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ARTICLE I.

UNITED MINE WORKERS AND CHRISTIAN
ETHICS.

BY PETER ROBERTS, PH.D.

THE army of employees set apart in the United States to mine and prepare coal for market numbers about half a million. Some 350,000 are members of the United Mine Workers' Union of America, one-third of whom are employed in anthracite collieries in Northeastern Pennsylvania, and the remaining two-thirds are scattered throughout fifteen other coal-producing States in the Union. All well-organized mine employees have a trade agreement, so that about seventy-five per cent of the coal produced in the country is cut under contracts. On March 31, 1906, these contracts expire, and, if operations are to continue, either the old agreements must be renewed or new ones made. The average daily production of our mines is about a million tons. If 350,000 mine workers were to quit work this spring a national calamity would befall us. All centers of industry east of the Rockies would be paralyzed; ten million homes would be discomforted; our factories would be closed; our furnaces be extinguished; our mills grow silent, and our shops empty. Such a contingency is not impossible. The question of a national suspension of mining was raised and voted upon in Indianapolis, July, 1902. Then it was a question of a sympathetic strike, and the bituminous mine workers abode by their contracts. This year the question is of new agreements in both anthracite and bituminous coal-fields, and the difficulties incident to new agreements may precipitate synchronous conflicts.

The public is interested in the discussions now going on in the mining industry between employers and employees, and, as a Christian nation, we are anxious that justice should prevail in industrial controversies. We are willing to hear what economists and accountants have to say upon these discussions, but we also know that ethical motives react upon economic conditions, and the moralist must interpret to the Christian conscience ethical considerations in the action of economic forces. Here are 350,000 men and boys involved in a controversy upon the issues of which the daily bread of a million and a half of our fellow-citizens depends; will discussions of profits and loss, wages and interest, royalty and rent, exhaust the nation's interest in them? A nation that has its will and heart fashioned by Christianity, whose character is molded by Jesus, will not rest satisfied with a discussion of the controversy from the dollar-and-cent standpoint. It must be raised to a higher plane. Christianity measures man by the justice and the holiness of God, and the industrial questions must be studied in the light of the eternal Word, "who lighteth every man coming into the world." Man was not made for the coal-mines. The earth and the heavens were made for him, and it is not the will of our Father that one of the least of these colliers be left to the greed of mammonism, regardless of the ethical values involved in his nature and the moral ends for which he is constituted.

What has Christian Ethics to say upon these questions which are, just now, arresting public attention? Has the Christian conscience a message of comfort or condemnation to these mine workers who are restless under present industrial conditions? What are the principles laid down by the Master? What are our ideals? Is there a Messianic hope for the wage-earners of these coal-mines? The purpose of this

article is to study the nature, aim, and future of the United Mine Workers of America in the light of Christian Ethics.

NATURE OF THE MINERS' UNION.

Trade-unionism is said to be a social phenomenon of modern times, whose characteristics are conditioned by the forms of industrial life which have been evolved by the application of steam to production and transportation. No one will deny this fact, but the gregarious tendency of groups of men subjected to similar conditions has been observed in all ages and climes, and, although conditioned by the several industrial stages through which mankind has passed, it represents a force that is more deep-seated than self-interest, and wider than humanity.

The army of trade-unionists in the United States is over 2,000,000 strong, and never before, in the history of our country, was there such a combination of wage-earners resolved upon waiving their individual interests that those of the group may be the better secured. No social phenomenon of modern times is as persistent as trade-unionism, and, notwithstanding many vicissitudes, great internal dissensions, and many external oppositions, it marches on triumphantly and daily increases in number and influence, so that a well-organized and ably-officered labor movement is just now a business reality in the United States.

The marvelous growth of capitalistic interests and the concentration of our several industries in few hands are reflected in this social phenomenon. The physical well-being of the 160,000 anthracite employees depends almost wholly upon the dictates of four men. The United States Steel Corporation has in its hands the physical well-being of seventy-five per cent of the employees directly engaged in the production of iron and steel. Thousands of employees in the textile industries labor

for one strong corporation, whose affairs are managed by one master mind. And so it is all along the line. Employees in large aggregates are subjected to similar conditions, are forced to adopt the same standard of living, are alike affected in their income and expenditure by the decrees of one concern, and, naturally, their common lot will bring them together to discuss means for social amelioration and to construct bulwarks against forces antagonistic to their interests. The form taken by this "gregariousness of similars" in modern industry is trade-unionism.

The coal industry of the United States has increased as rapidly as any other in the country. We lead the world in the tonnage produced. During the last thirty years the production of our coal-mines has increased over 700 per cent, but in the same period the number of employees has only increased a little over 320 per cent. In 1870, 347 tons were annually produced per employee in the mines; in 1900, it was 565 tons, an increase of 65 per cent. These changes in the industry seriously affect the lot of the employees. At present, wages in the bituminous coal-fields are from 40 to 60 per cent higher than they were in 1895, and in the anthracite region they are from 26 to 32 per cent higher. But, notwithstanding these advances, the average annual income of contract miners in both industries will not exceed \$600, and the income of company men is from \$150 to \$250 less. From 1870 to 1895, the condition of mine employees was one of poverty and wretchedness. They were kept near the poverty line by both low wages and intermittent labor. Against these conditions the soft-coal men organized their forces in the nineties of the last century, and succeeded in raising their wages and shortening their hours of employment. Flushed with victory, they sent their missionaries into the anthracite region in 1898, and their brethren in

the hard-coal industry also organized to raise their wages and improve their conditions of employment.

This organization, which has enabled the mine workers to realize substantial advances in wages and better conditions of employment, is purely democratic in its nature. It has its local, sub-district, district, and national bodies, each related to the other in perfect coördination. Each of the parts has its president, vice-president, and secretary-treasurer, who are elected by the members of the various organizations. Each district has, besides the above three officers, a group of organizers whose business it is to keep the members in line, and persuade those outside the organization to enter. In the national organization, besides the three leading officers, there is a group of national organizers whose business it is to go to new territory to promulgate the principles of the miners' organization, and organize those who are ready to accept its teachings. The policy of the organization is settled in the national convention, which sits for two weeks each year. During the remaining fifty weeks the president, vice-president, secretary-treasurer, and the twenty members of the national executive board have full charge of the affairs of the union.

These last-mentioned officers, twenty-three in number, are the ultimate arbiters in questions of strike in any district. They also form a board of conciliation and arbitration in the industry, watch over the finances of the organization, and discuss questions of policy. In times of strike, the president is virtually dictator, for the union has learnt that industrial war cannot be successfully conducted by a committee. All these men, who control this great organization and manage its affairs with admirable judgment, were, a few years ago, actual miners. They were chosen by their fellow-workmen to look after their interests, to make the best possible terms with their employers,

to watch the fluctuations of the trade, and to advise them what is to their best interests in times of crises.

The methods used by the mine workers to gain their purposes are trade agreement, arbitration and conciliation, legal enactment by state legislatures, and strike. In ten States the mine workers annually meet their employers in joint conferences to arrange wages and conditions of employment, and its present request is that the anthracite operators do the same. Within this territory boards of conciliation and arbitration are organized. In each of the States the legislatures are ever considering measures in the interests of mine workers, while the last means, the strike, has been used by the organization with telling effect.

Its members represent some sixteen nationalities, all of whom stand together in times of crises. They all understand wherein their interests lie, and repose absolute confidence in competent leadership. In peace or in war, the solidarity of these workers is grand. A thousand men laying aside the pick and shovel to convene in a national convention to consider the interests of more than 350,000 of their fellow-craftsmen, and outline the policy to be pursued the following year, is a social phenomenon which cannot be duplicated in the history of society. When a strike is on in any part of the territory controlled by the union, the members freely give of their earnings to support their brothers struggling for their rights or resenting undue encroachments.

What has the Christian conscience to say to these thousands banded together in self-defense, and in defense of wives and children? The powers against which they contend are well-organized. Economic forces against which they have now erected strong barriers brought them, in the last century, poverty, with its accompanying terrors—dirt and disease, dissipa-

tion and death. Has the Christian conscience a word of commendation to these men in their struggle against blind law and mammonism?

Mine workers know that individually they are no match to the entrepreneur, whose specialty lies in his capacity to drive a hard bargain. They need the aid of an advocate, an expert negotiator, one trained in the art of bargain-making, in order that they may secure the most advantageous terms possible. This they demand as a right, and not a favor. It is a business proposition. These thousands pool their interest—labor, they then choose an expert agent, and commission him to sell the commodity to the best advantage. The operator's plea to deal with each one individually is only a subterfuge. It is not done. They divide mine workers into groups, each of which is subjected to common hours, standard rates, and general regulations. A separate wage for each employee and a separate bargain with each is an administrative impossibility. The Pittsburgh Coal Company, the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company, have a common policy, common rate of wages, common regulations, and the miners' union want these common rates to be raised to common agreements in the forming of which they will have a voice. Are they right in this, or must the Christian conscience indorse the extreme individualistic position taken by the anthracite operators?

No precept in the teaching of Jesus is more emphasized than that of one common brotherhood. Man is designed by God to find his perfection by association with his fellow-man. The glory of Christ is that he took upon himself flesh—that he joined himself to humanity. Life in self is sin. To disregard the promptings to reach out to others is death. His followers are to seek greatness by social service, and to replace the tyranny, selfishness, and hatred of the human heart by the uni-

versal reign of love. To come short of this social service is to lose one's life: to enter it is the consummation of happiness. For the Lord commends such in the last judgment. Side by side with the most sacred sacrament of the Christian church, the Master placed the most striking example of service to his fellow-man, and, while the disciples were surprised at the humility of their Lord, he said: "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him." Jesus has conditioned the very sanctification of sinful man upon his capacity to associate with his fellow-men.

Can we find a better example of this spirit of brotherhood and social service anywhere than is found in the United Mine Workers of America? Here representatives of sixteen nationalities stand together in defense of their rights. The brotherly bond is stronger than national antipathies and racial pride. The individual buries his self-interest, and looks only to the interest of the group. Americans and Englishmen are side by side with Slavs and Italians pledging mutual support to resist the downward trend of wages, which brings distress and death to thousands of homes, and inflicts wrongs upon the innocents. The union knows neither Greek nor Barbarian bond nor free, Caucasian nor African, for all whose lot it is to dig coal in the caves of the earth are welcomed if only they pledge themselves to the ideals of trade-unionism. They suffer hardships for their fellow-man; the privations of hunger and the perils of a conflict they gladly endure for their neighbor's sake; and when their brethren are fighting for their rights, they freely contribute of their means to the extent of \$2,225,370 in one year. This money the union distributed with commendable impartiality among non-members as well as members, and it poured as freely into the Virginias, where the

African works, as it did into Pennsylvania, where the Caucasian toils.

And to bring these men, representatives of sixteen different families of mankind, into a solidarity that commands admiration, has required self-sacrifice and self-abnegation of which the world knows very little. The social service rendered by the "labor agitators" cannot be measured by the wages they receive, for the organization in the years of its inception had no funds. We hear much of the "labor agitator" interfering with business, but little is said of the hunger and suffering, the peril and imprisonment, the persecution and death, of this class of men, who toil in season and out of season, in their efforts to raise the weight of "the burden of the world" from off the bent backs of the sons of toil. There are unworthy men among the apostles of labor as there were among the select band of twelve in Palestine; there are many excesses committed by these men in their mad haste to right their wrongs, as are found in the history of the Christian church. But these are exceptions. We judge the tree by its fruit, and deeper than the excrescences, more permanent than the terrorizing outbreaks in times of industrial warfare, and strong as life, is the bond of brotherhood in the miners' union. It is their cry for redemption, their effort to escape from conditions which destroy both body and soul, their way of working out their own salvation.

And can any follower of Jesus, whose teaching so clearly shows that no social conditions have any right to exist which obstruct or fail to encourage the growth of the divine in man, turn away from this movement of the mass of mine workers? Their cry is for a more humane, a freer, a more reasonable life; shall we turn a deaf ear to their struggle and their travail? The movement makes the Slav a better man; it pro-

duces a type of forcible and virile men who champion the cause of labor; it fosters the spirit of coöperation, so that men no more live for themselves, but work with others for one broad and high aim,—the redemption of labor from the crushing force of inexorable economic laws, on the one hand, and, on the other, from the greed of entrepreneurs, who only look for returns to the interests they represent. And the Master, who saw that the only hope of man's being redeemed from the lust, hatred, greed, and wrangling incident to the struggle for daily bread, was by the founding of a new society in which a common brotherhood was to seek its fruits in purity, love, and reconciliation, would unquestionably look with approval upon this birth-struggle of a better industrial and social world for the 500,000 mine workers of America.

THE AIMS OF THE MINERS' UNION.

The United Mine Workers have organized for a purpose. Their constitution states that their aims are: (1) to secure just wages, paid weekly in lawful money, which the recipient can spend where he wills; (2) to reduce accidents to life and limb to the lowest possible minimum by making the face safe to work in and by providing all appliances for the preservation of life and limb; (3) "to uncompromisingly demand that eight hours shall constitute a day's work, and that not more than eight hours shall be worked in any one day by any mine worker"; (4) to prohibit the employment of children under fourteen years of age; (5) to adjust "all differences, so far as possible, by arbitration and conciliation, that strikes may become unnecessary."

All sections of the union have not been equally successful in realizing their aims. The bituminous miners have secured the eight-hour day and a trade agreement, but their anthracite

brothers are now asking the operators to recognize their union, to grant the eight-hour day, and to establish standard rates for mining, rock-work, timbering, etc. The labor leaders, however, hope to establish the above conditions in all collieries upon this continent, and force the operators to sign contracts whereby a living wage, humane conditions of employment, and arbitration in labor disputes will be secured its members. To do so a compact organization is necessary, so that the exigencies of particular operators or particular districts may not influence the industry unfavorably.

The prime aim of mine workers is to secure a living wage. John Mitchell has defined this to mean the support and education of "an average family, a comfortable house of at least six rooms, a bath-room, good sanitary plumbing, a parlor, dining-room, kitchen, and sufficient sleeping-rooms that decency may be preserved, and a reasonable degree of comfort maintained . . . carpets, pictures, books, and furniture with which to make home bright, comfortable, and attractive . . . and ample supply of clothing for winter and summer, and above all a sufficient quantity of good, wholesome, nourishing food at all times of the year." Mr. Mitchell believes that a minimum wage of \$600 a year to unskilled labor, in small mining towns, is necessary to maintain this standard of living. A careful calculation of the income necessary to secure the essentials and comforts mentioned by the labor leader puts it at about \$725 a year. The past three years have been years of unusual prosperity in the anthracite business, and yet the contract miners have not averaged more than \$650 a year, while the annual income of unskilled laborers inside the mines has not averaged \$500, and that of those outside the collieries is \$100 less. The lot of bituminous miners has not been as favorable. Intermittent labor, due to market conditions, has made the lot

of thousands of soft-coal employees a hard one. Their wage rates compare favorably with those of anthracite miners, but "stop cars," "half time," has made it impossible for thousands of homes in bituminous mining communities to realize the standard of living above laid down by their leader. These men will ask for an advance in wages, and, if a minimum annual income of \$600 at "half time" is to be realized, they will need a big advance.

The Christian conscience demands that just compensation be paid mine workers for their work. But what is just compensation? Give each what he produces. But who can measure the production of each of a thousand men who coöperate in sending out 2,500 tons of coal in eight or nine hours? Pay him a wage which another man, equally efficient, is willing to take to do the work; that is, pay him the market price of labor. This means the free competition of labor, individual bargaining, a cutting of prices by the iron law of wages, against which mine workers, after an experience of a generation, are organized. Let the social service rendered by these men to society determine their share of the national dividend. But society only wants cheap coal, and when it got it at prices ruinous to operators and operatives alike, no consumer offered to reimburse bankrupt employers or replenish impoverished employees. What wages are these mine workers "entitled to have"? Proudhon said that book-keeping is the final arbiter in all economic discussion. The point at which wages should be fixed cannot be determined either by a Christian philanthropist or by a shrewd employer of labor bent upon driving a hard bargain. The question relates to profits of capital, royalties of land-owners, wages in other industries—data not easy to obtain, and yet which must be obtained if industrial peace is to come. Until such data are available and a

competent commission is appointed to sift them and give us the truth, the employees, who do the work, are the natural appraisers of coal digging, and have a right to put a fixed price upon their labor. This the United Mine Workers do.

Will the Christian conscience indorse this position of the mine workers? It is safe to say that a Christian nation, in order to get cheap coal, will not squeeze the wages of mine employees to the starvation point. On the other hand, it will not allow these men to exploit, for their own benefit, the coal resources of the country. The labor leaders insist upon fixing a minimum wage which shall enter as a fixed charge in the cost of production which determines the market price of the commodity. But if mine workers think that they can, by compact organization, force up wages indefinitely, the public will possibly insist upon fixing a maximum wage. Social justice requires that the interests of the whole industrial organism be considered, and that the distribution of the national dividend be so adjusted that no part be in an anemic condition while another suffers from hyperemia.

We are all brothers, and the wealth produced in the mill and in the mines loses its purpose if its first mission is not to promote the divine brotherhood of men. This is the judgment of Christian conscience; how seldom it is realized! The wealth of our coal-fields has often been exploited to selfish ends. Starvation wages were paid, national antipathies of workmen were fanned by cunning entrepreneurs for personal ends, callous indifference is shown to the maimed and the sick, and the widows and orphans of the slain have been left to beg or suffer the pangs of hunger. What divine brotherhood could flourish under such conditions? Men of great intelligence and wide experience became unsocial. The corner-stone of their life was cold-blooded individualism of the Nietzschean type.

They consciously severed the bond of brotherhood, they laid more value on mules than on men, their generous impulses were singed by the passion for wealth, and their faith in their brother-man perished at the altar of Mammon. Need we wonder that the heaven-born impulses of the human heart, which go out to God and our fellow-men, were weakened in the souls of those who dug the nation's supply of coal at starvation wages, and, instead of the coming of the Kingdom of God, we see the setting up of the kingdom of the devil—saloons on all sides, gambling devices without number, pool-rooms of the vilest sort, profanity in the mouths of babes, wretched homes where the innocent in mercy perish, desecration of the Sabbath, and a record of murders that is appalling. The judgments of God are here written in large letters, and they have fallen because men who knew the law of service turned away from those who fell among thieves and left the poor to rot among dogs.

Again, the mine workers ask for protection to life and limb. Coal-mining is a dangerous occupation, and ranks with the powder industry, railroading, and the merchant marine, in the number killed per thousand employed. There are shafts where in each year 10 per 1,000 employees are killed. In five of our coal-producing States, the average death-rate of mine employees, in the last decade, has been 5 per 1,000 employed. The average in all the coal-mines of the Union is 3.7 per 1,000 employed. This means, that each year about 1,700 men and boys are sacrificed whose average age is not thirty-five years. Another army of 5,000 persons are non-fatally injured, whose industrial efficiency is materially reduced. Here is a waste of life and limb that is agonizing to contemplate. Considered from the economic standpoint, the nation would gain some 50,000 years of productive labor if the killed had reached the

average expectation of life. Put their average potential wage at \$400 a year and the financial loss aggregates \$20,000,000.

Turn to the record of the mines of Great Britain; the death-rate there is 1.3 per 1,000 employed,—about one-third of what it is in the mines of the United States. In the face of these facts, who will not join the protests of mine workers, and demand that this fearful waste be stopped? Every workday six men fall by violent death in the army of mine workers, and seventeen are more or less crippled. Do these men ask too much when they say to the operators, Meet us; let us reason together, and see if this frightful waste cannot be reduced? The Master once said that a man will give all in exchange for his life, but these men risk it daily for twenty-five cents an hour; and, in order to appreciate its value, they must appeal to the cruelest of their defensive weapons—the strike. Jesus pronounced a fearful judgment upon the man who caused a little child who believed in Him to stumble; what would He say to the annual lamentation of more than 2,100 orphans who rest their heads upon a widowed mother's breast, weeping, for her bread-winner is no more? It is the Christ of God who taught us the value of the individual man. Each one born of woman is dear to the divine Father, and is capable of divine fellowship. It is the spirit of Jesus that makes the centuries radiant with a great light, and the upturned swarthy faces of these sons of toil have caught its radiance, and appeal to a Christian nation to save them from the needless sacrifices daily going on in this risky business of digging coal. And as long as the conscience of the nation bears the imprint of the Son of man, we will not rest until the lives of these mine workers—our brothers—be given all possible safety, and all possible appliances to enhance their safety.

The other aims are the eight-hour day and the adjustment of industrial controversies by arbitration.

The eight-hour day means that the mine employee is to spend eight hours out of every twenty-four at the face or the place where he works. To this must be added the time spent in going to and coming from work, an item that is continually increasing as the workings are further removed from the foot of the shaft. Thus men who work only eight hours spend, underground, each day, an average of nine, and those who work nine hours spend, each day, ten hours in the mines. The miners' union desires to make the eight-hour shift general throughout the mining industry on this continent, for they believe that eight hours' work in the mines is all the average mine worker can stand and retain his maximum industrial efficiency. The consumption of energy in the mining industry is great. The miner's recumbent position, the want of fresh air and sunshine, the presence of foul and poisonous gases, the presence of powder smoke and lamp smoke, dampness and coal dust,—all these tell upon the constitution of the mine-worker, and both ethical and economic considerations are on the side of the mine worker in this demand. Economic considerations enter into the question, and it is important for the nation to find the point of maximum efficiency in industrial labor. But, studied from the biological as well as the Christian standpoint, the social conscience demands that the waste of tissue in the hours of labor be not greater than can be replaced in the hours of rest, and it further demands that the consumption of physical energy in mining be not so great as to incapacitate these men for intellectual or moral improvement. Coal produced at an expense of disease, physical ruin, degeneracy, and premature death, is too dear for a Christian nation. No social system that conforms to Christian principles imposes a ruinous burden upon any part of the community. The law of Christian service demands justice tempered with

mercy, and if the assertions of mine workers that eight hours is all they can stand in the mines, with physical efficiency, be well founded, then the followers of the Master should give these toilers their support in securing the eight-hour day.

The demand for arbitration and conciliation in all industrial controversies in order that strikes may be avoided, is in perfect accord with the law of divine brotherhood. It presumes a degree of intelligence and a sense of justice in the contending parties that goes far to save society an industrial conflict, and is an appeal to reason for the adjustment of controversies. Nothing is better calculated to foster that mutual self-respect between employers and employees that is so essential to industrial peace. Honor to all men is a Christian duty. Noble-mindedness is a Christian virtue. From these sentiments sprang chivalry in the Christian church, which considers, under all circumstances and conditions, what are due to others, and respects the claims, feelings, and rights of others. And nowhere can these qualities be better exercised by both employer and labor leader than upon boards of arbitration and conciliation. We would expect to find this courtesy and true gentility among men of intelligence in industrial affairs, but the stubborn refusal of employers to submit their differences with their employees to arbitration, suggests a type of mind other than that outlined in the New Testament. To act the Christian, professed followers of the Master are expected to choose that course of conduct which gives the greatest chance of practicing those virtues which form a constituent part of their nature. But to stand aloof, to refuse to hear the voice of labor, to resent a demand for arbitration as an insult, are far from the spirit of the Master who said, "See that ye despise not one of these little ones." If Christianity is to be preserved in these mining communities, it will not be done by verbal

profession and privy counsellings in philanthropic work by entrepreneurs and employers; it can only be preserved by the redeeming virtues of just men, by the healing influence of men willing to serve the least of their fellow-men, by men who, amid the confusions and conflicts of industrial intercourse and friendships, are willing to work and to suffer in efforts to realize the new society suggested by the Master.

THE FUTURE OF THE MINE WORKERS.

There are prophets who predict the disruption of the present union. The wish is father of the thought. Extreme individualism is no longer possible in industrial life. The cry "Down with trade-unions" will not succeed. The movement has its origin in industrial conditions that were intolerable to wage-earners. The workingmen to-day will no longer submit to the paternal rule of their employers, no matter how benignant it may be. Our industrial army is moving in large battalions, and the members seek their common good through collective bargaining, which depends for its efficiency on the existence of a strongly-organized union. The operators may be naturally expected to resist the movement, but they are powerless to oppose it. Right is on the side of the men. The Christian conscience approves all men seeking the largest possible self-development, and they have a right to combine for this purpose of self-advancement. When a group organizes to maintain its rights and to advance its interests, public opinion will never side with its traducers. The miners' union is sometimes charged with seeking its own immediate interests, regardless of the interests of others, which is contrary to Christian principles. If this be true, the organization violates the first law of organic well-being and must necessarily fall. If it places its self-interest before that of society, it disregards the law of mutual service,

upon which depends the welfare of the whole social body. But this is hardly credible of men who earn the wages mine workers earn and undergo the perils which they undergo. These men rather seek their rights, and Christianity nowhere commands men to waive just rights. The Master himself never waived his just rights; he courageously and constantly waged a war for the assertion of human rights, and the church has done the same in the years of its history. And as long as the miners' union directs attention to the aims laid down in its constitution, the Christian conscience will gladly see the organization flourish.

The United Mine Workers' Union is destined to live. What form it will assume in future largely depends upon the attitude manifested toward it by the operators. They have it within their power to decide whether it will be a fighting body or one bent upon a mission of peace and good-will. Its success in the attainment of its ideals will largely determine whether or not it will evolve into a more radical movement which will menace our social and industrial systems. The leaders are working for the national organization of mine workers, and they will not give rest to their eyelids until the work they propose to do will be accomplished. The organization is now a fact in the coal-mining industry of the country, and it will become more of a business reality in coming years. The more perfect and complete it becomes, the greater guarantee we have of permanent peace. The mine workers welcome all possible moral support from a Christian nation, but they also feel that the advantages already gained by them can only be retained by a well-organized body that convinces the operators that their employees have the power to withhold their labor and paralyze their operations. Such an organiza-

tion the mine workers will maintain, and it will be a guarantee to the public of industrial peace and an assurance to all the world that differences in the coal-mining industry will be adjusted by other means than an appeal to brute force.

Granted, then, that this Samson has come to stay; what will he do with the power he wields? If we find that it is not best for society that two or three men have control of the subsistence of thousands of men and their families, what of the power laid in the hands of labor leaders who control the labor in industries of a semi-public nature, and who can paralyze the industrial life of the nation by ordering their followers to quit work?

John Mitchell said before the Coal Strike Commission, that the stronger the organization the more conservative it becomes. Increased power brings increased responsibility. There is no monopoly in the United States more complete than that possessed by mine employees in certain territories controlled by the United Mine Workers of America. The anthracite miners have absolute monopoly of mining coal, and the collieries of Illinois are virtually closed against non-union workers. Some of the restrictions thrown around the industry by mine workers are un-American in spirit and tyrannical in practice. If the organization be perfected and these become general, public sympathy will soon be forfeited, and it will be useless for the mine workers, who form only some two per cent of the industrial army of the Union, to imagine that they can flourish in defiance of public sentiment. Abuse of power will forfeit public sympathy, and no section of the state organism can long retain its power if it disregards the law of mutual service. The imperative of Christian association is mutual benefit, and the success of the miners' organization depends upon its fulfillment. While it is right for wage-earners to combine to secure their

interests, they must do so by bringing the self-interest of their class into harmony with the law of mutual service for the welfare of the whole social body. In a Christian nation, moral considerations underlie economic forces, and the Christian conscience demands that the actions of industrial groups be in harmony with Christian principles. If labor leaders imagine that they can disregard ethical considerations in the labor movement, and by business sagacity and an intelligent forecast of circumstances can lead their followers to success, they will come short of their purpose. Business sagacity and wise forecast of the movement of economic forces are essential, but as long as trade-unions are surrounded by a community whose heart and will have been molded by the teachings of Jesus, their actions and ideals will be judged by Christian standards.

Labor leaders, among mine workers, will do well to give attention to moral values in their task of completing their organization. Paul de Rousiers, in his "*Trade-Unionisme en Angleterre*," calls attention to the moral character and religious convictions of the leaders of the miners' union in England as one of the secrets of their success (p. 32). The strong religious sentiment of the Miners' Federation of England and Wales is known to all who have studied the movement, and it largely accounts for the cohesion that has characterized these men's actions. It is wanting in our miners' organization, and it is the weaker for its absence. The one thing that is needed above all else in labor leaders is, a moral if not a religious conscious obligation to the fundamental laws and elements of human nature. The sense of right and wrong; the essential difference of men in aptitudes, capacities, and character; the rights of property; the inviolability of contract; and the rights of free men, are such as no organization can ignore and flourish. These principles must be cherished and remembered by

the leaders and inculcated upon their followers if the union is to be saved from ultimate failure.

The rank and file of the miners' union also need an appreciation of moral values. Edmund Burke once said: "Men are qualified for civil liberty in exact proportion to their disposition to put moral chains upon their appetites. . . . Society cannot exist unless a controlling power upon will and appetite be placed somewhere, and the less of it is within, the more there must be without. It is ordained in the eternal constitution of things that men of intemperate minds cannot be free. Their passions forge their fetters." The greatest danger to the miners' union comes from within. Uncontrolled appetite for strong drink, reliance upon brute force to the disparagement of the intellectual and the moral; lack of economic foresight whose horizon is wider than the immediate advantage of an advance in wages; lack of appreciation of moral leadership and a favoring of men of radical tendencies who have social qualities of low moral value, are characteristics too common in mine workers, while the intrinsic value of a trade-union is not appreciated by them. Nietzsche said of the Germans that their intellect was kept down by their beer and their newspapers, and he recommended to them tea and pamphlets. The same advice would not be amiss in the case of mine workers. The Christian conscience will judge of the union by the type of men composing it. If they are thoughtful and loyal, conscientious and temperate, just and conciliatory, their efforts to bring about a better social order will meet with favor. Christian ethics lays more emphasis upon the moral than the material, and demands that trade-unionism be lifted up from the struggle for wages to the level of moral opportunity. The discipline of industrial life is lost unless it affords opportunity to cultivate moral integrity, to do justice, to keep faith, and

to act righteously in the perplexities of business relations.

Can we expect labor leaders to cultivate these virtues and inculcate them upon the minds of their followers? This would be expecting too much from these men whose outlook is seldom broader than the immediate interests of the class they represent. Here, however, comes the opportunity of the Christian leaders of the day. It is the open door whereby Christian leadership can enter the field of social service. It is so to clergymen, who are by profession and study the champions of righteousness and justice on the earth. Of all classes of professional men, they are expected to defend the just cause of the workingmen. They, of all men, are the guardians of justice in the community. Their commission is to do the righteous and just will of God on earth, their voice and influence must be at the service of every true cause needing advocacy, and the Master will hold them responsible for the advancement of the same.

In order that they may discharge their duty, it is incumbent on them to know the economic life of their fellow-men and make an effort to see that justice be done to them. This they cannot do within the walls of their study. It must be done within the sphere of real life. Many Christian pastors have given us the results of prolonged investigation into economic and sociological conditions, and they are our best evidence that the principles of Christianity are not fatal to scientific investigation. May their number multiply. The opportunity is theirs and the necessary culture is not wanting. The church has long posed in the world as the healer of the diseases of humanity, but she can never discharge her duty in the twentieth century unless her servants go forth to learn the facts of the industrial life of to-day. Look at the waste daily going on around us; see the forces which tend to produce poverty; be-

hold how pitiless are the actions of economic laws ; mark how the antagonistic interests of men drive them apart ; hearken to the bitter cry of children driven to the mill and the mine before their bones are hard and their young brains developed ; shall not the servants of Jesus study these facts ? Never will the church be able to drain the sources of human misery and reclaim the waste places of life until she does. Never will the Bride of Christ discharge her social mission until she comes with the lamp of truth into the mill and the mine, the factory and the workshop, that the sons of toil may see her face and hear her message. But if once she understands the needs of the people, her resources and knowledge, her spirit and gentleness, will prove to the laboring classes that the Christian religion is rational and practicable, and that in her sane teachings there is economic justice to the coöperating forces of industry, social redemption to society, and a Messianic hope to all the world.