

# **A SHORT HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN LABOR MOVEMENT**

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A Short History of the American Labor Movement by Mary Beard

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**MARY BEARD**

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OF THE AMERICAN  
LABOR MOVEMENT**



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LABOR MOVEMENT**

BY  
**MARY BEARD**



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## PREFACE

This little book is intended as a brief and simple story of the labor movement in the United States from the day of independence to the present time. Although there are many special studies, including the great treatise by John R. Commons and his Associates, there is no single, comprehensive volume of moderate size for the busy citizen. It seems hardly necessary to dwell upon the importance of more exact and more widespread knowledge of the history, aims and methods of labor organizations in this country.

This volume is largely based upon the monumental *History of Labor in the United States* by Professor Commons and his Associates. Several other books, however, have been used with the Commons text, especially for the history since 1905. Among these supplementary books may be mentioned: P. F. Brissenden, *The I. W. W.: a Study in American Syndicalism* (Columbia University Studies); M. Hillquit, *History of Socialism in the United States*; *Report of the Proceedings of the Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor*; Stanwood, *History of the Presidency* (Vols. I and II) for all party platforms; F. Engels, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*; C. Becker, *History of Political Parties in the Province of New York*; Alice Henry, *The Trade Union Woman*; Edith Abbott, *Woman in Industry*; and Samuel Gompers, *Labor and the Common Welfare*.

MARY RITTER BEARD.

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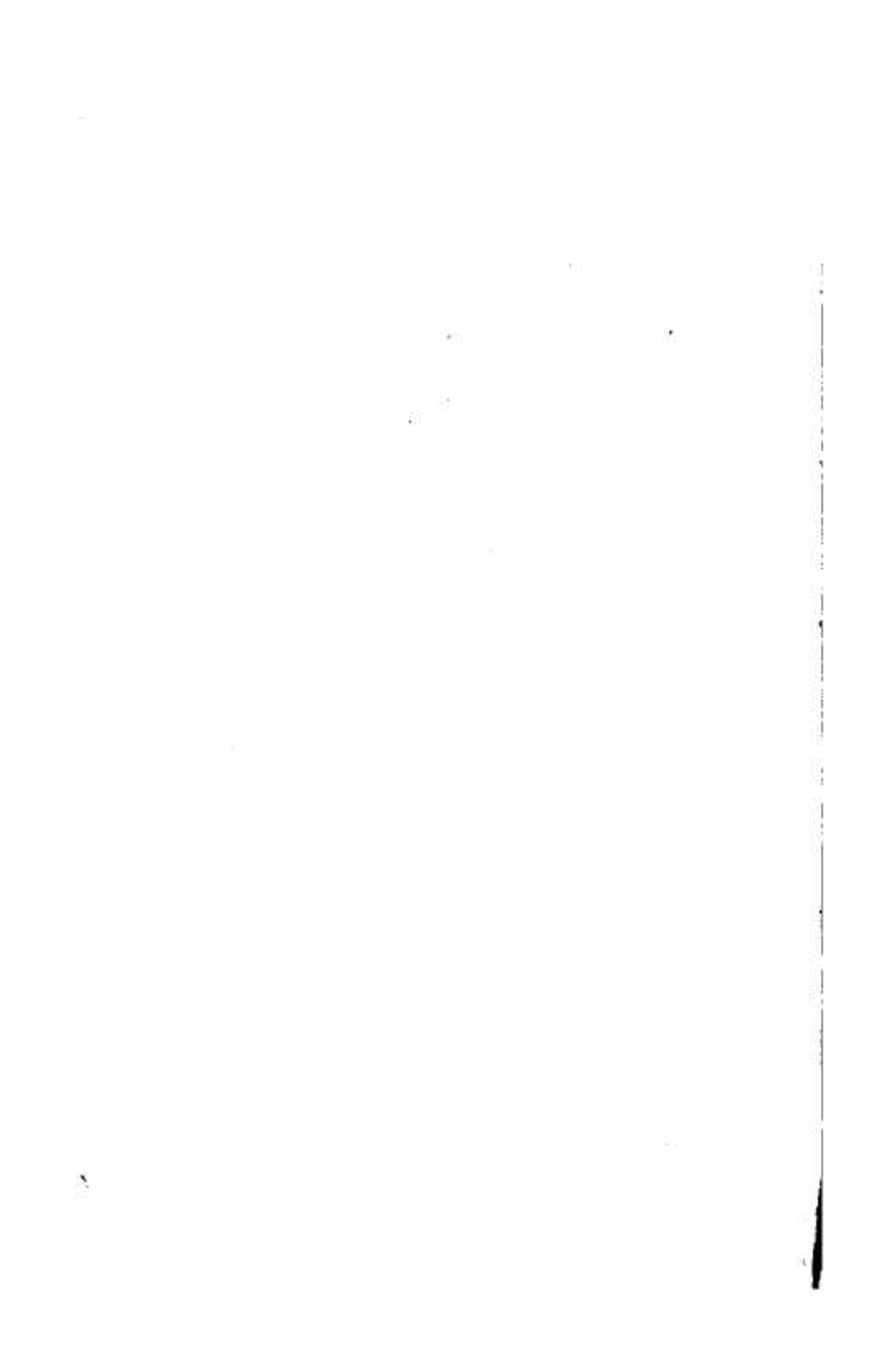
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# A SHORT HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN LABOR MOVEMENT

## CHAPTER I

### NATURE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT

**Labor movement—definition.**—Every modern industrial country has a labor movement; that is, an organized and continuous effort on the part of wage-earners to improve their standards of living over a national area. The outward and visible signs of this movement are trade unions, national federations, strikes, boycotts, lockouts, labor leaders, labor conferences and programs, injunctions, legal battles, prosecutions, co-operative societies, labor and socialist parties, a labor press and labor propaganda, the participation of labor in partisan politics, labor lobbies in legislatures, and labor colleges and educational experiments. Considered as a state of mind, the labor movement is marked by growing sympathy among all crafts, trades, and classes of workers—