

# THE PRESENT CRISIS IN TRADES-UNION MORALS.

BY JANE ADDAMS.

IN spite of the fact that sympathy for trades-unions never rose so high in America as during the long anthracite-coal strike, the past two years afford undoubted evidence of a reaction against the cause of organized labor. This evidence may be cited in the increasing number of Employers' Associations, some of which, in spite of carefully worded constitutions, are making direct war not only upon the practices of trades-unions, but upon their very existence; in the acute exasperation exhibited by many manufacturers who were previously, at least, in a state of friendly neutrality; in the oft-repeated assertion that it is impossible to extend business operations in the present state of the labor market; in the recognition of the non-union man as the "modern hero," and of his sufferings as those of the martyr; in the practice of the newspapers to state at great length the acts of trades-union lawlessness, and to make but terse reports of their renewal of contracts and other legitimate actions; and in that which is, perhaps, the most significant, the increasing confusion of mind on the part of the public, which tends to make trades-unions directly responsible for many of the difficulties inherent in the factory system itself.

It is always difficult to judge a contemporaneous movement with any degree of fairness, and it is perennially perplexing to distinguish what is merely adventitious and temporary from that which represents essential and permanent tendencies. This discrimination is made tenfold more difficult when a movement exhibits various stages of development simultaneously, when several historic phases are going on at the same time; and yet every historic movement towards Democracy, which constantly gathers



to itself large bodies of raw recruits while the older groups are moving on, presents this peculiar phenomenon. In the case of trades-unions, certain groups are marked by lawlessness and disorder, others by most decorous business methods, and still others are fairly decadent in their desire for monopolistic control. It is a long cry from the Chartists of 1839, burning hayricks, to John Burns of 1902, pleading in the House of Commons with well-reasoned eloquence for an extension of the workingmen's franchise; and yet they are both manifestations of the same movement towards universal suffrage, and show no greater difference than that between the Chicago teamsters, who were blocking commerce and almost barricading the streets, and John Mitchell, who at the same moment made his well-considered statement that he would rather lose the coal strike, with all that that loss implied, than gain it at the cost of violence. Students of industrial history will point out the sequence and development of the political movement from the Chartist to the Independent Labor party; and yet they give no help to our bewildered minds when we would fain discover some order and sequence between the widely separated events of the contemporaneous labor movement.

We must first get down to the question, In what does "the inevitably destined rise of the men of labor" consist? What are we trying to solve in this "most hazardous problem of the age"? Is progress in the Labor Movement to come, as we are told progress comes in the non-moral world, by the blind, brute struggle of individual interests; or is it to come, as its earlier leaders believed, through the operation of the human will? Is it a moral phenomenon which must depend upon educators and apostles; or is it merely a conflict of opposing rights which may legitimately use coercion? The question, from the very nature of the case, is confusing; for, of necessity, the Labor Movement has perfectly legitimate economic and business aspects, which loom large and easily overshadow the ethical. We would all agree that only when men have education, a margin of leisure and a decent home, can they find room to develop the moral life: before that, there are too many chances that it will be crushed out by ignorance, by blinding weariness, and by indecency. But the danger lies in the conviction that these advantages are to be secured by any means, moral or non-moral, and in holding them paramount to the inner life which they are supposed to nourish. The Labor Movement



is confronted by that inevitable problem which confronts every movement and every individual. How far shall the compromise be made between the inner concept and the outer act? How may we concede what it is necessary to concede, without conceding all?

In considering this question we must remember the spiritual growth of one social group is conditioned by the reaction of other social groups upon it, and that the worship of success, so long dominant in America, has taught the majority of our citizens to count only accomplished facts and to make little inquiry concerning methods. This has long been done in regard to business enterprises and political parties, but it is evident that we intend to call a halt before we are willing to permit the same latitude to labor organizations.

The present moment is one of unusual crisis in that many of the trades-unions of America have reached a transitional period, when they can no longer be mere propagandists, but are called upon to deal with concrete and difficult situations. When they were small and persecuted, they held to the faith and its implications of idealism; as they become larger and more powerful, they make terms with the life about them, and compromise as best they may with actual conditions.

This transition is especially difficult just now; for, during this last period of prosperity, trades-unions have increased enormously in numbers; the State Federation of Minnesota, for instance, reports an increase of six hundred per cent. in one year. The well-established unions have also been flooded by new members who are not yet assimilated and disciplined, and they have further been beset and carried off their feet by that unrest which impels us all to hasten if we would avail ourselves of the advantages which prosperity affords. "If we don't get things now, when they are going, we won't get them at all," is often said by workingmen, and the expression voices that sense of unseemly haste which characterizes the entire community.

During this period of extraordinary growth, the labor movement has naturally attracted to itself hundreds of organizations which are yet in their infancy, and exhibit all the weakness of "group morality." This doubtless tends to a conception of moral life which is as primitive as that which controlled the beginnings of patriotism, when the members of the newly conscious nation considered all those who were outside as possible oppressors and



enemies, and were loyal only towards those whom their imagination regarded as belonging to the national life. They gave much, and demanded much, in the name of blood brothers, but were merciless to the rest of the world. In addition to its belligerent youth and its primitive morality, the newer union is composed of members who have long suffered what they consider to be grievances, and the accumulated sense of unredressed wrong makes them eager for a chance to "fight for their rights." At the same time, the employer always makes his most vigorous attack upon a new union, both because he does not wish organized labor to obtain a foothold in his factory, and because his chances for success are greatest before his employees are well disciplined in unionism, although in actual conflict a young union will often make a more reckless fight than an older one. The members of a newly organized group naturally respond first to a sense of loyalty to each other as against their employers, and then to the wider consciousness of organized labor as against capital. This stage of trades-unionism is full of war phraseology, with its "pickets" and "battle-grounds," and is responsible for the most serious mistakes of the movement. The sense of group loyalty holds trades-unionists longer than the normal period of development, doubtless because of the constant accretions of those who are newly conscious of its claims. It is strong enough to overcome astonishing difference of race and tradition, but becomes a veritable stumbling-block.

Those Chicago strikes which during the last few years have been most notably characterized by disorder and the necessity for police interference, have almost universally been inaugurated by the newly organized unions. They have called to their aid the older organizations, and the latter have entered into the struggle often under protest and obviously against their best interests.

The Chicago Federation of Labor has often given its official endorsement to hot-headed strikes on the part of "baby unions," because the delegates from the newly organized or freshly recruited unions had the larger vote, and the appeal to their loyalty and fraternity carried the meeting against the judgment of the delegates from the older unions.

It is only quite recently that the first attempts have been made in Chicago towards controlling this natural tendency of group morality in the interests of a larger conception of citizenship.



We may instance the successful efforts of the Packing Trades' Council against the practices of the Teamsters' Union, the charges being made and the investigations carried on through the Central Labor body. Later, the more law-abiding members of the Wagon-Makers' Union disciplined certain other members of the same union for their lawless acts, not only by the methods provided in their constitution for such discipline, but in the courts, where a conviction was secured. However, such action proceeds slowly, and in the mean time the unions are constantly disgraced by acts of disorder and lawlessness.

In their efforts to meet the requirements of business dealing, the older unions are not only hampered by the actions of the younger, but are handicapped by their own early enthusiasms.

On its idealistic side, trades-unionism is an international movement, founded upon one of those appeals to universal sentiment which bind men together because they are strong enough to overcome even national differences, and it has been this aspect which the business man has found it hardest to deal with, and which has most sorely tried his patience. He has said many times to the trades-unionists: "If you expect recognition from business men, you must be businesslike on your side. You must make a definite contract and stick to it. Supply us with skilled labor at a definite price, as a contractor supplies us with specified material at a definite price, and we will know where to find you, and try to deal with you. But if, because a man in Buffalo or Seattle has trouble with his working people, you are going to get up a sympathetic strike; if, because some non-union-made material comes into my factory, all of the union men are going to walk out, you cannot expect any sensible business man to try to get on with you." Such things were said only after unions had become large and powerful enough to be negotiated with; they were sensible and inevitable, but they were a direct invasion by business standards of the hitherto idealistic realm.

On the other hand, and illustrative of a strange inconsistency, the arguments against the "closed shop," made by the employer, are made on the general ground of the "freedom of the individual" and of "the liberty of the workingman," and are a direct carrying over of the ideal into the region of business. The term "contract shop" would be a much fairer phrase and a much more businesslike definition of the situation than the phrase "closed



shop." In such a shop, the unions say to the employer: "We are ready to sign a contract to supply you with labor for a year under union conditions of hours and wages, but we cannot sign the contract if non-union men are employed, for we have no way of holding them to the terms of the contract, as the fines and other disciplinary methods enable us to do with our own men. These non-union men have no regard for our standard of wages and hours, and are continually cutting into both. We, as a union, can make a contract with you, and agree to stick to it, only if you will keep the non-union men out." In this case, the businesslike proposition comes from the union, and the concern for ethical standards, for "American ideals," comes from the business man. It is an absolute reversal of the position that the two sides take on the subject of the sympathetic strike. To use a war simile which would certainly not be inapt, as in many cases actual war is waged, each side stays within its own battle line, one side waving a banner of idealism whenever the other side waves one of commercialism.

In this necessity for compromise which characterizes the present development of trades-unionism, the selfsame union will often conform to the tenets of its earlier idealism and at the same time hold strictly to its newly adopted business standards, the two phases of development going on together in that strange fellowship which all life presents.

A woman organizer in Chicago, who had been active in organizing the nine thousand Special Order Tailors into a successful union, was recently called to a clothing factory in which all of the girls had struck because they were given a new style of garment to work upon, which they found added fifteen minutes to each hour, and made their wages correspondingly less than they had been when they were working upon the style of garment upon which their contract was based. Six months of the year's contract still remained, with no provision for changes in style. In declaring a strike the union girls clearly violated the contract, although they were firmly convinced that it was not they, but the employer, who had done so; and, when the organizer insisted upon a return to work and a strict enforcement of the contract, she did it at the cost of cruel misunderstanding, for the girls were all firmly convinced that she had been "fixed" by the employer.

Another illustration occurs to me of the trades-union regard for contract, in which it was more rigid than that held by the em-



playing side. Several hundred Italian women, who were "home finishers," had with much difficulty been organized by the Special Order Tailors and carefully drilled to demand the union scale. After some months, it was discovered by the officers of the union that at least in sixty-two shops these Italian women were taking two cents less a garment than the union contract had specified. After much difficulty the union officials were permitted to see the employers' books, and the withheld wages, amounting to some hundreds of dollars, were paid by the employers and put into the treasury of those locals whose members had failed to receive the agreed scale. In this case, the contract between the Employers' Association and the union was clearly violated by the employers, who had taken advantage of the ignorance of the Italian women, and the trades-union had urged the validity of the contract upon an organization of manufacturers.

Although this union is so careful in regard to contracts, curiously enough, no labor organization in Chicago at the present time is exhibiting more clearly the possession of idealism,—at least, if we measure idealism by the willingness to make sacrifices on its behalf. This union has been one of the most successful in its attempt to extend its benefits to the least skilled and most wretchedly paid. It is comparatively simple for an employer to give the skilled operatives in a clothing factory more money by taking it away from the wages of the seam-sewer and buttonholer. The fact that it results in one set of workers being helped at the expense of another set does not appeal to him, so long as he is satisfying the demand of the union without increasing the total cost of production. But the Special Order Tailors have, at the expense of their own wages and growth, made a determined effort to include even the sweat-shop workers in the benefits they have slowly secured for themselves. By means of the use of the label they were finally able to insist that no goods should be given out for home finishing save to women presenting union cards, and they have raised the wages from nine and eleven cents to the minimum wage of fifteen cents. They have also made a protest against the excessive subdivision of the labor upon garments, which enables the manufacturer to use children and the least skilled adults. Thirty-two people are commonly employed upon a single coat, and it is the purpose of the Special Order Tailors to have all the machine work upon one garment performed by one



worker, thus reducing the number working on one coat to twelve or fourteen. This change will at the same time demand more skill on the part of the operator, and increase the variety and interest in his work. At the present moment, a District Council of Garment Workers in Chicago is under indictment for having attempted to enforce a similar demand in what is known as the "vest and pants locals." In the testimony taken before the Master in Chancery, the argument was based almost entirely upon the right of the worker to a legitimate interest and pleasure in his work, and I could quote sentences from the testimony of one of the organizers against whom the injunction was issued, which could easily be mistaken for quotations from Ruskin. Indeed, these garment-makers are sacrificing both time and money for the defence of Ruskinian principles, one of the few actual attempts to recover the "joy of work," although, of course, mixed with a desire to preserve a trade from the invasion of the unskilled, and a consequent lowering of wages.

Undertakings such as these must make an appeal to unselfishness, and must break through the mere personal interest of the trades-unionists in their own higher wages. They more readily respond to this appeal in that it stirs memory of their "organization night," when they were admitted after solemn ceremonies into the American Federation of Labor. At the same time, the organizers themselves often hold out too large promises, on the sordid side, of what organization will be able to accomplish; they tell the newly initiated what other unions have done, without telling at the same time how long they have been organized and how steadily they have worked. A year ago, when there seemed to be a veritable "strike fever" in Chicago among the younger trades-unions, it was suggested in the Federation of Labor that no union be authorized to declare a strike until it had been organized for at least two years. The regulation was backed by some of the strongest and wisest trades-unionists, but it failed to pass because the organizers were convinced that it would cripple them in organizing unions; they would have to point to many months of patient payment of dues and humdrum meetings before any real gain could be secured. The organizers, in fact, are in the position of a revivalist who, in the midst of holding out hopes of heaven and future good, should have to tell his converts that there would be no chances for at least two years, or that the rewards would have



to depend upon "works," although from the start they must learn to walk by "faith."

It is a curious admixture of motive, and at the best is a wretched preparation for the life of collective bargaining and contract-keeping, into which the modern trades-union is quickly plunged without the gradual training which the older unions had, through their "mutual benefits" and other semi-benevolent and semi-business features. As a result, the newer unions are constantly held up to public scorn because they "do not keep their contracts,"—it is said that they are, indeed, utterly regardless of the validity and sacredness of a contract, upon which all business dealing rests. This necessity for business action without the requisite business training affords opportunity for never-ending difficulty. One fruitful source arises from the inexperience and vanity of the committee which represents the newly organized union at the time the contract is drawn. Usually, such a committee has no "power to act," but is expected to take the propositions back to the body of its union for ratification. The committee finds, however, that the men representing the employer have full power to act, and are, moreover, businesslike and alert in their dealings. In the course of the negotiations, the committee is led to promise certain terms, which seem to it reasonable, and it fully commits itself to these terms. It quite unconsciously assumes the tone of finality and business dealing of the other side. When the terms of the contract are finally submitted to the union for ratification, they are often "turned down," the committee being unable to reproduce effectively the arguments which sounded so cogent in the committee meeting. The committee is thus in a dilemma; it must return to the employers and tell them of its plight, at which point the employer will often meet it with the cry of broken contract, assuming that the representatives of the union had power to act for their body; or it must carry out the original terms with the employer, and tell the union that those were the best that could be made. In the latter case, the entire body will enter into the new relation with reluctance, and sometimes in a recalcitrant spirit, ready to take offence.

In passing judgment upon this obvious dereliction of trades-unions, it is well to recall the fact that, throughout his life and that of his father, the workingman has had nothing to do with contracts; he rents his tenement by the week or month and does



not sign a lease; he has been hired habitually by the day or week, with no contract to assure his continuance at work; if he offended the foreman, he might be dismissed, with or without good cause, any day in the week or any hour of the day. The old-time workman may have had theoretical freedom of contract, but he has had no actual contract. When the employer says, "I will bargain with my own men one at a time," he practically means that he will make no bargain, that he will merely enter into a relation of goodwill and good faith. None of the workman's relations in life, although they are often continuous and stable, depend for their continuity and stability upon contracts between himself and other people. His marriage contract is, perhaps, the one exception to this; but it is fortunately, to him, not a contract, but a sacrament.

The fact that the American trades-unions are receiving their first lessons in business at a moment of unusual business corruption, also tends to make the present time for them one of unusual crisis. There are practically no longer any charges of corruption against the English trades-unions. But there is undoubted evidence that many unions here are suffering from the present low standard of public morality, and share the more brutal doctrines of commercialism, which make a man declare his resolve to "get there," despite obstacles from without or scruples from within.

It is, indeed, cold comfort to say that the methods of labor organizations are "no worse" than the methods adopted by certain organizations of capital. If a small body of men become so absolutely engrossed in making money that they disregard public rights, that they bribe and browbeat railroads from their function of common carriers to that of granters of favored rates, that is certainly deplorable, but, after all, not so deplorable as when a large body of workingmen disregard public rights, and involve the honor and moral standards of many of their fellows. The first, too, is carried on by secret negotiations which may not be understood by the public until years afterward, while the second has to justify itself, from the very organization of modern trades-unionism, to the reason of hundreds of men, and must debauch their consciences in the process. It is a much more serious concern to the community when a trades-union employs questionable methods than when a business concern does, because it affects a larger proportion of the population, and in that respect is much more nearly analogous to political corruption. That trades-unionists them-



selves are perilously near to accepting the corrupt business standard as a normal one for their own dealings, there are unfortunately many evidences. Samuel Parks at one time was almost forgiven by the majority of the members of his union, who admitted that, although he had accepted bribes and extorted blackmail, he had nevertheless doubled the wages of his fellow trades-unionists, that he was engaged by them for the sake of increasing their wages, and that it was a matter of his own individual conscience as to how he proceeded to do it; that his method of procedure was no concern of theirs. Fortunately, however, the sense of honesty and fair dealing rallied later, and the national representatives refused to endorse his position. The argument was not unlike that used by the stockholders of a Chicago street-railway company, who some years ago practically admitted that their representatives had bribed the members of the Common Council and had been indifferent to the rights of the people, but who insisted that they had nevertheless managed the company effectively, had paid the stockholders a good dividend, and had even lowered fares; that such results were all that could be reasonably demanded of them, and that to go into their methods and condemn them for what their own individual consciences permitted them to do, was an impertinence. The arguments on the surface are not unlike; but it is infinitely worse for a large body of men, representing the traditions of simple people, to use these arguments, than it is for the smaller groups of business men, with their sophisticated experience, to use the same arguments. It is fortunate that the public made a more vigorous protest in one case than in the other.

Another source of corruption is the political situation found in all the large American cities. Labor-unions are naturally composed of the same men who form the units of our political life, many of whom have already had their training in corruption through their political organizations. Indeed, it is a charge made by certain "old-time" trades-unionists that the Civil Service regulations have turned out of office a number of adroit politicians, who, finding "nothing doing" in politics, have turned their attention to "grafting" among trades-unions. The Teamsters' Union, which was started in Chicago two years ago, and was equally distinguished by its phenomenal growth and brilliant achievements in connection with certain Team Owners' Associations, was composed very largely of men who lived in the river



wards. These wards are adjacent to the business quarter, and the teamsters naturally kept their horses and wagons in the vicinity of the down-town district where their work was found. The Chicago River wards have long been notorious for their well-organized political corruption, and before they joined the Teamsters' Union many of the men were already "wise" on the subject of "graft," and in the methods of manipulating large bodies of men for their own ulterior purposes. That they had learned their lesson well was shown by the early history of their organization, which illustrated the most obvious effects of political corruption upon labor organization.

It is more difficult to trace the course of that subtler form of corruption which has been in progress for many years in the Labor Movement. Every organization whose success depends upon large numbers is always susceptible to the subtler type of corruption, and instances could easily be cited from the various devices to increase their membership used by benevolent and philanthropic societies.

To many people of average ethical instinct, this collective ambition to gain as many members as possible for a given organization seems entirely praiseworthy, and the method is not scrutinized if the desired result is attained. It has certainly always been done most openly in the political field. In the early days of Chicago, before the advent of Civil Service, it had for some years been the custom for the secretary or other official of a trades-union to promise "the labor vote" to the candidate for Mayor, if he upon his election would consent to appoint a trades-union official to an inspector's position, where he would have opportunity for increasing the membership of his union. No attempt was made to conceal the motives, so long as they were impersonal. This went so far as to dictate at least one appointment of the first Civil Service Commission, whose business it was to put trades-union men into inspectors' positions. It is easy for a city inspector who is also a union man to give a contractor to understand that, unless his building has been constructed by union labor, he is going to have constant difficulty with the department, that it will be much simpler for him in the very outset to insist that all of his men shall join the union. The inspector is therefore a powerful factor in the increase of membership in all of the organizations connected with the building trades, and may regard such action



as a perfectly legitimate piece of trades-union extension. Through the coercion thus brought to bear upon the contractor, the unions grow in numbers. They are composed, however, of men who know little of the earlier aspects of the movement, and are held together not by the free acceptance of mutual obligations, but by the plain desire to "hold their jobs" under a contractor who wants his business to run smoothly.

The rapid growth of trades-unionism in the city building trades, in both Chicago and New York, and the extraordinary corruption found in connection with them, may bear more of the relation of cause and effect than is at first obvious, and the community may be congratulated that it has been so thoroughly exposed before it became a steady feature in their lives, and their corruption became interdependent with political and commercial corruption.

One would be glad to believe that this crisis of corruption is but a passing one in the Labor Movement, as we try to persuade ourselves that it is ephemeral in politics and business, "a mere incident in the triumph of industrial progress." Trades-unionists have, indeed, an unusual opportunity for ultimate honesty of administration, for collective bargaining must in the end be public bargaining, involving as it does hundreds of men.

From this point of view, it is difficult to understand why American business men have been so reluctant to concede to trades-unions the right of collective bargaining. The business men of this generation have seen the administration of property change largely from individual management to corporate management, as the directors of a stock company more and more outline the policy of the business for which they are responsible, and in which their money is invested. They have practically made a new adjustment, in regard to the administration of at least one class of property, and yet they are the very men who most resent the attempt to extend this method of bargaining, this modification of individual ownership, to workingmen. They declare that the old method, which in fact is not very old, but comparatively recent, is inviolable, and cannot be changed without an attack upon the very principle of property itself. It is a confusion between the principle of property, which has been recognized and protected throughout the existence of civilization, and the modes by which it has been governed. The



latter are unstable, and destined, like any other manifestation of life, to undergo the law of progressive development. The workmen who insist that they do not get their fair advantage from the invention of machinery, that the partition of the results of labor achieved by both proprietor and workman is not effected in just proportion, who seek to modify and correct the conditions and hours under which they labor, are really advocating a gradual change in the present constitution of property, and are pursuing the conservative method when they advocate those changes by means of collective bargaining and trade contracts. This is true in spite of the fact that these demands are often excessive and, from the business point of view, "impossible"; that they are many times accompanied by irrational use of newly acquired power; that their representatives are often corrupt and self-seeking, and that the entire movement exhibits the disorder which has accompanied both political and ecclesiastical movements whenever they have tried to change the administration of power from the aristocratic to the democratic form.

The hope of trades-unions lies in the sheer necessity for the public discussion of their affairs, for it is hard to overestimate how far mere publicity makes for morality, and in the fact that the earliest trade organizations have committed the entire movement to that growing concern for a larger and more satisfying life for every man. For, rightly or wrongly, among us all the belief daily strengthens that whatever has for its object the increased value of the universal life is thereby certified as legitimate. Whether organized labor in America will make its business adjustment and still keep this object in view, whether it will safely pass through the present crisis of transition and temptation, no one can as yet state with any degree of certainty.

It is possible, in addition to the period of transitional development and the fact that they are bearing the brunt of a vigorous onset of national corruption, that a third line of tendencies may be adduced, which make the present decade one of crisis for trades-unionists, as it is, indeed, for all of us. America is only now beginning to realize, and has not yet formulated, all the implications of the factory system, and the conditions of living which the well-established system imposes upon the workers. As we feel it closing down upon us, moments of restlessness and resentment seize us all. The protest against Mr. Mitchell's state-



ment that the American workingman has recognized that he is destined to remain a workingman, is a case in point. In their attempt to formulate and correct various industrial ills, trades-unions are often blamed for what is inherent in the factory system itself, and for those evils which can only be cured through a modification of that system. For instance, factory-workers in general have for years exhibited a tendency to regulate the output of each worker to an amount which they consider a fair day's work, although such a restricted output may prove to be less than a fair day's work to many of the workers. The result is, of course, disastrous to the workers themselves, as well as to the factory management, for it doubtless is as bad for a man's nervous system to hold in his natural pace as to unduly accelerate it. The real trouble which this "limitation" is an awkward attempt to correct is involved in the fact that the intricate subdivision of factory work, lack of understanding on the part of employees of the finished product, has made an unnatural situation, in which the worker has no normal interest in his work or direct relation to it. In the various makeshifts on the part of the manufacturer to supply motives which shall take the place of the natural ones so obviously missing, many devices have been resorted to, such as "speeding up" machinery, "setting the pace," and substituting "piece-work" for day work. The manufacturers may justly say that they have been driven to these various expedients, not only by the factory conditions, but by the natural laziness of man; but, nevertheless, reaction from such a cause is inevitably an uncompromising attempt on the part of the workers to protect themselves from overexertion and to regulate the output. The worst cases I have ever known have occurred in unorganized shops and have been enforced by public opinion, unaided by any trades-union. The "pace-setter" in such a shop is often driven out, and treated with the same animosity as the "scab" receives in a union shop.

Although trades-unions are much blamed for this "holding back of the ambitious man," this "reducing every one to a dead level of mediocrity," and although they were the first to formulate it into a creed, to accuse them of inventing it, as is often done, is to disclose ignorance of factory conditions.

A few months ago, a noted educator complained that a reference to the "joy of labor" made before a large audience of trades-unionists produced only scorn and merriment. He instanced this



as a lack of idealism among trades-unionists, with the implication that a roomful of unorganized men would at once have responded to this shibboleth, whereas of course the factory system itself has brought them all to exactly the same place.

We are constantly confronted by large industrial changes from which the community as a whole profits, but which must inevitably bring difficulty of adjustment and disaster to men of certain trades. Doubtless, these difficulties should be distributed, and not allowed to fall altogether upon the group of working people whose labor is displaced as a result of the change. If these great industrial situations could be considered as belonging to the community as a whole, and could be reasonably dealt with, we would get rid altogether of that disgraceful attitude which the trades-unions have from time to time taken against the introduction of improved machinery,—a small group blindly attempting to defend what they consider their only chance to work. The economists have done surprisingly little to shed light upon this difficulty; indeed, they are somewhat responsible for its exaggeration, for their old theory of a “wage fund,” which did not reach the rank and file of trades-unionists until at least in its first form it had been abandoned by the leading economists, has been responsible for much disorder along this line, as well as for the other mistaken attempt “to make work for more men.”

If progress were inaugurated by those members of the community who possess the widest knowledge and superior moral insight, then social amelioration might be brought about without the bungling and mistakes which so distress us all. But, over and over again, salutary changes are projected and carried through by men of even less than the average ethical development, because their positions in life have brought them in contact with the ills of existing arrangements. To quote from John Morley: “In matters of social improvement, the most common reason why one hits upon a point of progress, and not another, is that the one happens to be more directly touched than the other by the unimproved practice.” Perhaps this is a sufficient explanation of the fact that untrained workingmen are intrusted with the difficult task of industrial amelioration and adjustment, and that trades-unions, which are the organized expression of that effort, are the most significant organizations in our midst, and their code of morality our deepest concern.

JANE ADDAMS.



# OBSTACLES TO REFORM IN TURKEY.

BY CHARLES MORAWITZ.

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THE obstacles which, in the Ottoman Empire, oppose the execution of those reforms that are so desirable and are so constantly demanded, are of three kinds: they arise, firstly, from the extraordinary and curious variety of the peoples classed together pell-mell under the name of Ottoman; secondly, from the character of the Turkish race; and, lastly, from the attitude of foreign Powers.

## I.

No exact or even approximate census has ever been taken of the peoples who, with or against their will, recognize the Sultan of Constantinople as their sovereign. These statistics would, however, possess only a relative value. Moreover, such a census would be impossible in a country like Turkey, where an important part of the population leads a nomadic life, and where the civil organization exists only in a rudimentary form, or is even totally lacking. But so much is certain, that the territory from Novi-Bazar to the Persian Gulf, and from the frontier of Russian Armenia to the Red Sea, respectively, contains the most varied and in-harmonious collection of human elements conceivable.

In European Turkey alone, there are no fewer than eleven races, and the number of churches is greater still. This extraordinary diversity, together with the rivalry existing between the various Christian races and sects, would be in itself a great impediment to the introduction of administrative and judicial reforms; but it is further aggravated by the fact that certain tribes, such as the Albanians, for example, are partly Christians and partly Mohammedans, and that each of the various religious communities possesses a certain degree of autonomy.

The sense of uniformity has always been singularly wanting