

Cultura Obrera (LABOR CULTURE.)

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COHESION AND AUTONOMY

Anyone who imagines it to be impossible conjointly to operate the forces of labor without subjecting them to a central power which will direct and govern their activities, is mistaken. If he were right, we ourselves would be opposed to such organization.

whereby all the forces of labor (which must shun all weakening isolated efforts) can operate in unison without being controlled. It is the ties of solidarity and not compulsory bonds which keep our ideal organizations together—they give the workers the cohesion which is indispensable to the success of their undertakings.

We are inimical to all centralization, to all dominion, because both make subservient to them whatever revolves within their sphere of action. No association can be an emancipating one which curtails individual initiative, tramples under foot or limits in any way whatsoever, the spontaneous movements of its component parts.

Collective bodies should be as autonomous as individuals. In everything that concerns itself alone, every Union must work independently of all other Unions and without any intervention on their part. From them it will expect only moral, financial, and personal support as and when it may be required.

On the other hand, the lofty and ennobling ideas of emancipation call for volunteers—not mercenaries and drafted soldiers—for warriors of conviction, who of their own will and through their love for a Cause, join hands and stick by one another in their fight for that Cause for the reason that they expect it to bring about, their betterment, their longed-for welfare, the ideal for which they strive.

Let us consider for a moment the action of water. Heat converts the water in the ocean into vapor. The vapor rises and forms clouds in the atmosphere. These become condensed on passing through low temperatures and send back to the ocean in the form of rain the water that came from it.

For that reason, as I have already pointed out, the Labor Consciousness (which, broadly speaking, may be said to be the will of mankind) must be formed and above all be formed. If this principle is adhered to, legitimate cohesion will be the result.

The bosses will insist in nullifying the word "minimum" and on making the wage scale provided by the Union the maximum wage scale. In view of that, it was decided by the Union to change the agreement so as to provide for a 25 per cent increase in wages for all week workers. The piece workers are to be paid at the rate of 50 cents per hour and not the rate of 40 cents, as was the minimum provided in the first place.

STRIKES

To the ranks of the steam shop laundry workers have been added the hand laundrymen. The conditions of the steam shops will probably be "instituted" by the State Department of Labor's Commissioner, John Williams. Maybe the Department of Health will also take a peep.

will try to buy off the government while publishing statements that they would welcome an investigation. In letters to the New York "Call" the sufferings of the workers in those steam hells have been graphically depicted. One ex-slave says: "I was recently employed in Brooklyn, where in a dark, gloomy cellar amongst the washing-wheels are engaged two Washers, one Engineer and two Wringers from 4 a. m. until 8 p. m. for low wages. The consequence is that not having sufficient air and suffering horribly from the dampness of the floor, the density of the steam and the inhuman hours, they are becoming members of the army of consumptives."

PHILADELPHIA BRANCH STOP PROSECUTION. Report has it that Secretary of the Treasury McVeigh has been offered \$1,000,000 to prevent proceedings against the importers in Philadelphia, Boston, and New York of German cutlery.

PHILADELPHIA IMPORTER, who has been promised immunity by the Department of Justice, has disclosed in a confession the method of undervaluing knives, razors, scissors, etc., in the consular invoices and thus robbing the government of its duties.

PHILADELPHIA BRANCH. Jan. 1, 1912. Meeting held Dec. 30th, 62 members present. Acting Agent read letter from Headquarters wherein he was instructed to turn over the agency to Ramon Torres, elected in New York to take the place of J. Filgueira.

PHILADELPHIA BRANCH. Dec. 28, 1911. Regular meeting called to order at 8 P. M., Jan. 3rd, 200 members present. Proceedings as usual.

PHILADELPHIA BRANCH. Dec. 29, 1911. No meeting held here this week. Shipments fair but business slow.

PHILADELPHIA BRANCH. Dec. 29, 1911. Regular meeting called to order at 8 P. M., Jan. 4, 1912.

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