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OCT 19 A.M.

LINO BANK—39

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JAN. ISSUE ..... RUNOVER
GAL. 4—MUSSOLINI .....

If they fall into dispute, the matter is referred to a Labor Court [illegible] the new laws have created within the Court of Appeal a Labor Section made up of three magistrates and two [illegible] experts, which is supposed to take care of disputes and infractions of the Law brought before it. If three or more laborers combine to force changes by quitting work or in any way disturbing the regularity of production, they can be fined from one hundred to one thousand lire and imprisoned for from one to two years; if an employer shuts down to force acceptance of changes in wages, hours or conditions, he can be fined from ten thousand to one hundred lire and also imprisoned for from one to two years.

And of course there are other things that these organizations are required to do by Law. Employers must consider the health and well-being of the workers. They must carefully cooperate with various laws—excellent ones concerning maternity and infancy, that have been recently passed; provide opportunities for recreation, education, training.

A brave, and so far as one can see from the surface, a cheerful attempt is being made in Italy to make the Corporate State a success. It is to the great industrial centers that one should go if he is to see how the provisions for the relation of the employer and employed are working out. Genoa, Turin, Milan, are the towns in which the results are the most significant. Ancient Genoa, a great ship-building and trading port, six years ago was in a state of complete demoralization. Strikes were incessant; transportation irregular. The only labor group in Genoa that went through the period without disturbance of mind and activity seems to be that remarkable organization, the "Caravana" of [illegible] so far as I know, [illegible] the oldest labor organization in the world; [illegible] years (it [illegible] never left its duties. Its origin is obscure. Caravana wear today, as 700 years ago, a short plaited kilt shirt over their trousers, a distinguishing mark of which they are very proud. They keep records of their activities dating back to the 14th Century, the earlier ones bound in vellum, and frequently illuminated by those of their members who possess artistic ability. They treasure their privileged place in all civic festivals. [illegible] they keep their character. It is a significant fact these men who have always kept aloof from politics, are now the most loyal and outspoken of Fascisti; indeed no one in Genoa uses the Fascisti salute more constantly.

Turin, which went through some of

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Turin, which went through some of the most tragic industrial experiences in the period from 1919 to 1922, is also thoroughly organized. The town is important in Italy's economic war, for here you find brilliant exhibits of her attempt to strengthen certain points in which she is poorly equipped for the industrial struggle. Twenty-five or thirty years ago, Italy [redacted] to the fact that if she had no black coal, it might be possible that she could replace it by what she calls "white coal," that is that she could use the inexhaustible supplies of water which fall continuously from the high Alps on her Northern border, as well as that which at certain times of the year pour down from the Apennines, to produce electricity for power. Since that time hydro-electric plants have one after another been established in various parts, particularly of the North. In the last few years these plants in the north have been rapidly consolidating into what is very like an American trust—the SIP it is called (Società Idroelettrica Piemonte). [redacted] The importance of this tremendous power development is appreciated if you go into Turin's great automobile factory, the Fiat. In the making of [redacted] famous automobile and also in the multitude of allied products, railroad supplies, metal work of all sorts, tanks, tractors, Diesel engines, and even aeroplanes, the only power used is that generated by these waters which fall from the top of Mt. Cenis. Not a pound of black coal, only white. The ambition of Turin is that she should never have to use coal in any form; and in her great artificial silk works, the greatest of their kind in the world, it is [redacted] To keep the moisture necessary for the spinning of silk, nothing but steam will do.

There are other interesting exhibits in Turin of the attempt to escape from the industrial limitations nature has put on Italy. The great Fiat automobile factory over 1600 feet long, and something like 500 wide, is a solid concrete building. It [redacted] has a feature which is as interesting as the leaning tower of Pisa. On the top of this great five-story building, they have laid out a track for testing cars, which is about 3300 feet in length, and 130 in width. To reach it the cars are sent up a winding corkscrew staircase, fully half a mile in length. This track makes turns, the ends at a startling

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track makes turns, the ends at a startling angle, giving a chance for testing both the climbing and descending capacity of the car. Every car turned out from the factory must make a run of 25 times round this amazing track. We have nothing that approaches this in [illegible] I must [illegible] driving on this aerial test track, looking out over the great plains of Piedmont, and onto the distant Alps.

Now these great industrial undertakings are all working under Mussolini's new syndical system. All of the concerns which I have mentioned, the hydro-electric, the silk industry, the Fiat, were taken with more or less violence, depending upon the resistance of the owners which indeed was not great. The men went in seemingly with the idea that it would be a simple matter for them, the men and women who did the heavy labor, the fetching and carrying, the tending of machines, to conduct them. They had the notion, so common among uneducated workers, that capital is money, money in the safe or the bank. They never visualized it as buildings, machinery, stock, supplies. As long as the materials on hand lasted, the works were run; but soon they found themselves without supplies, and no money to buy them, no money to pay one another. They had taken the factories by violence; but according to the tales that circulate, they were returned in calm dignity.

It is only five years since these things took place; yet today as you go about, you see no signs of disorder, discontent or rebellion. To be sure, the Communist leaders, so far as they are known, have been imprisoned or deported. To be sure, strong Fascisti groups exist in all the factories and outside there is a Fascisti Government, a Fascisti Army ready to act on the moment. Moreover the difficulty of inciting rebellion is great, for no workmen's publications are allowed that do not support the new order; no gatherings are allowed that criticize the new order. It is unwise even to talk revolutionary doctrines to your best friend. All the machinery which formerly kept the workers on edge has been suppressed.

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LINO BANK—40
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GAL. 5—MUSSOLINI .....

What is Mussolini getting in return for this suppression of free communication and for the taking away of his power to strike when he is dissatisfied? He is getting something at least, of that for which he formerly struck: he has an eight hour day. Wages have improved everywhere under his system; but even with the improvement, the wage is so low that one wonders how the workers manage with the increased cost of living. They could not do it if the Italians as a race had not learned the art of living decently on a pittance to a point that I doubt any other nation has reached, mainly not excelled. One of the constant comments that I heard from tourists in Italy when the question of the poverty of the nation or the low wage came up, was that they can not be so poor and manage to dress so well. But you have here part of the art; Italian women as a rule are skillful with their needle, they make out of scraps that we in America would throw into our rag-bag, garments that have at least the merit of tidiness. One healthy and natural effect of fuller collaboration of employing and employed classes which the system has put in force is that it has aroused in many of the former a growing concern about living conditions. You find them reckoning how a man can live on what they are paying. "We pay our houseman thirty lire a day," a serious young lawyer told me in one place, "and my wife and I have been trying to figure out how it is possible for him and his family of four to live on that amount. We are very much worried about it, and we have to figure ourselves so closely that we do not see how we can pay more." This kind of scrutiny of living conditions is much more common in Italy I am convinced than it has been ever before—and it has been made so by

learned a lesson that learned so well.

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ever before—and it has been made so by the new scheme!—The worker is going to enjoy too, greatly improved working conditions. The law requires employers to provide opportunities for recreation, for education, for safety, insurance, better housing.

And how about the employers? I found no enthusiasm for Mussolini's Peace Ship among them; but everywhere an apparently sincere declaration that they intend to do their utmost to make it a success. Some of them tell you it is costing them much more to run their works; one big concern estimates its increase at thirty-five per cent. "Of course," my informer said, "this means in the long run, cutting dividends and increases in prices to the consumer."—Some of them complain, too, of not being able to dismiss summarily an unsatisfactory workman. "It is bad for the shop," they tell you, "to know that a man can shirk and still keep his place." But they generally admit it is better to err on that side than have men at the mercy of irritable or unjust managers. They rejoice in the steady production, that comes from out-lawing the strike. It is giving them a chance to regain what they lost in the years of disturbance, again pay dividends; although they feel their restrictions. "The men have more power than we have," one employer told me ruefully, "but I think it is just that they should have it." The fairness of the employers' attitude toward the workers, their seemingly honest attempt to make the Corporate State a success is one of the most hopeful features of the Great Experiment. For an experiment it is—this Peace Ship of Mussolini—and so everybody admits it to be. The hopeful thing is that they are quite frank in telling you that while the plan probably will make many mistakes, they hope to catch them as they are made, and to correct them. That they are quite willing to change, and change until their creation does function properly. In this they are following Mussolini himself who of all men is the quickest to change an opinion or a method if he sees he is wrong.

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During all this period Mussolini was giving serious attention to the labor problem. ~~If they were successful, and he expected nothing else, with what should they replace the Labor Unions? One comes continually on evidences of the planning that was going on.~~ Certain state labor laws were promised!—an eight-hour day, a minimum wage, a share in management, better laws regarding sickness and death insurance;—things that had long been talked of but never fully realized. Nevertheless the Fascisti were not going to countenance any longer in Italy the attempts of the lower class to pull down those that were higher. Instead, the lower were to struggle to climb up; and their advancement was to depend upon the ability they had. This sounds very like our Democratic talk. "I do not tell you, oh people, that you are as gods," Mussolini said one day in a speech at Florence. ~~"As I love you truly, so I should say to you that you are dirty; you must wrap and change yourselves. You are ignorant, therefore set yourselves to gain instruction. . . . Horny hands are not enough to prove a man capable of guiding a State."~~ . . . . You can make a revolution in twenty-four hours; but you cannot in that time create a new Social Order for a nation which is part of the World Order." And while Mussolini and his colleagues were talking, they were organizing—organizing syndicates and Fascisti Labor Unions. By the time the Government in Rome was operating, there were probably one million laborers in the Fasciti Unions, many of them former Socialists.

A program was soon put out. It was based on the ideas they had been laying down:—every form of production recognized; cooperation between all classes; no privileges; no recognition of persons who were not making a useful contribution to the State; suppression of speculators, particularly the speculators in money. It took four years of persistent work to complete the structure at which they were aiming; and even now, I must confess that when I go up and down Mussolini's Peace Ship, trying to understand its plan and how it is to run, I frequently find myself bewildered, sometimes lost, as I do when I go over a great ocean liner. But the scheme is all down on paper and one can, by a little imagination, see what it proposes.

~~To make it clearer, apply the plan to our own country.~~ Under Mussolini's scheme ~~what would happen to us? We would no longer be recognized by the National Government as merely political units—voters; we would be recognized primarily for the contribution we made to the Nation's prosperity. We would all automatically and immediately be divided into groups according to our occupations, and if we did not have an occupation we would be outcasted. We would be~~ are thirteen classes ~~of us~~ recognized:—the manufacturers one, their employees another; agriculturists one, their employees another; the merchants one, their clerks and accountants another; sea and air transporters one, sailors and aviators and all connected with them another; land and inland water transporters one, their employees another; bankers one, their workers another. And last of the recognized groups that ~~we would have in American life would be that~~ of professional people and artists, lumped together. Look this over and you will see that one of the most useful, and to my mind productive classes of the community is not represented—the woman who heads the home, and bears and rears the children. I heard a highly intelligent Italian woman discussing this. I should say it would be hard to duplicate her usefulness in the State; and certainly she felt her responsibility as an individual. "But where," she said, "do I come in? In these thirteen categories I have no place, yet I claim to

no one any longer is recognized as mere political unit—a voter; but instead according to the contribution made to

sibility as an individual. "But where," she said, "do I come in? In these thirteen categories I have no place, yet I claim to be a productive individual and have a right to be recognized by the State."

But this division into categories is only the beginning of the organization. [illegible] each of these allied groups Guilds have been formed [illegible] these Guilds may unite into federations, these federations in turn forming confederations. After the confederations come the heads of the pyramid added only [illegible] the Department of Ministry of Corporations in the Government. And the chief, of course, is Mussolini himself.

All over Italy people have been knitting their brows over the plan trying to find their particular berth. [illegible] working out, it is apparent that in the future one's importance as a citizen henceforth will depend upon what he produces, not on his vote. The Fascisti hold that an increase in wheat is more valuable than an election won, a good manufacturer more desirable as a citizen than the most acute politician, a skilled mechanic higher than [illegible]

The real test of Mussolini's corporate state depends upon what it does in the factory and the field. There is where the war between Socialist and Fascist centered. Can it bring order and peace there?

Mussolini, however, is not depending on mere organization securing peace between labor and capital. He has provided laws—drastic laws. They were passed in the spring of 1926, and are now, six months later, in full swing. The Corporate State recognizes that the conditions under which an industry is carried on in one place are different from those in another, and that an attempt by the Corporate State to lay down regulations, fix wages and prices and hours for all Italy as national trade unions do, might ruin more than one industry, give unfair advantage to another. Consequently, a certain latitude is given to the local associations which the employer and employee must form if they are to have a legal place in the new State.

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