

PREFACE

The study of labor organization here presented is offered in the hope that it will encourage a more general interest in the subject. That the problems of labor constitute one of the most serious issues of our industrial and social life is a contention that needs no arguing. It is perhaps less generally recognized that these problems center in labor organizations. It is assumed that the American labor problem is the problem of organized labor; that American unions are the embodiment of the aggressiveness, the restlessness, the hopes, the fears and the ideals of American laborers. In accordance with this assumption the accompanying study has been limited to organizations of laborers.

That there is need of a more thorough understanding of these associations is quite evident. The multiplication of courses in colleges and universities, the increase of books, the abundance of discussion in periodical literature all attest a growing interest. The confusion of essentials and the emphasis of non-essentials in much of the writings and public discussion show a need for more systematic study. It is to meet such a need and to encourage such a study that this book is offered.

It is an Introduction to such a study. It does not aim to say the last word on any topic. Any finality would be fatal to the purpose. It hopes to start and not to conclude such study.

It is a Study of these associations. Its aim is to promote discussion — to promote difference of opinion if need be; for there are issues about which intelligent differences of opinion must and should exist.

With this end in view representative opinions have been introduced on various sides of the questions. The desire has been to present these conflicting opinions as frankly and fully as space would allow. Of course the author accepts no responsibility for the views thus presented. Nor does he ask the reader to accept his own views unless they appear reasonable. Since