

INDUSTRY

The Barefoot Boy

By AGNES E. BENEDICT

YES, my daughter gave up her job in the factory to spend the year on the farm with us, but lands—the work here was too much for a delicate girl like her. *She had to go right back to the factory.*” To most people, this remark of a middle-western farmer would sound absurd. Nevertheless, recent studies made by the federal Children’s Bureau and the National Child Labor Committee of the work of children on the home farm and as farm hands hired by the day,* bear out the farmer and reveal an appalling discrepancy between public recognition of the one form of labor and of the other—at least insofar as this recognition is expressed in protective legislation for children. For example, the twelve-year-old sister of this farmer’s daughter, had she sought work in the city with her sister, would have been turned back by law from the factory and told not to return for two years. If she came back at fourteen, the hours and conditions of her labor would have been definitely prescribed until she was sixteen. Yet no law whatever stood between her and the burden of farm work from which her older sister found it necessary to escape, and which, as a matter of fact, fell heavily upon this child. Again, it is astonishing to reflect that the child welfare laws of her state could be invoked to protect her from various forms of parental “abuse,” such as neglect, severe punishment, lack of school opportunity, yet “abuse” in the form of exploitation and overwork in the fields is practically unrecognized by the laws of any state.

The studies referred to covered a wide area in the general farming regions of Colorado, Illinois, and North Dakota and on the truck farms of Maryland and New Jersey. They show that, while the farm work of children is seasonal—while it differs from factory work in its problems and the possible ways of meeting them—nevertheless, it does present at its worst many of the evils of factory labor at its worst, with additional evils of its own.

Farm work compared with factory work suggests free and unrestrained movement, as opposed to cramped positions

* Work of Children on Illinois Farms, Federal Children’s Bureau, Pub. No. 168; Child Labor in North Dakota; Work of Children on Illinois Farms, by Dorothy Williams and Mary E. Skinner, Federal Children’s Bureau, Pub. No. 168.

and strains; initiative and self-directed effort, as opposed to the relentless drive of a foreman. Yet these studies forcibly show another foreman, quite as inexorable as the factory boss: the urgency of a perishable crop. They show his pitiless strawbosses, labor shortage and economic strain. Under the drive of these forces, the various farm processes—preparing the ground, planting and harvesting—are pictured as going on hour after hour, day after day, for eight, ten, and eleven hours a day, monotonously, endlessly. When their day in the field is over, many farm children find two or three hours of “chores” waiting for them. Here the factory hand has the advantage of the rural worker, for he turns his back on his labor when the whistle blows.

The reports emphasize the physical strain of certain processes, such as the continual stooping in picking tomatoes and cucumbers, the danger of sprained wrists in twisting dry onions, the weight of carrying and dumping 35- to 40-pound baskets of tomatoes or sweet potatoes. Hamlin Garland’s description of harrowing is quoted: “. . . your heels sinking into the soft loam bring such unwonted strain upon the tendons of your legs that you can hardly limp home to supper, and it seems that you cannot possibly go on another day.” Many farm processes are carried on in intense heat or severe cold.

Most states in the Union have taken account of the hazardous nature of machine work for children and set a sixteen- or eighteen-year age limit for certain “dangerous occupations.” But these laws affect machinery in factories only.

The extent to which the machine age has laid hold of the farm is hardly appreciated, and never in terms of menace to the child worker, yet a partial list of the machines referred to in the reports includes the transplanting machine, the disking machine, the grain binder, the cultivator, the threshing machine and the plow. These are not harmless tools. Here is a picture of a threshing machine: “The worker pitches the bundles to a moving belt which carries them under a set of moving knives. . . . He works in such proximity to moving machinery that he is in danger of being caught by knives, belts or parts of the machine.” In the state of North Dakota, of 845 children studied, 104 had been injured in farm work. Fifty-four had



Abuse in the form of overwork in the fields is practically unrecognized by laws

been injured while the children were using farm implements.

The figures on school attendance in the reports show how completely crops are put before education. The extent to which public opinion countenances this attendance situation is illustrated by a thirteen-year-old son of a member of a local Illinois school board, who had lost 75 days of school for farm work during the year! Considering that attendance has been proved to be a decisive factor in school progress, the percentage of retardation among farm children reported in most studies is not surprising.

This comparison of children's work on the home farm with child labor in factories has not been made with any idea that the two problems need the same solution. In fact, with our limited information on the rural situation, only tentative remedies can be suggested. Many authorities feel that an attempt to regulate the work of children on the

home farm through a labor department would only mean waging a blind guerilla warfare; that it might be more successfully and more logically handled through juvenile courts, as a "child welfare," not as a "child labor" problem.

To the writer, it seems, however, that the first step in the solution of the problem is a change of viewpoint in regard to it—a willingness to accept the situation—a desire to face the facts. Such a changed viewpoint will inevitably be slow in coming. To see country life as it really is means blotting out of the picture many of the cherished associations of beauty and glamor which we have put there as visitors going to the country on vacation, or as grown-ups looking back at our childhood on the "dear old farm" of another and a simpler time. It will mean substituting for these rosy pictures a less colorful one—a picture that includes the grayness as well as the sunshine of country life.



Courtesy of The American Child

The A. F. of L. and the American Scene

By JOHN A. FITCH

WHAT the American Federation of Labor has really been doing in politics since the adoption of the famous non-partisan policy in 1906 and what the considerations are that influence its policy are matters not always easy to grasp. Consequently, William English Walling has done a real service in providing a resumé of activity in this field in his *American Labor and American Democracy*.^{*} He describes the changing political tactics of the Federation from its launching of the "non-partisan" movement as an exclusively trade unionist policy down to the farmer-labor entente, which had its more definite beginnings in 1920 and 1922, and the development of the Congressional bloc. Accompanying this is a discussion of labor's attitude toward the relation of government to industry and toward such employers' policies as company unionism and an account of such policies within trade unionism as the development of a concern for the solution of production problems, as exemplified by the so-called B. & O. plan and the new wage policy of the Federation.

It would be a satisfaction if one could separate the well-documented facts presented in this book from the opinions and inferences that accompany them. For the latter leave the informed reader in a state of some bewilderment. Not only does Mr. Walling present numerous conclusions as being those of organized labor which the reader is inclined to challenge, but he tends to challenge them himself by the

frequent insertion of contradictory conclusions also presented as being those of organized labor.

Mr. Walling, one of the leading American Socialists of pre-war days, who has now abandoned his earlier faith, offers a sort of modified Sovietism as the ideal to be worked for in government. The beginnings of a tendency in this direction appear, he believes, in the economic blocs that have begun to play so important a role in Congress. He attempts to show that through these blocs an ideal two-party system will come to prevail in Congress entirely distinct from the traditional two-party system that will continue to exist for the purpose of carrying on election campaigns. By a process of carefully keeping the left and right hands from ever knowing of the other's existence, one man will run for Congress as a Republican and another as a Democrat and both will function in Congress as labor men without their respective campaign committees ever knowing anything about it.

In discussing the election of 1924, Mr. Walling interprets the action of the Federation in lending support to what was potentially a new party—the La Follette-Wheeler ticket—as a "deviation" from its traditional non-partisan policy. That it was a deviation in some respects no one will deny, but Mr. Walling makes it appear that the Federation is bound by its non-partisan policy to support no candidate who is not labeled either Republican or Democrat. Support is given to the one of these two parties according to Mr. Walling, that seems in any given case to be the "lesser evil." Just why support of a third party as the least evil would be a new or different policy is not apparent. Even while we

^{*}American Labor and American Democracy. By William English Walling. Harper & Brothers. 184 pp. Price \$3.00 postpaid of The Survey.

are pondering this question the author seemingly rejects the lesser evil theory, for he explains the action of the Federation in 1924 by saying that labor found itself confronted with a new problem because "unsatisfactory presidential candidates and platforms had been adopted for the first time by *both* the major parties." Thus we are left to assume that in previous campaigns only the Republican candidate and platform have been unsatisfactory and that the Democrats were favored, not as the lesser evil, but as representing all that labor was seeking!

THE two major contentions of the book appear to be these: That American labor is American, and that American labor is right. Personally, I am unable to see that the strictly American character of anything is worth contending for unless it is better than anything else. Probably the latter is not a good reason either, but at least it is a less dangerous foible. Or one could reasonably explain that a thing is American or British or Chinese or what-not as a means of explaining why it is the particular sort of thing it seems to be. But Mr. Walling insists that American labor is American as if that in itself is an achievement justifying a considerable amount of self-congratulation. He goes further; he even insists that it is not European in any sense and particularly not British. And in doing all this he contrasts experience with theory as if the two could represent any lasting conflict if men are both intelligent and honest. Repeatedly he makes statements like the following: "Our labor unionism is based not upon ideas but upon experience." American labor has "adopted neither socialism nor any other doctrine." "Our labor movement is not an importation or the result of a theory."

But he apparently believes that the American labor movement is the best thing of its sort in the world and so he is, in a way, justified in celebrating its Americanism. It is hard to understand why the absence of ideas, which he insists is a characteristic of the movement, should be considered a cause for cheering, but it is apparent that he does so consider it. And so he leaves the impression that American labor is as right as can be.

Now, I submit that this is no service to the labor movement, nor is it a true statement of fact. American labor has evolved its policies out of experience, of course, just as every other movement of any stability has done either here or anywhere else. But it has also evolved theories and even doctrines, without which any consistency of action or any action at all would be impossible. No better example of this could be desired than the discussions of wage policies in recent conventions of the American Federation of Labor, resulting in the development of a theory of wage payments that Mr. Walling discusses.

ANOTHER matter about which labor might be expected to have some ideas, or even a theory, is the question of its relations with the employer. Mr. Walling really concedes this also, by his insistence on the non-class-conscious character of American labor. "Organized labor," he writes, "has been a part of the democratic movement—on the whole exploited neither more nor less than the rest of the people, conscious of that fact and not conscious of itself as a separate proletariat of outcasts or disinherited." Consequently, "there were no classes within the democratic movement, nor did labor or the people as a whole feel that they were subjected

to any lasting class rule." In a chapter entitled Labor Challenges the Domination of Capitalism, he writes, "The Federation . . . denies that we are living under a capitalist system." And to emphasize the point further, he asseverates, "When 90 or 99 per cent of the American people lost, organized labor lost; when 90 or 99 per cent of the people gained . . . labor felt that it was also gaining."

Now it takes some reasoning, one would suppose, to reach the conclusion that there are no classes in our democracy and that the economic regime under which we live is not one of capitalism. Such a belief might even be described as a theory, and if it is the belief accepted by organized labor, then labor has been dabbling in theories also.

BUT Mr. Walling has no sooner announced this theory than he begins to deny it. Again and again he points out the camp of the enemy that organized labor must face. They are "employers," "profiteers," "vested interests," even "capitalists." Labor realizes that "economic or social compulsion" will be necessary before these foemen will "yield anything either of their illegitimate profits or their arbitrary power." It "realizes that it must necessarily take the offensive" against an opposition that is "natural and inevitable" and possessed of "colossal strength." This opposition has many weapons at its disposal—it may "starve out" the workers, it uses the "blacklist," at times it controls the government and its resistance even takes the form of "getting judges to declare unconstitutional or otherwise nullify the legislative remedies and reforms secured by organized labor to protect its rights." These are rather drastic charges, but they are not a whit more drastic than appear regularly in the journals of conservative trade unions. It is quite true that organized labor in this country is to a large extent conservative, but as long as the workers conceive of their unions as fighting organizations, as long as they think of employers as constituting an opposition body whom, from time to time, they must fight, it is absurd to say that there is no class-consciousness.

MR. WALLING has fallen into the error of assuming that organized labor is single organic entity, speaking with a single voice. He overlooks altogether the million organized workers outside the American Federation of Labor, and he recognizes no possibility of difference of opinion within the Federation. The leader whom he quotes far more extensively than any other is Matthew Woll, who, in addition to being president of the Photo-Engravers' Union, is vice-president of the National Civic Federation. Many of the quotations from Mr. Woll are taken from speeches delivered before the Civic Federation. Now, Civic Federation economics is not distasteful to large numbers of trade unionists, but there are at least half a million members in unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor which have forbidden their officers even to become members of the Civic Federation, and there are many members of other unions who do not accept its philosophy.

These other trade unionists who do not accept the doctrine that there are no classes in America may possibly not stress their Americanism so far as to deny that anything can be learned from any other country. But I venture to suggest that straight thinking and open-mindedness have never yet made a good American into a bad one.

Such Things Can Be

A DAY WITH THE STATE DIVISION OF ALIENS

By LILLIAN SYMES

WE LIVE in an age which is skeptical of melodrama. The unscrupulous villain and his innocent victim, the sinister plot to defraud the trusting widow and orphan, the foreclosure of the old homestead, the whisking away of the comely country girl—we live in a world where such things do not happen (if they ever did) and in which conflict is, for the most part, subtle and devoid of action.

The busy Director of this Division of Aliens of the New York Department of Labor can afford to smile at our sophistication. Her world is as unbelievable as a dime novel and as real as life. Lillian Sire and the investigators attached to her office guard the rights of that most helpless and inarticulate portion of our population, the unskilled alien workers. The casual American laborer also comes here with his difficulties, for the bureau handles complaints of fraud and abuse perpetrated upon the helpless worker whether native or foreign.

A host of questionable and criminal elements are forever preying upon this group—unscrupulous employers, bogus doctors and lawyers, notaries public who extract extortionate fees, fake installment and stock schemers, crooked ticket and money transmission agents, fortune tellers and the like. To look over the records of this Division or to sit through the hearings of the twenty or more cases a day which pass through the office is to realize that the strong arm of the State Labor Department is in many cases the sole protection of the unorganized worker against the most rapacious elements of our industrial life.

On the Director's desk lay a letter from the village police officer of a sleepy little Catskill town where many New Yorkers spend idyllic holidays in mountain inns and boarding-houses. In his letter he appeals officially to the Division of Aliens in behalf of a group of cases that had come under his observation during the month of August. Names, addresses and dates are given and the circumstances described in the dispassionate language of an official report.

A HUNGARIAN woman from New York City was employed for a time in the kitchen of a summer boarding-house. When she got ready to leave, she asked her employer for the sixty dollars due her. He not only refused to pay, but when she grew insistent, beat her and threw her out of the house. She went to the village officer who advised her to take her complaint to the Alien Division. She started back to the boarding-house to get her clothes, but on the way, dazed and desperate from the beating she had received, she was hit by an automobile. While she lay in the village hospital the police officer appealed to the Alien Division in her behalf, concluding his letter, "If this woman had been treated as she should have been, this terrible accident would never have occurred." Before the Division could act, she died.

There was no claimant for the sixty dollars, no legal ground for holding the employer responsible. He still retains the sixty dollars and his liberty.

THAT this was not an isolated case in the "summer boarding-house industry" is shown by three other reports from this same officer. A middle-aged woman with a little girl was sent from New York City to work as a cook. When she arrived, late at night, the employer had changed his mind about hiring her and refused to let her into the house. With the child tugging at her skirts, she was obliged to walk the four miles back to the village where a night policeman found her lodgings. In the morning he discovered that she was penniless, that neither she nor the child had eaten since twelve o'clock of the day before. A collection was taken and the woman and child sent back to the city with instructions to report to the Division of Aliens.

A young Polish woman had been hired to work in another boarding-house. After working a month, she demanded her pay. She was thrown into the street, her clothes after her. Carfare back to New York was supplied by a collection taken at the village police station.

The most flagrant cases of labor abuse reported to the Alien Division take place in the lumber camps in the northern part of the state. The work is done mostly in winter when the camps are snowbound. The story of

Stephan Kuscovitch is, except for its fatal ending, typical of dozens reported to the Division of Aliens.

Stephan had been employed in this small lumbering camp for several months. Food and a bunk had been supplied but payment had been postponed on one pretext or another. When Stephan finally demanded his wages, he was ordered out of the camp and threatened with death if he refused to leave. Penniless, he started to tramp over the fifty snow-covered miles to Utica. Overcome with exhaustion, he collapsed in the snow where he lay for several hours before being picked up by a passing driver to whom he told his story. The "good Samaritan" offered him work at better pay if he would come back to his ranch and fell a patch of trees. For a month, Stephan felled trees, split logs and sawed cord-wood. Then he asked for his pay. He was beaten over the head by his benefactor and threatened with a shot-gun if he didn't "clear out." Again he started for Utica. This time he reached his destination, frozen and exhausted. A few days later he died from the effects of exposure.

OCCASIONALLY the worker takes justice in his own hands as in the case of another Polish farmhand, who, threatened by his boss for demanding his wages, proceeded to "beat up" the employer. When a constable arrived, the worker was arrested and thrown into

jail. He has now served two months, awaiting trial, unable to furnish bail or hire an attorney. The Alien Division, recently notified of his plight by a local official, has interested itself in his case.

NOT all such injustices are visited upon alien workers in isolated communities. Recently a motion picture film shipped 250 extras to Lakewood, New Jersey. When the men arrived at their destination at 2 A. M., they found that no quarters had been provided for them. They remained all night in the open woods in a pouring rain. During the next two days, the rain continued and still nothing was done to give them shelter. The filming was called off on account of the weather and the men straggled back to New York, many of them ill from exposure. After futile attempts to collect their wages, they reported the matter to the Alien Division. On the same day the complaints were filed, the Division collected wages amounting to \$960 for them.

The building or road-making firm that goes into business "on a shoe-string" and then fails is one of the most difficult problems of the Department. While such an employer is compelled to furnish a bond, the companies supplying them with material have first lien upon the bond and it is usually exhausted before the matter of wages can be taken up. Recently such an "over-night" building concern filed a bankruptcy petition while owing the sum of \$10,000 to its employees.

The alien worker is often exploited as cruelly by his prosperous fellow-countryman as by the "hard-boiled" American. A typical fraud was that perpetrated by two Slavic business men who formed a co-partnership as steamship and money transmission agents. Twenty-one of their fellow-countrymen, poorly paid laborers and servant girls, deposited with them sums amounting to \$3,438. The depositors had deprived themselves in order to send this help to their relatives in Europe, for the most part women and children, who depended on aid from America for food and shelter. The money was appropriated by the two partners. When the matter was finally taken up by the Alien Division a meeting of all the creditors was called and the problem placed before them. The two partners had no assets of any kind.

THE defrauded workers finally voted that a gradual restitution was preferable to revenge, and left the matter in the hands of the director of the Division. Soon after this, the wife of one of the partners called at the Division office and placed a twenty-dollar bill on the director's desk. In broken English, she told her story. She had felt the disgrace of her husband's exposure keenly and had determined to go back to work at her old trade of dressmaking in order to pay off the obligation more quickly.

"He no good man," she admitted. "Bad to me, to the little girl, but no good for the little girl to have her father in jail. I go back to work,

pay twenty dollars a week. When money's all paid, I will feel better." Each week her twenty dollars is subtracted from the claim against her husband.

While an organized white slave traffic in immigrant girls is probably a thing of the past, continuous vigilance is necessary on the part of the Alien Division for the protection of the newly arrived woman immigrant from the exploitation of unscrupulous lodging-house keepers in some of the foreign settlements.

STRIKE-BREAKERS recently brought in to take the places of men on strike created a serious problem in New York City. These men had been promised their return fare when the strike was over, as well as their board, lodging and generous wages while it lasted. On their arrival here, several hundred were immediately discharged, because of settlements in certain divisions. They were left to roam the streets, penniless, hungry and desperate. One hundred of them took up their grievances with the Alien Department. In a session which lasted until 10 o'clock in the evening, a settlement was finally obtained whereby their board and return transportation were provided by the company. Since that time the company has agreed to submit to the Alien Division for its approval any contract by which large numbers of men are brought into the state for employment, temporary or permanent.

SINCE the passing of the Federal Immigration Law, the question has been frequently raised as to whether a division of aliens is necessary. The thousands of cases which pass through the Division every year, of which the ones quoted are but casual examples, should point to the fact that an alien in a strange land, who cannot speak its language and whose funds are limited, cannot possibly be adequately protected by our already congested courts of law. Nor have the courts the facilities for the rapid and accurate investigation which cases of this type require.

Two hundred and forty-one thousand, three hundred and nineteen foreigners entered the United States through the port of New York during the fiscal year 1923-24, and the United States secretary of labor estimates that about 850,000 persons had entered the country clandestinely during that period. About one-third of the immigrants who enter the port of New York remain in this state as residents. New York has and will always have, therefore, an alien problem demanding special agencies for its proper handling.

The Division is a clearing house for those big and little tragedies which can find no adequate solution in law courts or charitable agencies. More than any scheme for intensive Americanization of the immigrant, it has within its power the molding of alien bewilderment and resentment into intelligent loyalty and willing co-operation.



IMMIGRANT

Woodcut by Emile Adler

Home Work

The illegal employment of children on industrial home work has been reduced by half during the first year of Pennsylvania's experiment with a new type of regulation (see *The Survey*, April 15, 1926, p. 97). In 1924 the state Department of Labor and Industry found that in 50 per cent of the homes where industrial home work was done and where there were children under 16 years of age, the children were illegally at work. In 1926, the proportion was reduced to 23 per cent, according to a report prepared by the Bureau of Women and Children which is to be published soon. This drop in the proportion of illegal child labor is more conspicuous in some industries than in others:

INDUSTRY	1924	1926
Tags	90.8	41.4
Women's and Children's Clothing	50.3	27.4
Men's Clothing	44.3	25.8
Knit Goods	29.2	17.4
All Industries	50.0	23.5

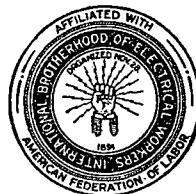
The report attributes this gain to the cooperation of employers in enforcing home-work regulations. This has been largely a matter of learning through investigating the actual conditions under which the firm's work was being done in the homes and then devising methods of supervision to meet the needs of the various types of work. "The reduction of the illegal employment of children in the tag industry was directly due to the forceful methods with which with one accord the employers in this industry met the situation. The comparatively slight improvement in the men's clothing industry, on the other hand, may be explained by the fact that in this industry instead of dealing with a few employers, the Bureau has had to make its contacts with a large number of small contractors." Home work processes are simple and children have been traditionally employed upon them. Probably only the long, slow method of education can bring about absolute enforcement of home work regulations. But this report of the first year of the Pennsylvania experiment shows that much can be done through the intelligent cooperation of state authorities and employers of home workers.



INDUSTRIAL research groups, "to meet the need of students desiring to obtain first-hand contacts with industry" are planned for the coming summer vacation by the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A. Each group will meet once or twice a week "to exchange and evaluate experiences and to discuss the wider issues which may be found to be involved." For the students who go into industry free lance, unattached to any group, the Associations plan to hold a Students in Industry Conference in the fall, similar to the one at Earlham in September, 1926 (see *The Survey*, Dec. 15, page 383). Groups are already definitely planned for Chicago, New York City, Detroit, and Philadelphia during 1927, and in St. Louis and Denver if there is sufficient demand. The Associations point out that "The men and women of our colleges are becoming more and more keenly aware of the intellectual and moral challenge of industrial problems. Because so many of the issues are controversial in nature and because so many human values as well as economic facts are involved, it is difficult to weigh class-room and textbook data. . . . An increasing number of college students have

therefore determined to find out for themselves by entering industry as manual workers, hunting their own jobs, living on their wages and working day by day under the same conditions as their fellow-workers."

"A TEN FOOT Shelf of Books for Trade Unionists" was published in a recent issue of the *Journal of Electrical Workers and Operators*, Washington, D. C., which includes an unusually intelligent selection of titles in economics, history, war books, fiction, drama, poetry, psychology and biography. "The list was made up without an ax to grind or without any peculiar propaganda intent. It was made to include only those modern books which tend to illuminate the labor struggle." It should be of interest not only to trade unionists, but to anyone who wishes a colorful but reliable background for the consideration of current industrial questions.



ARKANSAS' minimum-wage laws have been thrown into the discard by the U. S. Supreme Court, following the precedent of *Adkins vs. Children's Hospital*, the District of Columbia case, which was a year ago cited when the Arizona law was thrown out (see *The Survey*, Nov. 15, 1925, page 200). The Arkansas law was first declared unconstitutional by the U. S. District Court at Little Rock, when the Arkansas Welfare Commission stipulated the minimum wage to be paid by the West-Nelson Manufacturing Company. The law was upheld by the State Supreme Court, but the federal court of the district felt itself bound by the *Adkins* case, and the U. S. Supreme Court has now upheld that decision.

A moving picture film which gives "a popular presentation of standard working conditions for women" has been prepared by the Women's Bureau of the U. S. Department of Labor. The pictures were taken in modern factories during working hours and depict actual workers and actual working conditions. "The scenes portray such good workroom features as modern and scientific methods of lighting, ventilating systems for the regulation of heat and humidity, comfortable seats adjusted to work and workers' and safety devices. . . . The good service facilities . . . include sanitary bubble fountains, a wash-room supplying hot water, soap and individual towels; a lunch room where hot, nourishing food can be secured at noon; a clean toilet room equipped with installations on the basis of one for every 15 women; a satisfactory cloak room . . . a rest room . . . and first aid equipment." The film is the third prepared by the bureau dealing with special problems of women wage-earners. The films are lent by the bureau, free of charge, to organizations and individuals for educational purposes.

A RECENT bulletin of the Daniel Guggenheim Fund for the Promotion of Aeronautics, Inc., states that "aerial service is performing a multitude of services daily. . . . Just as the air mail and air transport have become integral parts of American industry, so is aerial service performing its part in modern, Twentieth Century life." It cites the development of flying fields or airports; the uses of aerial photography by railroads, real estate and building operators, surveyors and map-makers; the protection of crops by dusting or spraying by airplane; and "general service," such as sight-seeing, medical service, forest patrols, study of traffic congestion. The Fund has appropriated \$78,000 to complete the aeronautical laboratory at the University of Michigan and other sums for aeronautical engineering schools at Leland Stanford University and the California Institute of Technology.

SOCIAL PRACTICE

Why Come to Des Moines?

By T. J. EDMONDS

A WELL-KNOWN publicity hound in the East (which is the strange land that lies and lies beyond the Mississippi River and whose inhabitants know not the Great God Maize) wrote me a moon or so ago saying: "Please write me, omitting the usual Chamber of Commerce dope, in answer to the question, 'Why go to Des Moines?'" Being of a literal mind I replied: "Why, indeed?"

It appears that this was not a satisfactory answer. At least it did not afford a sufficient basis for an article about the National Conference of Social Work in The Survey. I was told that, although it is the function of a publicist to take a basis of truth and weave it into a readable presentation, this was going a bit too far—using "far" in an extremely figurative sense.

Consequently I am ordered to set forth a few reasons why one (or more) should come to Des Moines May 11 to 18. Not why the Conference should come to Des Moines, for that has already been determined by a process of elimination—or rather attrition. But why, since the Conference is to be here, any one should attend this Conference, accepting Des Moines as a necessary corollary.

Every article or speech I am told should be constructed on the outline system. Here is the outline of this:

a. The uniquenesses of Des Moines and Iowa; if any.

b. & c. The social significance of Des Moines and Iowa to the Conference.

d. The significance of the Conference to Iowa.

a. The Conference has never met in Iowa. Des Moines is the smallest city in which the Conference has ever met. It is probably the only decent convention city that possesses at the same time the advantages of Gopher Prairie and New York. You can't get lost in Des Moines. You can't even wander far from the path. You can't possibly stay at a hotel that is more than six blocks from the farthest meeting place. You can't skip from one meeting place to another farther than a half-kilometer distant. In fact you can step across the street from any one to most of the others.

The convention bureau neglected to mention that Des Moines is the only city that is just a night from St. Louis, Chicago, Kansas City and the Twin Cities. It is so easy to get out of it and in a period of unconsciousness get somewhere. No other city is so easily so.

Have you thought of this astonishing

astronomical fact: that if a line be drawn from the center of population of the country to its geographical center the center of that line is just a few miles directly south of Des Moines? That should appeal to social statisticians and to the graphic artists of the Russell Sage Foundation.

It is because of these things that Radio Station W H O thunders nightly with 5,000 watt power its slogan "Des Moines the Nation's Convention City." (The name of this station is W H O, not W H Y.)

b. The social significance of Des Moines^o to the Conference: Des Moines has more golf holes per capita than any city in the country.

Des Moines is unusual among cities because it has an intelligent, socially-minded mayor who doesn't care whether he is asked to make a speech of welcome or not; and Iowa has the same kind of a governor.

Des Moines has three universities—and one of them played Navy and Notre Dame last year.

Des Moines' community chest is one of the few that goes over the top regularly. It maintains to an unusual degree the good will alike of contributors and member agencies.

c. The social significance of Iowa to the Conference:

Iowa is the buckle of the corn belt. Des Moines is the capital of Iowa, its biggest city and in its center. And the corn belt is just now the seat of inflammation of the body politic.

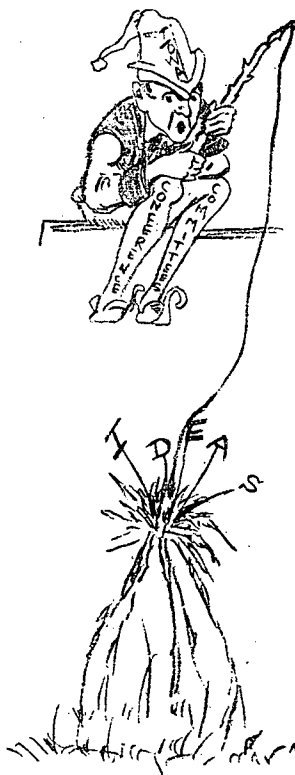
Iowa is the typical agrarian state. Rome fell because its social workers gave all too little heed to agrarian problems.

Iowa is lowest in illiteracy, sixth lowest in its death-rate, unrivalled in its fertility of soil, in its economy of expenditure for good roads and in its crop of broken banks and broken hopes.

Iowa is the home of the consolidated school idea. The greatest agricultural college in the world is an hour's ride from Des Moines. The University of Iowa, three hours away, is noted for its child welfare research station, its remarkable medical school, its mobile mental clinic, its department of maternity and infant hygiene, and its many other socio-educational accomplishments.

Iowa has a physical education law. Its tuberculosis hospital-bed provision equals its annual death-rate. Its state institutions for mental diseases are models. Its state capitol has the most artistic setting in the country.

Cooperation in Iowa among organizations interested in social and civic welfare is so



Drawn by Alice R. May, Iowa