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Justice

International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union
(ILGWU)

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Justice (Vol. 14, Iss. 10)

International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU)

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Comments

Justice was the official publication of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union ILGWU from 1919 to 1995. Editions of *Justice* were published in English, Italian, Spanish, and Yiddish. When compared side by side, the content of some of these different editions of *Justice* shows significant differences. This is the English-language edition of *Justice*.

JUSTICE

Official Organ of The International
Ladies' Garment Workers' Union

Vol. XIV. No. 10.

Jersey City, N. J., November, 1932

Price 10 Cents

Editorial Notes

FOR OVER THIRTY YEARS, Morris Hillquit, the candidate of the Socialist Party for Mayor of New York City, has been the champion and defender of the trade union movement and its loyal and tireless advocate.

Morris Hillquit— For Mayor

Morris Hillquit's name has been inseparably associated with every movement of our workers, with their struggles for recognition as a force in industry, with their conflicts for shorter work hours, higher earnings and humane treat-

ment in the shops. He has been the guiding spirit in most of our battles, representing and defending our cause in the courts, at arbitration bodies and in the forum of public opinion.

In this municipal campaign, surrounded as we are by a staggering economic depression and industrial crisis, the platform upon which Comrade Morris Hillquit is running



MORRIS HILLQUIT,
Socialist Candidate for Mayor of N. Y. City

offers the only ray of hope, the only courageous, honest and sincere approach to the solution of the appalling problems of unemployment and of municipal government in the interests of the labor masses of our great community as contrasted for the hopelessly corrupt and decayed rule of the boss-ridden political machines of the old parties.

The trade union movement of New York City, and our organization in particular, owe Morris Hillquit, as the standard-bearer of the Socialist Party in this campaign, not only a debt of personal recognition for inestimable services but they owe no less a sacred duty to the masses of the workers whom they represent to rally all wage-earners

in this great community to the support of Hillquit's candidacy and the imperishable principles which it symbolizes.

The splendid campaign which Comrade Hillquit is putting up should be a matter of sincere interest to all our members. Hillquit has served the labor movement wonderfully well, and it is our duty, as a part of that movement, to be of help in this campaign as much as we possibly can. Subscription lists for the Hillquit campaign fund have been distributed in all cloak and dress shops. Let every man and woman contribute to this fund—a dime, a quarter, a half dollar—each according to his or her ability. There will be a great mass-meeting at Madison Square Garden on Thursday evening, November 3rd—let us help fill that great hall to overflowing and close the Hillquit campaign with a magnificent demonstration.

Above all, remember, whether we can elect Morris Hillquit as mayor of New York this year or not—a great vote for him will strengthen immensely the position of the labor movement, because Morris Hillquit is one of us, he is our leader and our spokesman.



IT WAS A HARD-WORKING, steadily-gearred meeting of the General Executive Board that was held early in October at Unity House, a full, unbroken week of continuous reporting, debating and discussion. In fact, it has to be all work and no fun at Unity House in October, especially on rainy, inclement

The G. E. B. Meeting at Unity House

days and evenings.

There was little glamor or exuberance in the accounts presented by the members of the Board, gathered from all centers of women's garment making at this first meeting of the G. E. B. since the Philadelphia convention. Each report reflected the general industrial situation in the country, and in our industries as well,—poor work seasons, little earnings, a sharpened feeling of insecurity next to dismay among the workers, employers using every pretext to violate union work conditions, and, above all, a burning need for organizing activity, for strengthening the ranks on all fronts.

Yet, in the face of these uniformly disquieting reports, our organizations, in New York City and the country over, are carrying on—not on as grand a scale as in the pre-crisis days—but, nevertheless, doggedly, and with a grim earnestness fighting their way through the maze of the current economic calamity. They have trimmed their sails to suit the storm, they have made retrenchments, introduced economies in management, they are fighting on the defensive wherever they are pressed too hard by the employers, but they have stuck to their guns, with their eyes continually fixed on the morrow, and constantly hoping and watching for a better turn.

The reports, an extensive, all-embracing one by President Dubinsky, and a score of others by every member of the G. E. B., covering each market, trade and activity, give a composite graph of the International for the past four months. Since May, the I. L. G. W. U. has gone through a string of stirring events. Schlesinger's death in the midst of negotiations in our key industry, the cloak industry of New York, for a renewal of collective agreements; the election of David Dubinsky to the chief stewardship of the organization, the tense, trigger-hair discussions with the cloak employers stretching over a month and a half; the two referendums and the general stoppage which assumed the proportions of a real strike; then a poor work-season which has made the enforcement of the new contract achievements in the cloak shops all the more difficult and onerous.

In Cleveland our workers are mobilizing their strength for a battle royal to force the employers who had slipped out from under union contract obligations to assume responsibility for work conditions. They are preparing for a real fight in that market; it is, indeed, a question of life or death to them. In Toronto the cloakmakers are girding themselves for an organizing drive that would bring back the organization to its former standing in the local market. In Chicago, the cloakmakers' Joint Board is carrying on a desperate fight against several employers who are attempting to "run out" on the Union by opening sweat shops in Illinois, Wisconsin and Indiana cities. In Philadelphia the cloakmakers are doing their best in a slumping local industry and a very bad season to hold up their position, while the dressmakers, with only a small part of their trade unionized, are stubbornly defending this nucleus of an organization and are waiting patiently for an opportunity to launch a drive to unionize the rest of their shops.

And so on, all along the line—in Montreal, in Toledo, in Baltimore, in far Los Angeles and San Francisco, everywhere our workers are struggling against the tides of unemployment, acute want and employer aggression, all of them in unison directing their appeal to their parent organization, the International, to come to their aid and to give them all the moral and material support it can muster in this, their hour of need.

Has the quarterly meeting of the G. E. B. answered all the urgent pleas of our organizations? Has it found a solution to all the problems that are harassing our unions far and near?

It has, certainly, done its very best with the materially shrunk means at its command at the present moment. Frankly, it required courage of no mean order, in the face of gloomy reports from so many quarters, to decide on immediate organizing drives in a number of cities to offset the demoralizing effects of the crisis and of the union-destroying tactics of the employers. But the General Executive Board, under the leadership of President Dubinsky, rose fully to the height of the situation at that meeting. Depression or no depression, as long as there is an ounce of strength left in the parent organization, it will be placed at the disposal of our struggling unions—in New York and elsewhere—in their fight to keep their heads above water in this all-engulfing crisis.

It was decided, and steps were taken at once to carry out these decisions, to come to the aid of the Cleveland organization, to help direct the drive in Toronto, to assist the activity in Baltimore, to consider effective organizing work in the Philadelphia dress market, to continue the encouraging work being done in the Chicago dress field, in addition to sanctioning the very material support already given by President Dubinsky to the New York Dress Joint Board in their organizing work during this season and to

consolidate all available efforts for a greater drive in the dress industry during the coming spring season.

Besides, a multitude of very important matters pertaining to organizational efficiency and economy, to the financial standing of the Union as a whole and of the locals in particular, the out-of-town activities of the New York unions and the various other centers—subjects on which we shall touch later—all were given a thorough airing in debate and dealt with in a practical, conscientious manner.

It was a business-like meeting, a meeting without frills and window-dressing, adjusted realistically to the very tense industrial moment through which we are all passing. Yet, while there was no holiday mood about this gathering of the leaders of the I. L. G. W. U., neither apathy nor resignation has marred its spirit and the tenor of its proceedings.

The past three years of stress and storm have added tremendously to the sum total of our needs and worries but the crucible of this bitter experience has also hardened our fibre. We have tightened our belts, we are ready to retrench still further in order to make our line compact and less open to attack, but we are determined, nevertheless, not to yield an essential foot of ground to the enemy or to abandon any of our hard-won positions.



THE MOVEMENT FOR ECONOMY in management in our local unions, we are glad to observe, is now beginning to take a rational and sensible turn. As such, we

Economy on Its Merits

have every reason to believe, it is likely to produce some very wholesome results.

It stands to reason that no one with a straight-thinking mind could have any objection to economy in principle. If a dollar could be made to do the work of two, or one man can be made to render the service now given by two, without weakening or destroying the purpose for which it or they are being used, by all means let's have it done. In times like the present especially, economy and retrenchment in management of any institution, besides the common sense behind it, carries with it a special popular appeal and finds widespread approval.

The trouble, however, with this economy movement in our spheres was that it started originally not as a straightforward business suggestion but as a political issue, and like everything that has a political taint, it was grossly exaggerated and twisted. It was only after President Dubinsky had taken the initiative in this matter and carried through a policy of strict retrenchment in the General Office, and has set an example for our locals and joint boards to follow, that this question of economy in management has assumed in our Union a rational, non-political aspect. And the consolidation of the finance departments of Locals 22 and 89 and the joining of the offices of these two locals together with the office of the Dress Joint Board, effected shortly thereafter, has served further to confirm the thought that economy can be raised from the rather low estate of a political issue to the higher plane of sound trade union achievement.

It was precisely in such a spirit that the last meeting of the General Executive Board considered this problem when it came up on the order of the day. The Board decided to call conferences of all local unions in New York City—cloak and dress organizations separately—to take up the intent of the resolution presented at the Philadelphia convention with regard to "curtailment of management and organizational expenses wherever possible to meet the emergency situations created by the present industrial condition." The Finance Committee of the G. E. B. and the General Office were also given the authority to "look into

the finances of each and every local and sub-division and direct them how and when to make necessary economies and cutting down of expenses."

We expect that these conferences and the work of the Finance Committee will bring substantial gains in economy to some of the locals who are themselves sincerely interested in this problem. Once such a question is stripped of its political lining and is examined and tackled in the light of reasoning it can be settled right and to the ultimate benefit of all concerned.



THE NEGOTIATIONS which President Dubinsky has been conducting in recent weeks with the Unemployment Emergency Relief Committee and the New York

For the Needy By the Unemployed

chapter of the Red Cross concerning the making up of dresses and underwear for the needy families in the New York district by members of

our Union, have attracted considerable notice.

Originally planned to be made up by "volunteer" labor, by amateur seamstresses in homes, trade schools and institutions, this 4,750,000 yards of cotton material donated by the Government to the Red Cross, is now pretty certain to be made up by unemployed members of our organization. Under the terms submitted by President Dubinsky to the Emergency Relief Committee, the work would be made up by workers employed in two shifts at six hours each. On a rough estimate, the material at hand would give 1,000 workers employment for two months and would yield 60,000 dozen garments. This does not include several thousand and dozen of men's shirts which are to be made up by men shirtmakers.

Wholly apart from the work which this arrangement would afford a considerable number of our idle people during the approaching slack period, perhaps the major point of interest in this transaction is the revealing fact that a labor organization can organize its collective force with comparative ease for practical production purposes. It also opens up a new vista of possibilities for cooperative efforts by trade unions in conjunction with governmental and semi-public agencies in the promotion of large public undertakings that would provide work to unemployed under decent labor conditions.



THE DECISION OF THE G. E. B. to expand the work of the "out-of-town" departments of the International, in the New York area and in the Middle Western women's

Out-of-Town Activity

wear markets brings out sharply the importance which the small towns located near the main production centers of our industry have assumed in

the past few years.

The craze for cheap production and for cheap garments and the sacrifice of skill and good materials for mass production, shoddy goods and cheap labor is fairly eating the very heart out of our trades these days. Of course, it is all the result of the breakdown of the earning powers of the workers in the cities and of the distressful condition of the farmers in the rural districts brought on by the crisis. Be it as it may, however, the fact remains that dress and cloak employers are now moving out in larger numbers than ever before from the big production markets to the hinterland in search of cheap female labor, cheap or free rentals and, incidentally, "freedom" from union work rules and standards.

Small wonder our unions are intensely alarmed over this exodus of garment firms into the non-union areas. It

can easily be imagined that, if left unchecked, this migration might gravely affect the very livelihood of thousands of our workers especially in the cheaper lines of merchandise which can be produced on section work by semi-skilled labor. The only effective way for combating this menace is, of course, organization work. The workers in the smaller towns who are being mercilessly exploited by the "benefactors" from the big cities who open cloak or dress shops in their locality and pay them the munificent sums of seven or eight dollars a week for fifty-five or more hours of labor, can and should be approached and interested in the cause of trade unionism. It has been done before with success, and, while the task admittedly is a difficult one, it is not an impossible one.

The allotment by the G. E. B. of two cents of the weekly per capita income of the General Office for the work of the Out-of-Town Department in the East and of a half a cent of this revenue for out-of-town organizing activity in Chicago and Cleveland, marks the beginning of a very earnest campaign to bring into the fold of our Union the thousands of workers who are being ground under the wheels of cheap mass production in the small localities surrounding the chief markets of our industry. Many an employer who has been figuring until now that he can "get away with it" undisturbed on account of the prevailing hard times may soon have cause to conclude that he had, after all, reckoned without his host and change his plans accordingly.



ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20, the I. L. G. W. U. will unveil a monument over the grave of Morris Sigman, its former president, and one of the heroic figures

A Monument for Morris Sigman

which have helped to mould its destiny and have left an indelible stamp upon its history and course of development.

Morris Sigman died about sixteen months ago, in early middle age, worn out by a life of intermittent struggle. A rebel from his earliest days, a fighter who asked for no mercy and gave no quarter, he was essentially a genuine lover of his fellow men, to whom the greatest and the lowliest looked alike, a real democrat and a generous character.

Morris Sigman was a fighter, yet a builder with a constructive mind and with a rare gift for divining the strivings and the heart-throbs of his fellow workers, of the masses who so gladly and enthusiastically followed him. Less perhaps than any other leader of our union movement Morris Sigman needs a monument of stone and steel to keep green among us the memory of his wonderful personality. In the truest sense of the word, Morris Sigman is reverently enshrined in the hearts of the tens of thousands who have lived, struggled and suffered by his side.

These thousands will congregate on Sunday, November 20, at his grave, when the stone erected by the International is unveiled, to pay him again a part of the tribute which never could be fully repaid, and to voice again in simple words which he loved so well their profound, heart-felt recognition of Morris Sigman, the leader, the fighter and the man.

The Morris Sigman Monument Committee of the General Executive Board is calling upon the entire membership in New York and nearby cities to come to Mount Carmel Cemetery, Queens. Locals are expected to elect committees to represent them. The unveiling ceremonies will start at one o'clock in the afternoon.

The G. E. B. Committee consists of Vice-Presidents Julius Hochman, Louis Levy, Charles Kreindler, Luigi Antonini and Nicholas Kirtzman.

Cleveland Ready for Coming Conflict

Contract Parleys Will Begin November 15

Our agreement, which expires on December 31, provides that we are to notify the employers before October 15 whether we want to renew the contract on its old terms or would suggest modifications. This year, our conference committee, reached the conclusion to postpone the negotiations until November 15 despite the fact that we have a number of important agreement changes to propose.

The reason for it was that this year our contractual relations extend only to a few manufacturers, representing not more than a quarter of the local industry. Before beginning to discuss agreement renewals, we deem it of greater importance to launch a campaign to organize all the other shops in the trade and then suggest an agreement for all of them. This plan was approved at a special meeting of the Joint Board held together with all executive board members and shop chairmen and notice of this decision was forwarded to the employers accordingly.

Organization Committee Formed; Manifesto Issued

A committee of fifty active members was at once appointed to put the organization drive into effect. We divided them into eight sub-committees, each assigned to a designated building, with a chairman to supervise their activity. The campaign opened on October 12, with a circular which was distributed among the non-union workers calling upon them to fall in line with the Union members. The response was quite encouraging, though we realized at the start that the initiation fee of \$25 would hinder our progress as the non-union workers are employed under sweat-shop conditions and cannot pay this amount.

A manifesto was, therefore, issued to all the workers in the non-union shops that they may join the Union for a \$5 initiation fee for men and \$3 for women. Within the past ten days, since this charge in admission cost had been ordered, we have enlisted a substantial number of recruits on our rolls. The manufacturers, as one might have expected, feel considerably disturbed over the headway we are making. Some of them, in fact, have called together their workers and have warned them that in the

By ABRAHAM W. KATOVSKY,
Manager Cleveland Joint Board

event they join the Union they would be discharged, while others threatened that they would close their shops rather than enter an agreement with the Union. We are satisfied that Cleveland non-union employers are taking our campaign seriously, and we are also glad that the press in this city is giving our side a sympathetic hearing in its columns.

President Dubinsky's Visit

Although President Dubinsky stayed in Cleveland only one day during last month his visit left a good impression. He met with the Joint Board and with all the active workers on the local executive boards and learned from the actual state of conditions in the local market. We talked with our President about the changed situation in the Cleveland women's wear trade and of the urgency of strengthening the Union in this city and of extending its influence to the non-union shops. President Dubinsky was advised that all possible economies had been put into effect in the local organization, yet the Joint Board is unable to meet the present financial needs for organizing the non-union shops, and if this is not done at present, there is danger that control of working conditions will be lost even in the union shops and Cleveland will be wiped off the map as an organized market.

In turn, President Dubinsky gave us a complete review of the condition of our industry in every important market in the land and the effect of the current economic upheaval upon it. Drives to organize the workers are a prime necessity, he told us, not only in Cleveland but everywhere. The International is, therefore, confronted with a multitude of problems, all of them of a pressing and urgent character. He promised, however, to have the Cleveland situation fully discussed at the G. E. B. October meeting and that he would make every effort to extend to us all assistance possible. He, nevertheless, emphasized the point that the Cleveland workers cannot and should not depend solely on the International but would have to do their full share of the work if they want to make their campaign a success. These remarks were met with hearty approval indicating clearly that our members are ready to do their bit in this drive.

G. E. B. Comes to Our Aid

When Vice-President Charles Kreindler returned in the middle of October to Cleveland, he brought us the glad news that the G. E. B. did act favorably on the request of the Cleveland organization and decided to assist us in the campaign. This report was enthusiastically received by our members spurring them on to greater activity.

We at once increased our organizing staff, engaging Mrs. Gallagher and Miss Mayette, of the Women's Trade Union League, to do special work among the women workers in the non-union shops. In addition, several members of the League have pledged support to our drive.

The problem of organizing the Italian element still remains a hard problem for us. Local 44, our Italian local, has not succeeded in developing the leadership which a drive among non-union workers requires. We are on the lookout for organizing talent in the local field as we realize that we must start the ball rolling among the Italians if we are to succeed in this campaign. If we don't succeed in finding an Italian organizer here, we expect to ask the General Office to send one of our Italian vice-presidents to Cleveland for a short time to assist us in our work and to make, at least, a good start in organizing the Italian workers.

Let me just say at the finish: Judging by the eagerness with which our circulars are being read by the non-union workers, on one hand, and by the readiness of our active members to give all their time and energy to this drive, we may safely state that all indications point to the success of our work. The manufacturers obviously realize the seriousness of our campaign, and they have good reasons for it: We mean business.

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At the Crossroads in Toronto Cloak Market

By SAMUEL KRAISMAN, Manager,
Toronto Joint Board

Conditions in the Toronto cloak trade have, on the whole, not improved during October, and we feel that the season is too far gone for any improvement. A few shops have a little work, but most of them have been very slow through the season and, of course, the workers spend more time in the streets than in the factories.

Even those who were fortunate to work are not too happy when they compare their wages this season with prices that prevailed in past seasons when the Union had control over the entire trade. No one ever dreamed that prices would drop so low and that working conditions would be as deplorable as they are now, and, what is more, everyone realizes that wages will drop still lower and conditions will become still worse unless the cloakmakers wake up and re-assert themselves in the shops.

Turning Point Reached

We believe, however, that the turning point has been reached and that the cloakmakers are beginning to bestir themselves. On all sides there are signs that our members are prepared to make a determined effort to re-establish humane working conditions and decent living wages in the local cloak trade.

Prior to the meeting of the General Executive Board, our Joint Board had met and, after a thorough review of our conditions, reached the conclusion that our only salvation lies in an immediate campaign to be launched by the International to re-organize the trade. For that purpose, the Joint Board sent the writer to the meeting of the General Executive Board with instructions to urge upon the G. E. B. to look into the Toronto situation and bring order out of its chaos. My visit to the G. E. B. was rather an interesting experience. It gave me a deeper insight into the difficult problems facing our unions all over the country, as well as of the methods applied by our International in meeting them.

Straining at the Leash

The General Executive Board gave our problems all-sided attention and decided to support an organization campaign in Toronto and to assign a special organizer to carry on the work. From past experience, we in Toronto know that when the International decides on an organization campaign, it carries it on in a systematic manner that brings results, and we are, therefore, certain that the campaign

which is about to be launched will also be carried on in the same spirit and with the same telling results as on previous occasions.

The Joint Board and our members hailed the decision of the G. E. B. with delight, and plans are already being formulated for intensive organization work. Meetings of shops are being held daily, and the only topic discussed at these meetings is the forthcoming organization work. Our Joint Board, executive boards and the local meetings will from now on be concerned with one topic only: the coming drive and how best to win back all such cloakmakers as have dropped out of the Union as members in the past two years. We are straining every effort so to arrange our activities that when the organizer from the International reaches Toronto, he may find that we have already covered considerable ground on the road of re-establishing a strong cloakmakers' union. We can also give advance assurance that the organizer will find a lively group of

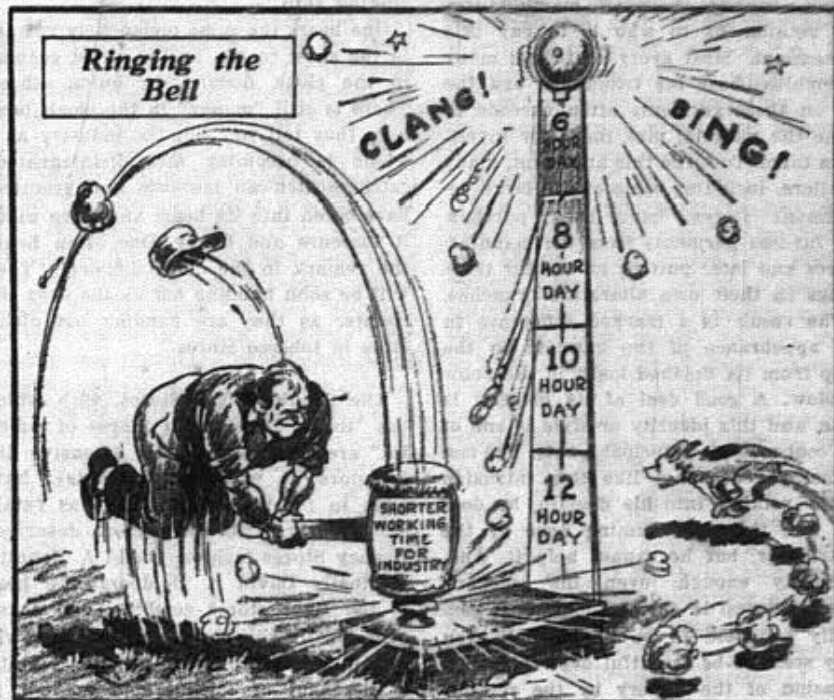
members ready and willing to do all they are called upon to do in order to bring the campaign to a successful conclusion.

Revival of Old Spirit at Hand

We have abundant hope that with the revival of the old fighting spirit among our old members and with the readiness displayed by our active groups, the coming spring season will see an effective cloakmakers' union in Toronto. It now depends on the general membership of our Union and also on such cloakmakers as are still on the outside to devote their time and energy to reform our ranks, to close up the gaps and get into action with a will to instal union control in the shops.

The cloakmakers of Toronto will soon be put to an acid test, and judging by the past, there is reason to believe that they will rise equal to the emergency and responsibility placed upon them and will reassert themselves as a controlling factor over labor conditions in their shops, winning back in this manner the prestige and power that their Union had here but a short while ago.

Shorter Hours — The Only Way Out!



An Upheaval in the Garment Trades

By HARRY LANG

(From a series of articles appearing now
in the Jewish Daily Forward)

Fur Taxes and Fur Trimmings — Schulte Cigar Firm Also Makes Cloaks — The Epidemic of Cheapness — Can the Garment Industry Be "Saved" by Advertising? — "Backstage" Sales Costs

2nd ARTICLE

Two cloakmakers were standing in front of a big show window of a department store in the heart of the retailing district, eyeing somewhat expertly some women's coats wrapped around "futuristic" mannequins. Said one to the other:

"Do you believe you could recognize a coat from our shop on any of these figures?"

"Not much. They change the looks of them so quickly after they leave the factory nowadays that you cannot tell which is which." This came with an undertone of worry not unmingled with a quiet sort of resentment.

A new wrinkle is being added to the many lines frowning the face of the coat-making industry this season, bringing more confusion to a trade already sufficiently complex. It is a technical complication, to be certain, yet one that carries with it implications that further disturb old producer-distributor relationships in the market. It is all about the so-called excise fur tax, levied by the last Congress on fur-trimmed garments, and the controversy between manufacturer and retailer as to who is to pay this assessment. Most every coat—and many ensembles—bear fur trimmings and the fur on these garments often exceeds in value the material plus the labor invested in them. To settle this argument, many retailers, including some of the large department stores, have been purchasing fur-less garments from the manufacturers and later putting on the fur trimmings in their own alteration branches.

The result is a marked difference in the appearance of the garment in the shop from its finished looks in the show window. A good deal of its identity is gone, and this identity or style is one of the coat-maker's principal assets. The manufacturer does not like this intrusion of the retailer into his domain, he does not like this fur-trimming done by the distributor, but he cannot help it. And, strangely enough, even the workers, whose interest in garment-making is generally supposed to be impersonal, even they seem to be resentful over this; this invasion of the factory by the retailer is something they instinctively do not like, as if convinced that it can do no

good to the industry as a whole, that it certainly can do no good to them as workers. . . .

A cloakmaker tells me the following story.

Times are incredibly hard, so his seventeen year old boy had to quit City College. Luckily, he found for him a berth in the shipping room of his shop. It was a great pity to break up his studies, an able boy, a good kid, but there is no use in battling against the impossible. . . . But this work for a cloak firm, the old man appears to be worried about it:

"I don't like to see him in a cloak shop . . . It would be much better elsewhere. . . . What may he expect from this trade of ours anyway?" . . .

The other day President Dubinsky of the I. L. G. W. U. spoke to me in a similar strain:

"At times it seems to me that our entire women's wear industry, the very backbone of the economic existence of our masses, is giving way. . . . People are running away from it like from a sinking ship." . . .

One hears the same melancholy refrain in the show rooms, on the street corners in the cloak district, in union offices. There is still "money" in the cloak business they tell you, but the industry as a whole is becoming fast disintegrated; catch-as-catch-can methods and practices have eaten into its heart and have made it insecure and floppy. One often hears the remark in the cloak district: "They will be soon handing out cloaks over the counter as they are handing out cigarettes in tobacco stores." . . .

The Schulte Cigar Stores, with which the "Retail Department Stores of America" are allied, (the latter extensive distributors of women's garments), have gone in for marketing cloaks as retailers-producers after the formerly described Penney Stores fashion. David A. Schulte, originally David A. Goldberg, the head of the cigar stores combine, had taken over legally the name and the good-will of his brother-in-law, Anthony Schulte, a merchant of considerable renown. It would seem that this David A. Schulte was molded for the chain-store or branch-



Harry Lang

store enterprises. Anything and everything he touched, he would expand along the chain plan—cigars, real estate, perfumery, lunch counters, drugs and notions, bargain basement commodities from a "nickel to a dollar" and, finally, women's cloaks.

The firm, it appears, has had in recent seasons rough sledding in some of the smaller cities which compelled liquidations here and there, but, on the whole, the Schulte retailing interests are still regarded among the growing chain businesses with stores in some forty-odd cities. And the same is true of the Henry Rose Stores, a women's wear subsidiary of the Sears-Roebuck organization, with eighty ladies' garment stores in the country and a direct interest not only in the retailing but in production control of their merchandise.

Million-dollar firms from the "outside" are thus casting their shadows upon the garment industry and upon the lesser "legitimate" manufacturers who hitherto held sway in it. But the bigger capitalist, it seems, is no blessing for the cloak industry. Big money in the garment trade does not spell greater responsibility for conditions in industry and greater orderliness. On the contrary, it seems to stress, above all, cheap quantity production, low work standards, and the gradual elimination of skilled labor.

Some more facts.

Kansas City, Mo., has, for a while, been one of the "sore spots" of the cloak industry, a cheap production place. About three years ago, President Dubinsky found in that city a number of cloak factories which looked more like trade schools than regular shops, with a tran-

sient labor personnel, mostly women dropping in and out during the work seasons. Such a worker element, it stands to reason, is best adapted for cheap production. The system in the Kansas City cloak shops is not unlike the system prevailing in some of the Brooklyn contractor shops with one man mechanic "running" a flock of women "assistants" at section work.

Within the past couple of years, however, Kansas City has slumped considerably as a cloak market. Its production last year was no more than two and a half million dollars, less than half of Philadelphia's output, another cloak market which has suffered so heavily in recent years.

Strange as this may sound, garment buying by women has hardly fallen in volume even during these times of depression. Garment buying is no more a luxury, it has become a prime necessity. What has dropped is the quality of the product turned out by the garment shops. Women buy today no less clothes than what they used to in the better years, but they are buying very much cheaper garments. The American woman has become style-conscious; she refuses to wear a garment which is not fashioned in accordance with the decree of the season. The American woman, in fact, may deny herself other necessities rather than a dress or a coat of the current style. And if she cannot afford a good garment she will buy a cheaper garment as long as it conforms to the demands of the latest fashion.

These cheap garments, however, are an affliction upon the industry. In the large retailing places, in most of the popular department and chain stores, where the masses buy their clothes, one hardly finds an expensive garment today. The garment most in demand in these establishments today is the ten-dollar coat—or to be precise, the \$9.90 garment. To make the production of such a garment possible, new cloth, "woolens" and lining materials are being woven and put into them, materials that may look good enough but which actually are of the old shoddy quality.

The logical outcome of this cheapness epidemic is a murderous competition all through the trade. The sub-standard shop, until recently a bootleg source of production, has now acquired a "legitimate" standing in the market; it is relied upon to furnish the extra-cheap product to make possible still lower price-marketings; in fact, to dictate to the majority of the shops in the industry where union work conditions still prevail and where the workers' organization is putting up a valiant struggle to defend the earnings of the men and women employed in

them. And along with the ten-dollar coat, there has made its appearance in the market a new merchandising phenomenon—the coat plus hat and purse—all for the same ten dollars or less. This contact between the coat manufacturer, the purse maker and the millinery producer, is being made by the distributor, the retailer, who thus appears as a connecting link between these three distinctly different crafts and is able thereby to influence these producers to fit their output to his own needs and demands.

To what extent this epidemic of cheaper and ever cheaper production is affecting the industry may be seen from the sudden impetus it has given in the past few years to the exodus of cloak shops from New York into adjacent territory in Connecticut, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Chambers of commerce, rotary clubs, citizens' committees in scores of small towns within a hundred miles or so from New York are launching drives for bringing shops into their communities, promising police protection against "union interference," and not infrequently even free power and lights. They are flooding the garment manufacturers in New York—and Chicago—with such offers in the hope of providing their home folk with jobs, jobs at any wages and work hours. In some of these towns candidates for city offices are even campaigning on the issue of "bringing garment industry shops to their localities."

A few weeks ago, a representative of the Penney Stores Co. came, by invitation, to a meeting of the New York Cloak Commission whose members were anxious to learn to what extent this huge chain store corporation would be ready to assume some obligations for the work standards under which the garments retailed by them were being made up.

There is one garment sold by the Penney stores which is exclusively union-made, and that is men's overalls. But that, of course, is another story. Overalls are largely union-labelled and their label is a well advertised selling asset, which means, in turn, good business. To what extent they would go in confining their buying and producing of women's wear to union-controlled shops is another question. The element of profit and loss would probably be the controlling factor in shaping their policy in this matter. I am told that Mr. J. C. Penney had met, some time ago, William Green, the president of the A. F. of L., at the latter's request, to discuss with him the subject of union-made hosiery, an article which the Penney stores sell in huge quantities. Mr. Penney, I am told, argued at that conference that he does not have to recognize any labor union directly, that industry and business to him are a matter

of dollars and cents. Human interests, workers' rights, social justice, are like religion, things apart from business; they do not mix well.

This policy the Penney organization maintains not only with regard to the production of its women's wear. The Penney Arm produces also men's clothing. Officially it is stated that it obtains its ready-made men's clothing from the "English-American Tailoring Corporation" of Baltimore. Now the Penney system has started a new garment line, a "made-to-measure" service in all its fifteen hundred stores. It has also a subsidiary in the corset and underwear lines, the "Crescent Corset Co." of Cortland, N. Y., with a huge output. There was a time, not so long ago, when the manufacture of white goods in New York employed thousands of Jewish girls. Now underwear and lingerie shops are to be found in countless small towns, filled with a different type of workers and run by a new type of employer.

Representatives of several large stores in New York City have recently met to think and talk over plans of "saving" the garment industry from the morass of cheapness and quality disintegration into which it has been sinking so steadily. The stores were: Lord & Taylor, Franklin Simon, Macy & Co., Abraham & Straus, and the National Dry Goods Association.

I have read the account of that meeting, to the extent that it was reported in the trade press, and I have my doubts whether these gentlemen, regardless of their excellent intentions, will succeed to any material degree in "saving" the industry. I am even inclined to believe that these representatives of New York leading retailers fail to perceive clearly the forces which are operating behind this breakdown of quality and standards in coat and dress making.

What are their plans?

One plan is to start an effective propaganda all over the country for "better and higher priced garments." And extensive advertising campaign covering newspapers, the radio and the movies, as well as special window displays, would be employed as part of this propaganda. Simultaneously, the leaders of this drive plan to exert a "moral" influence upon other retailers to stop playing up price-slashing as a means for drawing trade.

This plan, in other words, centers wholly on publicity, on the belief that the printed word and the "educational" message may lift the falling standards of garment making. Against this, arises the question: How big, indeed, is the consumer market today that can afford better and higher-priced garments? The fact staring in the face every sober-minded person in and outside the gar-

ment industry is that there are today no less than 11 million unemployed people in the country, besides those who are employed on part time, and that these millions represent with their dependents at least a quarter of the nation's population, some 35 million human beings. It is doubtful if an advertising campaign alone would induce the farmers, the miners and the mill workers to ask for better garments. Clearly, the question of a disintegrated consumer market in the garment business is interwoven with the critical economic situation in every industry all over the land.

A former Princeton professor, now the head of a research bureau of a large chain store company, talked to me about it.

A gravely earnest man, one whose business it is to keep an eye on the credit standing of all firms with which his concern is doing business and to study merchandising and production costs. He it was who told me: "You can't ignore this point; it is a serious item in garment production and garment distribution."

We were talking about models, theatre parties, gifts-to-buyers and similar "backstage" business-getting devices in the cloak and dress industry. My informant was asserting that these items constitute a substantial part of the sales costs of women's apparel; that they are treated as a legitimate weapon in the competitive game of selling to buyers and, eventually, in retaining them. A few "friendly" acts here and there in the show rooms and outside of them often go far to "make" a season for a garment firm.

"It is difficult, of course, to determine how high these 'sales' costs are," my informant further told me, "they are never entered as a separate item on the books of a manufacturer, but they are, probably, not small. Some few years ago, an Atlanta, Ga., newspaper had published a sensational 'expose' with regard to garment merchandising practices in New York City, stating that our producers here are 'giving a bottle of rye with every garment purchased by an outside buyer,' and that it is high time to 'emancipate the country from the New York garment supply, as instead of garment quality New York is furnishing only liquor quality.'

"This silly attack received at that time a proper rebuke from the leaders of the cloak and dress industries and was practically squelched. The fact, however, remains that 'selling costs' constitute a heavy item in garment merchandising and that parties and gifts are a substantial part of such costs. And it is also

true that models in the show rooms, while as intelligent and, with very few exceptions, as morally wholesome as their sisters in any other occupation, are being nevertheless exploited as 'pullers-in' in the merciless competition which characterizes this industry for the past several years in particular."

In a recently conversation with Mr. Samuel Klein, the executive director of the "inside" cloak manufacturers' association, we touched upon the role of the resident buyer and his function in the coat and suit business.

Mr. Klein explained to me that there are three types of such buyers in New York. Not all out-of-town retailers are sending periodically buyers to New York; instead, they connect with permanent buyers in New York, while others send buyers not to the manufacturing firms directly but to legitimate resident buyers. Other resident buyers act as intermediaries between the manufactur-

ers' show rooms and the department stores, and still another group is serving selected clients, usually the largest retailers in the field. This service consists, in addition to buying merchandise, of industrial and economic research and careful surveying of all developments and trends within the industry.

There is also in this industry a group of "commission" buyers, usually ex-salesmen, who live on commissions from jobbers and often resort to selling practices which are no credit to the business and which involve "basement bargain" tricks. In the long run all these go-between costs come out of the earnings of the workers. For, while the manufacturer obviously cannot force the woolen house which supplies him with materials or his landlord whose loft he is occupying to take into account these extravagant selling costs, he invariably looks to his labor costs—weekly wages or piece prices—to cancel his inordinate middleman expenses.

(Continued in the next issue)



SWEEP THESE OUT!

Run O' The Month

By MAX D. DANISH

NOT LESS THAN 36 MILLION dollars will be required to keep alive the starving unemployed in New York City during the coming winter months. Of this huge sum the city is expected to furnish 30 million dollars, while the other six million is to come from the various charity institutions.

There are 92 thousand families in New York City which manage to keep body and soul together only by the doles they receive from the Emergency Relief Administration. Ninety-two thousand families means nearly a million persons. These cold figures, however, do not tell the whole story. At a recent meeting of representatives of women's clubs, one of the speakers, a lady connected with hospital work, reported that the hospitals are being daily swamped with children brought in in a critical condition. In one day four children were brought into a down-town hospital suffering from acute malnutrition; one child was poisoned with "food" picked from a garbage can, while a mother and a child were both in terrible pains because they had existed a full week on water and sugar only.

These are "human interest" stories, which speak even louder than statistics. Twenty and one-half per cent of all school children in New York suffer from undernourishment, and this undernourishment takes annually four hundred child lives in our wealthy metropolis. "A child's life," one of the speakers at that meeting declared, "is estimated to be worth five thousand dollars. If the city had saved these four hundred children it would have saved the community two hundred million dollars annually."

Lives measured in dollars, how typical of the shopkeeper's approach towards relief work,—how typical of the world we live in!

ITALY IS "CELEBRATING" the tenth anniversary of Fascism at huge carnivals in many of her large cities, at which the glory of Fascism, of its monumental achievements, and, of course, of its Duce, is eulogized by Mussolini and his lieutenants. And over the wires, and across the air similar grandiloquent ballyhoo is being spread across both hemispheres by the paid agents and by the volunteer henchmen of the Black Shirt regime.

The perennial claims that are being made for Fascism are chiefly these: Italy has gained economic strength and stability under Mussolini, and second, the Duce had saved Italy from the Bolshevik menace. The fact, however, is that Bolshevism was dead in Italy before the

Fascists captured power in 1922. Mussolini himself, in July, 1921 had written in his paper: "To say that there is still danger from Bolshevism in Italy is to accept fear for reality. Bolshevism is dead in Italy." What concerns the second assertion, of Italy's prosperity under Fascism, a few cold figures might easily dispense with this illusion.

In 1922, there occurred in Italy 3,607 bankruptcies. Four years later this number was quadrupled, and in 1929 the number of bankruptcies in Italy reached 11,106. All this occurred prior to the economic crisis in the United States and had therefore nothing to do with it. Again, while there are no correct official figures on unemployment in Italy, even Fascist statistics show that unemployment has been continually on the increase in that country—181,493 in 1926; 414,000 in 1927; 439,000 in 1928; and nearly a half million in 1929. Italy's foreign trade has also registered a steady annual lowering—from 26 billion lire in 1925 to 14 billion in 1928.

The economic condition of the Italian people, contrary to Fascist publicity, has not improved under Mussolini's rule; it has become worse. But Italy is no more a land of free citizens. The dictatorship has destroyed its liberties and has not, in return, given anything worthwhile to the Italian people.

THAT THE SOCIALIST VOTE this year will be tremendously increased seems to be a fergone conclusion.

Straw votes may err considerably and forecasts may often fall either too short, or too long, of results. But the tremendous crowds which the Socialist candidates are attracting this year, especially the multitudes which gather to listen to Norman Thomas in every part of the country, are a fair indication that Socialism is beginning to interest earnestly millions of citizens in America. And the space which the big dailies the country over are giving the Socialist campaign serves as another barometer of popular interest in the Socialist message.

The straw vote of the "Literary Digest" indicates that Thomas will get most of his votes in the industrial states. The American working masses it seems, are at last awakening and are looking up towards Socialism. This awakening is expressed with admirable clarity in a recent letter from a reader in the liberal weekly "The Nation":

"The reasons why I am going to vote for the Socialist ticket this year are quite simple: I will not vote for Thomas as a person, though I admire him; I shall vote for the Socialist Party because I should be ashamed to think that the present order in America is the best we can have. I believe that human nature does change and, that blind as we may be, we are still going forward and I should rather be with those who are going ahead than with such as go backwards or remain in one place...."

"The Socialist Party may not reflect all my ideas and all my hopes; it is today, nevertheless, the best vehicle for realizing these ideas and every one of us should help it build a society that would fully and adequately express our common strivings and desires."

DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION of unemployment insurance has been blocked and muddled for years by calling it a "dole," and by pointing to England as the horrible example. The "dole" has demoralized English workers, America has been told. Men stop work to live on the "dole," young men and women are demoralized by it, it has encouraged pauperism and almost bankrupted that country.

Yet a study just made by Arthur Hunter, chief actuary and vice-president of the New York Insurance Company, and printed in many conservative journals, refutes all these charges. Mr. Hunter finds that English workers do not quit work to live on the dole, and cannot, since, with a few sharply defined exceptions, no one can draw unemployment insurance for more than six months in one year.

The system is not demoralizing British youth, Mr. Hunter reports. On the contrary, it is helping youngsters to get a start in life at the right trade, and keeping them in school.

"The men do not feel that they are receiving a dole," says Mr. Hunter. "They consider that the payments are rightly due them, as they, their employers and the state are contributing thereto." As for the expense, it is heavy, but Mr. Hunter intimates that the degree of unemployment from which England has suffered would be expensive anyway. He might have added that unemployment in America is costing the country twice the national debt each year in decreased production of wealth.

IT MAY HAVE BEEN in a moment of unguarded frankness,—or perhaps during a spell of defiant swashbuckling—that

Mr. James J. Walker, by now a nearly forgotten ex-Mayor of New York, had spoken his heart freely upon his arrival from Europe, after a rather brief self-imposed exile, to a crowd of newspapermen. What he said, however, was of more than passing interest.

"Jimmy" attributes his downfall to the merciless campaign which nearly all the papers in the city were waging against him. The ex-Mayor, however, is inclined to believe that New York would still acclaim and reward him for the present anguish if he ever chose to run for office, any office. The newspapers may be against him but not "his voters."

"Where I get my votes," Walker said, "the newspapers do not amount to anything. The residents of Ninth or Tenth Avenues, or of First and Second Avenues, for that matter, have no time for newspapers. The organization is the main thing there."

Jimmy does not think much of his electorate. He is sure that they do not bother with such nonsense as the printed word. They are all too busy to waste their precious idle moments on the press or magazines. They cannot afford the extravagance of examining the worth or value of candidates. They only have hands to vote with, and these hands are being deftly manipulated by the better minds of Tammany Hall, up there on Union Square.

Jimmy is right. "The organization is the thing." The sovereign citizenry of New York is as much clay in the hands of Tammany as are the masses of Chicago voters in the hands of the Chicago political machine, or the Philadelphia "free" electorate in the hands of the Republican gang. It is the bulwark of sordid, machine-run politics in every American city, big or small.

Anyway, Jimmy Walker is at times a candid sort of a fellow. —

GLAD TIDINGS ARE ABROAD that we may have beer, honest-to-goodness beer, before the Winter is over.

There is reason to believe that this prophesy might actually be realized. Whoever wins in the national election, Roosevelt or Hoover, the "wet" cause cannot lose. The prohibition "experiment" is clearly on the toboggan.

And along with the real-beer news comes the no less plausible forecast that the country is due for another jacking-up of taxes during the coming short session of Congress. An attempt will, quite likely, be made to push through, with the aid of the "lame ducks," a sales tax, and this surely is bad news for either "wets" or "drys."

The present nuisance taxes are admittedly a flop. They are not producing even a portion of the revenue they were

supposed to yield. Legalized beer might produce about 500 million dollars in taxes but that would not be nearly enough to cover the present huge deficit.

So it looks like new and higher taxes on all common necessities, taxes on the kitchen, on household furnishings and on clothing. With earnings continually decreasing and unemployment still increasing all over the land, this prospect of added burdensome taxes is nothing short of a calamity.

UNEMPLOYMENT RIOTS, for the moment, are shoving political news into a "back seat" in England.

Several thousands of bedraggled and misery-ridden unemployed are converging from all ends of the British Isles on London, while Hyde Park, where these weary hunger marchers are expected to concentrate, is being guarded by thousands of policemen, mounted and on foot. While there is little doubt that this particular demonstration is being inspired by Communists, essentially the cause for it is the government's new dole

"means test" by which many subsistence receivers have been stricken from the lists.

Regardless of inspired dispatches to America, there has been no revival in English industry and unemployment has reached the highest mark ever recorded in British history. All the "economies" effected by the Tory-controlled government, since the Labor Party was so overwhelmingly defeated in the elections, have been at the expense of the poor. Relief, which had offered only a bare existence, has been cut drastically, or, in thousands of instances, abolished entirely.

There have been bloody hunger riots in Belfast and looting of food stores in numerous other cities. Armed soldiers, constables and special police are patrolling the streets, like under martial law, in the towns most seriously affected by unemployment. And over the whole scene hangs the threat of a gigantic, nationwide railroad strike to resist the plans of the railway magnates to put through a ten per cent wage-cut.

The Month in Montreal

By ISRAEL FEINBERG, Vice President
Manager Montreal Joint Council

October has brought no change in local cloak trade conditions. To some extent this may be due to the unseasonable warm weather we were having here, and we are hoping, therefore, that the advent of normal cold weather might still bring some work to our shops.

At any rate, our people are having quite a hard time of it. Yet, despite the hardship, the feeling generally prevalent among the cloakmakers is that if not for the Union, thing would have been much worse. They just visualize what merciless advantage our employers would have taken of them if not for the fear that the organization might retaliate. They, after all, have a memory and they have not forgotten the past.

Times, we know, are bad, but these bad times are not going to last forever; they have lasted long enough as it is. Conditions are bound to change, and it is for that change that we are now waiting.

To See the Union Through

That's exactly what the Montreal cloakmakers have on their mind constantly these days. We have got to keep the organization intact during the difficult period so as to be able to make im-

provements later when the opportune hour arrives. We are calling shop meetings, chairmen meetings and are taking up union matters with many workers individually in the office to keep the workers closely together. My feelings in this matter are that we shall be able to weather the storm and preserve the Union here notwithstanding the difficulties.

We have loyalty on our side and the self-interest bred and strengthened by past experience, which is a fine teacher. The Montreal cloakmakers have seen the light and by that light they will continue to cling to their organization and to protect it against every form of attack.

THANKS!

We, the workers of the dress firm N. M. Zucker, 1375 Broadway, express our hearty thanks to our shop chairman, Bro. J. B. Thomas, for the loyal, unselfish and exceptionally able services rendered by him to us.

We consider it a great pleasure to be able to present to him as a token of our recognition a library and smoking table and we hope that he and his family may use it in good health.

THE COMMITTEE:

Sam Pass,
Louis Gilbert,
David Shotten,
Members of Local 22.

Chicago Dressmakers Making Headway

By BERNARD SHANE,
General Organizer, I.L.G.W.U.

It was about a year ago that we began the present work of organizing the dressmakers in Chicago, and, although we realized from the very start, of course, that the task would be a difficult one, the obstacles that we met were such, that many a time during the past year we were so overcome with pessimism that we were ready to give up.

First of all, we expected too much help from the cloakmakers. It so happened that they had so much trouble of their own that they could give us very little help. Secondly, many of the old-time dressmakers who still remember the loss of the general strike of 1924 were very pessimistic about building a new dressmakers' union here.

Nevertheless, we kept plugging along, and results are now beginning to show. We could do very little organizing during the fall season of 1931. I arrived in Chicago in the beginning of October, and before I had an opportunity of getting acquainted with the most active members, the season was over. There remained nothing else for us to do but make preparations for the beginning of the spring season.

At first, we did everything possible to organize shops in their entirety. A group of the most active women workers formed an organization committee, working day and night, sacrificing their time and energy, but without results. It was simply impossible to bring the girl dressmakers of the trade into the Union. We then decided to concentrate on the cutters and pressers.

Cutters, Pressers in the Vanguard

In previous reports to "Justice" we reported about the cutters, how they were the first to respond to the call of the International, and how they benefitted the most by it. The pressers, who had a separate independent club supported by the "lefts," joined the Union towards the end of the spring season. We can now report that we have here a wonderful dress pressers' branch numbering close to three hundred members.

We calculated that by organizing the cutters and the pressers we would be able not only to get better working conditions for them, but that through them we might organize the girls even if we had to strike some houses by calling out the pressers and cutters, and force thereby the operators, finishers and drapers into the Union. Now we can happily report that our hopes are beginning to materialize.

At the beginning of this fall season a group of men operators had volunteered to help in the organization work, with the understanding that something would be done for the operators at once. Of course, we were only too glad to accept this voluntary help and, together with the small number of girls who stuck to Local 100 during the most discouraging period, we organized them into a committee for immediate action.

Operators Join Volunteer Organizers

It is immaterial whether it was the actual semi-slavery existing at present in the dress shops that drove these men into activity, or the fact that the cutters and pressers had obtained considerable recognition from the employers because they were organized that made the operators jealous, the fact remains that this group of men, together with the old stand-bys of Local 100, are doing excellent work in the dress trade at present. These people are now devoting all their time to the organization work of the Union and the results are gratifying.

This work of organizing shops began about a month ago, considerably late in the season, although the season itself was late in coming. The first thing we did was to organize a committee which would be able to walk into a shop and bring the workers to the Union's headquarters. Our attempts, although not altogether successful at first, turned out very well at the end. After a few hours of striking, the employer signed a contract with the Union, giving a small increase to the operators and finishers. This shop is now one-hundred-per cent Union. We then concentrated on organizing every shop in that building, and though that was not an easy task, we went through with it first rate.

Winning Shop After Shop

A strike was declared in the S. G. Garment Co., a shop employing about twenty-five workers. Most of the operators were colored girls. The employer, in an attempt to defeat the Union, used the old trick of race distinction and told the girls that the reason we called his shop out on strike was to chase the colored people out of the trade. Most of them remained at work. Nevertheless, we had the shop picketed morning, noon

and evening, a hundred people picketing the shop at times.

The Pressers' Branch deserves most of the credit in this strike, for they supplied the biggest number of pickets. The operators' group was on the job almost continuously, and we want to compliment the workers of the G. & G. Dress Co., who did their picketing work diligently. The result was that after four days of striking, the employer realized that no business can flourish on strikes and, like a sensible business man, he signed a contract with the Union and gave a slight pay increase to the operators and finishers.

The interesting part about this strike is that the settlement was effected at a conference of all manufacturers in that building, five in number, with an understanding that they would all unionize their shops. One of these manufacturers afterward changed his mind, but after a stoppage of a few minutes he, too, signed a contract with the Union.

Union's Move Impresses Local Market

These few strikes and settlements have made a good impression in the market, both on the manufacturers and the workers. Some bosses have put in new locks on their factory doors (as though a new lock could keep the workers from the Union). Others, who are more sensible, have made arrangements to unionize their shops without a strike. Our only trouble at the present time is that the trade has become slack all of a sudden.

One encouraging incident occurred last week which deserves mention. Two workers of Steinhandler's shop approached us asking if they might have a shop meeting. Of course, we said yes. Nevertheless, we did not believe this possible, as the girls working there had never been in the Union. To our great surprise, however, all the workers from that shop, about twenty in number, appeared at the shop meeting, joined the Union, and we now have another complete union shop.

We take it as a good sign in our organization campaign. Only a few weeks ago it was impossible to get any set of girls to join the Union, even after we had taken them down. Now they appear to realize that the Union means business; besides, they also know that in every case where a shop was unionized the girls received a slight increase in their prices, and that stimulates their interest in the organization considerably.

Why Union Leaders Die Prematurely

By DR. GEORGE M. PRICE,
Director Union Health Center

The recent deaths of Morris Sigman, Benjamin Schlesinger and Abraham Baroff, following each other in rapid succession, at a comparatively early age, should draw the attention of the man outside the Labor movement to the high rate of mortality among leaders of labor.

Statistics on this subject are, of course, unavailable for the reason that labor leadership as an occupation is not yet specially listed or designated in the mortality tables. However, if I were to write or classify death certificates of union officials, I should consider myself justified in answering the question as to the "predisposing causes of death" with the diagnosis of "unionitis." This may as yet be a novel, and an unaccepted, term, but, I am inclined to believe, quite an accurate designation.

Union Officers Found Ailing

The records of the Union Health Center, where hundreds of union officers have been medically examined during the last twenty years, show that hardly one of them was found without a number of physical ills and that they are affected in a much larger proportion than the rank and file of the workers.

The maladies from which the union officers suffer mostly are: functional neuroses, gastric disturbances and arterio-sclerosis with hyper or hypo-tension. Most of them were found to be suffering from either one or more of these diseases.

There is, of course, a reason for that, and it is not far to seek.

A worker in the needle trades, or for that matter in any other trade, who has risen from the ranks to a post of responsibility in his local or national office, changes at once the whole tempo of his living. He no longer has merely the troubles of his private job to contend with. He becomes a representative of hundreds of workers to whose troubles and complaints he must listen carefully, and on whose confidence his future rests. He must at times conciliate his membership, and often employ diplomacy; he has to carry on running battles against employers, and he has frequently to combat hostile opinion on the floor of his union meeting. He is constantly under a nervous strain. He rarely has definite hours of labor, for after working from morning until evening inside or outside his office, etc., his hardest work only starts with the interminable meetings, conferences and assemblies in which he must participate

regularly and sometimes poorly chosen and too rich food. He has no rest during the day, enjoys no week-end recreations, and seldom enjoys a real vacation.

Insecurity Another Source of Worry

To these handicaps, there is added insecurity of office and the constant apprehension of being voted out at the next election. No matter how long a union officer has been in office he is never secure from defeat by either an abler person in the ranks or by a general change of sentiment or policy within the organization. His financial condition, to say the least, is not stable. He is the first to suffer when the union treasury is at a low ebb. Moreover, despite the usually moderate salaries paid to union officers, they are compelled by the exigency of their office to be liberal and frequently personally assist needy union members whose distress calls for immediate aid.

The spectre is always before them that, after holding office for years, and after having become practically unfit to work again at the bench or machine, they are liable to lose their office in their middle age and be left adrift with no support from their fellow members, actually thrown out on the scrap heap of life.

Is there any wonder that the ordinary labor leader is older than his age, that he suffers from insomnia and nervousness, from indigestion and other gastric disturbances, that he is subject to too high or too low blood pressure, develops early arterio-sclerosis and thus becomes an early candidate for the Grim Reaper?

A Doctor's Suggestions

If labor organizations wish to attract and retain as their leaders an intelligent and able personnel, and if the leaders of labor are not continually to be burnt up physically and mentally by the terrific pressure of their posts, a radical change must be made in the treatment and in the aspect of trade unions toward their officers, both with regard to security of tenure, the burdens put upon them, the treatment accorded to them, and, last but not least, in reasonable pensions to be allotted to them after years of service.

Above all, labor leaders should recognize the immense value of periodical medical examinations that would check

up on their conditions and guide them accordingly. The result of such examinations should be thoroughly studied and the advice of the examining physician heeded and followed.

About twelve years ago, I recall, Abraham Baroff came to the Union Health Center for a "life extension" examination and was told that he was suffering from high blood pressure with some other serious complications. He was told to change his diet, to be careful with his smoking, etc. He was enjoined to take frequent rests and vacations. Had he followed the advice given him at that time by the physicians at the Health Center, I am sure, he could have prolonged his days and might have lived another dozen years.

Women's Trade Union League Classes Open October 17

The New York Women's Trade Union League has started its ninth year of evening classes during the week of October 17. The program includes a wide variety of courses. An introduction to Social Philosophy will be given by Dr. Max Lerner, of the Encyclopedia of Social Sciences. This course will include an analysis of the work of social thinkers such as Marx, Veblen, Dewey and Freud. Men and Women who want to study and to analyze the current trends of modern social thought will find an opportunity in this group.

Miss Josephine Colby of Brookwood Labor College will give a course in Public Speaking for Use in the Labor Movement for those who want to be able to speak readily when called on at meetings. The program also includes a course in Imperialism with special emphasis on the problems of North and South America. There is a class in English for those who feel they have something to say but can't say it, and a more advanced class in Literature for those who love to read and write. The League is again giving a class in Pottery, which is open to industrial workers at a reduced fee—\$7.50 for 20 lessons.

A new group will be organized this year—the Workers' Dance Theatre which is a scholarship course open to industrial workers, both men and women. It is hoped to make this the nucleus of a Workers' Theatre and there will be an opportunity to make use of a wide variety of talent—dancing, acting, scenery designing and building, as well as writing.

Fees for the courses of 20 lessons range from \$2.50 to \$5.00.

A Work-Week Geared To Production

By RICHARD H. WALDO,
President, McClure Newspaper Syndicate

For some years I observed the steady decrease of working time and our vast increase of wealth with the conviction that they were closely related. My first job as an office boy in 1894 brought me into contact with the 12-hour day, six days a week. My \$4 weekly wage was in keeping with the standards of the time. If we had maintained that schedule of working hours we must have remained on approximately the same standards of living.

From 1898 to 1918 mass production—and therefore labor-saving—machinery was developed by this nation in the face of European skepticism. Over the same 20 years American labor was conceded reductions in working time—mostly by the strike and lockout routes—in a roughly proportionate measure. By the end of the Great War Europe no longer scoffed at mass production. Perhaps the greatest single achievement of the war was the convincing of the nations that mass production would rule the future.

United States Equipped Europe

Capital did not foresee and labor did not forecast that the war would give the United States a temporary golden time while Europe was getting on its feet, and that thereafter we should have from at least the European countries a competition that would level the peak of prosperity to the plane of a struggle for subsistence.

When capital and labor agreed in 1918 to a standard eight-hour day they brought into effect an average 50-hour week. In 20 years ten hours a week had been cut from the average individual's working time. We can see now by the charts that it was not enough, but the average of 30 minutes' reduction a year for 20 years was a wholesome move in the right direction.

Had the agreement carried with it a provision for further reductions proportioned to the development of machine efficiency we would not be where we are today. Instead, the eight-hour day had been treated as a sacred thing, and between 1918 and 1929 a reduction in average working time of only 30 minutes for the entire period was conceded—less than three minutes a year was handed back to the employe-consumer while our prosperity was rocking the world.

That Hog-Wild Era

And that prosperity was built in large measure upon the failure to make proper reductions in working time. Book profits of corporations and small concerns alike

piled up as pay rolls were cut down. These profits stimulated the purchase of labor-saving machinery, of bond issues based on profit showings, of stock flotations founded on prospective profits, and stock splits only justified by profits yet to be achieved. Everybody could get in on the operations and nearly everybody did. But there was a major error in the whole project. Yet the separation of consumers from pay rolls at a steadily ascending rate was viewed with alarm by but a few—and their warning voices were drowned in the clicking of the ticker.

We had come to the peak of our production economy, but we could not see it. During the brief life of this Republic we have fostered production as though there never could be enough. Our economists, our bankers, our business men and therefore our political leaders have called for savings to the end that they should be invested in the production of more goods and more service. That consumption, growing by its own pressure as natural gas flows out of the earth, presently must be planned and financed has registered on few minds. But the time has come upon us now when we shall either make orderly plans for stabilizing and upbuilding consumption or we shall see the end of our economic system through the natural pressure of grave social disorders.

Which Way For Us?

Few indeed would approve a return to the twelve-hour day. With the inventions that we have developed it is manifest that a comparatively few plants, working their machines twelve hours a day, could turn out more than enough to meet our present consuming demands. It is also quite clear that increased millions thus unemployed would have to be taken care of by charity or a dole.

At the other extreme we can picture what would happen if we attempted to run our machines but one hour a day. Though employment were to reach an approximate 100 per cent we could not meet the existing consumers' demand. If we contrast the two extremes we shall seek a reasonable medium. At some point general employment would produce general consumption, and general consumption would maintain general employment. The eight-hour day has failed to meet the specifications. Then what working time will meet them?

Jobs and Confidence

The sound and very able statistical section of the American Federation of Labor estimates an average six-hour day as an approximation. The American Legion endorses the estimate.

In 1929 our average pay roll time was forty-nine and a half hour a week. If 98 per cent of the people available and competent for employment had been put to work they would have produced with an average of thirty-four working hours a week all that we could have then consumed. The fifteen and a half-hour error compelled layoffs, which dug the initial pit into which we have fallen. We have widened and deepened that pit steadily. Fear and the burden of caring for the unemployed will continue their undermining work until jobs and confidence in jobs reestablish the spending habits of our people.

Leaders of the world as we have been in mass production and mass consumption, we have drawn the rest of the world into the pit with us. Our machines they have, our training of their men they have, our money they have, but even less than we have they any grasp of the fact that machine efficiency must be balanced by proportionate reduction of human working hours if consumption is to be sustained.

The thirty-hour week, or its approximation, is not an experiment. More than 600 concerns throughout the country have taken it on. The Kellogg Cornflake people have shown the high efficiency of the single six-hour shift without break as against the eight-hour day with lunch time out. Reducing working time has been demonstrated amply as producing increased employment and stabilized profits.

—International Labor News Service.

Morris Bialis Re-elected in Chicago

As we go to press, we received the news that Vice-President Morris Bialis has been re-elected manager of the Chicago Joint Board in the election held on Wednesday, October 26.

All the locals affiliated with the Chicago Joint Board took part in the voting. The number of ballots cast was 789, of which the successful candidates for manager and secretary-treasurer, Morris Bialis and M. A. Goldstein, received 533 and 468 respectively.

American Labor After the Depression

By PAUL SCHARREBERG,
Secretary, California State Federation
of Labor

TODAY the savages, not the civilized, are the only ones free from unemployment.

In the United States we have unemployment, suffering, and starvation, not because we are short of necessities, but because we have too much. In other countries it is because there is not enough to go around.

In the old days, unemployment and suffering came from famine, drought, floods, or a siege of locusts. Poverty was due to natural causes.

Can any intelligent man say that our poverty and suffering are due to natural, rational causes?

Our depression is man created and therefore not beyond human control.

The United States can produce enough to feed its own people and then feed and supply three other nations the same size without pinching.

We are in the habit of blaming our present condition on the war, or reparations, the gold standard, prohibition, the tariff, the stock market, taxes, over-production, or foreign trade.

All these causes are contributory, perhaps, but not one is fundamental.

We can't honestly claim we are suffering from over-production so long as men are hungry, so long as human beings have the desire for more.

Foreign trade is not tremendously important to us. Ninety-five per cent of our production is consumed at home.

We are still thinking in past ages though we are living in a changed world.

Production has been our goal and we have been told we could have more pay and shorter hours by producing more. But we made the machine a cruel master instead of a useful servant.

In one cast iron operation seven men replace sixty; in one steel operation two men replace one hundred twenty-eight; one man does the work of twenty-five in any machine shop equipped with modern machinery.

Throughout all industry we have cut down men and increased production. Even in China, where labor is the cheapest thing obtainable, I saw a machine installed that would produce 1,500 cigarettes per minute where the old machine produced 900.

We bow down to efficiency and create big mergers. Two newspapers are merged and the employes of one paper lose their old jobs forever.

If we used real efficiency things would be much worse. If the coal industry were really efficient, four hundred twenty thousand men would do the work now performed by seven hundred fifty thousand.

In 1923 American labor received eleven billion dollars in wages; in 1929, eleven billion five hundred million dollars. During the same period the claimed volume of manufactured goods increased nearly nine billion dollars.

That difference between wage increase and production increase leaves goods worth eight billion five hundred million dollars on the pile. The goods couldn't be bought by the wage increase.

Our failure to give as much attention to fair, equitable distribution of wealth as we gave to developing production has landed us in a blind alley. The only thing for us to do is to look into the mirror and turn back.

There have been plans and systems galore for leading us out of this economic mess. Labor's program is very simple.

The trade-union plan is to reduce the working time and increase the worker's income in proportion to increasing production.

For many years the American Federation of Labor has warned what would happen if this plan were not followed. Instead of heeding this lesson, we have done the opposite; we have reduced hours in a few instances, but we have also reduced pay.

Temporary relief measures are palliatives but when families are hungry something must be done. The Federal Government has passed the buck to the States, the States to the cities, and the cities to the

In California, for example, men are given three meals and 30 cents a day for building unemployed citizens working 25 cents a day—no compensation.

Charity raised eleven million dollars in the rich city of New York, while typographical union members raised three million.

If we all were well organized as the printers, I wouldn't have to talk about depression.

My radical friend says the system is wrong and I agree with them so long as the few who dominate it refuse to budge.

If prosperity were to return tomorrow, we would still have millions unemployed, with other millions constantly added to the ranks.

If we must get used to the fact that men

are more important and valuable than stocks, bonds and machinery.

We must have a new definition of commercial value. Values depend on purchasing power. The only way to restore purchasing power is by shorter working hours and higher wages.

It is obvious the eight-hour day is too long. I am not sure whether we need a four, five or six-hour day.

I would prefer to see improved conditions come by collective bargaining, but I doubt that the big business has the vision to see the inevitable.

In 1919, President Wilson called the First National Industrial Conference, of which I was a member. There were fifteen men from labor, fifteen from capital, and fifteen from the public, in an attempt to thrash out these matters. The employers then refused to accept the simple statement that "the right of wage-earners to organize, to bargain collectively, to be represented by men of their own choosing, is recognized."

The policy of those employers prevails today in most basic industries.

The other method whereby shorter hours and higher wages may come is by legislative enactment. A Constitutional amendment would doubtless be needed—but ten million unemployed are worth the trouble.

Fascism or communism face us unless American industry voluntarily accepts the American Federation of Labor plan.

The one redeeming feature of this depression is the fact that it has driven home to workers the old lesson that organization—collective self-help—must be maintained and perfected.



He carries an alternative ballot

The Month in Local 10

By SAMUEL PERLMUTTER

Nearly \$5,000 Paid Out For Relief

In conformity with the decision of the membership meeting held on August 29, ratifying the recommendation of the Executive Board to levy an assessment of 3 per cent on the wages of all employed cutters up to December 1, to raise an emergency relief fund, the office proceeded to set up the machinery for the collection of this tax and simultaneously installed a system for checking up on all those who might fail to pay wholly or in part to this fund.

In view of the fact that many cutters, even at this time, which is supposed to be the peak of the season, are working only part time, the collection of the tax did not come up to the expectations. Our records show that the majority of the men working in sub-manufacturing shops are employed only one or two days a week. It is quite obvious that the tax receipts from these men could not be large. Nevertheless, it may be said to the credit of the vast majority of our members that up to this time they were prompt in their payments and very few attempted to dodge. Thanks to this the Local has been able to pay out until this date in relief an amount well over \$4,000.

Over 400 Needy Members Receive Relief

As a result of this emergency relief fund many members who were in dire need were able to get some help. Until now more than 400 members have already received relief.

The headquarters of the Local were swarmed during the past few weeks with hundreds of cutters on the nights the Relief Committee met. The office was kept open very late on such nights, and with the exception of one or two, all those who applied obtained relief.

The Relief Committee, appointed by the Executive Board, consists of Brothers Louis Forer, chairman, Louis Pankin, Harry Friedman, Morris Strauss, Morris Wulinsky and Morris Feller. This committee, in addition to fixing the amounts of relief to be given to applicants, is also charged with the duty of investigating numerous cases, their eligibility for relief and the degree of their need. To be sure, within the last few weeks a number of complaints were filed in the office against some members who applied for relief, charging that they were working right now either in the

trade or were earning money at other occupations.

Incidents of such a nature are bound to arise with the establishment of a relief agency in an organization with a membership of several thousand. It may be expected that unscrupulous fellows would attempt to take advantage of this fund at the expense of those who are in actual need. The Relief Committee, together with the Executive Board, will have to be on the alert and act severely with such as misrepresent themselves as being out of work. It could be stated, however, with certainty that nearly all who received relief were absolutely entitled to it. This Committee will also have to be equally strict with those who deliberately fail to meet the payment of the 3 per cent tax.

Old Age Pension Another Feature in Local

In addition to the many members who are being helped by the Relief Fund, our Local is facing another important problem in its aged members.

About five years ago, Local 10 conceived, upon the initiative of President David Dubinsky, then manager of the local, the idea of an old age pension fund for aged members of the local who found it difficult to secure employment. Such a fund was instituted with an initial capital of about \$18,000. This fund was raised from advertisements in a souvenir journal printed in connection with a ball and entertainment held in 1928. Brothers Samuel Perlmutter, Isidore Nagler, David Dubinsky, Maurice W. Jacobs and Louis Pankin were then elected as a committee to plan for the fund. That committee suggested an amendment to our local constitution providing for an annual tax of \$1 per member which would go towards that fund, and the amendment was adopted.

Besides these two funds, Local 10 also has a tuberculosis fund which entitles a member to \$300 in case of tuberculosis affliction. These are the three major benefit funds existing in the organization.

Ladies' Tailors Strike Settled

The recent strike in the ladies tailoring trade has brought about the renewal of agreements in many shops. Among them were the firms of Hattie Carnegie, Milgrim Bros., Mont-Sano & Pruzon and others. Local No. 38 attempted also during this strike to organize the firms of

Nettie Rosenstein, Corbeau Dress and Copeland Dress, but did not succeed as the workers in these shops, with the exception of the cutters, failed to respond to the strike call.

At this writing, Local 10 is still continuing strikes against these firms and their cutting departments remain paralyzed. The firm of Corebeau Dress in particular, an old firm that never had a union shop, is expected to put up a stubborn and protracted fight. Local 10 is nevertheless doing all in its power to get the firm to grant union conditions to the cutters in this shop.

As regards Hattie Carnegie, we had several conferences with them prior to the signing of the agreement with which the firm submitted a list of demands to us, among them reorganization, which implied the dismissal of about 50 per cent of all workers, including cutters, and reduction of wages. The Union, on the other hand, informed the firm that unless the demand for reorganization is withdrawn it would at once be declared on strike. The firm finally withdrew the demand for reorganization and also agreed to the suggestion of the Union that the reduction of wages, not in excess of 10 per cent, should be submitted to arbitration. This tentative agreement was ratified by the workers and a strike was thus averted. The wage question and some other minor points will shortly be submitted to arbitration.

Several Important Firms Lay Off Cutters

The condition in the cloak and dress industry at the present, instead of improving, has been growing worse despite the fact that this is supposed to be the height of the season. For about a week or two there seemed to be a slight indication of the beginning of a season. Some sub-manufacturers started to work on merchandise received from jobbers, but at this writing it appears that this was but a flash in a pan. Several firms, in fact, have laid off cutters while the sub-manufacturers are still far from starting any sort of a season. Whatever work the jobbers do have, is going out of town largely; and this presents one of the gravest problems to us and menaces the very existence of our Union.

The General Executive Board at its recent session held in Forest Park, Pa., decided to appropriate 2 cents of its weekly per capita revenue towards out-of-town organization work, and it is hoped that this activity will now be started on a wider scale, as only effective out-of-town organizing work could help this situation materially.

(Continued on next page)

The Month in Local 10

(Continued from preceding page)

Charges of Non-Cooperation Unwarranted

At a recent meeting of Local 22, we are informed, charges of non-cooperation with the Dress Joint Board locals were openly directed against Locals 10 and 35. Not being a member of Local 22 and not being present at that meeting, I cannot, of course, explain the motives behind these insinuations. If the failure of the Dress Joint Board to function properly were due to lack of cooperation on the part of Local 10, I should consider it a very serious charge, and Local 22 should have referred such charges directly to the International. So far as I know some officers of Local 22 have from time to time, in and out of season, made general statements accusing everybody, Local 10 included, but never have they been able to show definitely when Local 10 was not cooperating to the fullest extent. As a matter of fact, at the Philadelphia convention, after some of the delegates of Local 22 had repeated these charges, the writer of these lines challenged their statements and proved that Local 10 had at all times met its financial obligation to the Dress Joint Board. He also proved that in a number of shops such as the Germaine Mantel and Chas. Armour, where strikes were declared by the Joint Board, the cutters were the only ones to answer to the call while the rest of the workers who are supposed to be members of Local 22 had failed to come out, with the result that the loyal cutters lost their jobs.

Our Record in Our Best Defense

I am authorized by the Executive Board of Local 10, to state emphatically that these charges are absolutely false and are nothing short of a deliberate attempt to besmirch a Local Union of the International whose record can be traced back 45 years as an organization which at all times was ready to take the first trench lines in supporting every enterprise undertaken by the Interna-

tional whether in time of strikes, organization campaigns or peace. While some of the leaders of Local 22, because of their comparatively recent affiliation with the organization, cannot personally remember the struggle through which Local 10 has had to pass as a whole, they should certainly remember the several recent strikes in which Local 10 had taken a most active part; such wild statements as are reported by some of the officers of Local 22, should therefore appear quite ridiculous and unwarranted to every unbiased and active worker affiliated with the International or with the labor movement in general. It would seem to me that those who are making these accusations do not themselves believe in them.

I submit for our Local and for our Executive Board that we have no quarrels with any local in the Dress Joint Board or in any other Joint Board. No progress unless all its component parties are united and work in proper harmony. As far as Local 10 is concerned it has always had the highest esteem for our parent body, the International and its leadership, especially today. Our suggestion to Local 22 is to, please, stop making Local 10 a target for their jibes and insinuations and rather do, with the support of the other locals more effective and constructive work for the benefit of the dressmakers and of our entire Union.



"OLD MEN"

By GEORGE E. PHAIR

In savage tribes where skulls are thick
And primal passions rage
They have a system, sure and quick,
To cure the blight of age.
For when a native's youth has fled
And years have sapped his vim
They simply knock him on the head
And put an end to him.
But we, in this enlightened age,
Are built of nobler stuff,
And so we look with righteous rage
On deeds so harsh and rough.
For when a man grows old and gray
And weak and short of breath
We simply take his job away
And let him starve to death.

ATTENTION
CUTTERS OF LOCAL TEN

The meetings for the month of **NOVEMBER**, will take place in the order as herein arranged:

1. Regular Membership Meeting,
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1932
2. Special Membership Meeting,
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1932.

All the above meetings are to be held in Arlington Hall, 23 St. Marks Place, at 7:30 P. M.

Cutters are urged to attend without fail.

ATTENTION
CUTTERS OF LOCAL 10

—A SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

for the purpose of nominating officers for the term of 1933, will be held on

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 28
at **ARLINGTON HALL,**
23 St. Marks Place, at 7:30 P. M.

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In case you move from your present quarters, please notify your local office of your new address. We shall then forthwith put your new address in our mailing list.

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Naturalization Aid League

Room 302—Rand School—
7 East 15th Street, New York

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