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the economic and social background of those who would condemn working-class children—but never their own children—to wage slavery. They find that these lobbyists for child labor are of the privileged classes, constituting "the vast bulk of the business class of the country," interested in maintaining the status quo of the business system.

In outlining a program for the curbing of child labor, the authors look hopefully toward an inclusive political party to be created by labor, to include large numbers of wage earners, farmers and the salaried middle classes. They conclude that "a strongly consolidated movement of this kind could launch a legislative campaign to eradicate the crasser forms of child labor with reasonable hope of success."

GRACE HUTCHINS.

### Negroes and Unions

THE NEGRO LABOR UNIONIST OF NEW YORK, by Charles Lionel Franklin. Columbia University Press. \$3.75.

**W**HAT proportion of the Negro people of New York are—more or less gainfully—employed? In which industries are they mainly found? Are these industries strongly unionized? How many Negro members are there in Manhattan labor unions? Do they meet the obligations and share fully in the benefits of union membership? How did the N.R.A. affect Negro labor?

These are urgent, vitally important questions for every worker and for all who wish to grasp the meaning of current trends within the labor movement. Until recently, however, most of the answers have been lost in a fog of rumor and misunderstanding. In this closely reasoned and carefully documented volume, Dr. Franklin marshals many of the needed facts with great clarity. The story sketched is that of Negro-white relationships in industry from 1827, when Negro slavery was abolished in New York state, to the present day. It ends with a study of Negroes in 224 Manhattan unions, made by the author in 1935—a study growing out of interest aroused during his work on the research staff of the Mayor's commission on conditions in Harlem, following the outburst of protest in March, 1935.

So far as this reviewer is aware, this is the first comprehensive study of the Negro unionist in any city during the post N.R.A. period. Since Manhattan industries include almost every type of union and labor relationship found in the United States, the volume throws considerable light on the general problems of the American labor movement.

It is important to realize that Negroes have been interested in organization to protect their economic interests since 1808; that early efforts to organize them separately failed, owing, in part, to betrayal by corrupt politicians; that the notorious inertia of the A. F. of L. national policy has encouraged white monopoly of jobs in the skilled trades; that Negroes form a greater proportion of all gainfully employed workers but a smaller proportion of organized workers; and that only fifty-

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In The Adirondacks

five of every one hundred employed Negroes were engaged in domestic and personal services in 1930, as compared with seventy in 1910, while increasing numbers are entering manufacturing and mechanical pursuits. Of the 224 unions canvassed by the author, 143 had Negro members; and of these unions, 117 reported recent strikes involving Negroes.

Dr. Franklin's analysis of attitudes and practices relating to Negro membership within New York unions reveals a wide range of policy—from exclusion of Negroes, by constitutional provision, in some ten A. F. of L. affiliates, to conscious effort to enroll and activate Negro members. The Food Workers' Industrial Union, Local 110, and the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union are cited as outstanding examples of the latter policy. The N.R.A., of course, resulted in changed attitudes all along the line: new recognition by white unionists of the need for all workers to stand together and a new willingness on the part of Negroes to enter the unions. These changes were due in part to a greater sense of security on the job, and in part to the activity of the Negro Labor Committee and Harlem Labor Center following the Negro Labor Conference of July 1935.

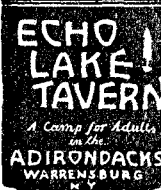
The author concludes that "there can be no solidarity of workers . . . if one is considered as a black worker and another as a white worker; all should be regarded merely as workers. The fundamental problems of all workers are the same." This is unfortunately misleading. Is not this volume itself convincing evidence that Negroes face all the problems of labor in general and, in addition, certain problems which do not as directly confront their white fellow-workers? So long as discrimination exists, it must be recognized and opposed by all unions that wish to build a strong, united membership. Moreover, the causes of this division in labor's ranks must be laid bare—the continuous and deliberate efforts by employers to "divide and rule," turning one group of workers against another by appealing to unreal rivalries. If the present admirable study has a weakness, it is here. More space might well have been given to employers' habits, not only in hiring Negroes, but in fomenting hostility among the groups employed.

MARTHA THOMAS.

★

### Recently Recommended Books

- The Second Five Year Plan*, The State Planning Commission. International. \$1.75.  
*Japan's Feet of Clay*, by Freda Utley. Norton. \$3.75.  
*Key Economic Areas in Chinese History*, by Ch'ao-Ting Chi. Peter Smith. \$3.  
*The Road: In Search of America*, by Nathan Asch. Norton. \$2.75.  
*Dear Theo, The Autobiography of Vincent Van Gogh*, edited by Irving Stone. Houghton Mifflin. \$3.75.  
*Middletown in Transition: A Study in Cultural Conflicts*, by Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd. Harcourt, Brace. \$5.  
*The Soviets*, by Albert Rhys Williams. Harcourt, Brace. \$3.  
*The Court Disposes*, by Isidor Feinstein. Covici, Friede. \$1.



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