

CONSTITUTION

— OF THE —

Silk • Ribbon • Weavers

Progressive Union

— OF —

NEW YORK.



College Point, E. I.

Queens County Freie Presse" Steam Print, 13th Street, bet. 3d & 4th Aves.,

1889.

NOTICE.

All members are requested to take this book with them, when making Engagement for new employments.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

Society at present is composed of classes whose interests are highly antagonistic to each other. On the one side we have the proprietary class, possessing almost all the soil, all houses, factories, means of transportation, machines, raw material and all necessaries of life. In comparison to the entire people this class represents a small minority.

Upon the other side we have the workmen, possessing nothing but their intellectual and physical power with which to labor, and which they must sell to the possessors of the means of production in order to live. The workers represent the millions.

The interest of the possessing class consists in buying the productive power of the laborer as cheap as possible, in order to produce as much as possible and to amass wealth. The few hundred thousand proprietors arrogate to themselves the larger part of the wealth produced by the workers.

The laboring millions receive from the product of their labor only as much as is necessary to live a life of misery and starvation.

Every improvement in machinery, every new discovery of hitherto unknown forces of nature the proprietary class arrogates to itself for the exclusive purpose of increasing its possessions; through this process human labor is more and more replaced by machinery.

The workers having become superfluous are compelled to sell their labor at any price in order to save themselves from starvation. The value of labor gradually decreases; the laboring people are being impoverished more and more, its consuming power is more and more lessened, and the consequence is that the commodities produced remain upon the market without being bought by anyone, commercial stagnation sets in, production is decreased, and even partly suspended. The crisis has arrived.

The proprietary classes press into their service the power of the State, the Police, Militia, Press and Pulpit, to protect their possessions produced by others, and to declare the "sacredness" of property.

While the millions of the working people are left without all means of existence, without rights and unprotected, betrayed and sold out to their enemies by the State, by the Press and by the Pulpit, the arms of the Police and of the Militia are directed against them.

In consideration of these facts we declare :

1. That the laboring class must emancipate itself from all influences of its enemy, the proprietary class : that it must organize locally, nationally and internationally, for the purpose of setting the power of the organized masses against the power of capitalism ; and that it must see that its interests be represented in the shops, in the different branches of the local, state and national administration and governments.

2. National and international Trade Unions, are apt to exert a powerful influence upon production, prices, the hours of labor, regulation of apprenticeship, and to support their members in all the different places of life.

3. The combat through which they have naturally to go with the organized power of capitalism lead them to recognize that all Trade Unions must form one great, powerful body ; the solidarity of the interests of all is proclaimed, the workers mutually assist each other. Soon the fact will be recognized that the entire system of production rests upon the very shoulders of the laboring class, and that, if the workers only display their firm determination and exert their power, a new system based upon justice might be easily introduced.

Arrayed against the power of capitalism and its minions stands the power of the laboring masses self-reliant and conscious that they possess the power with which to overwhelm their antagonists.

4. There is no power on earth large enough to resist the will of such a majority if it be enlightened in regard to its rights ; it will accomplish its aims and objects irresistibly. The right of nature is upon its side. The earth, together with all its wealth, belongs to mankind. The results and triumphs of civilization have been achieved through the course of thousands of years, and with the assistance of all nations. The organized workers will come to carry out into the reality these principles, and they will establish a state of affairs under which every one will enjoy the fruits of his labor.



CONSTITUTION.

ART. I. NAME.

The name of this organization shall be :
Silk-Ribbon Weavers Progressive Union of New York.

ART. II. OBJECT OF THE ORGANIZATION.

Sec. 1. The economical and intellectual advancement of all silk-ribbon weavers.

Sec. 2. This object is to be reached through the following means :

a) Organization of all silk-ribbon weavers.

b) Regulation of differences with employers.

c) Lectures and discussions on the social relations between labor and capital and the economical and political position of the working class.

ART. III. ADMISSION OF NEW MEMBERS.

Sec. 1. Every silk-ribbon weaver of good character and who agrees to abide by the constitution of the organization, may be admitted as a member.

Sec. 2. Every applicant for membership must be proposed by a member in good standing at a meeting preceding the meeting where he is to be admitted. Such proposing member shall give the name and shop-address of the applicant.

Sec. 3. Every applicant who has been a member of another organization must prove that he has fully satisfied all his obligations towards his former organization; otherwise he cannot be admitted.

Sec. 4. In case such member has been admitted upon false statements, he shall be suspended until he has fully satisfied his obligations towards his former organization. Upon refusal to do so, such member shall be expelled from the union.

ART. IV. DUTIES OF MEMBERS.

Sec. 1. Every new member shall upon his admission pay the initiation fee of \$1.00, fixed by the union and one month's dues.

Sec. 2. The monthly dues have been fixed at 30 Cents, half of which shall go into the strike fund.

Sec. 3. Every member must abide by all resolutions passed by a majority vote; this applies also to members who were absent from the meeting where a resolution was adopted.

Sec. 4. It is the duty of the members to bring their membership cards to every meeting, and on request to exhibit the same to the Sergeant-at-Arms.

ART. V. RIGHTS OF MEMBERS.

Sec. 1. Members who are out of employment or otherwise in distress may by resolution be excused from the payment of dues for a stated time.

Sec. 2. Every member shall have access to the books of the union.

ART. VI.

A member shall forfeit his membership:

- a) If he is in arrears with his dues for more than two months.
- b) If he offends against the interests of the union.

ART. VII. ADMINISTRATION.

Sec. 1. The affairs of the union shall be conducted by the following officers:

Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Financial Secretary and Treasurer. In addition there shall be elected: 3 Auditors, 2 Trustees, 1 Statistician and 1 Sergeant-at-Arms.

Sec. 2. A chairman shall be elected at each meeting; the trustees and the statistician shall be elected for one year and the other officers for six months.

Sec. 3. It is the duty of all members to aid the officers in the discharge of their functions.

Sec. 4. If any officer shall be absent for three successive meetings without sufficient excuse, he shall be removed from his office and another officer be elected in his place.

ART. VIII. DUTIES OF OFFICERS.

Sec. 1. The chairman shall conduct the meeting for which he has been elected in an impartial manner and sign all bills and receipts.

Sec. 2. The recording secretary shall call the meetings of the union to order, keep correct minutes of all proceedings and read the minutes at the next meeting.

Sec. 3. The corresponding secretary shall conduct the entire correspondence and keep a correct list of all members. He shall also have charge of the seal of the union and have the same at hand at every meeting of the union.

Sec. 4. a) The financial secretary shall receive all dues, initiation fees and taxes, and upon proper receipt turn the same over to the treasurer.

b) He shall also give once every month a report as to members in arrears, and once every three months he shall render a complete financial report.

c) Upon receiving monies for dues he shall first deduct any strike money that may be due.

d) He shall keep a correct list of all members, stating names and residences.

Sec. 5. a) The treasurer shall receive all monies coming to the union. He shall pay all orders and bills ordered to be paid, keep an exact account of all receipts and expenditures, and render a quarterly report to the union.

b) He shall at no time have on hand more than \$25.00 cash; all cash money in excess of that amount shall be deposited by the trustees in a bank designated by the union and the bank book kept by the treasurer.

Sec. 6. The auditors shall once every three months audit the books and report the result to the union.

Sec. 7. The sergeant-at-arms shall at every meeting have the right to examine the membership cards, and if it appears from any card that the holder is in arrears for more than two months, the sergeant-at-arms shall at once bring this fact to the attention of the meeting under a point of order.

Sec. 8. It is the duty of the statistician to gather statistics concerning the wages and mode of work and living of the silk-ribbon weavers and regarding the condition of the silk-ribbon wearing trade in general.

ART. IX. ORDER OF BUSINESS.

1. Opening of the meeting through the recording secretary.
2. Election of a chairman.
3. Reading of the minutes.
4. Proposal and admission of applicants for membership.
5. Shop-Reports.
6. Report of officers.
7. Report of committee.
8. Correspondences and bills.
9. Unfinished business.
10. New business.
11. Discussion for the welfare of the union.

ART. X. MEETINGS.

Sec. 1. The meetings shall be held once every two weeks.

Sec. 2. The last meeting in each quarter of a year shall be a general meeting.

Sec. 3. Ten members may by written request, stating the reason for their demand, demand that a special meeting be called; such meeting must be called by the secretary.

ART. XI. UNION FUNDS.

Sec. 1. All monies which come into the treasury from initiation fees, dues, fines, extra taxes or from entertainments, must be used for union purposes only.

Sec. 2. Appropriations not provided in the constitution can only be resolved by a two-thirds vote of the members present. Extraordinary appropriations must be submitted to a general vote.

Sec. 3. No monies shall be drawn from the bank except upon a resolution of the union, which must be written and sealed and signed by the recording secretary.

ART. XII. DISBANDMENT OF THE UNION.

This Union cannot be dissolved as long as there remain nine members in good standing who uphold its principles and constitutions.

GENERAL REGULATIONS AND SHOP RULES.

Sec. 1. If any difficulty should arise in any shop, which cannot be settled by the strike-committee, the latter shall at once notify the corresponding-secretary of the union, who shall, if necessary, call a special meeting to discuss and decide whether a strike shall be ordered or not.

Sec. 2. After a strike has been ordered in a shop, every member on strike shall receive after two weeks support in an amount to be fixed by the union.

Sec. 3. To provide funds for this support, a tax may be levied on all members at work, to be collected and receipted every two weeks.

Sec. 4. If a member employed in a shop where a strike has been ordered, should refuse to stop work, he shall be expelled and his name published, so as to warn other organizations.

Sec. 5. Any member who is convicted of scabbing, may be expelled and shall only be re-admitted on payment of a fine to be fixed by the union.

Sec. 6. Members who have been victimized for their activity in the interest of the union, receive a weekly support to be fixed by the union until they have found employment.

Sec. 7. In shops where five or more members are employed, collectors and delegates shall be elected, who shall conduct the shop affairs in accordance with the constitution. But in shops with small membership the collector may also act as delegate.

Sec. 8. The collector shall receive and enter in a book the dues, and shall deliver the same, with a statement of the names and card-numbers of the members who paid the same, to the financial secretary at or before the next meeting of the union and shall submit the receipt, which he shall take for the same, at the next shop meeting.

Sec. 9. Every shop must have a meeting once every two weeks for the purpose of regulating shop-matters and collecting the dues.

Sec. 10. It is also the duty of every shop to see to it that every new silk-ribbon weaver entering the shop belongs to a labor organization.

Sec. 11. Every shop-delegate and collector must attend every meeting of the union.

Shops situated at great distance from the meeting room of the union are held to refund the traveling expenses to their delegates and collectors.





Receipt-Book

for Member

.....
Initiation fees paid \$.....



Admitted.....

.....
Sec'y.

PAYMENTS received by STAMPS issued by Finance SECRETARY.

1889

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL

MAY

JUNE

JULY

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

PAYMENTS received by STAMPS issued by Finance SECRETARY.

1890

JAN UARY	FEBR UARY
MAR CH	APR IL
MA Y	JU NE
JU LY	AUG UST
SEPT EMBER	OCT OBER
NOVE MBER	DECE MBER

PAYMENTS received by STAMPS issued by Finance SECRETARY.

1891

JAN UARY	FEBR UARY
MAR CH	APR IL
MA Y	JU NE
JU LY	AUG UST
SEPT EMBER	OCT OBER
NOVE MBER	DECE MBER

PAYMENTS received by STAMPS issued by Finance SECRETARY.

1892

JAN UARY	FEBR UARY
MAR CH	APR IL
MA Y	JU NE
JU LY	AUG UST
SEPT EMBER	OCT OBER
NOVE MBER	DECE MBER

PAYMENTS received by STAMPS issued by Finance SECRETARY.

1893

JAN UARY	FEBR UARY
MAR CH	APR IL
MA Y	JU NE
JU LY	AUG UST
SEPT EMBER	OCT OBER
NOVE MBER	DECE MBER

PAYMENTS received by STAMPS issued by Finance SECRETARY.

1894

JAN UARY	FEBR UARY
MAR CH	APR IL
MA Y	JU NE
JU LY	AUG UST
SEPT EMBER	OCT OBER
NOVE MBER	DECE MBER

PAYMENTS received by STAMPS issued by Finance SECRETARY.

1895

JAN UARY	FEBR UARY
MAR CH	APR IL
MA Y	JU NE
JU LY	AUG UST
SEPT EMBER	OCT OBER
NOVE MBER	DECE MBER

