

5. The Federation of Strike Committees would practically be free of "machines" because it would be constantly getting "new blood," since members would only hold their seats during the progress of their strike. Committees would be coming and going as strikes are declared on and off.

6. Imagine how little enthusiasm can be aroused in a number of small, isolated strikes. Also imagine what a power these would be when all combined together. Also the bringing together in mass-meeting of all the strikers and sympathizers at stated periods would create an immense enthusiasm. Such meetings would soon eradicate all craft prejudice and pave the way for organization along industrial lines.

7. Furthermore, it would be extremely difficult for the strikers to be "sold" out, because it would have to be done under the gaze of all the workers on strike.

The Federation of Strike Committees—the fighting body of the labor movement—would concern itself with the conduct of strikes only; all legislative matters to be left to the organizations composing it.

The Syndicalist League of St. Louis and Vicinity submits the above proposition to the militants of the Syndicalist League of North America, for their consideration.

SECRETARY.

### THE REVOLT OF LABOR.

At the present time the English trade unions, numbering about 2,000,000, are voting on the proposition of a nation-wide movement to establish a universal eight-hour day in Great Britain. The proposed plan is for all the workers to demand an eight-hour day on a certain date, and in case of refusal to go to work as usual, but to quit at the expiration of eight hours. This is to be kept up until the eight-hour day is recognized or a general strike or lockout precipitated. Already several of the largest unions in England have voted in favor of this revolutionary method of getting shorter hours, and from all indications the plan will soon be tried on a gigantic scale.

This plan, borrowed from the French Syndicalists, is only one of the many evidences of the renaissance now taking place in the English labor movement. One significant feature of this "re-birth" is that it dates from the demise of the English Industrial Workers of the World. As long as the rebels herded together in little bunches outside the trade unions and spent their time "baying the moon" about the impossibility of reviving the trade unions, these organizations remained inert and apparently devoid of life. But when the rebels gave up their useless howling and set themselves about constructive work, their accomplishments immediately became evident. The present great upheaval in the English labor movement, which is without parallel in labor history, is largely due to their efforts. American direct actionists who are still in the "baying the moon" stage might profitably study the English labor movement.

The I. W. W. strike of rubber workers at Akron, Ohio, has been declared off. The workers have been advised to go back to work and reorganize. Considering that the I. W. W. has always such harsh condemnation (and bushels of fancy tactics to advise) for A. F. of L. workers who similarly calmly stay on strike and watch themselves being starved into submission, we may be permitted to ask why the I. W. W. didn't take some of its own advice in this strike? Why wasn't the much-advertised intermittent or irritation strike used? The answer is easy: The present ignorance and lack of solidarity of the workers simply prohibit such tactics being used. And the I. W. W., when it comes face to face with more realities, will find that numerous others of the theories upon which it is built won't pan out. It will learn that a conservative working class is not going to suddenly accept a completely new set of tactics overnight, but that it is going to revolutionize its methods only gradually. When the I. W. W. learns the difference between theory and practice possibly it won't be so condemnatory of every union that fails to measure up to its arbitrary ideals.

London taxicab chauffeurs have won a notable victory, after an eight weeks' strike that cost their employers \$3,500,000. The strike was waged chiefly to force down the price of gasoline, which the chauffeurs must buy from their employers. A maximum of 16 cents a gallon was set. With gasoline

now costing the employers 28 cents a gallon, just what this means becomes clear. As the employers are being forced to sell their gasoline for 12 cents per gallon less than they pay for it, it looks as though finally a way has been found to put a real crimp in the masters' pocketbook. All that is needed is an extension of the principle and capitalism will be at an end.

The French government is proposing to lengthen the term of compulsory military service from two to three years. The C. G. T. has launched a great campaign against the project. If the government adopts the measure in spite of the working-class protest, France will undoubtedly be treated to one of the greatest shake-ups in its history.

Disgruntled Italian sailors have discovered a way to strike and not run afoul of the severe maritime laws against striking. Recently in several Italian ports they all quit work, stating that they were too sick to work. A squad of doctors were hastily summoned, but to no avail; the shipping was brought to a standstill.

The bricklayers and carpenters have just joined the Chicago Building Trades Council, making it the strongest in the country, with 100,000 members. The plasterers, the only independent building trades union, are also expected to affiliate shortly.

Ten months ago the street car men, surface and elevated, of Chicago were on the verge of a general strike to better their wages and working conditions. As public sentiment was with them, the strike would have surely been a success. After much parleying the union officials secured a tentative agreement from the companies which gave many concessions to the workers. The latter refused to accept it, however, voting it down by a 10-to-1 vote. Then the controversy went to an arbitration committee. After deliberating eight months this prejudiced committee has finally brought in its award, which gives the workers fewer concessions than did the tentative agreement they so overwhelmingly voted down months before. However, the street car men will accept it. There is nothing else for them to do. The magnificent strike movement they had on foot has been demoralized. By permitting the matter to go to arbitration, and agreeing to abide by the decision, they practically surrendered their ability to strike. And they have very properly been stung for so doing. Great is arbitration!

Ten days ago 4,700 Chicago painters went on strike for an increase of wages and the right to at all times have access to the building specifications—this latter somewhat revolutionary demand being to prevent the contractors from "skimping" or sabotaging their work, and thus taking work from the painters. Surprising as it may seem to those who believe the dogma that "the A. F. of L. has not won a strike in ten years," this strike is practically won, almost all the contractors having come to terms. The victory is in no small measure due to the stand taken by the other building trades unions. They one and all refuse to work with scabs, consequently the boss painters, not wishing a general building trades strike, have not dared to try to break the strike by replacing the strikers with scabs. If the Chicago building trades unions have not yet developed to the point of always making their demands concertedly, and always striking together, they have at least learned the valuable lesson that to work with scabs is fatal. At the rate they are now progressing the general strike will soon be a popular weapon among them.

The street car system of Buffalo is completely paralyzed by a general strike; no cars whatever are moving. Several thousand troops are already on the scene and 10,000 more have been asked for. The local Central Trades and Labor Council has notified the street car magnates that if the strike is not settled shortly a general strike of the 42,000 union men in Buffalo will be called.

WM. Z. FOSTER.

### SOCIETY NOTES.

These society notes are sabotged.

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The saboter is between me and the printer.

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[I am just trying the dope on the doctor.—J. F.]