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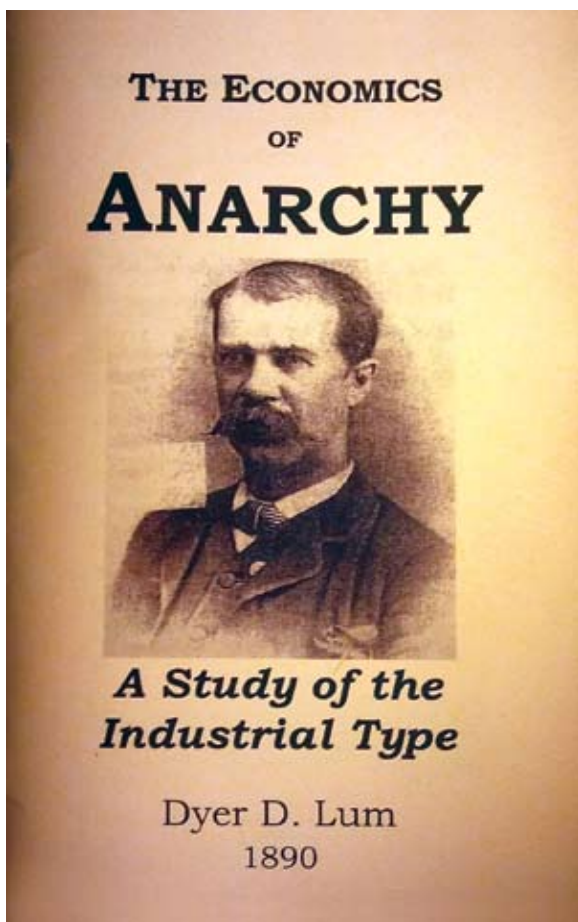
a journal of theory&strategy



Philosophy of Trade Unions

Dyer D. Lum

Radical Reprints



**The Economics of Anarchy:
A Study of the Industrial Type**

I have repeatedly been asked to write a brief summary of the aims sought by Anarchists which could be read and discussed in the various clubs that are studying economic questions. With this end in view the following pages are submitted, trusting that they may be a help to those who are earnestly seeking the rationale of the Labor Question. — Dyer D. Lum.

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PHILOSOPHY OF TRADE UNIONS



**An Essay Devoted to the Interests of the Thousands
Who, in the Daily Struggle for Labor's Rights,
do Battle for the True Freedom
of the Human Race**

By DYER D. LUM

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Philosophy of Trade Unions

Philosophy! Lord bless us! Have we not enough to do to make both ends meet, and scant time enough to read the papers, without bothering our heads about *philosophy*? Such time as we may have for reading, we want mental rest, recreation, rather than abstract thought — ! Yes, so say or think thousands and, like their fathers before them, keep on in the narrow rut trod for them. Yet, and it is a hopeful sign, hundreds are beginning to *think*. Both over the bench and in hours of rest, the active mind will ask itself questions, and seeks to understand the reason of the relations in which it finds itself.

We have had Philosophies of religion — by the ton, but they no longer concern us. We feel that they are “back numbers” — past year’s almanacs — in this world of active relations. The questions they propound do not touch us; they seem suited for another atmosphere than that of the shop. Our Hereafter is undoubtedly as important as the Here — when we get there; but the prosaic fact of “bread and butter” concerns us mainly just at present. “Christ and a crust” may involve happiness, but — we don’t hanker after it. We put all such studies

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back on the top shelves where they stand dust-covered — their day seems past.

Philosophies of government have no charm, unless they touch our vital interests. It may be grossly materialistic, but still our *vitals* dominate in shop-life. The Church having passed from our lives as an active force, will its successor — the State — serve us? There

we are more interested and our *vitals* warm up somewhat and we dream theoretical dreams! Yet still we are not satisfied. Abstract theories about suffrage, constitutions, representation, limits of executive and legislative powers, do not seem to fit in with Trade-Union work. In fact as Unions grow, these fade. What the Church *won't* do we know. What the State *might* do is a vexed puzzle. What we *can* do is more vital. And herein lies the philosophy of Unionism.

The philosophy of any state of action is its reason, an answer to the ever-recurring *Why?* But in industrial relations it need not be a “dismal science,” as [Thomas] Carlyle called Political Economy, nor need its terms be located in transcendental space; it is but *common sense* views of life in the broader phase of it presented by history; the connecting link between the individual effort and social progress.

Looking at this Greater Life we see why Winwood Reade calls his history of human efforts “The Martyrdom of Man!” History is but the biography of the national individual — the Race Self; and in this biography we find

the steps of growth marked by three great human relations, which have succeeded each other, the Religious, the Political, and the Industrial.

As each has in turn arisen to agitate thought, the preceding one has waned in public interest. These three successive phases of thought took to themselves form and substance in Protestantism, Democracy, and Socialism. By Protestantism I mean the struggle for liberty of conscience, which the Catholic to-day values as highly as the loudest shouting Methodist. That battle has been won and both Catholic and Protestant became more humanized.

By Democracy I mean the next extension of protest to control over actions. As the former protest left the conscience free to follow its beliefs, so this demanded freedom from interference by king and noble. With the American and French Revolutions there began to rise in importance the status of industrial relations, and queries whether they were equitable.

To say that trade unions have a philosophy is but to say that it has a *Why* as well as a form. It shapes us more than we it. It, too, is a larger Self, embodying our hopes, our aspirations, and unconsciously leading us on to wider views. What these are will do us no harm to examine; it may even clear our thoughts a little and animate us with new zeal. Let us then, by easy stages, study this new Ideal, and see wherein Trade Unionism plays a leading part.

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Industrialism.

We have seen that the dominant spirit of the age is no longer religious creeds, nor forms of government, but the industrial relations of social life. Where the former are not in touch with these, they cease calling out our enthusiasm. Although the younger brother of these, it begins to feel its own independence and resents their interference. It feels that it is of age and would enter upon its inheritance.

To understand this new spirit which now dominates thought, let us briefly follow its modern growth. In the dark midnight of Feudal Ages, Industry seemed slumbering in Europe.

The slave had, it is true, given way to the serf, who was sold with the earth on which he saw the first and the last ray of light. The absence of diversified industry left warlike activities to ravage the country. Baron against baron, patriotism limited to the estate, labor fought for its owner in return for protection; rights and duties were co-related; the many served the one whose strong arm protected. But a change came, and singularly it was to religious fanaticism that Industrialism was indebted. The wild cry of the Crusaders to rescue the tomb of a dead Savior, was the lullaby over the cradle of the new one. For in that upheaval of provincial lines, in its extension of the bounds

of the horizon, in freeing the serf who donned the Crusaders' cross and who lived to return with widened experience, came the new thought which surged in the veins of youthful and sickly Industry. Knowledge of the Orient, its arts and crafts gave a new impetus to human wants. In the walled cities the returned pilgrim became a free artisan. But hearts as well as walls constitute defence, and stout hearts were there beneath brawny breasts. The old Roman

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guilds were revived. Against marauding baron and thieving ecclesiastic stout hearts strengthened city walls. In Germany through the Hanseatic Teague, and in France through alliance with the crown, the power of militant feudalism was weakened and Industry acquired a foothold. With increasing luxury rose fresh supply, and the trades began to assume form and organization.

Silently, like a subterranean river, it flowed on gathering strength. From Italy to Britain, from Holland to Spain sturdy artisans were uniting. Beneath the terrible wars which followed Luther's rebellion, backed as it was by the old Feudal spirit, beneath the subsequent upheavals attending the formation of ruling nationalities, the river flowed on. When the Great French Revolution swept away the accumulated rubbish of centuries, when the banks of established Custom grew weakened over its increasing torrent, the dikes broke and the

deluge came. Since then the waters have flown above ground. Here, in wider current; there, in narrow and rocky gorge and more tumultuously. Luther, Calvin, Puritans, had dinned the ears of men with conundrums on "divine grace" and "predestination and election." Still Industry toiled on silent and unmoved. Roundheads and Cavaliers, Tories and Patriots, Jacobins and Royalists took their turn, and Paine, Rousseau, Junius filled the thoughts of men in both hemispheres with man's political rights. Still the artisan made his anvil resound and spoke no word.

But when these old dikes went, how great the change. Cabinets, Parliaments, Congresses no longer debate creeds nor draft constitutions. What have been their labors? Tariffs, Factory acts, Emancipation, Labor Bureaus, Protection, to or control of great enterprises — all alike testify to the change. Even the war between North and South in this country was an economic issue; dear labor and

cheap labor confronted each other and over the victory for cheap labor patriots still exult, display their wounds and draw their pensions with patriotic ardor.

Another feature is prominent which must be noted. The old Civilization was warlike; activity sought militant paths. The citizen was of worth in proportion to his strength and endurance. The same priestly hand that blessed the infant consecrated the sword which was to brain it. As Industry rose, it became discernible that peace was a necessary condition to its growth. Thus wars of conquest insensibly changed into wars of defence. At the present day wars are but desperate efforts to secure control of markets whereby labor may not flag nor privilege lose its power and lease over it. Thus in the biography of the Race we see the one struggle assume various forms. With succeeding generations old foes reappear in new uniforms. Militancy undermined in Church, being undermined in the State, is seeking support in Industry. No longer wearing a crown, it seeks foothold in the shop.

**Born of the New,
[the Trade Union]
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Industrialism, steadily toiling on, feels quickened pulse and new hopes. Logically the antagonist of Militancy, it demands peace, yet is driven by untoward circumstances to unite for self-defence. It is ushering in a new civilization. While priests are praying for us, and politicians “orating” to us Industrialism is silently building its outposts and pushing its videttes further beyond the old lines.

Trade Unions a Protest.

In the palmy days of Rome and Greece, when even the wise Aristotle declared slavery to be a “natural” condition, the trade union was an important factor. In the inscriptions of the ancient Roman Republic they are recognized, and in both lands they had their altars and gods. As Rome extended her conquests, slaves increased in number and the free artisans grew more and firmer allied.

Though the current religion gave it its consecration, necessity was the spur which prompted its action. In a militant society, where imperial methods were continually limiting the sphere of individual activity, where lordly pride contemned humble worth and trod ruthlessly over unprotected weakness, trade union lines were closer drawn. But the power of Militancy resided in authority and was wielded by the sword; while Industrialism was a child as yet learning to walk.

All through the Middle Ages the trade union survived. The barbarian invasions, the wreck of the empire, the contest of rival nationalities never completely swamped it beneath its deluging floods. In holiday processions ancient prints still show us the red banner of the trades carried by their members at festivals.

But because of this ceaseless warlike activity around them trade affiliation became still more a necessity. As deeper grew strife, harder became the peaceful conditions under which alone Industry thrives and blooms best. Animated, as it were, by the same instinct with which, though side by side, the horse turns his heels, and the ox his horns, against rain and storm, so the artisans flocked together in self-defence feeling that in union alone was strength.

In England, "Merrie England," the lot of the workers was most often a hard one. His clothing prescribed for him by act of parliament, his absence from his town a subject for magisterial inquiry, refusal to work for regulated schedule of wages an offence for which pillory and cropped ears, or a brand of infamy, must atone — how could he survive if even union organization became "conspiracy" against the laws of God and man? While the church hurled damnation and sulphur, and the State cell and gallows, for such un-

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lawful agitation, still the unions grew. Whether as clubs or mutual aid societies the artisans rallied around them as their only centre of strength. Even into our own century many of these barbaric statutes stood unrepealed.

But its animating spirit could not be trampled out and in the present day we find them recognized and granted official status. Why, then, still continue the struggle? Because the downfall of the hereditary crown, and baron, and privileged gentry was but the shedding of outer garments. The power once incarnate in

the pontiff, then divided among crowned heads, and finally spread out to parliamentary legislation, was still militant. The conflict is but transferred to other fields. The religious and political battle fields are today flowering meadows, but the spirit which trod them with warring hoofs, now benignly smiles over the ledgers of the counting room. In the economic struggle of the ages lords and nobles have lost but their gold lace and velvet; they survive as economic lords of the means of life and the trade union can not yet draw in its advance guard of pickets.

Only where militant measures restrict the peaceful flow of Industry a tangible or intangible Something blocks the path, does protest arise. Whether the toll collected be by the baronial armed troops, without word of apology, or by indirect means, the protest comes out. However free a country may boast itself, how eloquent its orators may become on patriotic occasions and stated days, yet where unions of toilers are increasing there protest is rising. Its rise and fall can be as accurately measured as that of mercury under atmospheric pressure. Presidents and secretaries are but its mouthpieces through which the protest seeks utterance.

The very fact that Trade Unions exist and are manifesting increased activity, is evidence that inequitable economic conditions exist. Whether conscious or unconscious this is the natural channel where such protest is

first heard and the barometrical indicator of its strength.

It is a business, matter-of-fact institution, responding to personal needs, living in the present for the present and not concerned about its status in the Millennium. Born of the New, it instinctively opposes the Old civilization. Growing to stature when ecclesiastical and hereditary lords disputed its rights, it still survives when their heirs don the, modern costume to cover their economic lordships. It feels, rather than reasons, but its intuition is that of instinct. The Old was founded on *compulsion*; the New tends to *voluntary co-operation*. One looks

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backward for its title deeds; the other forward to growing solidarity of interests. The Old, rooted in militancy, blossoms in enforced *direction*; the New, rooted in peace, buds in *mutual concert* of aid and action. In its waking moments it stands arrayed for defence; in its dreams it sees co-operative solidarity, and cries with Bobby Burns:

“A fig for those by law protected!

Liberty’s a glorious feast!

Courts for cowards were erected,

Churches built to please the priest.”

Its Conscious and Unconscious Growth.

So far we have mainly considered its outward form and actions, but the spirit of Trade Unionism, like that of all institutions, is a living soul. Embodying the hopes and aspirations, of long centuries of struggle, ever adapting itself anew to changed surroundings, it has in its varied existence become endowed with a purpose which no caucus of “leaders” can dispel, nor errors of the moment divert.

Its conscious growth may be read in its annals; its victories and defeats, its resolutions and concerted acts, all tell the story of determined opposition to regulative interference. The peasants that gathered in the great uprisings of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries felt its inspiration stirring their hearts, and formulated their grievances in concise form.

But its unconscious life has had by far the widest influence upon social life. Protests never fall as idle winds without leaving effects. The cry of the New against the Old, the protest of cramped activity, ever takes moral form. The legitimate outgrowth of Industrialism fretting under militant direction, drawn as if by an invisible cord to stand shoulder to shoulder in defence of common needs against a common foe, it must need foster desires

and hopes unknown under old conditions. In its members arose a sturdier manhood, a more self-reliant activity. The artisan of the middle ages, who at any moment might be called upon to doff his apron and seize his weapon to rally with his comrades at the city walls to repel invasion, grew more independent. Inch by inch they contested the ground and won from reluctant privilege by presenting a solid front. In that age the union was more than a perfunctory due collector, it was a living reality, because the need of mutual concert of action was imperative.

In the battles waged by it in this century, abroad and at home, from the vantage point of its last decade we can see growing out of its deeds effects rippling over the social surface of life on all sides. It has transformed the patient and sodden drudge into a manly and honest worker. In the increased hours of leisure it has secured for him, in the greater comfort thereby arising from greater wants, in the broadening of his mental horizon and wider sympathies, we can behold an advance that has been won by action, not prayers, by determination, not supplications.

Even in the last century trade union lines were closely drawn, and rivalry and jealousy between trades of constant occurrence. A feeling of class pervaded each union, and it manifested itself against those of another craft.

War, in centralizing power, ever tends to centralization in all other functions.

That same narrowness which leads us to despise those of another nationality in the name of patriotism was too often shown between unions. But that day has forever past.

Another evidence of growth in self-reliance can be seen in our own generation. When our civil war was over and thousands returned to their

customary occupations, a change was perceptibly felt. War, in centralizing power, ever tends to centralization in all other functions. The growing wealth of a few, the rise of monopolies, the gradual extinction of smaller industries, the concentration of industrial direction in fewer hands — all told upon the worker. Unions began to increase their activity, bastard organizations claiming the shield of labor came into existence, agitation began, and organization followed for political action. The writer, looking back over more than a quarter of a century of identification with the Labor Movement, can note several distinct rings of growth during that period.

Immediately after the war of the rebellion a Short Hour Movement was organized in Massachusetts and the East. With the eloquence of Wendell Phillips to arouse enthusiasm a determined effort was made to affect legislation. A ticket was annually placed in the field; the State-house besieged by delegations of workingmen; and, with every crumb gained, the loaf seemed nearer. Alas! "distance lends enchantment to the view!" Zeal did not diminish among the active few, but soon the fight was transferred from the State-house to the National Capitol. The National Eight Hour Law became the object of desire and

petitions were secured from all over the country. In 1880, after several failures, a national conference appointed a "National Eight Hour Committee," consisting of R. F. Trevellick, Chairman; John G. Mills, Secretary; Chas. Litchman, Albert R. Parsons, and myself, to interview the entire House. Mr. Trevellick had speeches to make elsewhere. Litchman had "fences to fix," or other business — also elsewhere. Albert R. Parsons had not the means to stay, but said if one of us could take him in, he would stay and fight it out. *He did so.* Mr. Mills and myself were then residing there.

Time passed and the Eight Hour bill is just where it was. But unions no longer bother themselves about it. Grown more self-reliant, they are seeking it through mutual cooperation.

This is but a single instance of unconscious growth, yet how pregnant with meaning for the future! The new cry is not for "more legislation," but more unity and self-help! Even those who still hold to the past methods are unconsciously drawn in with the current.

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Instead of depending upon a politician, he is becoming to the Unionist as unnecessary a factor, *in his work*, as the priest. It is an indication of yet further self-reliance, of still greater possibilities, when with one accord the federated solidarity of toilers will sing with [Lord Alfred] Tennyson:

"Ring in the valiant man and free,

The larger heart, the kindlier hand;

Ring out the darkness of the land.

Ring in the Christ that is to be."

Federation and Solidarity.

We are now beginning to obtain a glimpse of the philosophy of Trade Unionism. Eminent writers, like Herbert Spencer and Auguste Comte, have laid down the broad proposition that modern civilization has consisted in the distinction between Militancy and Industrialism; between past "compulsory cooperation" and growing "voluntary co-operation." Accepting their conclusions, we have tried to apply their reasoning to the Trade Union, and have seen that its unconscious growth is in that direction. The Trade

Union being the only mouthpiece of concerted industrial effort it must be in accord with the unconscious tendency of Industrialism, if it is to effect lasting results. The body must conform to the requirements of the soul if it is to influence the future.

The tendency toward self-reliance mentioned is borne out in the federated action of the trades. Having outgrown the petty jealousies and rivalries of the past they now seek in Federation conscious action in "voluntary co-operation."

The generous support extended by other trades to the Carpenters in their conflict for a shorter day of labor was a magnificent illustration of the growing mutuality of interests felt by the toilers. When callings so different as carpen-

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ters, bakers, cigar-makers, miners, street-railway employees, etc., etc., rely upon their own efforts to assist fellow-workers of another craft, we can see that the true spirit of Industrialism has taken deep root in organized effort.

The moral aspect of such growing mutualism is not to be overlooked. While each trade preserves its own autonomy with jealous care, the broader spirit is one of fraternity. So in social life the broader spirit of Industrialism, while tending to make each individual more self-reliant, also teaches that true individualism is based on mutualism, on the voluntary co-operation of each to the common end. This broadened Sympathy in men's natures, this heartier interest in others' welfare, this identification of self in

the common weal, is the moral result of free relations. As compulsory co-operation has relaxed, as individual initiative has been given greater scope of action, our emotional natures are affected and mutual accord follows as naturally as water gravitates to a level.

This moral growth we see reflected all around us. The habits of "gentlemen" a century ago would be deemed intolerable in any self-respecting workman's home. With this growing solidarity of interest common decency has taken on a far higher meaning. Courtesy has extended her boundaries, and the old prejudices are melting away. The bigotry and hatred of our fathers shown in "know-nothingism," is now only seen in public by the untamed "small boy," stoning a Chinaman or a "dago."

This higher ethical standard is seen in the various beneficial orders among us, as well as in the trade unions, where fraternal love overleaps the tomb to relieve the widow. This solidarity of interest; is not a prayer-meeting enthusiasm, I not a political party fellowship, but inclusive of all religions and politics. More, it is fast breaking down boundary lines as absolute barriers between fellow-workers, and *patriotism* — which old Dr. Johnson defined as “the last refuge of a scoundrel” — is reserved for Decoration Day and the Fourth of July.

Industrialism, as the Gospel of Peace, brings with it international fraternity, and in this lies the goal of Solidarity. To this end the logical development of Trade Unionism tends, and across seas and continents friendly hands are already outstretched with invitation to fraternal grasp. The Trade Union, more than other institutions, must need and feel this new breath, and its federated history already marks how willingly it is accepted. Step by step is the advance made, but surely is the march continued toward this broader view of social relations, this constant growth of individual self-reliance and mutual interests. For the first necessarily involves the second in a free society, and the tendency indicates growth toward that culmination. The Trade Union movement, therefore, need not worry over the barking of the camp curs hanging around it, or the acts of stragglers who fall out of line. In their course they are evidencing an alignment with both industrial and moral progress, placing themselves on record as worthy standard-bearers in the Industrial Crusade, and forecasting conditions in which Solidarity will be hope realized. Whether the foe appear in open field, or as a “hired Hessian” masquerading in *Liberty's* name, the result of the struggle need not be doubtful while the workers themselves remain true to their colors. Federation and Solidarity! Already the hilltops are ruddy with their dawning light, though sombre scenes may lead to it.

“Freedom we call it, for holier
Name of the soul's there is none;
Surelier it labors, if slower,
Than the metres of star or of sun;
Slower than life into breath,
Surelier than time into death.
It moves till its labor be done.”

Its Militant Character.

It is time to note an objection; a charge of inconsistency is raised. If Trade unions represent Industrialism, whose ends are peace, whence their militant character? On every hand we hear economic lords, and their editorial hirelings, bewailing the “tyranny of trade unions.” Is the life of the institution, like that of the individual, a contradiction? Are there stronger inborn impulses to evil than efforts for good?

Let us be honest with ourselves, and with “our friends the enemy.” The

very fact that the Trade Union is a protest, that it is called into being for defensive purposes, that it has to constantly withstand the open attacks of its enemies, and the more insidious opposition of those who prate loudest of individual liberty — stamps it with a militant character. As soldiers of the Revolution they stand in line, shoulder to shoulder, to defend every point won, and to advance their position. The Unionist is no Quaker, thankful for the right to exist, but unwilling to defend it.

To imagine that emotion could in any way aid the astronomer in his investigations would at once strike every intelligent person as absurd. In fact, the perfection of the science is constituted in its elimination of the emotional factors, as well as any form of intellectual bias. But in economic problems, the emotional nature is generally assumed to be an indispensable factor. The reason for this error is not difficult to understand. The world's thought is now centered on social relations, and it has been facetiously said: "There is a

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good deal of human nature in man." As actors in a struggle in which our interests are directly involved, our judgment should be the more impartial; we must exclude bias, subtract the "personal equation" of feeling, and study social relations as we would those of the animal or the inorganic world. The fundamental idea underlying the industrial protest is that equity may be attained.

In basing our demands upon what Herbert Spencer has called "the law of equal freedom," we ask no more than we are willing to concede. Our rights being equal, injustice must have for its cause some deviation from this principle whereby some are granted special privileges, which ever carries with it corresponding restrictions from which results the social inequity of which we complain. If the fundamental truth of an equitable I system of relations as the industrial goal of progress be equal freedom, it resolves itself into the opportunity of gratifying self-interest.

Trade unions are not system-builders. With them, "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," and tomorrow will find a new relief for picket duty. Self-interest is not only a fundamental law of our being, but is the incentive which has lifted man from the animal into the sphere of the human. Because suffering exists, poverty degrades, and immorality results, there is the greater need for cold judgment rather than emotional hysterics. Schemes for abolishing individuality have their source in the emotional nature, while human progress consists in judgment sitting over and ruling the lower side of our natures. All life is a contest between the judgment of the intellect and the impulse of emotion, and this primarily is the distinction between man and the animal.

The present struggle for shorter days of toil is not based on any sentimental desire for “the other fellows,” but for self alone. We want a higher standard of living, and to secure that self-interest becomes mutual interest, to wring from privilege a greater opportunity. While, therefore, basing our economic struggle upon self-interest, we are not unaware that whatever tends to enlarge the scope of opportunities by establishing greater equity, at the same time leads to a wider field for the higher display of emotion. Increased sensibility *follows* free relations; the soldier in the line need but defend his position. Thus, while sympathy has enlarged with the greater increase of freedom, it is but as a result, never as a cause. We no longer view

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scenes of torture with the dulled composure of our ancestors, but, while this more sympathetic nature is but an effect, it has been dominated by judgment. In other words, our selfishness has broadened into mutualism and such scenes are no longer of interest to self.

The Trade Union’s line is, therefore, a defensive one, and in the bitter fight forced upon us we want all we can get, and pathetic narratives of the sufferings of a “scab” in case he runs against a missile will not trouble our tender hearts. In such a warfare we do not keep our emotions on tap, and the sentimentalists who propose to “rush the can” for sympathy will receive no more attention than the inequitable system that their weak natures lead them, however unconsciously, to bolster up, and maintain. For both “scab” and sentimentalist in the hour of conflict we have but contempt, and turn from each alike when the word is passed to “fall in.” Our duty is in the ranks, not playing “coffee cooler” to the captain in the hour of danger!

Its Logical Position.

The point just discussed is so vital that it should be made still clearer. The pompous, big-paunched monopolist, after having satisfied his mind that his “trust” arrangements are working all right, unburdens his conscience in bemoaning the fact that men will so far forget the inherent dignity of human nature and inalienable right as to kick for themselves. Their sympathies, in such cases only are freely on tap and his indignation is aroused. To hear

him orate, one might think the welfare of the worker lay nearest his heart, and that his woes often embittered even the champagne with which our kind and tender-hearted philanthropist tries to drown his regret at such ill-advised persistency in wrong doing. Nor would we for a moment bring the railing charge of conscious hypocrisy against such profession of surprise. His own independent course of life, his position as one of the belted and epauletted generals in the warfare for a living, with a full commissariat for his own subsistence, and able to dictate the line of advance and battle, renders him blind rather than indifferent to the feelings of the humble private in the ranks. Independence in submission is his idea of the private's whole duty.

But, by the too often meagre camp-fire by which the private reflectingly sits, other thoughts arise, and other thoughts than his adaptedness to carry

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out pre-arranged schemes, of which he knows nothing, take form. Let us try and express what these often-unuttered thoughts are as translated by his actions. Nor, is our simile of warfare a mere metaphor. There is such a warfare, like all warfare cruel and relentless, but not the warfare our epauletted generals imagine, of a warfare upon nature under their guidance and control. On the contrary it is the same warfare that occurred in the Black Hole of Calcutta among the doomed prisoners who trampled each other to death

in order to get near the sole opening for air — a warfare for position. Our generals are those who have succeeded in monopolizing the air, the means of life! Nor have they succeeded, as their in their self-esteem assert, by their superior ability alone, but by legalization of each successive monopoly, wherein might makes right and the weak is not merely left to succumb, but even punished for his struggles if the might of monopoly be assailed.

The warfare of industrial life is not between rich and poor, but for position for all to acquire from the inexhaustible store house of unexploited wealth. The reason that all do not possess comfort is found in the fact that artificial restrictions have been created. How shall the struggle be conducted? Singly, the restricted can form no army, and conjointly they would be but a mob. In union alone lies strength, and before an entrenched enemy union becomes an imperative necessity for self-preservation. It is a civil war in which our armor-clad foes march under the black flag, and even when they return a portion of the wealth extorted they dignify it with the high-sounding name of Charity!

Organized labor makes no warfare upon property; on the contrary, it would have each and all possess property. Property is that which is *proper* to man as its creator, and, because denied this, the producers combine. The day has passed when it can be asserted as an economic truism that the laws governing production and distribution are invariable natural laws. From

the pages of standard economists the fallacy may be shown. Thornton and Walker have given abundant testimony that organization has directly affected wages. In fact, this is being generally conceded.

The necessity for united action needs no special argument; it is apparent. The beneficial effect has been over and again demonstrated from the guilds of past centuries to the present day. The justification of such organized resistance lies in the very nature of the contest. Adam Smith said: "We have no Acts of Parliament against combining to raise profits." And a century intervening does not alter the fact save in degree. He also said: "Masters are always and everywhere in a sort of tacit, but constant and uniform, combination not to raise the wages of labor above their actual rate."

Today this combination is more than a tacit one, it is open and avowed, and necessity demands counter combination.

Experience has determined that, as social beings, as civilization is based on interdependence, we defend our own

selves better in accord than when acting separately. The resistance of a mob is self-suicide; accord is essential. In this case, drill, discipline, alignment in ranks, becomes as much self, as mutual, interest. We are social beings, our very individualities are determined by both social inheritance and environments.

As a human being the Czar of Russia has an equal right to life; but when the denial of equal freedom finds its incarnation in the Czar, he becomes a social enemy, in other words, an invader. To attack Czardom, and not the Czar, its concrete materialization, is to draw a metaphysical distinction between form and essence. All we know of "systems" against which we are so often advised to confine our attacks, is in their incarnate form as human beings, woven into organization.

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Its Relation to the Scab.

The non-unionist is but an indirect enemy; in withholding his aid he by so much weakens the common line of defense. Though often his acts may directly, without conscious effort, aid the enemy, he need not be a traitor to his fellow toilers. Every great movement has some object of I superlative loathing; its Judas Iscariots, its Benedict Arnolds, its PigOttis, its paid spies and informers, its Pinkerton thugs — men deaf to all honor, blind to mutual interest, dead to all but the miserable cravings of their shriveled souls. In the industrial conflict the instinct of workers has significantly termed its type of this species — "scab!" Loud have been the appeals for sympathy with the workman who falls out from the line to better his condition, or relieve the distress of a starving wife and family. But to prevent just such contingencies

is the mission of the Union. One who is forced to the necessity of wage-labor and refuses to share the common danger, but either openly or stealthily goes over to the enemy to accept his terms, is a deserter. By his act he has sundered the social bonds of mutual interest which united him to us, has served notice

It is our duty, not only to ourselves, but to our families, to enlarge the scope of union among our fellow craftsmen.

that he asks no aid, expects no sympathy, seeks no quarter. *At his acted word we take him.*

The time has passed for circumlocution in handling this subject. If Trade Unionism has a logical ground for existence, if organized resistance is preferable to slavish submission, if the social ties which unite us in

mutual alliance are of higher validity than the selfish cravings of an unsocial nature, the relation between the Trade Union and its sycophantic enemy — the “scab,” is that existing between the patriot and the paid informer. No sentimentalism will attenuate; no olive branch will be extended; no tears will be shed over whatever misfortune befalls him, nor aught but utter loathing be felt for him. He stands forth by his own act recreant to duty. Bankrupt in honor, infidel to faith, destitute of social sympathy, and a self-elected target. We here but express clearly what workingmen feel in every industrial crisis, and we deliberately express it that at *all* times such men be regarded as possible “informers” and traitors.

But let us hear his defence. We are told that Trade Unionism is an encroachment upon individual right, that the toiler, whether union or non-union, has the privilege to sell his labor as best suits himself. To this we reply:

1. The toiler does not enter the market under equal conditions.
2. Monopoly over land, the source of wealth, and over exchange, its medium of distribution, gives to the capitalist an economic advantage in the struggle.
3. The legalization of privilege forces upon the unprivileged the necessity of combination in order to sustain themselves.
4. The logic of events has settled the line of action; it lies neither in the prayer-meeting nor the polling-booth, but in mutual accord of action and determined self-help.

Industrial combination, under such circumstances, is as necessary for the exploited toiler, as military organization for an invaded people. We *are* in a state of industrial war. Every appeal to legislation to do aught but *undo* is as futile as sending a flag of truce to the enemy for munitions of war. The growth of solidarity evidenced in wider federation, in leading to broader views of the issue, and deeper sense of mutual interrelations, can but intensify this feeling toward the “scab.”

Unions having already demonstrated their power to rise above the subsistence level, where otherwise they would be, it is our duty, not only to

ourselves, but to our families, to enlarge the scope of union among our fellow craftsmen. Our task is to be true to the need of the hour in order to be the better fitted for the unknown needs of the struggle tomorrow. The lines are being closer drawn, and the exigencies of the situation demand concert of action, both against the combined enemy and the traitor who would betray our cause by a shot from the rear. In such a struggle for a higher civilization — a struggle forced upon us — the industrial recreant is a social traitor.

Out of conflict all progress has come. The history of the Labor Movement, its increasing self-reliance, its growing indifference to “labor politicians,” its development of sturdy independence and manhood, all alike indicate change in its methods among future possibilities. But with all this, and its accompanying wider sympathy and extension of mutual ties, the feeling of loathing toward the “scab” has intensified.

To sum up, to assert egoism against mutual interests is unsocial and hence a denial of the mutual basis upon which equitable relation alone can exist. Thus the “scab” is not merely unsocial, but by his acted word virtually places himself with the industrial invaders and becomes an enemy. Equal freedom can not be strained to mean a denial of mutual interests. Social evolution is not a mere theory, but a record of facts, and no fact is more strongly brought out than that progress has resulted only in so far as mutual interests have been recognized. We do not *institute* them, they *compel* us.

Therefore, primarily as human beings, become so by social evolution, and by the social environment in which the present struggle is conditioned, and recognizing as the goal of industrial advance the mutuality of interests involved in the assertion of equal freedom, in strict accord with all sociological deductions, and with the utmost submission to the higher law permeating social growth, we reverently raise our hats to say prayerfully: “To hell with the ‘scab!’”

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Its Attitude to Non-Unionists.

One of the chief objects of the enemy in attacking Unionism is to seek to array sympathy on the side of the non-unionist. How shall he be treated? I admit that this is one of the most troublesome questions trade unions have to meet; troublesome only because not squarely met. Let us try to face it frankly. The trade union is fully conscious that its very existence depends upon its ability to enforce the rule — “no working with non-unionists.” It sees in this not only the issue of self-protection and continued usefulness, but ideal aims. For this it insists with more pertinacity than ought else, and if need be is willing to fight for it.

Below the surface of what appears to prejudiced observers to be an unjust and tyrannical practice is an economic foundation. It is the experience of all the great Trade Unions of this and other countries that success never perched upon their banners until they insisted that the position taken by their own advance lines for mutual interests should not be encroached upon by individual bushwhackers. There is no denying the abstract right of a workman to join, or to decline to join a union, just as there can be no denial

There is no denying the abstract right of a workman to join, or to decline to join a union, just as there can be no denial of the abstract right of the unionist to work with, or to decline to work with, the non-unionist.

of the abstract right of the unionist to work with, or to decline to work with, the non-unionist. But when an attempt is made by social pressure, or otherwise, to compel non-unionists to join the union many good people deprecate it, and pious pulpits and pews are scandalized!

The nature of the internecine conflict demands discipline.

First, every union must be not only a camp, but a recruiting station. As only in union lies strength, so no pains should be spared to increase solidarity. Every non-union man should be besought to enroll, its advantages shown, and inducements offered. Speakers, tracts, papers should be generously used. A union that sits down supinely to mere routine work is recreant to its duty. The

propaganda of its principles is as imperative a duty as scanning its books for the delinquents its own inaction has rendered indifferent. The struggle is ever on. The exactions of rent, interest, and profits are continually competing to reduce wages, and at any moment the blow may come, and the presence of a host of stragglers, who have been left unheeded to gather on the outskirts, may bring it the sooner.

Second, necessity demands federative unity. The warfare has passed out of the political phase; it is now an economic struggle for position between employer and employed, and the latter, relying solely on their own strength, can not turn a deaf ear to the cries of those engaged on the skirmish line. The old, siren song of political aid from partisan prostitutes no longer divides our ranks. Elections come and go and we are unaffected by hopes resting on pledges unredeemed, or saddened and demoralized by candidates defeated.

Third, discipline demands the ostracism of the camp follower, ever ready to accept the wages organized action has won, yet shrinking from assisting in the effort. On the field of action non-combatants have no place; there is no third line. In the fierce struggle for position the skulker not merely weakens

the lines of fellow wage-worker, but also directly or indirectly aids and abets the enemy. He is the curse of the Labor Movement, false to his comrades, false to mutual interests, and a drag to progress. Both before and during a strike union doors should always swing inward to all applicants whom reason or self-interest may convince. But whoever deliberately refuses alliance with organized labor, who from cowardice or selfishness stays without to skulk back over the field, like a ghoul for personal gain, by his or her act becomes an enemy. Your duty toward them will be determined by the exigencies of the situation. As in our civil war the timid Union man in the South, and the blatant Copperhead in the North, received but little respect from either side, so in the industrial conflict they are despised by those who urge them on, and disowned by their more resolute fellows. "He who is not with us, is against us."

Fourth, our action toward such is dictated more by sorrow than hatred. We may even

respect the man who stands aloof from conscientious motives, and alike refuses sympathy to either side, however much we may deplore what we consider his shortsightedness.

Not only self-interest prompts us, but we claim the sympathy of all, not directly interested in our degradation, by the proven fact that union labor is the most intelligent and the best labor. Higher wages bring increased wants, and the ability to gratify these, greater intelligence. Those who flippantly assume that increased wages augment cost correspondingly, unconsciously assume that ignorant and skilled labor produce the same results; they assume that solidarity does not heighten productive capacity; they assume that union rules have no effect in acquiring a trade efficiently; they assume that the amount to be produced is a fixed quantity, a fallacy akin to the wage-fund theory; they assume that the distribution of reward under increased production and higher wants must still leave wages at the level of lower wants, a contradiction in itself.

Every interest save that of exploiting greed, and time-serving and short-sighted cowardice, is thus on the side of the Unionist. And with the intelligence of skilled artisans, the conviction of economic possibility, and the strength and fellowship of organization, he approaches the skirmish line of today, knowing that victorious here he will be the better able to meet the, as yet, theoretical requirements of the day after tomorrow.

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Its Industrial Ideal.

In this section we must put on our thinking caps, for the whole philosophy of the Labor Movement, its growth, and its ultimate goal will tax our attention. For this purpose we will take a bird's-eye view of human progress, and try to offset its dryness by its brevity. In such a rapid glance at social progress we will distinguish three leading phases from which a fourth is not only foreshadowed, but also seen to be the transition to that which determines the issues of the day as progressive or reactionary.

1. The initial phase is that of the savage, where each labors for himself. The division of labor, by which alone exchange of products could be furthered, finds here its starting point by which surplus product could be accumulated and man lifted above the necessity of relying upon a mere hand-to-mouth existence. All experience teaches us that among those savage or lowly developed tribes where the fruitfulness of nature calls out no incentives famines most abound. The "free state of nature" is accompanied with high death rates, destitution of capital, and absence of motive.
2. The second phase is that of slavery where, by conquest or otherwise, some are subordinated to the personal rule of others. Here only could division of labor have its rise, out of which alone civilization became possible. Whatever may have been the motive, whether a humane feeling or a purely selfish one, it remains true that when a tribe began to save captives rather than butchering them, not only did economic progress become possible but scope was given for the development of the softer feelings; the human was henceforth to slowly evolve and assume mastery over the brute in man. Seen through the prospective of the ages this progress is brought out in all the clearer relief. Excess in products became possible and capital was born.

Though, during the Middle Ages, slavery passed into serfdom, the economic condition of the thrall was not essentially changed. The advantage accruing still remained with the master. National wealth was augmented, but the essential characteristic of this age, personal rule, still dominated.

3. The third phase is that wherein capital supplants personal rule. For centuries the contest waged between the old and the new, and it required the electric shock of the French Revolution to end the transitional agony and definitely install capital. Henceforth capital assumed a more mobile character. No longer restricted to territorial area it flowed to demand, production increased, and in the furtherance of exchange the benefits slowly percolated downward through the mass. Labor became organized by capital as we see it today (hence the strife), but in such organization of productive capacity there lay the danger of what is called over-production, and today we are facing the problem of a phase of society in which capital

rules, and a large and increasing quota of labor becomes superfluous. Labor, like its products, follows the laws of price, supply, and demand, and we are thus presented with the anomaly of increased wealth leading to increased destitution. The benefit received by the laborer has been largely indirect, resulting not so much from his own exertion primarily, as from the sharp competition between the holders of capital. This has lowered prices by calling out improved appliances for greater production, and in turn leading to the inevitable doom all countries are now trying to forestall by colonization, or new foreign markets, to avert danger arising from an increasing superfluous class of non-possessors of capital.

But in seeking Africa for markets, grave doubts have arisen at home. Not only the blind gropings of the "superfluous," but the increased reliance upon militant measures to suppress industrial demands, have fastened attention upon the Labor Question. It also indicates that we are in another transition period; the issue being less to doctor up a moribund system than to more clearly discern the phase toward which it leads, and for which it is preparing the ground for future development. Slavery and capital, as phases of productive agencies, through increased division of labor, and thereby economy of effort, have raised the workman to an ever higher plane. Instead of being the simple drudge, *he now thinks*, and in this we see new evidence of the coming change.

4. The changes in Church, in State, and in Industry all indicate the fourth and last phase to be free association as contra-distinguished from privileged capital, as the latter was from slavery. It is not by attacks upon capital, nor guiding it by fashioning for it a new harness under collective control, but in freeing it that safety lies, and to this all progress points.

One deduction may be briefly stated. In the transition from slavery to capital, it is seen that States have undergone revolutions. Precisely as baronial sovereignty weakened have States changed in character to correspond with new demands. As once they were defenders of personal rule, so today they have logically become the guardians and protectors of the rule of capital. Its *institution* is rooted in legalization by the State. Thus in our wider survey of the field we again reach the same conclusions as when studying the modern development of trade-union activities. The trade unions build no system, yet in their growth they must involve a systematic thought. How far this is apparent we have partly seen in their departure from past methods to greater self-reliance and trust in the power of free

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association. With these fundamental principles to guide us let us attempt to obtain a glimpse of the possibilities yet awaiting the further development of trade unionism.

Its Possibilities.

With rare judgment, in my opinion, the American Federation of Labor has persistently refused to hamper itself and restrict its influence by "system building." As the vine unconsciously creeps along the ground and up a stone wall to some

Social growth is as natural as that of the vine, but the branches of the human vine are apt to think themselves peculiarly qualified to prescribe both the nature and direction of its growth, unaware that, while they are planning, growth is unceasingly progressing.

aperture through which it may grow into fuller light and life, it has attended to the duties of the movement and left its development to the unconscious guidance of the industrial ideal. Probably every delegated member could, on occasion, suggest a "scheme," but in their steady refusal to do so their gaining strength and influence lies. Social growth is as natural as that of the vine, but the branches of the human vine are apt to think themselves peculiarly qualified to prescribe both the nature and direction of its growth, unaware that,

while they are planning, growth is unceasingly progressing. Based upon free association, and without a lengthy preamble of contradictory demands, they have more fully shown the trend of industrial thought than has been shown elsewhere.

The basis of legislation, is stated in the general rule to be the promotion of the general welfare and the maintenance of civil order. Here monarchies, aristocracies, and republics differ widely; but all agree that legislative tinkering is an imperative want, and that some men, even waiving the exploded claim of "divine right," are born to direct others, as in monarchies; are best fitted by virtue of blood and wealth to govern their fellow-mortals, as in aristocracies; or may be selected by political lottery for the task, and, through the alchemy of an appeal to general ignorance, become endowed with wisdom, as with us. The industrial ideal, even on the limited scale in which trade unionism represents voluntary cooperation, or free association, illustrates the possibility of a social administration as a matter of mutual arrangement, rather than of collective interference.

But the change of attitude, already alluded to, on the question of securing a reduction of the hours of labor, is a case of deep significance. In the

present conflict politics has cut no figure. The workers rely more upon themselves, and all they have to ask of the State is "hands off." This means more than surface indications seem to denote. The lesson of this struggle may be briefly summarized in the following propositions, each of which is capable of demonstration.

1. The essential difference between the present struggle for eight hours and previous ones lies in the fact that the workers are more self-reliant, and dependent only on their own resources to control supply.
2. This difference is still further illustrated by the fact that, as recently as 1886, the movement was characterized by the enthusiasm of raw recruits, while today it is under the guidance of drilled and disciplined forces. The noise and excitement of the past has given place to cool and calm determination, and moves are not inconsiderately made, but are under the guidance of judgment rather than of sentiment.
3. This state of affairs carries with it the fact that the logic of unionism is not only to solidify trades, but to promote solidarity by affiliated federation, thus promoting identity of ultimate aims. That is, trade unions are no longer isolated bodies without mutual interests, but conjointly interdependent and rallying around a common standard with deeper conviction of mutual interests.
4. This evident fact also shows that under the spirit of unionism, and rising to conscious perceptions, not only is solidarity being attained, but there is arising the nucleus of an industrial force which will eventually contest with the militant organization of capitalism the direction of industrial activity. Further it proves that this increasing mutualism is in the line of resistance to invasion, that is, an assertion of equal freedom, a grim determination that militant "bossism" shall not manipulate supply and demand for private gain at others' expense.
5. Facts justify us in asserting that unionism is developing manly self-reliance; a conviction that the alleged "iron law of wages" can not maintain itself against united action that relief lies only in self-help.
6. This growing spirit of independence presages the near future, in which organized labor will no longer contest on the old grounds, but step into the market *and contract for itself*, and under its own guidance furnish the required labor supply without asking the aid of an intermediate "boss." One of the building trades, for instance, may yet settle a "strike" in this manner, through their central council making their own contracts; and thus, instead of leaving industry at a standstill, be instrumental in placing it on a free co-operative basis.
7. This step, by no means a remote possibility, will have far wider effect than many may now imagine. The unions, in undertaking to contract, can not rest content with eliminating the "master;" they must necessarily feel the need of capitalizing their own resources and capacities; of supplying, by their own exertions, the intangible force by which labor alone is rendered truly productive.

This means that under the growing mutualism of the industrial forces now going on, the inevitable result of increased leisure and intelligence will bring into operation an industrial army capable of combining capital and labor, and

The lesson of the hour, therefore, is build up your unions, and the growing spirit of mutualism and interdependence for self-interest will directly tend to encourage self-reliance and individuality.

thus work out the problem of labor's emancipation. However militant in present organization, by thus crippling their foes by capitalizing their own resources, the industrial system will swing into operation, and peace be attained in victory.

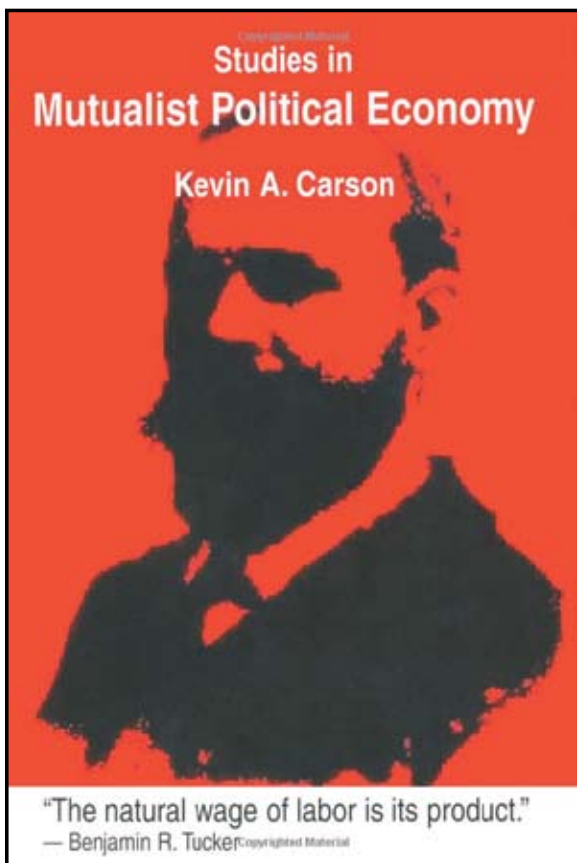
The lesson of the hour, therefore, is build up your unions, and the growing spirit of mutualism and interdependence for self-interest will directly tend to encourage self-reliance and individuality. In the trade union and its legitimate outgrowth, lies not only the hope of the future, but the

key to the emancipation of labor. To sum up, the security for wages lies in increased capital and the enlargement of enterprise, to both of which desirable ends the logic of events is forcing the trade unions of tomorrow.

Such I believe to be the philosophy of trade unions.

By Dyer D. Lum

Dyer D. Lum (1830-1893) was a revolutionary anarchist, a labor organizer, and a pioneer of mutualist economics. He became involved in the labor movement through his trade as a bookbinder, and came into contact with Anarchists such as Albert Parsons and August Spies in Chicago. He was closely involved with support for the Haymarket martyrs during the 1880s – he took up the editorship of Albert Parson's newspaper, The Alarm, after Parson's death, and it was Lum who smuggled a dynamite cap to Louis Lingg in prison (which Lingg used to commit suicide ahead of the noose). A collaborator and lover of Voltairine de Cleyre, and a prolific writer of both books and articles for Anarchist papers such as Twentieth Century, Liberty, and The Alarm, Lum's Anarchism combined the radical individualism and anti-capitalist market anarchism of the Boston Anarchists, with an emphasis on worker ownership, radical solidarity, and militant labor organizing of his Chicago revolutionary milieu.



Studies in Mutualist Political Economy

by C4SS writer and researcher Kevin A. Carson

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