. Five thousand meat stores had to close shop. Down came the price of meat!

Meat strikes followed in Detroit, Chicago, St. Louis, Minneapolis. Thousands and thousands of women whose "place" had been in the home discovered they were part of the great, irresistible drive of the American working class for decent living conditions. Their "place" as housewives was beside the men and women of factories and farms, fighting poverty and exploitation by organization.

In March the Progressive Women's Council will hold its Fourteenth Annual Convention. The members, now professional women as well as housewives, will survey their work in 1936 and plan, as far as a living organization can plan, their tasks for 1937.

They look back on the year past as that in which they participated in squelching the new and terrible drive of the milk trusts to jack up the price of this food so necessary to the babies of the poor. With the help of other organizations they not only compelled Borden's and Sheffield to revoke their price rise, but they supported the milk drivers' right to form a union.

YOU HAVE TALENTS

How do we know? Because our readers are vital and alive. You may be eager to develop leadership in women's unions, auxiliaries, shoppers' leagues, housewives' councils, clubs. Perhaps you feel the need of more

Self-Confidence

We offer you correspondence courses in public speaking, writing and parliamentary procedure, under the direction of well-known New York instructors. You pay absolutely nothing. The courses are *free*. Enclose self-addressed stamped envelope for full information.

THE WOMAN TODAY

112 East 19th Street, New York City

Landlords, surveying the increase in last year's wealth—of which too little has flowed into the pockets of the poor—decided to raise rents. The council has replied by helping to form Tenants' Leagues. These leagues fight to force landlords to make improvements in slum homes without raising rents. They are part of the demand for government-built, low-rent modern houses for the poor.

With such organizations as the League of Women Shoppers, the council helped win the Ohrbach strike. Money and food have been given by them to the striking seamen. Also in 1936, Mothers' Day was converted into Mothers' Peace Day through the initiative of the council.

"What is this Mothers' Day?" they said to each other. "A field day for advertisers! Motherhood exploited for commercial gain! From our children's love and our service to the State we want something more real. We demand the smashing of the ever-present, ever-agonizing threat that our sons will be taken to war. Let our children show their love of us by a fight against the millionaire armament makers—an honest fight for peace!"

And because they want peace they were drawn into the movement against fascism. They realized that the women of Spain were their sisters, fighting for the same essential cause as theirs. They sent \$1,500 in cash, foodstuffs, clothing, and one thousand Christmas bundles to Madrid.

Thus the Progressive Women's Council looks to 1937. Every year their vision is greater, they understand more and attempt more without giving an inch of the ground they have won. Because they are healthy and growing, they have become part of the push and life-force which is the mainstream of our time.

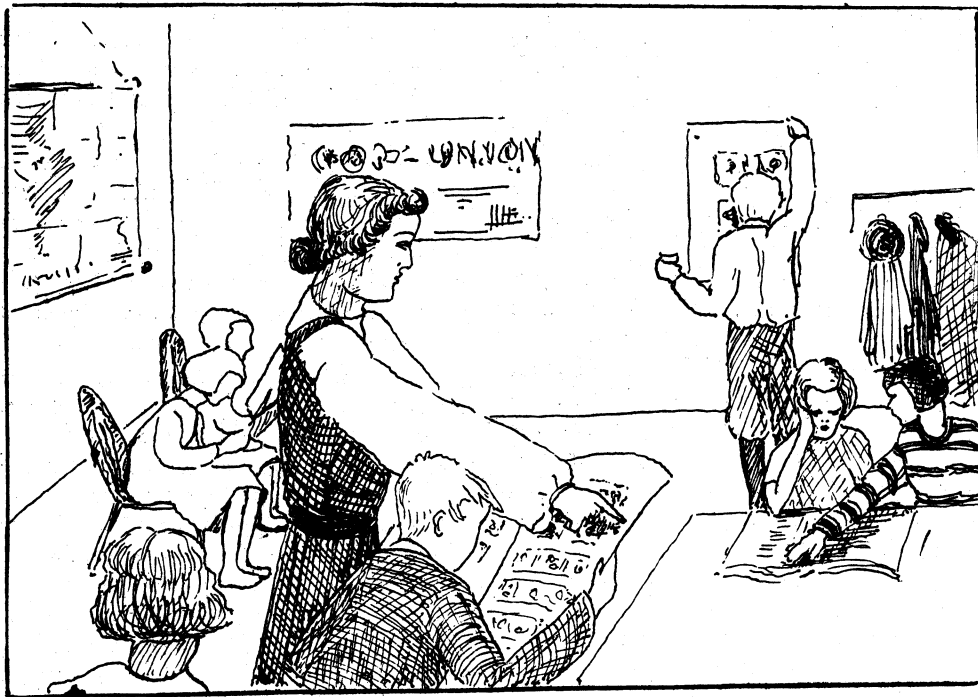
IN MEMORIAM GERTRUDE PRICE

In the death of Gertrude Price, **THE WOMAN TODAY** has lost a good friend. Following an operation for appendicitis, she died in a New York hospital on February 9th.

Always quiet and modest about the help she gave, this young social worker shared her salary with many organizations in need of support. One of the earliest friends of **THE WOMAN TODAY**, when it was launched a year ago, she contributed \$25 toward the first (March) issue. While paying off a personal debt, she budgeted her own expenses so carefully that she was able to give something regularly each month for the support of labor organizations.

Only 37 when she died, Gertrude Price left behind her many warm friends and the memory of her fine devotion to the cause of labor's struggle for freedom.

THE WOMAN TODAY



WHAT SHALL WE TELL OUR CHILDREN?

(Continued from page 23)

of the returns that public school teachers were prepared to go only one-fourth of the way with labor.

ON SPECIFIC QUESTIONS the report showed that three out of four teachers believe sympathetic strikes are not justifiable. Eighty-two per cent think it is the right of employers to refuse to employ workers who disagree with the policy of the management. The use of the injunction as a means of protecting business during a strike is approved by 64 per cent of the instructors. Three out of four teachers frown on picketing when it involves interference with workers who do not wish to strike. Thirty-eight per cent consider a picket line a public nuisance which police are justified in attacking. Eight-five per cent believe that all industry should be operated on an open-shop basis.

In view of these findings it is hardly any wonder that Eddie sensed a kind of contempt in his teacher's attitude.

These are some of the reasons why Mrs. Patterson came to the conclusion that there was an immediate need for Eddie to join a Junior Union, a special union club of his own. It would furnish not only education in the purposes and procedure of organization, but also the background of group approval so essential to the young conformist.

Farmers' children in the progressive Middle Western States could set an example for their city cousins in the matter of junior organization. Since 1930 the Farmers' Educational and Cooperative

Equity Union of America has had a Department of Junior Education. It has local, county and State leaders who work in cooperation with the national leader. From the national office they are supplied with book lists, manuals and guides for their work. The program of these groups, besides teaching parliamentary rules and the aims of the union, lays stress upon industrial and social problems, with the result that these children are growing up with a political and social awareness unknown to many children, even those of parents who are most actively engaged in union work. They learn not only the effectiveness of the union in promoting legislation and in developing cooperatives, but the essential identity of the farmers' interests with those of the working class of the country as a whole. The juniors do actual work for the union. One group, called the "minute men," conduct classes and make speeches. They have done splendid work in educating for peace and in working toward the set-up of cooperative business institutions in their localities. Junior members become regular dues-paying members of the farmers' union upon reaching 21, and a very effective means of recruiting into the union has been found to be the establishment of social memberships for children whose parents are not members of the farmers' union.

JUNIOR UNIONS in the American Federation of Labor have also shown that there is a latent eagerness on the part of children for an understanding of the significance of organization. The development of these was first started on a national basis in 1921 and it grew from the spontaneous interest of young people who wrote inquiries on how to start such work to the national

headquarters. According to the Junior Union Section of the *American Federationist* for January, 1935, "there are several hundred completely organized and chartered Junior Unions which carry out regular programs of study and recreational activities." This figure is probably considerably lower at the present time, however, as indicated by the fact that some junior unions listed as active at that date are no longer in existence. The high mortality and turnover among the A. F. of L. junior unions is doubtless due primarily to a lack of coordination of program activities and direction on a national scale, but it is also due to the lack of awareness of the anti-labor influences so widely present in the average child's environment. Members of locals might take a hint from Mrs. Patterson's experience and examine the forces that play upon their children. It would impress upon them the importance of encouraging the formation of junior auxiliaries in their own organizations.

In Huntsville, Alabama, a junior union boycotted a motion picture house where a union operator had been replaced by a non-union man. So effective was the boycott that the union operator was reinstated. Other stories of what junior unions are doing have come from Knoxville, where the members last Summer published a complete section of the labor paper for which all the writing was done by the young unionists themselves; and from California, where Local 180 of San Francisco is studying the significance of the union label and making a series of tours through union factories and places of business.

The eagerness and enthusiasm of the boys and girls who take part in junior unions is fully as forceful an argument for their continued building as the realization of the lack of labor education in schools. An onlooker could have seen it in the faces of the 12 to 14 year olds of Local 22 one Saturday morning last Winter, as they listened intently to a young dressmaker's tale of a "runaway shop." She was telling them a true story of how the bosses had made up a false set of books and given the genuine set to the janitors to burn; how the janitors in a gesture of solidarity had turned them over to the workers. The junior unionists, who had already rejected "Scrooge" and a "Wild West show" for their puppet play, saw in this the stuff of drama which they could translate into an art of their own, with realism and vitality.

The Saturday mornings of junior unionists are full of such activities, and they have a value aside from the creative need they supply, and the educational lack they fill. Their programs furnish an answer to questioning young Eddies. And they are a challenge to the Mrs. Pattersons to see that the work goes on.

THE FIGHT FOR PEACE

(Continued from page 19)

seem to be, however, that the President will support a combination of the two with certain changes. The Pitman Bill (S.J. Res. 51) has no embargo on raw materials, simply a "cash and carry" provision whereby American vessels cannot carry any war materials to belligerents if the President so orders. The McReynolds Bill (H.J. Res. 147) allows the President to curtail commerce in such materials as he sees fit to a normal amount—average shipments in certain pre-war years—the so-called quota system.

WHATEVER BILL finally passes, it will almost certainly contain these provisions: (1) Continuation of present provisions embargoing arms, ammunition, loans and credits to both sides. (2) Application of those embargoes to civil wars. (3) Prohibition against American vessels carrying any war materials. (4) A "trade at your own risk" provision applicable to the trade of Americans with belligerents. (5) A provision making it unlawful for United States citizens to travel on vessels of belligerents. (6) Probably, a provision giving the President power to proclaim a list of war materials, aside from arms, etc., which shall not be shipped to nations at war.

The final end of all naval limitation treaties, and the expansion program of Great Britain and Japan, will probably mean a drive by the administration for still further increases in our own armaments. Peace forces have fought our growing militarization for years to little avail. Last year they even lost the 10 per cent limitation on profits intended to apply to purchases of airplanes as well as battleships. There is no doubt that the continued expansion of our naval building program has contributed largely to the present arms race.

This year peace groups are shifting the emphasis. They believe that one of the weaknesses of their attack has been the lack of any United States national defense policy by which navy and army requirements could be judged. This year they are centering their attack on armaments in the demand for passage of a bill providing for the appointment of a civilian commission to study and define our national defense policy. If this commission makes it clear, as they believe it will, that our policy is to defend continental United States only, it will be much easier to attack many items in the military appropriations bills.

ANOTHER BILL WHICH would also clarify our defense policy has been suggested by the Nye Committee. It pro-

vides for a national referendum in 1938 to decide whether or not Congress shall have in future the power to draft men for service abroad. This bill also is being pushed by peace organizations. They see in such a referendum a splendid opportunity to educate the American people on the true meaning of national defense—defense of our own lands from actual invasion only.

The forces of peace, unfortunately, are not the only ones that have been alarmed by the world situation and are hoping for legislative action. The War Department has published a 1936 revision of its Industrial Mobilization Plan, its plan for the efficient organization of the next war, and some of the bills necessary to carry that plan into effect when war breaks out will be introduced into this Congress.

The Industrial Mobilization Plan makes it clear that the penalty of another war will be not only the tragedy of death and desolation, but also military fascism in the United States. Although the selective service act and the censorship provisions, which aroused such a storm of liberal and labor opposition in 1935, are still being revised, and have not been published with the present plan, it is clear from references in the text that they are an integral part of it. Peace and labor forces should fight this plan tooth and nail. Under its provisions "fair wages" would be stabilized by a Price Control Commission on which there is *not one* representative of labor. Many of the safeguards established for women and children in industry are said to be "expedient rather than necessary to the well-being of either the nation or the workers," and would be suspended.

IN CONTRAST WITH this disregard of labor's interests, it is interesting to note that the War Department recommends deletion of those clauses in the War Resources Control Bill which provide that "no one appointed . . . by the President . . . shall . . . participate in the determination of any question affecting his personal interest. . . ." The War Department footnote says, "This prohibition seems unnecessarily drastic, although naturally a man should not benefit by decisions he assists in making." In discussing tax provisions the War Department also emphasizes the fact that "tax provisions must not be of such a drastic nature as to hinder, hamper or destroy the more important mission of producing munitions. . . ."

It is impossible in the brief space of this article to analyze all the objectionable provisions of the War Department plan. The most disturbing feature of it is the implication clearly visible in several places that suspension and modification of labor standards, put into effect as war measures, may continue for a more or less indefinite pe-

riod after the conflict. In other words, while the application of this plan will clearly establish a military fascism for the duration of the war, it may do more than that.

Peace forces are aware of this danger. The fight against the Industrial Mobilization Plan is as much a part of their program as the fight for neutrality, for a civilian definition of national defense policy, for a 1938 referendum on the draft for service abroad.

These are the principal items on the immediate legislative program for peace. Ultimately, of course, peace for the United States can only be assured by peace in the world. And ultimately peace in the world is dependent on a just economic and social order. The immediate fight to withdraw the United States from the armaments race, to keep us from being involved in another war, to keep down fascist tendencies, is a fight to give us time to achieve a new economic and social order which will ensure peace in the future.

WHAT THE AMALGAMATED HAS MEANT TO WOMEN

(Continued from page 15)

Organizing the unorganized is a hard task and only those engaged in it know how difficult it is. There is nothing romantic about it. Those who think this work is done mostly in halls where the workers gather and where oratory is largely indulged in, know little about the hard grinding task which comes to all those engaged in this work. The real effective work is done very often in house-to-house canvassing, among those who work in a particular shop where the organization is seeking to establish a union. Doors are often slammed in one's face; abuse is sometimes showered upon those who are trying to bring about better conditions through a union. Almost infinite patience is at times required on the part of those doing this work and the Amalgamated has eloquent proof through the years that the work of its women members in this particular field has been most effective. The part which women have played in the constant struggle to improve the wages and conditions of the workers is at times, if not ignored, at least not stressed by some writers dealing with the industrial history of our country. Women workers should never forget the part played by the brave women in the needle trades in Philadelphia, just after the nineteenth century was ushered in, and the first strike of women weavers in Pawtucket in 1924. It is a far cry from then to this year 1937, but as valiant soldiers of the common good women have remained in the forefront of the battle for industrial freedom.

THE WOMAN TODAY

WHAT THE WOMEN DID IN FLINT

(Continued from page 3)

of the business district in Flint, forerunner of marching thousands, wives and mothers of workers going to the aid of their men as capably as they look after their homes. The duties of the home have merely been extended—the women are going to its defense.

When the parade ended, the women went in cars to picket Fisher Plant 1. The injunction had been granted, the sit-downers told to leave the plant, but they were not leaving.

There occurred one of the most amazing labor demonstrations ever seen in America. A singing picket line, six deep, circled round and round that huge plant for hours. Hundreds of women pickets, hundreds of red and green caps added color to the scene. There was perfect order, *because not a policeman was in sight*, not even a traffic cop. There must have been ten thousand people among the pickets—sympathizers and onlookers.

The auxiliary had called a mass meeting for that evening. By six o'clock the hall was full.

Here one could see a movement in its moment of creation. Women from half a dozen towns spoke. They clamored for more education, more pamphlets on industrial unionism. Mrs. Genora Johnson, who is one of the many leaders in this movement, said:

"A little while ago there were few women interested in the union. Today they have learned through the auxiliary that the workers have power. The workers are going to learn they have political power and when they do, we'll elect every county and state official."

The women from Detroit told of their visiting committee to recruit new women members. We heard of nurseries that are being formed so that women can join the Emergency Brigade and work in the auxiliary.

"I want you to know every woman in Lansing is behind you, but send a woman over to tell us what you're doing and how to organize, because men don't tell us anything," one woman said.

The old cry: "The men don't tell us anything." The men going along leaving out the women like a person trying to hop on one leg. The labor movement will not long be crippled, a new breath has blown through it. A cultural movement has started. The women are making up plays which are based on actual strike happenings. They have classes for children in tap dancing and singing. The union is entering into every aspect of life; the home and the union are becoming fused.

MARCH, 1937

WHO PICKS YOUR CLOTHES?

(Continued from page 9)

For evening dresses, pay as little as possible, unless they are made of plain crepe, which can be made over to do daytime duty in another season. Remember that velvet crushes when you sit, and metal brocade eventually smells brassy, despite the best efforts of dry cleaners.

If it's a period dress, know the period and keep to it—don't pin a Watteau garland on an Egyptian sheath. Remember that long sleeves and high necks are accepted evening fashions, so insist on them if they become you, and don't be led astray by sleeve caps or net yokes that look set in for modesty. Remember that slinky chif-

CLEVELAND AUTO

At a large open meeting of Ladies' Auxiliary No. 7 of the Cleveland Auto Council held at the old Post Office on Wednesday, January 27, twenty-five new members were added to the rolls.

Mrs. Tom Cleary, vice-president of the auxiliary, acted as chairman of the meeting. The meeting discussed the problems of the Fisher Body strike. Mr. Spisak, president of Fisher Body Local No. 45 of the U.A.W.A., talked on the strike issues. Mrs. M. Jenso, president of the auxiliary, spoke on the work of the auxiliary in support of the strike. Mrs. C. H. Sobon, chairman of the educational committee of the auxiliary, made an appeal for members.

In anticipation of an injunction Friday morning, February 7, the auxiliary organized an emergency squad to report for picket duty at the plant.

fons aren't for the skinny, or taffeta frills for the fat.

Coats: In bargain-hunting at a season's end, watch lengths; a short coat is a liability when skirts get longer.

To save money, try telling yourself that you dislike the very idea of wearing fur. Maybe you can't make it stick, but I've never forgotten a story that began "Her third chin rested on the back of a dead mink." There is no question that in moderate-priced coats those with a British air, without a smidgeon of fur, are smartest. For becomingness a bright scarf is worth a dozen dead animals around your neck, and as for patches of fur on elbows, pockets and such, heaven forbid.

If you do fall for fur, in counting the cost of even a modestly priced bunny re-

member to allow for the upkeep—the annual storing, glazing and repairs.

Finally, don't kid yourself that you must have fur for warmth. Camel's hair is every bit as warm, swears a Southerner who freezes if not well wrapped against the New York climate. Camel's hair or blanket linings that zip or button in make the same coat do duty for two kinds of weather, and for the classic topcoats the linings can be bought separately.

Another warm combination is the three-piece suit—topcoat over a short jacket and skirt. Then you have the topcoat alone for less freezing weather. Also, if you're good at making over, you can—in the third season or so—turn the short coat and skirt into a one-piece dress.

Of course the classic wool coat is nothing to wear over an evening dress. But a few yards of velveteen, interlined for warmth, will make an evening wrap if you must have one; anybody, seamstress or not, can do the trick.

Hats: Nothing beats the year in, year out felt or the beret, either of which can be coaxed into a shape to suit your face. Either can be bought for a dollar or two at the so-called "hat bars" of department stores, instead of in the millinery departments. American women would look several hundred per cent better if they'd stop trying to find original headgear. Ask any intelligent man.

Shoes: Avoid trick cuts, and learn leathers: kid scuffs while suede stretches, so learn to tell the difference between kid and calf, or suede and bucko, or "reverse calf," which wears like iron. Avoid covered heels, which peel.

Color in shoes is here to stay; so, thank heaven, is the flat heel. If the little girls like to teeter we'll have to let them, but the tall girl is getting a break at last. Square toes help flat heel design.

Handbags: Should match shoes when possible. Plain book shapes are ahead of pouches with handles, both because they wear better and because few women dangle a handle gracefully. One dollar, out of season, usually buys a good bag—but smell it if that's the only way you can tell imitation leather. Fabric is always better than fake leather. Smooth leathers stand handling best.

Gloves: Nothing beats the plain, slip-on fabric glove, hand-stitched if you can afford it.

THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT

(Continued from page 11)

week. If he loses his job he will first get nothing for 4 weeks. Then for 15 weeks (the maximum period) he will get \$7.50 a week. Averaging these 19 weeks together, he will have drawn at the rate of \$5.90 a week—and this regardless of how many dependents he has! And after those 19 weeks are over, he will receive nothing more, no matter how many months or years longer his unemployment lasts.

BUT THIS is not all. Even the inadequate amounts designated cannot really be paid! The actuaries who drew up the Security Board's sample tables based them upon an estimate of unemployment only as great as we had during the great period of the 1920's between depressions. Supposing the scheme had been set up and accumulating reserves throughout the years 1922-1929, by the end of 1930 it would already have gone bankrupt! Today we cannot seriously expect to get back to any period of as little unemployment as that. On the contrary, the Social Security Act has been launched in 1936-37, when we are told "recovery" is here, but when unemployment still reaches many millions. Under such circumstances no big reserve can possibly be built up. On the contrary, from the outset the State benefits will in many cases have to be cut. And when, to return to our International Labor Office spokesman, the "next depression" comes in earnest, the tiny barriers of protection offered by the Social Security Act will be swept away as a straw in the current.

Viewed against such a background of inadequacy, the need of real security legislation becomes overwhelming. Its necessary provisions are obvious: nation-wide coverage, to include all workers and their dependents as well; provision without interruption, without shuttling the family around from one agency to another, for the whole period during which the earnings are interrupted; benefits certain, not dependent upon a payroll tax which works in inverse ratio to need, and benefits adequate in amount to sustain a minimum family standard of living.

IT IS ONLY to the degree that they embody these simple and fundamental necessities that any future amendments to the Social Security Act should be considered. Many amendments will doubtless be offered this year—some to set up some sort of minimum standards for the variegated State unemployment insurance laws, some to put in minimums for the old age assistance grants, some to include farm and domestic workers and the employees of small employers, and some—these will be by far the

most important ones—to have the Federal government assume some share of contributions. Each of these amendments will furnish some improvement over what we have now, but none of them, starting with such a hodge-podge and fundamentally niggardly scheme as the present Act, can pretend to any real safety and adequacy. For that one must have all-around nationwide coverage and the full financial responsibility of the national government.

A bill embodying these necessary principles will be reintroduced into Congress this year by Senator Lundeen (Farmer-Labor) of Minnesota. As the Frazier-Lundeen bill last year it won widespread support in labor and liberal circles.

The Lundeen bill is national in scope. Drawn up in its final form by a committee of the Interprofessional Association on which were social workers as well as lawyers and economists, it is first and foremost a welfare measure. It views the family as a unit and provides a well-rounded scheme, without loopholes or breaks, to cover all the kinds of misfortune that are apt to interrupt working class earnings. No payroll taxes are set up; the full expenses of the Act are to be met by Federal appropriations.

BRIEFLY, the Act offers six kinds of benefits—for the unemployed, the aged, the sick and otherwise disabled, for working mothers before and after childbirth, for widows with dependent children, and, especially important in these days, for the self-employed, such as farmers and small business and professional men who have lost their jobs or are "starving on the job." For all these classes of workers the bill guarantees a minimum of \$10 a week plus \$3 for each dependent, and for those above the minimum, the average earnings prevalent in their occupation in their locality, up to a maximum of \$20 a week plus \$5 for each dependent. The cost is made a first charge upon the Federal Treasury, with an initial appropriation of five billion dollars. Administration is by social insurance commissions appointed by the President from panels chosen by workers and farmers' organizations.

Nothing so good as this bill will be won without prolonged struggles by the workers of this country. Even our present absurdly inadequate Social Security Act was too generous in the eyes of the Republican Party spokesmen of last Fall: they would have thrown all the unemployed back upon the States, and all the aged upon a means test. But the standards of the Workers' Bill are exactly and simply what we need: the degree to which we achieve social security will depend upon the degree to which American workers are organized and insist upon having these standards.

PINK SLIP

(Continued from page 25)

W.P.A. ruling that workers who absent themselves for two consecutive days in two consecutive weeks are automatically dropped from the payroll. True, the administration, when pressed, stated that on the presentation of a physician's certificate there is a chance of reinstatement. But W.P.A. workers, because of their sad experiences, dread the red tape that such reinstatement would involve and mistrust these promises. They know that one ruling may be made on Monday, canceled on Tuesday, reinforced on Wednesday, and on Thursday there may be a complete denial that there ever was such a ruling.

RATHER THAN RUN the risk of losing his job—his last chance to self-respect—he will go to work no matter what the condition of his health. The wife of the W.P.A. worker knows this and anxiously watches for his homecoming with the hot water bottle, the thermometer, and the open bed all in readiness, wondering whether the "touch of flu" will stay flu or develop into pneumonia. She realizes that she is helpless to persuade him to take proper care of himself, for work is more precious to him than health, and that when this job is over there lies before them no alternative but to renew the dreary search of 1930.

But there is a difference now. It is not quite the same as in 1930. Then, he and the other thousands of engineers and architects who were knocking at the doors of architectural and engineering firms and were filling out reams of blanks at the employment agencies were lone professionals in search of jobs. But now when fighting the lay-offs of the W.P.A. they are fast learning to organize. Like the millions of union workers, they realize that rights are not handed to you on a silver platter, but that you have to fight for them—even the right to bread and the right to work.

And not only the husband has joined his organization but the wife too is making up her mind that she will not take it silently this time, but will fight with the wives of other professionals who have joined the women's auxiliaries. She is not alone now. She does not have to sit helplessly and wait for the fateful mailman to bring the "pink" dismissal slip. She knows that they are not defeated as long as they are organized and willing to fight.

BOOKS

Between the Hammer and the Anvil

By Edwin Seaver. Julian Messner, New York, 283 pages. \$2.50.

IN HIS LATEST novel, Edwin Seaver has given us in all its tragic intensity and compelling dynamics; the contemporary American scene. His characters are fellow Americans in whom we recognize our neighbors, our close friends . . . perhaps even ourselves.

Because of this the book proves an absorbing experience, giving what I feel a good book should always give its reader—far more than a “good story” a few hours “exciting reading” and escape; but rather a searching within yourself, a looking out on the world around you with renewed feeling and keener eye. In other words, a novel should prove in the deepest sense a spiritual, a mobilizing experience. I believe that Seaver’s book meets this test.

His novel centers around the simple moving story of Alex, the young writer, and his girl wife who struggle to maintain their home and personal integrity in a depression-crazed world; a struggle which leads them finally to define their place in the ranks of labor and the movement toward a regenerated America.

Through Alex, as well as through the bewildered John Doe and his three Hollywood gangster-drunk sons, the author speaks out: America, you can’t run away from life. Don’t try to deny problems, don’t be afraid. Face it, fight it, fight for your right to live, demand it in an intelligent organized manner.

Alex’s and Anna’s decision against an abortion, (and in spite of all economic difficulties to welcome the coming child), becomes a symbol of this courageous approach to life, while the tragic death of the Doe boys rings with the doom of thousands of American youth.

There are many passages of unusual beauty and feeling in the book, entire chapters such as “For the Day Comes,” “Life is Real,” “A Child Is To Be Born,” and “On the Eve.”

In our modern writing, there are no better passages than these.

At the same time there are other chapters that seem unequal to this high level, being journalistic in treatment, with their minor characters presented more as caricatures than as human flesh and blood. No doubt Edwin Seaver did this with deliberate intent, but for me it lessens the total power of the book. Also I am sorry he employed the movie camera technique used in many modern novels, with quick flashes

and close-ups on many scenes and characters. The method has its good points, but the cost seems to me too great, in loss of continuity for the reader, and a partial defeat of its central aim—building up to a decisive total effect. For me, at least, the fragments too often protrude on the whole.

True, the novel in its traditional form has limits against which an author must struggle, in his endeavor to depict the complex vast scene of modern life. But the novel in its classic form has possibilities far from exhausted by contemporary writing.

I admit that I would prefer to meet and travel with Alex and Anna in such a constructed book, because we could travel further and come to know one another more completely.

And if you feel that way about an author’s characters, that is the highest tribute which you can pay him and his book.

MYRA PAGE

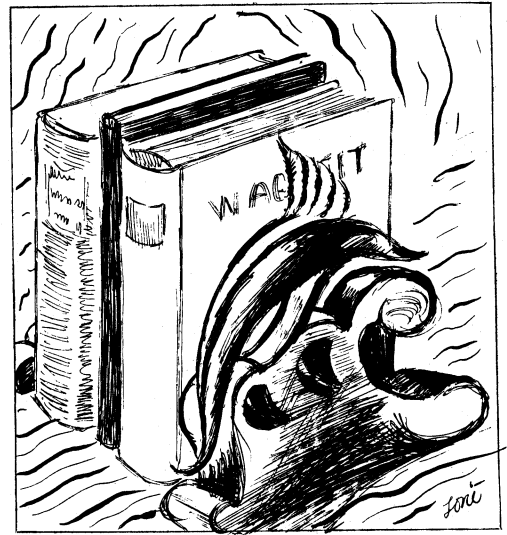
Behind the Spanish Barricades

By John Langdon-Davies. McBride. \$2.75.

WHILE OTHER WRITERS, from England, France and America, have gone to Spain to fight for the government, John Langdon-Davies has made his contribution toward the preservation of democracy by writing this substantial and lively account of what is going on there.

One thing that makes it so good is the author’s thorough understanding of the country, its people and their language. He has lived in Spain for many years and he talks both Catalan and Castilian. When he travelled through war-ridden Spain he visited places never recommended to tourists, he was able to compare the new with the old, and most of all, he realized, as few Americans can, what the people were fighting for.

Knowing Spain as he did and having been there just before the rebellion broke out he could not accept the explanation so many correspondents fell for—that there was danger of a red revolution. His explanation is that when Civil War came in Spain it was because “Spanish workers and peasants were simply trying to rid Spain of those social indecencies that Cromwell and our Puritan fathers finally destroyed in England.” He reviews the events that preceded the present conflict—the election of a popular front government in February, 1936, the armed insurrection led by General Franco in July and the immediate intervention of Germany and Italy. Throughout the book he bears in mind the



reasons for the fighting and repeatedly points with scorn to the American and British policy of “neutrality.”

Although many of his old friends have drifted to the rebel side, his sympathy is always with the people against the tyranny of the absentee landowners, the army and the church. In one town not far from Barcelona where he saw a church in ruins he was reminded of a scene in New York two years before. It was during the taxi strike. He was walking up Sixth Avenue and watched men tearing the doors from cabs, smashing the glass, and scratching the paint. It made him sick to see such deliberate destruction. Then he realized that there was a bitter strike going on and that the cars being attacked were scab cars. The destroyers were men “fighting for their economic lives, for more food for their children, more home decency for their wives. . . .”

To the burning of the churches, a subject so thoroughly distorted here, Mr. Langdon-Davies devotes a full chapter. The churches were burned, he says, not because the people did not believe in the symbols painted and plastered all over them, but because they did believe so strongly in them, feared them and considered them enemies to be overcome.

But it isn’t only the churches that have been closed. On a tour through Barcelona Mr. Langdon-Davies takes his readers past the Woman’s Prison. “You must see it to believe it,” he says. A red-and-black flag hangs from a window and a notice saying “This torture house was closed by the People, July, 1936.”

John Langdon-Davies saw human beings and he writes about them in human terms. Despite the seriousness of his subject, his book is entertaining. It should be read by everyone who would like a clearer picture of the Spanish situation than any they can get from the daily newspaper accounts.

CAROLYN MARX

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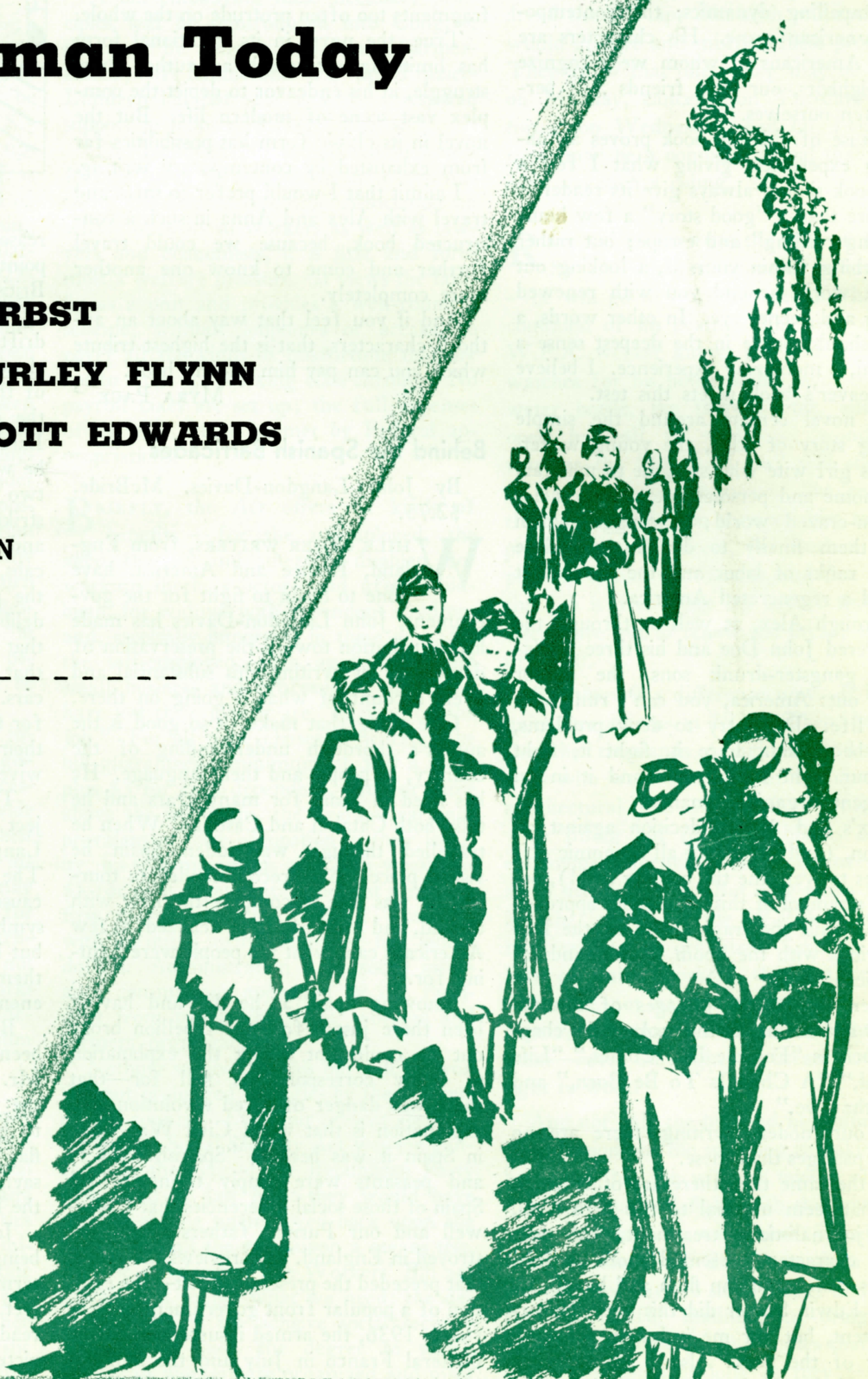
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