Comrade Jack London's lecture at the Academy of Sciences Hall last Sunday evening was a worthy one in many respects. He opened with the following:

"Mr. Francis O'Neil General Superintendent of Police, Chicago, speaking of the tramp, says: 'Despite the most stringent police regulations a great city will have a certain number of homeless vagrants, to shelter through the winter.'" 

"DESPITE" mark the word, a confession of organized helplessness as against unorganized necessity. If police regulations are stringent and yet fail, then that which makes them fail, namely, the tramp, must have still more stringent reasons for succeeding.

The Captain O'Neil quoted by Comrade London had an article in "The Saturday Evening Post", Nov. 23, 1901 in which the following occurs:

"I have been astonished at the multitude of those who have unfortunately engaged in occupations which practically force them to become vagabonds for at least a third of the year. And it is from this class that the tramps are largely recruited. I recall a certain winter when it seemed to me that a large portion of the inhabitants of Chicago belonged to this army of unhappy men who asked shelter in order to be at hand for the harvest season. The police station was not far from where an ice harvest was ready for the cutters. The ice company advertised for helpers, and the very night this call appeared in the newspapers our station was packed with homeless men who asked shelter in order to be at hand for the morning's work. Every foot of floor space was given over to these lodgers and scores were still unaccommodated."

Continuing, the police captain said:

"And it must be confessed that the man who is willing to do honest labor for food and shelter is a rare specimen in this vast army of shabby and tattered wanderers who seek the warmth of the city with the coming of the first snow."

To this Comrade London answers:

"Taking into consideration the crowd of honest laborers that swamped Mr. O'Neil's station-house on the way to the ice-cutting it is patent, if all tramps were looking for honest labor instead of a small minority, that the honest laborers would have a far harder task finding something honest to do for food and shelter. If the opinion of the honest laborers who swamped Mr. O'Neil's station-house were asked, one could rest confident that each and every man would express a preference for fewer honest laborers on the morrow when he asked the ice-foreman for a job."

Comrade London draws the following inferences from the remarks of the Police Captain:

1. The tramp is stronger than organized society and cannot be put down. 2. The tramp is "shabby," "tattered," "homeless," "unfortunate." That there is a "vast" number of tramps. 4. Very few tramps are willing to do honest work. 5. Those tramps who are willing to do honest work have a hard time to find it. 6. The tramp is undesirable. It is easy to demonstrate that there are more men than there is work for men. What would happen tomorrow if one hundred thousand tramps should become suddenly inspired with an overmastering desire for work? It is a fair question. "Go to work" is preached to the tramp every day of his life. The judge on the bench, the peddler in the street, the housewife in the kitchen door, all unite in advising him to go to work. So what would happen tomorrow if one hundred thousand tramps acted upon this advice and strenuously and indomitably sought work. Why, by the end of the week one hundred thousand workers, their places taken by the tramps, would receive their time and be "hitting" the road for a job.

Elias Wheeler Wilcox unwittingly and uncomfortably demonstrated the disparity between men and work. She made a casual reference, in a newspaper column she conducted, to the difficulty two business men found in obtaining good employees. The first mail brought her seventy-five applications for the position, and at the end of the week over two hundred had applied.

Comrade London then went on to give an illustration from the recent strike in San Francisco, where a whole federation was called out; thousands of men quit work and their places were taken by thousands of other men who, despite the good times, despite the prosperity, despite the fact that the harvest season was on in the rural districts, were waiting anxiously for a chance to earn a living.

The question naturally arises: Whence came this second army of workers to replace the first army? This second army, the surplus labor army, is the reserve fund of social energy, and this is one of the reasons for its existence.

The surplus labor army is necessary as things are arranged at present. Without such an army the present capitalist society would be powerless. Without a surplus labor army, the courts, police and military would be impotent. In such matters (strikes, etc.) the functions of courts, police and military is to preserve order and to fill the places of strikers with surplus labor. If there be no
surplus labor army to instate, there is no function, for orderly only arises during the process of instatement when the striking labor army and the surplus labor army clash together.

Comes now the tramp. And all conclusions may be anticipated by saying at once that he is a tramp because some one must be a tramp. . . . The tramp is one of two kinds of men: he is either a discouraged worker or a discouraged criminal. Now, a discouraged criminal, an investigation, proves to be a discouraged worker or the dependent of discouraged workers; so that in the last analysis the tramp is a discouraged worker. As an example of the things that help to discourage the workers, Comrade London quoted from the "New York Sun" of a cigar factory starting in New York where the police were forced with their clubs to clear away the boys and girls who blocked up the street waiting for a chance to earn $3.50 per week. Another example of the incentive to discouragement was given in the figures of Nellie Mason Auten, of Chicago University. Dressmakers average 90 cents a week, work 42 weeks in the year and average $87.00 for the entire year. Pans finishers earn $5.31 per week work on the average 28 weeks per year and average $48.41. These are figures that are accepted by authorities. Still another example was cited from Walter A. Wycoff, an accepted authority on the worker. Wycoff tells of a Russian jew who had spent the winter in a Chicago sweat shop and applied in the Spring for work in a factory. The boss actually hired him. But noticing his meager, hungry, hungry look, he asked him to bear his arm. The poor fellow did so and made an effort to give a semblance of strength to the boss. He was haunted by the gate by oaths. The boss was in search of strong men. The poor worker turned down the street facing the fact of his starving family with a despair at his heart which only mortal man can feel and no mortal tongue can speak.

And the statistics of the tenements, where humanity rots, proves beyond cavil where this surplus labor army finds the majority of its recruits. But the genuine tramp is not altogether of the stuff that finds resting place in the bottom of the social pit. The tramp is a bit of a rebel; a better man than the poor creature who struggles with his fellows for a chance to sell himself into bondage for $2.50 a week. No one misses him from the factory gate. Plenty remain to serve the bosses whim. The tramp is not an economic necessity such as the surplus labor army, but he is the by-product of an economic necessity.

"The road" is one of the safety valves through which the waste of the social organism is given off. Society, as at present organized makes much waste of human life. This waste must be eliminated. Chloroform or electrocution would be a simple, merciful solution of this problem of elimination; but the ruling ethics, while permitting the human waste, will not permit a humane elimination of that waste. This paradox demonstrates the irreconcilability of theoretical ethics and industrial need.

And so the tramp becomes self-eliminating. . . . He plays the most part in the twentieth century after Christ. He does not breed. Sterility is his portion, as it is the portion of the woman on the street.

This is a form of elimination we not only countenance but compel. Therefore, let us be cheerful and honest about it. Let us be as stringent as we please with our police regulations, but for goodness sake let us refrain from telling the tramp to go to work. Not only is it unkind, but it is untrue and hypocritical. We know there is no work for him. And though we may not know, we should know and it is our duty to know that he is a hero. As a scapegoat to our economic and industrial sinning, or to the plan of things, if you will, we should give him credit. Let us be just. He is so made. Society made him. He did not make himself.

POLITICS AND SOCIAL ECONOMY.

Translated for "Advance" by Oscar Johnson.

[Note: This article contains some facts that every trade unionist ought to know and when he wishes to find a local representative of the type, let him think of P. H. McCarthy.]

A strike in which over one hundred thousand persons were involved is concluded. In general it was like many others that have gone before, and is therefore, not an unusual subject for reflection, but nevertheless it is worth while to make a close scrutiny of this one as a social phenomenon. Much can be learned from the same if you keep your eyes open, and understandingly look at things in their proper connections.

What appears to be the surest sign to impress upon you in the two warring classes, is the difference in strength. On one side we see about one hundred thousand workers, who after a few weeks of idleness are on the verge of starvation, and compelled to beg for help, while on the other side the men are few in numbers, but giants in strength. The steel trust has at its command over one billion dollars, and although the trust would like to have all its works running in order to multiply the billion, it is not necessary to give any concessions. The members of the trust can in all serenity always await the time when the pangs of hunger will drive the workers back to their former places to crawl before their masters like whipped dogs. J. P. Morgan need not be afraid that the flour-bin will be empty or the coal run short, so that wife and children may hunger and freeze, even if the strike should last one hundred years. But how different is the prospect for the striking workers.

We have stated before as our opinion that a strike is a double edged weapon, and we reiterate it now. Even in the most unfavorable cases, only a temporary gain will be won, because after a short time the wages will go down to the old standard again. The temporary rise of wages balances the loss during the strike, and when reduction of wages has been carried on for a time, they stand at the same point, as at starting, ready to begin the circuit again.

But in most instances, the outcome of the strikes are less favorable to the workers. After a hard fight, during which they have lost everything they owned, they find themselves forced to accept any terms of peace the masters are pleased to dictate. Just think of the humiliation it must be for the wealth-producing to receive from those hands that have taken the wealth in possession, as charity without thanks, given the opportunity to produce more wealth for the wealth-possessors, and without any right to
decide which way to produce, or what part of the produced wealth shall belong to the producer.

As long as the fight is carried on in the economic field will the capitalists surely come off victorious. Here they have a power against which the workers are totally helpless, and it seems only to waste time and energy this striking without any other aim than a little higher pay and a little shorter day. Of course, there are many exceptions when a strike will accomplish the wished for result, but this holds good only within such branches of industry as are not yet organized; but even these branches are hastening with giant strides toward that day when they will have full control over the workers.

What still further makes the value of a strike problematical is the frequent rascality of the leaders. Most of them take part in the labor movement hoping to win some personal gain—and, strange to say they nearly always succeed. As an example we will relate a chapter from the history of "The Amalgamated Association" because this union is at present the most talked about.

"The Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers" was organized 1876 through the unions, Sons of Vulcan, The Brotherhood of Iron and Steel Workers and a couple of other unions. The first president of the new union was Joseph Bishop and he rendered such good services that he, was appointed Secretary of the Board of Arbitration by the late President McKinley, who at that time was governor of Ohio.

Another gentleman who played a prominent part in the organization of the "Amalgamated" is William Martin. As a reward for his faithful services in the labor movement he received a lucrative place in the Carnegie Company which he kept some years. At present he is real estate broker in Pittsburgh and still very much interested in the labor movement (so is also Morgan and Rockefeller).

Bishop's successor in the presidential chair was John Jarret. When he resigned his job it was to accept the secretaryship of The American Tin Plate Association. Afterward he was appointed United States consul to Birmingham, England and, after his return, secretary for The Sheet Steel and Tin Plate Association. When the Steel Trust was organized he became manager for its labor bureau, about which is rumored that it has inaugurated the most extensive and perfect spying system in the world to control its workers. For this dirty work Jarret receives from $12,000 to $15,000 a year.

The "next" in order was William Weihe who was president during the great homestead strike. He now holds a job in New York harbor for which he receives $7,500 a year. Mahlon H. Garland was the next president. He also received a reward from President McKinley as he now is an official in the harbor of Pittsburg. He is interested in some industrial enterprises and certainly is a "friend of labor."

And what shall we say about Shaffer, the present president, who is next on the list? We will let him speak for himself, and guess his possible reward. Listen to what he says:

"It has always been my highest wishes to see labor and capital mutually recognize each others rights and work in harmony. It is hordes of ignorant foreigners who are the principal rioters at strikes. I believe that the employers at present are more considerate towards their employees than they ever were before."

Is not this enough to stamp the man as either a fakir or an ignorant fool? A man who in our days has the audacity to stand up and declare that capital and labor have the same identical interests, is not the man to be at the head of a union, and least so during a strike. Even the brains of a primitive Indian could sense that if the interest of the capitalistics are identical with the laborers, the former would voluntarily raise the latter's wages—provided that it should not be in the interest of the laborers to receive low wages, which seems to be a fixed idea with certain labor leaders, to judge by their actions.

We will now leave the world of fakirs, as other matters will take up our attention.

It is hardly possible that the capitalists are afraid of the labor unions to a very great extent as long as they are satisfied with small battles or skirmishes on the economic field and leave politics in peace. Still the very principal of unity is hateful to the capitalist except when he himself makes use of the same. The very spirit of union is dangerous for the workers to imbibe, because the consequences of too much liberty on this field would become a menace to the capitalist powers. Therefore, we will find that the great steel trust makes use of a spy system that not even Russia can equal. So well does this system work that not two workers can talk to each other about the benefits of belonging to a union without it will be reported to the "labor bureau", and he who expressed himself friendly toward unionism can be sure to be dismissed. For about a year ago seven of the workers were called into President Schwab's office and spoken to in somewhat the following words:

"You have joined a union. That gives you a new employer and you can no longer remain in our service. I hope "The Amalgamated" will treat you well and that they will always be able to procure you work. You can never come back to us. I have sent for your coats and dinner pails."

The dismissed men were not even allowed to go back and bid farewell to their comrades and tell them the reason of their dismissal. They had joined a union and the company's spies had reported it.

The so-called "black list" is in general use in all the great eastern factories. In many of them it is a rule that the worker must show papers from his former employer before he can get employment. Sometimes he must also have his photograph and signature, which will be sent to former employer for identification. By such methods all mistakes are prevented, and "unworthy" persons can never gain admittance to the "selected" circle.

It may not be known that there is a vigorous Socialist party in Japan, says a cablegram from Tokio. Its last move is to go in vigorously for universal suffrage. The origin of the party is interesting. Four government officers were sent to Europe in order to study commercial and economic organization. These inquisitive men went everywhere and saw everything. When they returned three of the four left the army, founded a Socialist journal and formed a workingmen's party.
THE ETHICS OF BEING CAUGHT AT IT.

I suppose I am called down because I gamble in public and am not a hypocrite," said John W. Gates, after a severe lecture by J. P. Morgan, "If I did my gambling like some, in secret and behind closed doors, I suppose it would be all right."

That is just what doors are made for," replied Mr. Morgan, quietly.

This interesting conversation was the outcome of a vigorous protest which Mr. Morgan has recently made against the public gambling of men high in the councils of the steel trust.

And the essence of it is that doors are for no other purpose than to hide misdeeds. Mr. Morgan knows the trick of hiding his defects. He came to San Francisco under the cloak of visiting the Episcopal convention and even while he was on his knees, moving his lips in prayer, he was sending and receiving telegrams to all parts of the world. One of his deals at that time was the purchase of large mining interests in China that he had been working on for three years. Morgan has been trained in the art of keeping up appearances by his "grace" Bishop Codman Henry Potter. Bishop Codman Henry Potter said recently that he had a distaste for John B. Gough, the temperance worker, because in his speeches Gough shouted so loud he terrified the women and made them spill the claret. The spilling of the claret made John B. Gough a crime in the eyes of Bishop Potter, the friend of Morgan, the giant among gamblers, the rebuke of Gates the pigmy gambler. The spilling of claret is almost as offensive as not shutting the door when one sits down with the cards. The summing up of Mr. Morgan's philosophy, as inculcated by Bishop Codman Henry Potter, is "don't be caught at it."

And so far does Mr. Morgan carry this philosophy that when one of his underlings attempted to break the bank at Monte Carlo recently, he INSTRUCTED the associated press people and the other purveyors of news to deny the report. Which they did forthwith.

Mr. Morgan is in a position to shut the door at all times when it is inadvertently left open, that he and his employees and his spiritual adviser may indulge their tastes to their hearts content. And so firmly may the door be fastened that not a sound of the misery outside may enter to make one of them shudder and spill the claret.

This is one of the rewards of wealth.

LABOR SAVING MACHINERY.

Pittsburg, Jan. 21.—The United States Steel corporation is actively preparing, to-day to reap the fruits of its victory over the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin-Plate Workers during the great strike of the past summer.

After the strike all the important mills became unionless. In all of these, now, that the opposition to labor-saving machinery has been overcome, new devices will be introduced, which are expected to result in a great saving but at the same time will throw many men out of employment.

The American Tin-Plate company is preparing to install processes for making blank plate which will be largely automatic. Mills where the association may object, will likely be closed or abandoned.

Aside from the quarrel over the immediate profits that the steel trust is engaged in with the unions, there is
the cry being raised that union-men are against the introduction of improved machinery. The steel trust wishes freedom of action all along the line. There is going to be a supreme struggle for the world market, and no hindrance on the part America will play in the struggle can be tolerated. Where the unions cannot be effected by their conservative leaders they must be crushed; and, furthermore, they will be crushed. The recent set-to between the steel trust and the amalgamated shows that no sentimental or social considerations will be allowed to stand in the way.

The members of the unions have the right to object to the introduction of labor saving machinery if they see fit. But just as the early protestors against the introduction of the loom and the spinning-jenny were brushed aside, so will that union become a mere point in history which opposes the onward sweep of economic development. Our complex social forces cannot stop to consider a single man or a group of men.

The steel trust magnates are obeying a law inherent in the capitalist mode of production. There must be concentration, cooperation, elimination of waste, improvement of machinery. The unions at least are merely stay the workings of this law for a day or a week. The best thing they can do is to make terms with it; go in partnership with and receive the benefits of its workings. They can do this by becoming intelligent enough to own the machine. There is no other way.

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THE SITUATION AT NORTPORT.

When the municipal election took place in Northport last November the new Councilmen elected were equally divided between the Socialists and the other political parties. Much feeling was aroused during the contest, because the Socialist party was supported chiefly by the Northport smelter men, who struck last year and whose places were filled by non-union men brought from Joplin, Mo. The new miners had not been in the state long enough to vote, but their sympathies were with the candidates who opposed the Socialist ticket.

The democrats and republicans combined against the Socialists and took possession of the city hall and kept the Socialists locked out of the building.

Last night the Socialists perpetrated a coup d'etat by seizing Councilman Nelson, an anti-Socialist, and taking him with them to the city hall. Being still unable to enter they held a Council meeting in the street, Nelson's presence making up a quorum. They then proceeded to elect John C. Harkness Police Judge and C. C. Anderson City Marshal. Both men are Socialists.

The anti-Socialists refuse to recognize this action and the case will be taken into court.

This is what we may expect from this time till the Socialists get complete control of the government. There will be struggles without end and combinations on the part of the enemy, but nothing will stay the conquering hosts of the new order of things. The incident at Northport is an object lesson in capitalist politics. Ostensibly the democrats were the deadly enemies of the republicans and yet when the working class took independent political action, both these parties forget their enmity to fight the new enemy—the organized working class.

It may come to something worse than this in the future, but just as the burden of breaking the law rests upon the shoulders of the allied democrats and republicans so, undoubtedly, will the same burden rest on the shoulders of the capitalist class parties when the Socialists win in the nation. But this will not stop the onward march of the working class to the conquering of the powers of government. With peaceful methods and legal we shall press forward; and we shall win because we have strength.

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PROVISIONAL STATE COMMITTEE.


Remittances: Local Haynes, 24 cts.; Fresno, $5; San Francisco, $5; Hemet, $7; Sacramento, $5; John M. Reynolds for scales $3. Total receipts, $22.24.


The suggestion of Nat'l. Secretary that the amount due to National Committee be advanced to Comrade Roche was adopted, and secretary instructed to wire $23 to Comrade Roche.

The National Secretary reported inability to secure speakers, Comrades Debs, Harriman, Carey, Hanford and others being unable to come west just now. Matter of tour of noted speakers tabled for present.

5,000 application forms ordered.

Treasurer instructed to make formal request for cash book of treasurer of former committee.

Adjourned till Jan. 23rd. Thos. Bensford, Sec'y pro tem.

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PARTY MEETING.

Regular party meeting held January 22, with Comrade Larson in the chair. Minutes of previous meeting read and approved. Communications received from J. P. Hay and Provisional State Committee and filed. Bills ordered paid for $5.70. Comrade Holmes will preside and Comrade Culman will read at next Sunday's meeting. A subscription list has been opened for donations for the benefit of "Advance." The following members were elected as the Board of Directors of "Advance": Holmes, Culman, Appel, De Vries and Ober. The following officers were elected for the year 1928: Organizer, Geo. S. Holmes, Editor "Advance", J. J. Noel; Financial Sec'y, Oscar John- son; Treasurer, John Messer; Librarian, John Larsen; Purchasing agent, Alvin Appel; Literature salesmen, I. Rosenthal; Recording Sec'y B. P. Ober; Auditing committee, Everett, Barieau and Ober; Propaganda committee King Jr, Bercoff and Larsen. The constitution was adopted as a whole with a unanimous vote of 30. The proceedings and resolutions of the state convention were ratified by a vote of 19 for, 1 against. Receipts for week $35.55. B. P. Ober, Sec'y.

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Mrs. Villa D. Reynolds .50
O. S. .50
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$353.05

DELEGATE FUND.
Previously acknowledged $45.00
J. Flamm .50
Th. Molitor $1.00
J. J. Noel $1.00

Total $47.50

$100

The labor unions of Racing, Wis., have determined to petition the Council not to accept the $50,000 library which Andrew Carnegie has offered on condition that the city raise $5,000 a year to maintain it.

The Central Trades and Labor Union of St. Louis, Mo., has adopted resolutions protesting against the hiring of non-union labor by the World’s Fair and advising union men to pay no more assessments on World’s Fair stock.

Socialism has spread into Gibraltar and the longshoremen have been organized and abolished the middlemen.

In addition to the Socialist victories in Sweden further gains are announced in Malmo, Hammerfest, Christensen and Skien. The capital papers of Norway and Sweden simply cannot swallow their chagrin at the upheaval in labor's ranks.

Canadian Socialists and laborites report victories won in Brockville, Ottawa, Hamilton, Bradford, Guelph, London and other places. The daily papers express surprise at the awakening of the workingmen.

The joint commitee of the Mississippi Legislature, appointed for the investigation of the State Prison, has reported gross mismanagement in the running of the State’s convicts and collections of funds for their hire.
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