

**WORKERS EDUCATION IN THE UNITED  
STATES: REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS  
FIRST NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON  
WORKERS EDUCATION IN THE UNITED  
STATES, 1921**

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**WORKERS EDUCATION BUREAU OF AMERICA**

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— IN THE —  
**UNITED STATES**

**REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS  
FIRST NATIONAL CONFERENCE  
ON WORKERS EDUCATION  
in the UNITED STATES**

**WORKERS EDUCATION BUREAU OF AMERICA**  
— 465 WEST 23RD STREET  
NEW YORK CITY  
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1921

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1921

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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To the New School for Social Research, and in particular Professor Robinson, Miss Smith and Mr. Frank, as the representatives of the New School, we wish to express our thanks for the courtesy in opening its doors to this, the first Conference on Workers' Education in America. In the effort of arranging for this Conference, we feel particularly indebted to Miss Fannia M. Cohn and Mr. Abraham Epstein. The assistance given by the Bureau of Industrial Research has been of great value. And in the preparation of this report for publication, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Anderson, in addition to the Committee in charge, have given generously of their time.

SPENCER MILLER, JR.,

For the Workers Education Bureau of America.

*Workers Educ. Bur. of Amer.*  
 24  
 3-9-1921

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments .....	Page
List of Officers .....	2
Introduction. By Mr. Samuel Gompers .....	6
	7-8

### FIRST SESSION

I. WORKERS' EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES .....	9-60
1. United Labor Education Committee	
By Mr. J. M. Budish .....	11-15
2. Trade Union College of Boston	
By Miss Estelle Frankfurter .....	15-17
3. Rochester Labor College	
By Mr. Paul Blanshard .....	17-20
4. Trade Union College of Greater New York	
By Mrs. Anna Riley Hale .....	20-23
5. Trade Union College of Pittsburgh	
By Mr. P. J. McGrath .....	23-25
6. Rand School of Social Science	
By Mrs. Bertha H. Mally .....	25-27
7. Trade Union College of Philadelphia	
By Miss Frieda S. Miller .....	28-30
8. Educational Department of the Pennsylvania State Federation of Labor	
By Mr. Abraham Epstein .....	30-33
9. Introducing the Pupil to the Class	
By Mr. F. Stacy May .....	33-35
10. International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. Workers' University, Cleveland, Ohio	
By Miss Harriet Silverman .....	36-39
11. International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. Educational Department.	
By Miss Fannia M. Cohn .....	39-49
12. Educational Work of Local 25 of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union	
By Miss Elsie Gluck .....	49-51
13. New Brookwood	
By Mr. H. B. Brougham .....	51-53

14. Labor Educational Program and Activities of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America By Mr. J. B. Salutsky .....	54-60
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### SECOND SESSION

	<i>Page</i>
II. ORGANIZED LABOR AND WORKERS' EDUCATION .....	61-77
1. Value of Workers' Education By Mr. William F. Kehoe .....	63-64
2. Miners' Problems and Workers' Education By Mr. John Brophy .....	65-67
3. Place of the Film in Labor Education By Mr. Joseph D. Cannon .....	67-70
4. The Labor Union as an Educator By Mr. Joseph Schlossberg .....	70-74
5. The Pressing Need of Labor Education By Mr. James H. Maurer .....	75-77

### THIRD SESSION

	<i>Page</i>
III. THE STUDENT AND WORKERS' EDUCATION .....	79-96
1. What Subjects of Study Are of Most Practical Value to the Workers By Mr. J. R. Copenhagen .....	81-82
2. The Education the Workers Want By Mr. Bernard Engel .....	83-84
3. The Value of Workers' Education By Mr. Chris Sproger .....	84-86
4. What I Learned in Workers' Classes By Miss Sarah Schapiro .....	86-88
5. Training of Labor Leaders By Mr. Harry Russell .....	88
6. Education and Class Struggle By Mr. H. Zukoffsky .....	89
7. Democracy in Industry and Education By Mr. Frank Fenton .....	89-92
8. Old and New Education By Mr. George W. Snyder .....	92-93
9. Introducing the Pupil to the Class By Miss Mary Goff .....	94
10. The Engine of Workers' Education By Mr. Harry Hillmer .....	95
11. Working Girl and Labor Education By Miss Jennie Matyos .....	95-96



## FOURTH SESSION

	<i>Page</i>
IV. THE TEACHER AND WORKERS' EDUCATION .....	97-129
1. Teacher and Workers' Education	
By Prof. H. W. L. Dana .....	98-99
2. Methods of Pedagogy in Workers' Education	
By Prof. Lloyd M. Crograve .....	100-102
3. Obstacles in the Way of Labor Education	
By Mr. C. J. Hendley .....	102-108
4. Popularizing Workers' Education	
By Mr. Paul Blanshard .....	109-112
5. Methods of Mass Education	
By Mr. Algernon Lee .....	112-116
6. Psychology and Workers' Education	
By Dr. Margaret Daniels .....	117-118
7. How to Teach A Class of Workers	
By Dr. Alexander Fichandler .....	119-122
8. Class Consciousness As A Factor in Labor Education	
By Mr. J. B. Salutsky .....	122-125
9. What Can the Workers' Teacher Expect of His Students?	
By Prof. Broadus Mitchell .....	125-129

## APPENDIX

	<i>Page</i>
V. THE REPLIES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE ON WORKERS' EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES .....	133-141
VI. THE ORGANIZATION OF A NATIONAL WORKERS' EDUCATION BUREAU .....	142-144
1. Constitution .....	142
2. Aims and Program .....	143-144
3. Election of Officers .....	144

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# INTRODUCTION

## The American Labor Movement and Labor Education

By **SAMUEL GOMPERS**

President, American Federation of Labor

The interest of American labor in education has been long and continuous. As evidence of this may be offered the record of labor in urging and establishing free, popular education more than fifty years ago and report after report of the annual convention of the American Federation of Labor. To quote from the report of the Executive Council of the St. Paul convention in 1918:

It is a well-known and generally accepted fact that the public school system of the United States was created because of the insistent demands of our pioneer trade unionists in the early part of last century.

Particular attention should be drawn likewise to the report of the Educational Committee at the same convention and the action of the convention in its recommendations. The report of the same committee to the Atlantic City convention in 1919 is a highly instructive document for those who imagine that the American Federation of Labor is lacking in its appreciation of education as a matter of vital concern to the labor movement as well as to American citizenship as a whole.

Whoever will read the proceedings of the American Federation of Labor from year to year will find them most interesting and conclusive evidence that the American labor movement is abreast or perhaps in advance of similar efforts made by the working people of any other country. The recommendations of the Executive Council to the conventions and the resolutions introduced, discussed and adopted and the recommendations of the committee on education show that America's labor's contribution to this subject is widespread and vital.

In addition to its deep concern in public education the American Federation of Labor has been fully alive to the significance of the educational work which has recently grown up under trade union auspices. As one proof of this you need only turn to the report of the Executive Council to the Atlantic City convention in 1919 wherein is set forth a survey of some of the initial experiments in trade union instruction of a collegiate order. At the Montreal convention of the following year (1920) attention was drawn to the vital importance