

## CONSANGUINITY OF LABOR AND EDUCATION.

BY WILLIAM J. TUCKER.

[William Jewett Tucker, president Dartmouth college since 1893; born Griswold, Conn., July 13, 1839; graduated from Dartmouth in 1861; ordained Congregational minister, and has been the pastor of Franklin street church, Manchester, N. H., Madison Square church, New York; professor Andover theological seminary; founder of the Andover house, Boston; editor Andover Review. Author: *The Making and the Unmaking of the Preacher*; *From Liberty to Unity*.]

What I have to say is in the nature of some reflections upon the mind of the wage earner—an expression which I borrow from the opening sentence of the book by John Mitchell on organized labor: "The average wage earner has made up his mind that he must remain a wage earner." I would not take this generalization in any unqualified way. The author has himself qualified it by the use of the word average. But when reduced to its lowest terms, it is, I think, the most serious statement which has been made of late concerning the social life of the country, for it purports to be the statement of a mental fact. If Mr. Mitchell had said that in his opinion the conditions affecting the wage earner were becoming fixed conditions, that would have been a statement of grave import, but quite different from the one made. Here is an interpretation of the mind of the wage earner, from one well qualified to give an interpretation of it, to the effect that the average wage earner has reached a state of mind in which he accepts the fixity of his condition. Having reached this state of mind, the best thing which can be done is to organize the wage earner into a system through which he may gain the greatest advantage possible within his accepted limitations. I am not disposed to take issue with the conclusion of the argument (I am a firm believer in trade unions), but I do not like the major premise of the argument. I should be sorry to believe that it was altogether true. And in so far as it is true—in so far, that is, as we are confronted by this mental fact—I believe that we should address ourselves to it quite as definitely as to the physical facts which enter into the labor problem.

## CONSANGUINITY OF LABOR AND EDUCATION 427

If the average wage earner has made up his mind that he must remain a wage earner, we have a new type of solidarity, new at least to this country. No other man amongst us has made up his mind to accept his condition. The majority of men are accepting the conditions of their daily work, but it is not an enforced acceptance. This is true of the great body of people engaged in farming, in mercantile pursuits, and in most of the underpaid professional employments.

In the social order, one of two things must be present to create a solidarity—pride or a grievance. An aristocracy of birth is welded together by pride. It perpetuates itself through the increasing pride of each new generation. An aristocracy is an inheritance, not of wealth, for some families are very poor, but of an assured state of mind. An aristocrat does not have to make up his mind; it has been made up for him. An aristocracy is in this respect entirely different from a plutocracy. A plutocracy is at any given time merely an aggregation of wealth. People are struggling to get into it and are continually falling out of it. There is no mental repose in a plutocracy. It is a restless, struggling, disintegrating mass. It has no inherent solidarity.

Next to pride, the chief source of solidarity is a grievance. The solidarity may be transient or permanent. It lasts as long as the sense of grievance lasts. Sometimes the sense of grievance is worn out; then you have to invent some other term than solidarity to express the deplorable condition into which a mass of people may fall. But whenever the sense of dissatisfaction is widespread and permanent it deepens into a grievance which creates solidarity. The human element involved is at work to intensify and to perpetuate itself.

Now, when it is said that the average wage earner has made up his mind that he must remain a wage earner, the saying assumes unwillingness on his part, the sense of necessity, and therefore a grievance which, as it is communicated from man to man, creates a solidarity. If you can eliminate the grievance, you break up the solidarity. The wage earner then becomes, like the farmer, the trader, the schoolmaster, a man of a given occupation. The fact of the great number of wage earners signifies nothing in a social sense, unless they are



bound together by a grievance, unless they have made up their mind to some conclusion which separates them from the community at large or the body politic.

We have come, it seems to me, to the most advanced question concerning labor, as we find ourselves in the presence of this mental fact which Mr. Mitchell asserts. What can be done to so affect the mind of the wage earner that it will not work toward that kind of solidarity which will be of injury to him and to society?

It is, of course, entirely obvious that a greater freedom of mind on the part of the wage earner may be expected to follow the betterment of his condition. This betterment of condition is the one and final object of the trade union. I doubt if one half of that which the trade union has gained for the wage earner could have been gained in any other way. I doubt if one quarter of the gain would have been reached in any other way. Trade unionism is the business method of effecting the betterment of the wage earner under the highly organized conditions of the modern industrial world. But trade unionism at its best must do its work within two clear limitations.

In the first place, every advance that trade unionism tries to make in behalf of the wage earner as such finds a natural limit. The principle of exclusiveness, of separate advantage, is a limited principle. At a given point, now here, now there, it is sure to react upon itself, or to be turned back. Organization meets opposing organization. Public interests become involved. Moral issues are raised. The co-operating sympathy of men, which can always be counted upon in any fair appeal to it, turns at once into rebuke and restraint if it is abused. The wage earner in a democracy will never be allowed to get far beyond the average man through any exclusive advantages which he may attempt through organization.

In the second place, trade unionism can deal with the wage earner only as a wage earner, and he is more than a wage earner. There comes a time when he cannot be satisfied with wages. The betterment of his condition creates wants beyond which it satisfies. The growing mind of the wage earner, like anybody's growing mind, seeks to widen its environment. It wants contact with other kinds of minds. When once it be-

comes aware of its provincialism it tries to escape from it—a fact which is clearly attested in the broadening social and political relations of the stronger labor leaders.

But while I believe that trade unionism is the business method of enlarging the mind of the wage earner through the betterment of his condition, I think that the time has come for the use or adaptation of other means which may give it freedom and expansion. One means of preventing a narrow and exclusive solidarity of wage earners is greater identification on their part with the community through the acquisition of local property. Mobility is, in the earlier stages of the development of the wage earner, the source of his strength. He can easily change to his interest. No advantage can be taken of his fixity. He can put himself without loss into the open market. He can avail himself at once of the highest market price, provided his change of place does not affect injuriously his fellow workers in the union—an exception of growing concern.

But in the more advanced stages of labor the wage earner gains the privilege of localizing himself, and in so doing he takes a long step in the direction of full and free citizenship. A good deposit in a savings bank adds to his social value, but that value is greatly enhanced by exchanging it for a good house.

I am aware that in advancing the acquisition of local property I touch upon the large and as yet undetermined question of the decentralization of labor. If the great cities are to be the home of the industries, then this idea can be realized in only a partial degree through suburban homes. But if the industries are to seek out or establish smaller centers, then the wage earner has the opportunity to become more distinctly and more conspicuously a citizen.

Another means of giving freedom and expansion to the wage earning population in place of a narrow and exclusive solidarity is by giving to it ready access to the higher education. There is no reason why the former experience of the New England farmer and the present experience of the western farmer should not be repeated in the family of the intelligent wage earner. The sons of the New England farmer who



were sent to college identified their families with the state and church and with all public interests. They lifted the family horizon. I have said that this experience may be repeated in the families of the wage earner. It is being repeated. Let me give you an illustration with which I am familiar. The students at Dartmouth are divided about as follows, according to the occupation of their fathers: Thirty per cent are the sons of business men, twenty five per cent of professional men, fifteen per cent of farmers; of the remaining thirty per cent, more than half are the sons of wage earners. The per cent from the shops now nearly equals that from the farm. I have no doubt that this proportion will hold in most of our eastern colleges and universities. The home of the wage earner is becoming a recruiting ground for higher education which no college can afford to overlook. As Professor Marshall, the English economist, has said, since the manual labor classes are four or five times as numerous as all other classes put together, it is not unlikely that more than half of the best natural genius that is born into the country belongs to them. And from this statement he goes on to draw the conclusion that there is no extravagance more prejudicial to the growth of the national wealth than that wasteful negligence which allows genius which happens to be born of lowly parentage to expend itself in lowly work. So much for the necessity of fresh, virile and self supporting stock to the higher education, if it is to discharge its obligation to society. Virility is as necessary to educational progress as it is to industrial progress. I am in the habit of saying that, from an educational point of view, it is on the whole easier to make blue blood out of red blood than it is to make red blood out of blue blood. The reaction from the higher education upon the family of the wage earner is yet to be seen, but no one can doubt its broadening influence. As the representatives of these families become more numerous in our colleges and universities, and as they have time to make a place for themselves in all the great callings, they will of necessity lift those whom they represent toward their own level. Some of them will become captains of industry. I believe that in that capacity they will also become leaders of labor. For, as it

seems to me, the settlement of the relation of capital and labor is to be more and more, not in the hands of men who have been trained away from one another, but in the hands of men who have been trained toward one another. The industrial world is becoming a great school in which men must learn to practice the industrial virtues. And among these virtues I put, next to honesty in work and in the wage of work, and absolute fidelity in keeping agreements at any cost, that sense of justice which comes of the ability to put one's self in another's place. When we have capitalists and leaders of labor, it must be both at one and the same time, who are really able to reason together, we shall have industrial peace. This will mean arbitration at first hand.

I mention another source of freedom and breadth and power to the wage earner—a source which is common to all—namely, satisfaction in his work. The wage is not and never can be the sufficient reward of labor. This is just as true of the salary as of the wage. The difference at present lies in the fact that the person on a low salary is apt to take more satisfaction in his work than the person on a high wage—the school teacher on \$800 or \$1,000 a year, in distinction from the mechanic on four or six dollars a day. The present ambition of the high wage earner seems to incline more to the pecuniary rewards of his work than to the work itself. Doubtless this tendency is due in no slight degree to the fact that the wage earner is brought into constant and immediate contact with the money making class. He sees that the value of the industry is measured chiefly by its profits. Sometimes the profits are flaunted in his face. At all times the thing most in evidence to him is money. I deprecate this constant comparison between the capitalist and the laborer. The comparisons were far better taken between the workman and the other men whose chief reward is not money. The old time professions still live and maintain their position through a certain detachment from pecuniary rewards. The exceptional doctor may receive large fees, but his profession forbids him to make a dollar out of any discovery which he may make in medicine. The exceptional minister may receive a large salary, but his profession puts the premium upon self denying



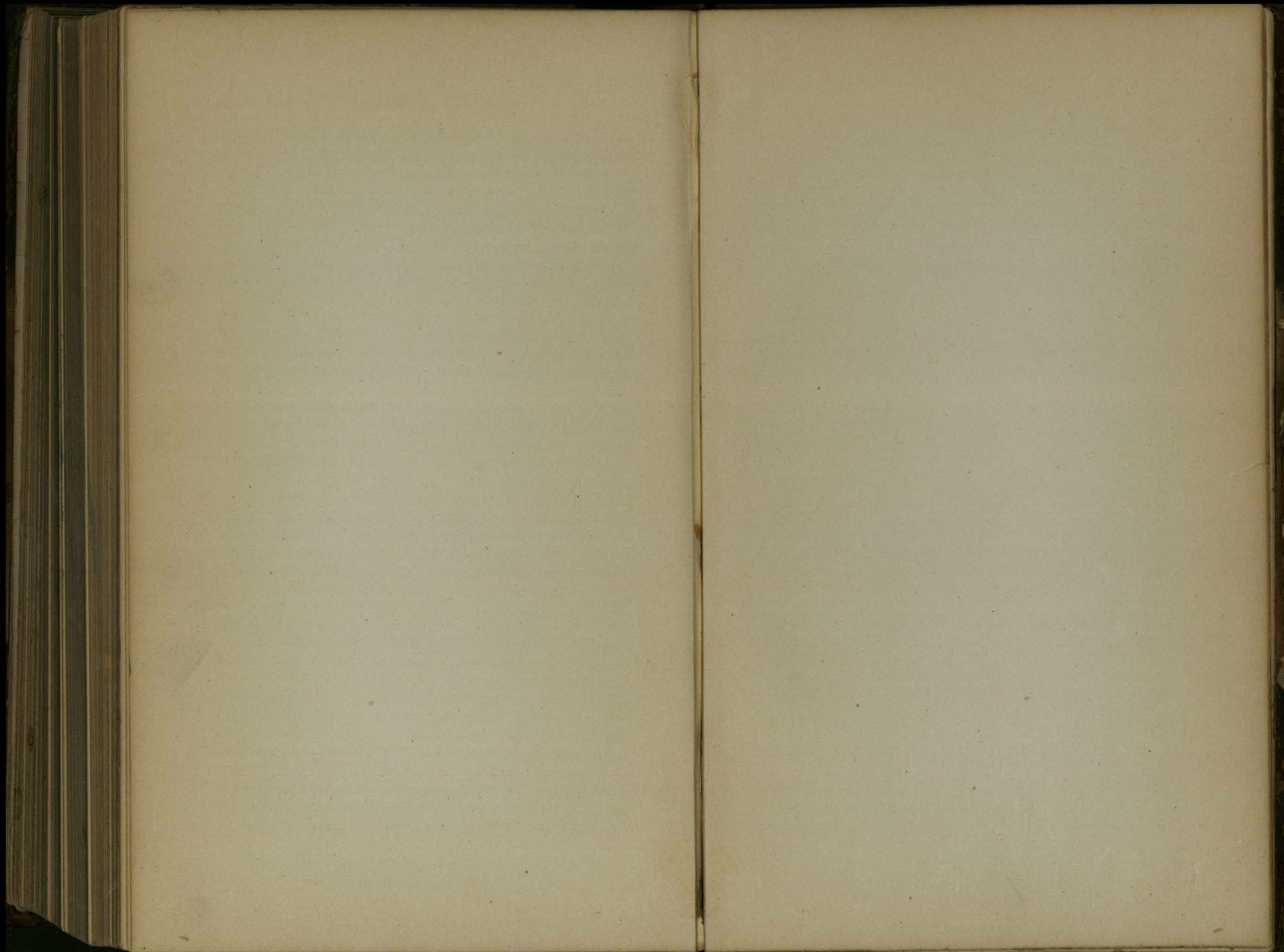
work. Even the law is more distinctively represented by the moderate salary of the average judge than by the retainer of the counsel for a wealthy corporation. The skilled workman, the artisan, belongs with these men, not with the money makers. In allowing himself to be commercialized he enters upon a cheap and unsatisfying competition. His work is an art, and he has the possible reward of the artist. Under mediævalism the guild and the university were not far apart. I should like to see the relation restored and extended.

I am not speaking in this connection of the unskilled laborer. There is a point below which it is impossible to idealize labor. The man who works in ceaseless and petty monotony, and under physical discomfort and danger, cannot do anything more than to earn an honest livelihood, if, indeed, he receives the living wage. But he is as far removed from the advanced wage earner of our day as he is from any of the well supported and well rewarded classes. For him we are all bound to work, and to act, and to think—not as an object of our charity, but as a part of our industrial brotherhood; and whenever a great labor leader, be he John Burns or John Mitchell, goes to his relief and tries to give him self supporting and self respecting standing, we should count it not a duty but an honor to follow the leading; but equally do I hold it to be a duty and an honor that, as the wage earner advances in intelligence, in pecuniary reward, and in position, he should take his place without any reservation whatever among those who are trying to meet the responsibilities which attach to citizenship in a democracy.

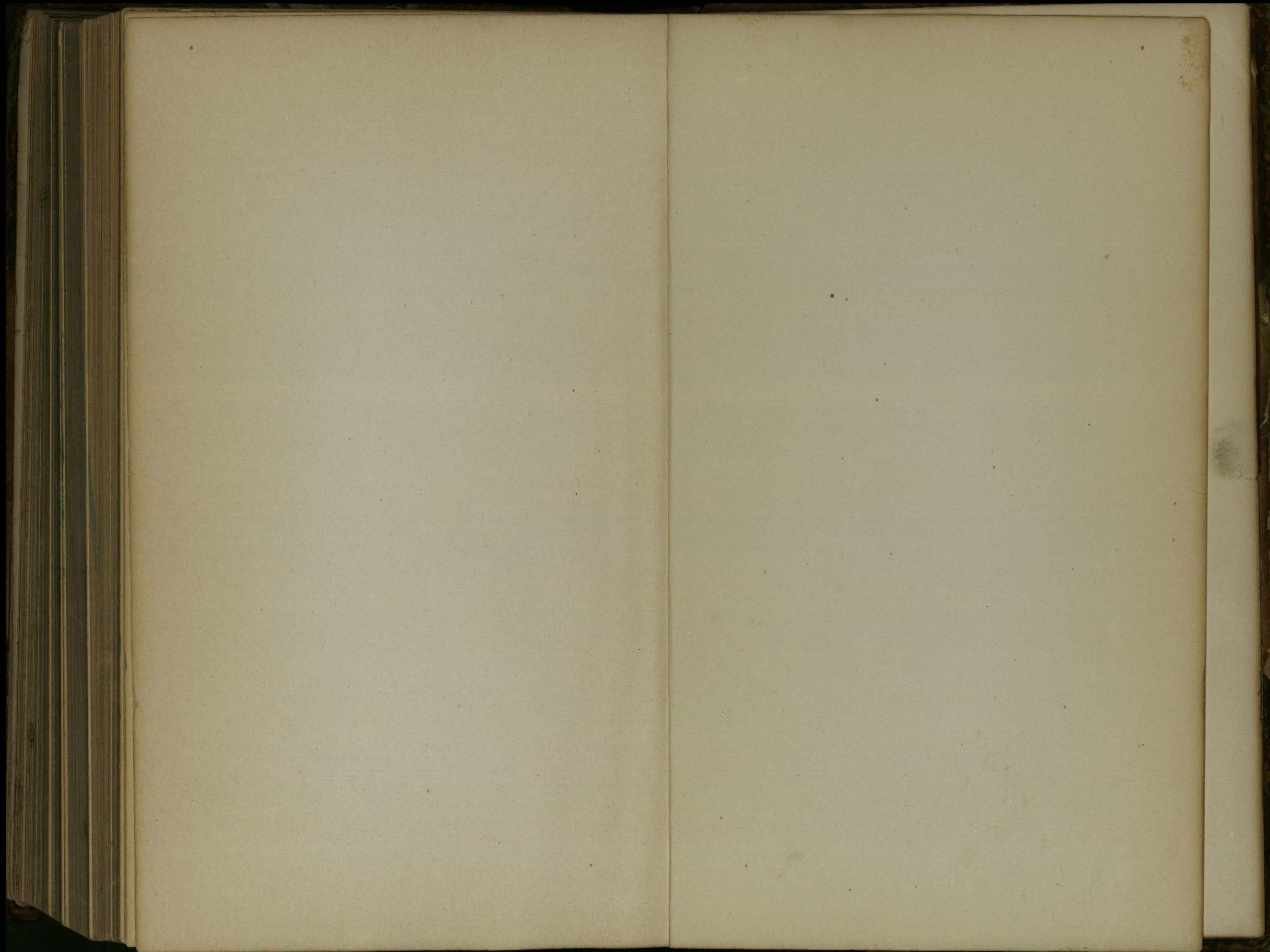
But viewing the present disposition and purpose of the best intentioned leaders in the ranks of organized labor, I am convinced that their avowed object is not commensurate with their opportunity. I am convinced that the interpretation put upon the mind of the wage earner, if it represents a present fact, ought to suggest a duty toward the mind of labor. That duty is to give it freedom, breadth, expansion; to incorporate it into the common mind of aspiration and hope, the American type of mind. In saying this I do not overlook or minimize the imperative duty of raising the lowest wage earner to the highest place to which he can be lifted, and of giving a

future to his children and to his children's children. I would urge, in the full apostolic sense, the old apostolic injunction—We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak. But I would not stop with this duty. I would make the wage earner, as he grows strong, a helper all round; a partner in all the serious work of the republic; an active power in that commonwealth which draws no line within the wants or hopes of man.

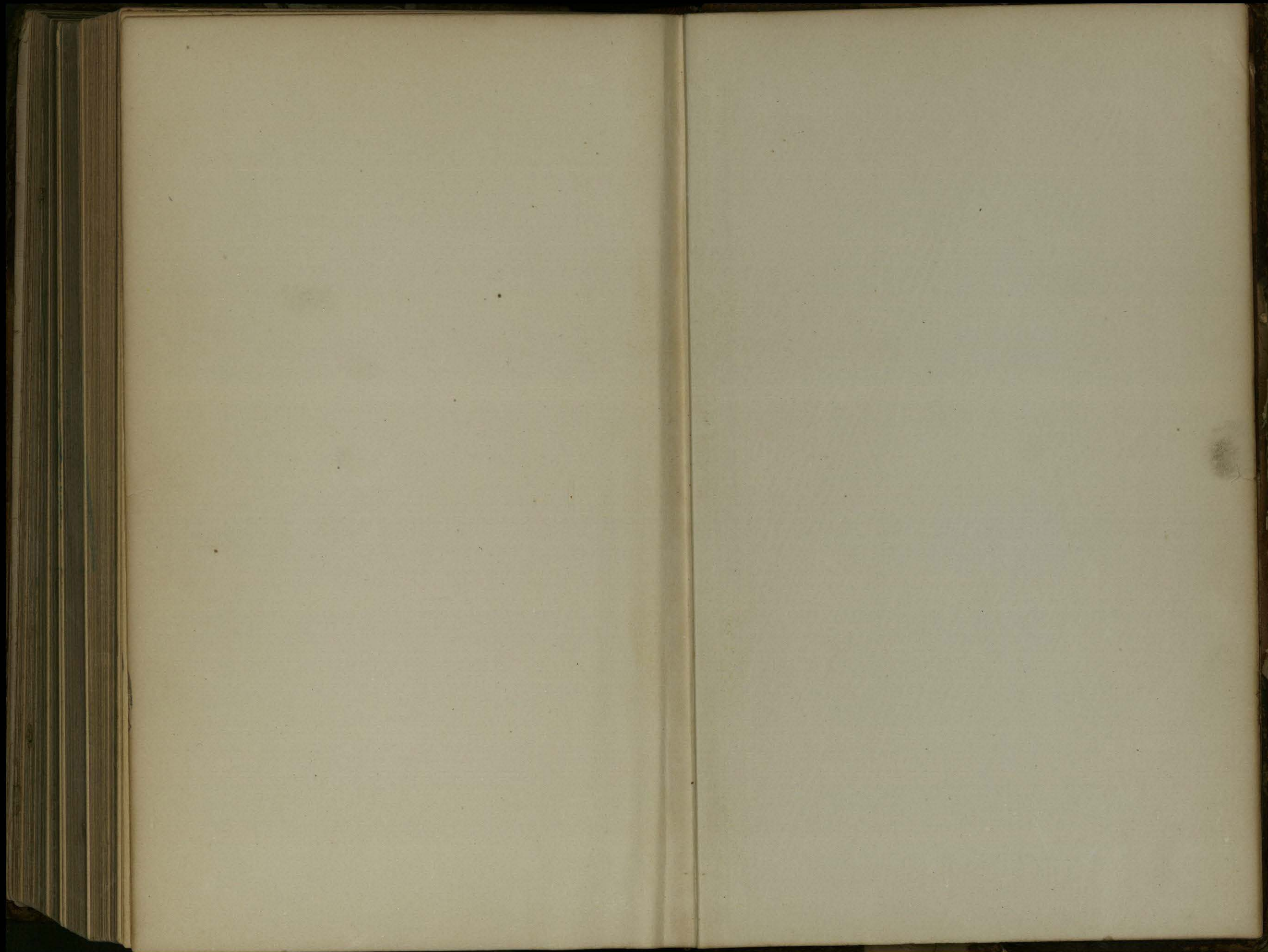














U. A. N. L.

Esta publicación deberá ser devuelta antes de la última fecha abajo indicada.

[illegible]

HC103  
.L25  
1907  
v.8

CABU: FG

46



\*1020046634\*

LA FALLETE, Robert Marion.

TITULO  
The making of América.

128446



