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AMERICANISM AND FORDISM—AMERICAN STYLE: Kate Richards O’Hare’s “Has Henry Ford Made Good?”

by
David Roediger

Years before Antonio Gramsci wrote his seminal chapters on “Americanism and Fordism,” the U.S. socialist author and orator Kate Richards O’Hare (1876–1948) published lengthy descriptions of the Ford system in the St. Louis-based mass circulation Socialist monthly, *The National Rip-Saw*. O’Hare’s accounts share Gramsci’s appreciation for the sweep of Henry Ford’s efforts in effecting both productive advances and human transformation. But unlike Gramsci, she portrays little of the extreme alienation engendered by Fordist mass production.

O’Hare, born Kathleen Richards in central Kansas, was the child of ranchers ruined by the drought of 1887. Her father then took a job as a machinist in Kansas City where she became active in religious and temperance causes and then in antimonopoly agitation. Converted to socialism after hearing a speech by the labor orator Mary “Mother” Jones, O’Hare joined the Socialist Labor Party in 1899. She met her husband, Frank O’Hare of St. Louis, in 1902 at the Socialist School of Social Economy in Girard, Kansas, a year after she had become a member of the Socialist Party of America. Active in Oklahoma, Kansas City and St. Louis Socialist movements in the next decades, O’Hare became a radical leader of national repute. She was a spellbinding speaker whom the historian James Green has called the “best orator” in the huge Socialist encampments of the Southwest. O’Hare was a moderate Socialist, who generally sided with the majority of

the Party leadership but sometimes defended dissident “decentralizers” within the Party.¹

The *Rip-Saw*, in which O’Hare published her reportage on Ford, was edited by Philip Wagner and coedited by the O’Hares, along with Eugene V. Debs, H.M. Tichenor, W.S. Morgan, and Oscar Ameringer in 1916. Begun by “Colonel” Dick Maple in 1904, the St. Louis-based monthly became a Socialist publication in 1907. Carrying the motto “BLIND AS A BAT TO EVERYTHING BUT TRUTH” and running 24 pages per issue, the *Rip-Saw* featured some of the liveliest short writing by American Socialists. Its circulation was 150,000 in 1916.²

O’Hare visited the Ford plant at Highland Park, Michigan on November 28, 1915 and spent a second day there as well. Her *Rip-Saw* editor commented that “as a rule six hours is plenty to know about an ordinary industrial plant for an investigator of Mrs. O’Hare’s wide experience, but two solid days was all too short” to examine the “most spectacular experiment ever made in the world.”³ The editor added that a “staff of experts was put at [O’Hare’s] disposal . . . to show her around and to answer her questions and every door in the factory was opened to her.”⁴ Impressions from “the Socialist comrades of Detroit” balanced the “roseate pictures furnished by the Ford managers.” The resulting extremely positive view of the Ford enterprise was, the editor concluded, “without exaggeration [and] if anything, toned down for fear that many readers would not believe the whole truth.”⁵

O’Hare’s lavish praise for the Ford system was partly a response to Ford’s actions of 1914 and 1915. Ford’s 1915 chartering of a “peace ship” to cross the Atlantic in an anti-war gesture increased his popularity among radicals. Indeed he was busy planning the voyage when O’Hare visited Detroit. But far more important than

¹Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (New York, 1971), 278–322. O’Hare’s date of birth is usually given as 1877 but see Neil K. Basen, “Kate Richards O’Hare: The ‘First Lady’ of American Socialism,” *Labor History*, 21 (Spring, 1980) 169 and *passim*; Mari Jo Buhle, *Women and American Socialism, 1870–1920* (Urbana, 1983), 247–49; James R. Green, *Grass Roots Socialism: Radical Movements in the Southwest* (Baton Rouge and London, 1978), esp. 48.52; Philip S. Foner and Sally M. Miller, *Kate Richards O’Hare: Selected Writings and Speeches* (Baton Rouge, 1982), esp. 1–40.

²Green, 136; James Weinstein, *The Decline of Socialism in America, 1912–1925* (New York, 1969), 96.

³*The National Rip-Saw* (Jan. 1916), 6.

⁴*The National Rip-Saw* (Jan. 1916), 6.

⁵*Ibid.*

Ford's peace activities were his 1914 labor reforms which institutionalized the cherished goal of an eight-hour day while raising compensation to five dollars daily. Ford reforms, and his use of assembly line labor, also tended to lessen the arbitrary authority of foremen. A curious alignment of opinion about Ford arose, in which, as Upton Sinclair later wrote, "A furious controversy arose — on the one side labor and the social uplifters, on the other side manufacturers, businessmen, and the newspaper editors. . . . The former said that Henry Ford was a great thinker, a statesman of industry; the latter said that he was . . . of unsound mind, a menace to the public welfare."⁶ O'Hare counted him a great thinker and her editor recounted Ford's achievements: banishing the "fear of discharge" and slaying the "wolf of poverty" for his employees.⁷

John Reed's 1916 homages to Ford extended the grounds for admiration. To Reed, Ford was an ex-worker who believed that "a workman has the right to what he produces." He was, for Reed, "industry's miracle maker," who held that "everyone ought to be able to own an automobile" and whose "Ford idea" would transform not only America but the undeveloped world.⁸ William Z. Foster, the Michigan Socialist Party, and others on the left joined in the praises of Ford.⁹

The alienation and deskilling engendered by Ford's fast assembly line received little attention from O'Hare. She did not note, for example, that Ford's 1914 reforms came as responses to massive informal protests (turnover and absenteeism) and some formal

⁶Upton Sinclair, *The Flivver King* (Chicago, 1984, originally 1937), 28 and 37–41; Weinstein, 198; on the labor reforms, see esp. Steven Meyer, *The Five Dollar Day: Labor Management and Social Control in the Ford Motor Company, 1908–1921* (Albany, 1981), 95–122.

⁷*The National Rip-Saw* (Jan. 1916), 6.

⁸Reed, "Why They Hate Ford," *Masses*, 8 (Oct. 1916), 11–12 and "Industry's Miracle Maker," *Metropolitan*, 45 (Oct. 1916), 10–12 and 64–68; Robert A. Rosenstone, *Romantic Revolutionary: A Biography of John Reed* (New York, 1981), 246–48.

⁹See Keith Sward, *The Legend of Henry Ford* (New York, 1948); Sinclair, 28–29; *Butcher Workman* (Sept. 1916); Allan Nevins with Frank Ernest Hill, *Ford: The Times, The Man, The Company* (New York, 1954), 536–50; *The National Rip-Saw* (Mar. 1916), 6; Sinclair, 44–46; H. deMan, *Joy in Work* (London, 1921), 121. For moderate criticisms of Ford by Eugene V. Debs, see Bernard J. Brommel, *Eugene V. Debs: Spokesman for Labor and Socialism* (Chicago, 1978), 173 and 193–94. By 1927, left critiques of Ford had proliferated. See, e.g. Reinhold Niebuhr, "Ford's Five-Day Week Shrinks," *Christian Century*, 44 (June 9, 1927) and "How Philanthropic Is Henry Ford?" *Christian Century*, 43 (Dec. 9, 1926) and William Z. Foster, "Capitalist Efficiency 'Socialism,'" *Communist*, 7 (Mar. 1928). For a general treatment, see David Roediger, "Fordism, Labor and the Working Day," forthcoming in Gary Cross, ed. *Worktime and Industrialization* (Temple University Press).

Industrial Workers of the World activity¹⁰ contesting the factory regime at Ford. The absence of a critique of alienation in Ford's factory by O'Hare is striking. Except for the passages on Ford's role in limiting the arbitrary power of foremen, workers control over the job is hardly an issue. Indeed scant attention is paid to the labor process. O'Hare does castigate scientific management expert Frederick W. Taylor for ruining the life of "Schmidt," the archetypal worker in Taylorist management guide books. O'Hare leads her article with the argument that, though overworked by the disciples of scientific management, the "Schmidts" of the world could find happiness in a Ford plant. To sustain this argument, O'Hare must ignore the clear affinities of "Taylorism" and "Fordism."¹¹ Jarring too is the very positive portrait of Ford's Sociological Department, an agency charged with Americanizing and uplifting workers as well as spying on them and determining if they were fit to receive high profit-sharing compensation.¹²

O'Hare probably shared Gramsci's belief that a new type of working class—united and potentially combative—was being made by Ford. But she hardly considered the costs of its creation and many of her assumptions differed little from those of American progressives.¹³ Like many socialists, she cherished a deep faith in progress, holding both that it was inevitable and that it should be fostered by planning. Her confidence in Americanization was no less deep. Far from admiring Ford only for his productive advances or diffusion of the benefits of consumption to the working class, O'Hare clearly valued the inculcation of standardized discipline by Ford.

The O'Hare articles thus tell us something of the human successes, viewed most rosilily, of the Ford system. They tell perhaps

¹⁰Meyer, 37–94; David Gartman, *Auto Slavery: The Labor Process in the American Automobile Industry, 1897–1950* (New Brunswick, 1986), 83–101 and 161–62. See also Joyce Shaw Peterson, "Autoworkers and Their Work, 1900–1933," *Labor History*, 22 (Spring 1981), 213–36 and Jack Russell, "The coming of the Line: The Ford Highland Park Plant, 1910–1914," *Radical America*, 12 (May–June 1978).

¹¹Gartman, 50–51; Meyer, 20. The auto managers developed time study ideas like Taylor's by 1907, independently of a knowledge of Taylor's work. Taylor later visited Detroit and praised these studies. Of course, Fordism innovated technologically far more than Taylorism did. See David Montgomery, *The Fall of the House of Labor: The Workplace, the State, and American Labor Activism, 1865–1925* (Cambridge, 1987).

¹²Meyer, 114–19.

¹³Gramsci, 278–322; James Gilbert, *Designing the Industrial State: The Intellectual Pursuit of Collectivism in America, 1880–1940* (Chicago, 1972), 18 and *passim* offer perceptive comments on affinities between progressivism and socialism.

more of a strong strain of American socialism which as David Montgomery has recently written, “had no insurrectionary bite and recoiled in fear before the ‘great slum population.’” O’Hare herself characterized that slum population as “the greatest danger to our state — the greatest menace to humanity — and civilization.”¹⁴

Her account of Fordism shows the potential for uplifting the unskilled poor — O’Hare was no immigration restrictionist — and extols the slender possibility that the old immigrant skilled workers would man the Sociological Department. There are, as Montgomery observes, historical reasons for the strength of such a stance among American socialists and, as Mari Jo Buhle’s work suggests, strong echoes in O’Hare’s socialism of her earlier work in “social purity” activities. O’Hare’s position was not a bourgeois corruption of the Socialist Party but rather a view based in the historical experiences of many skilled workers.¹⁵ Whether that position much illuminated the possibilities for radical organization among Fordized autoworkers is another question.

O’Hare’s articles on Ford run to great length, often illustrating the same point with several lengthy examples. The excerpts below come from the more concise first installment, in *The National Rip-Saw* (January, 1916), 6–10. The second installment appears in the *Rip-Saw* (February, 1916), 6–13 under the title “Some More ‘Ford.’” The second installment repeats arguments from the first and will be of interest mainly to those interested in O’Hare’s attitudes toward children and social purity. It includes accounts of the “fallen woman,” the “child worker,” the “criminal,” and the “improvident” nurtured to health by their experiences at Ford. O’Hare concludes (13) by observing that for former delinquent Jimmie Flynn’s mother, Fordism’s work “of human salvage had a price beyond rubies.” The *Rip-Saw*’s editor headed the second installment (6) with the statement that “nothing printed in the *Rip-Saw* in recent months has been read with greater interest” than O’Hare’s first installment.

HAS HENRY FORD MADE GOOD?
BY KATE RICHARDS O’HARE

In this story, I contrast my experiences during the last twenty-five years in the labor movement, with the corresponding conditions at the Ford plant. There

¹⁴Montgomery, 286 includes the quote from O’Hare.

¹⁵Montgomery, 285–87; Buhle, 246–57; Foner and Miller, 6.

is material enough left over for another installment, and it may be that I can later spend a week in Detroit, exclusively with the employees themselves and thus furnish the readers of the RIP-SAW with another installment of the REAL STORY OF FORD which the Capitalist press has so carefully suppressed.

TAYLOR vs. FORD

A Pennsylvania Dutchman named Schmidt worked at one time for the Bethlehem Steel Company for \$1.15 per day loading pig iron. He was strong as a bull and ambitious to earn money and not only managed to exist on that wage but bought a tiny plot of waste land, pounded together a shack out of scraps and raised a few vegetables by working late at night and early in the morning. Mr. Frederick Winslow Taylor, founder of the "Taylor System" discovered that Schmidt had not used up all his energy at the mill but had a little left to work for himself.

Mr. Taylor took Schmidt in hand, taught him to cut out waste motions and thereby load forty-seven tons of pig iron per day instead of twelve-and-a-half (nearly four times as much) and raised his wages from \$1.15 to \$1.85 per day.

Overwork reduced Schmidt's vitality and one day pneumonia got him and not only swept away all his savings but took the scrap of waste land also.

When Schmidt could stand upon his shaky legs he got a job on railroad construction work, drifted out to Detroit and today is working eight hours per day screwing a certain nut on a certain bolt in each automobile engine that passes him on the endless chain in the Ford Motor plant. He receives five dollars per day; his three thousand dollar six-room cottage is one-third paid for, his three children are in school, and two are taking music lessons; his garden is the pride of the block; he has learned to read and write and his wife has a washing machine and wringer, and electric lights in the house.

I did not know Schmidt when he worked for the Bethlehem Steel Company; I got that part of his story from a book called "The Principles of Scientific Management" (page 44) written by Frederick Winslow Taylor and published by Harper Brothers; but I met thousands of Schmidts in the Ford plant in Detroit.

MIKE DONNELLY

Mike Donnelly was an Irishman from Dublin and one of the heroes of my "flapper" days; Lizzie, his wife, was a girl who lived in our family when we children were small and their courtship was my first glimpse of real romance.

Mike was a sheep butcher in Armour's great packing-house in Kansas City, but he was also an idealist and a dreamer and with the contradictions of the Irish nature, a builder and organizer as well. There was something so fine and clean in Mike that the filth and sordidness, the poverty and wretchedness, the ignorance and helplessness of the denizens of Packingtown were revolting to him. "Social Uplifters" were unknown in those days and "Social Settlements" did not exist (at least not in the West Bottoms of Kansas City) at that time. But Mike had the vision of helpfulness and he was a natural born crusader; patient, tireless, persuasive and magnetic, and with the illusions and egotism

of youth he started on the mighty task of cleaning the filth and ignorance from Packingtown. He tried to make the union hall a clubhouse where foreigners could acquire higher conceptions of life and with all his power of persuasion he pleaded with the men to live cleaner lives. All his Irish blarney he used on the women preaching the gospel of soap and water, well cooked food and a plentiful supply of what was by courtesy called "fresh air" in packingtown. It was hard, discouraging work but Mike stuck to his self-appointed job and finally became a mighty power among the workers of the meat industry. By sheer force of will power and organizing ability he was dragging the packing-house labor of the country to a higher standard of life.

Phil Armour and his associates in the packing industry did not believe in "benevolent feudalism," "paternalism" or "interference" with the private lives of their employees, but they were very strong for the "sacred right" of their laborers to work as cheaply as they pleased, for as long hours as they chose and to live in any state of filth that \$1.40 per day would warrant. Naturally the owners of the packing industries resented Mike's work and set about in their usual "gentlemanly" manner to eliminate him. He was sandbagged by sluggers, beaten up by thugs, scarred by vitriol, kidnapped, robbed and doped time and time again. Mike could not be pried loose from his job and would not be bought, though the effort was made many, many times.

At the time the Beef Trust was being organized there were a few "independent" packers who would not "come in" or sell out. One day an agent of the Trust called on Mike in Chicago with a handbag filled with one hundred thousand dollars of good United States currency. It was a little present the Trust wished to give Mike if he would call the men out of the "independent" packing house on a strike and keep them out until bankruptcy forced the "independents" into line. Mike caused a riot by kicking the agent down stairs and scattering "yellowbacks" all over Halstead [sic] Street.

Then comes a long break in my knowledge of Mike Donnelly. The newspapers reported him dead and none of his friends knew whether the report was true or false.

One night I was speaking in a little mining town in Colorado and found Mike. Some slugger had at last succeeded, a section of lead pipe had crashed down on the head that had served the working class so well; the brilliant brain was clouded, the orator's tongue stuttered and mumbled, the iron will was broken and brave, loyal, loving Mike was a pitiful wreck. I have never heard of him since and none who loved him know whether he is dead or drifting about the world a tramp.

Tim Murphy was a foreman in a department of the Ford Motor Company and Tim had the same warm heart, glib tongue, loving soul and supply of blarney that cursed the life of Mike Donnelly. People with troubles just gravitated in Tim's direction as naturally as water flows down-hill and he seemed to be able to unsnarl the worst tangle that could come to him for help and comfort. While Tim was busy straightening out tangled lives Henry Ford was gradually finding out that what he needed in his business was efficient workers. Ford had been a workingman himself and he knew that "efficiency" meant plenty of grub to stoke the engine, plenty of hot water and a bathtub to get

rid of the grime, a cinch on the job and a contented, happy wife at home. When the shorter hours and higher wage scale was put in force it was found that many of the employees did not realize that Mr. Ford was paying for a higher degree of "efficiency" or did not know how to secure it with the additional wages and so they just indulged in a little more booze or tucked the surplus money away in the family sock and went on living in the old unsanitary manner. Then Mr. Ford found that he needed Tim and needed him very badly. Tim and about two hundred other employees who had displayed some of the same qualities of tact and kindness and clear sightedness were made volunteer "investigators" and sent out to investigate the living conditions of all the Ford employees and to counsel and help them if they needed help to make the best use of the added wage. Gradually as the scale of living rose among the men the force of investigators was reduced to eighteen and including Tim they are still on the job, looking after the new men and the weak men and the ignorant men and keeping a friendly eye on the womenfolk in the home as well. There has been some criticism by employers who pay about one-third the Ford wage because "Ford sends investigators to nose into the private life of his employees."

The criticism has found response in many minds because so many people confuse the work done by the Ford investigators with the particularly obnoxious parasites who are investigators for organized charity. The work of Tim and his colleagues is not that of carping criticism or insolent prying with a small charitable donation to follow, but just the same kindly, human fellowship poor Mike tried to extend to the packing-house workers.

ROUND HOLES AND SQUARE PEGS

Tony is just a "dago," slender and delicate, with dreamy eyes, a sweet tenor voice and absolutely stupid and impossible at manual labor. Poor Tony drifted from job to job, from construction camp to sewer ditch, always a misfit, was told with many curses by his bosses that he was a failure. He finally got a job on a boarding car as the cook's helper, got fired because he burned the beans and drifted into Detroit to sleep in the police station and eat free soup in the bread line. A fellow countryman took Tony to the Ford plant and got him a job; but stupid, misfit Tony was stupid still and was shifted about from department to department and foreman to foreman until the seventh foreman put Tony to work winding magneto coils and there the slender fingers that fumbled the shovel and dropped the wrench found work that their delicacy loved and the misfit failure became a highly efficient workman.

Tony is now earning five dollars a day, teaches in the Ford English School, plays in the Ford Band, and sings every Sunday in Father Talliaferro's church.

Through all his wanderings Tony had carried the memory of a pale faced, love hungry Yankee girl in a collar factory in Utica where he had held down a brief job as sweeper. One day when Tony's bank book showed a nice little balance and the birds were mating in the parks Tony slipped into the office and asked for a holiday. He returned a week later with the little Yankee girl

bride and now his eyes shine like candles on the altar when he talks to the other workmen about "our baby."

THE MELTING POT

Karl Schloss is an Austrian who came to the United States two years ago. He works in the barber shop in the Pontiac Building, St. Louis, for \$10.00 per week. He is rather refined, fairly well educated in German and eager to become Americanized, but he can only speak a few words of English—"shave," "haircut," "shampoo," "wet or dry," and Karl is making no progress educationally or economically. He can't attend the Free Night Schools provided by the city, for he works at night; he can't hire a teacher, for his wages are not sufficient; and the only opportunity he has to speak English is when a customer sits in his barber chair and swaps English for German; Karl Schloss is at a standstill and possibly never will become an American citizen.

In the Ford plant I saw thousands of Karls but they were earning from five to seven dollars a day and they had been educated to write and speak the English language more correctly than many Americans raised on the East side in New York or Kerry Patch in St. Louis, and they will be better citizens than thousands of Americans whose parents have lived in this country for three hundred years.

THE RIGHT TO DISCHARGE

In Fort Worth, Texas, a few weeks ago a man was hung, or rather his head was jerked from his body while the authorities were trying to hang him. The victim was a switchman who had been at one time employed by the Texas Pacific railroad in the switching yards at Fort Worth. He was not a socialist or even a trades unionist but simply a man of something more than average intelligence who agitated rather successfully among his fellow workers to inspire them with a spirit of revolt against the flagrant transgression of the laws of the State of Texas and the federal government concerning the hours and working conditions of railroad men by the Texas Pacific. James Montague, the yardmaster, fired the "agitator" one day, and blacklisted him on every railroad in the country. Under an assumed name the blacklisted switchman traveled from town to town, but always the long arm and eagle eye of the Texas Pacific railroad company ferreted him out and took his job. After three years of tramping, starving and freezing, he came back to Fort Worth, went to James Montague and demanded a job. He told the bitter story of his long, weary search for a chance to work and said that he realized there was no switchyard, no matter how far distant where the malice of the Texas Pacific would not reach him; that a job meant life to him and if Montague denied him a job he was murdering him by inches. Montague sneered at the broken old tramp and ordered him off the railroad property. Then a pistol shot pierced Montague's heart; the evil power of the blacklist got two victims and the sacred right of the boss to "fire" a workingman was upheld.

Henry Ford decided one day that he didn't care a darn about his sacred

right to "fire" a workingman; what he needed to add to his profits was the power to keep a man steadily working on his job. He found that he was hiring and firing from two to five hundred men per day to maintain a working force of less than twenty thousand and it cost him two hundred dollars to hire and train a green man. Quite sensibly Mr. Ford decided that he must make a job in his factory look so good to a man that the man would not leave; and he took the power of discharge from the hands of the foremen. Strange to say the Ford Factory did not go to smash, but is still doing business at the same old stand and promises to break all records in production this year. Anarchy does not reign because the boss laid his sacred right to "fire" on the shelf and the men freeze to a job in the Ford plant like a negro to a fat possum.

"WOPS," "DAGOES" AND "BOHUNKS"

I am a member of the Unemployed Commission of St. Louis. Last winter we were having a rather stormy meeting in the Mayor's office discussing what the city should or should not do in caring for the jobless men. Emil Tolkatz, Director of Public Welfare of St. Louis said: "In discussing this question we must always remember that we are dealing with the 'casual worker'; it is quite true that they have built the railroads, dug the sewer ditches, harvested the wheat and picked the fruit, but they are ignorant, inefficient workers," economically unable to earn enough to maintain themselves in any degree of comfort and cleanliness. We can't apply the same rules to these ignorant foreigner workers as to our higher class American labor; 'bohunks,' 'dagoes' and 'wops' are absolutely impossible in the better paid grades of labor."

In the Ford plant is the most amazing aggregation of human beings ever gathered under one roof. There are fifty-three separate language or national groups, not to mention the various kinds of Americans employed there, and in most instances they are not the best types of a given nationality, but rather the exact opposite. Ford's laborers, the most highly paid factory in the world, are just exactly what city officials, employers and social uplifters call "dagoes," "bohunks," "wops" and consider fit only for the meanest labor and capable of earning only the most miserable wage. Mr. Ford also puts to work all the convicts the state of Michigan will parole to him and the day I visited the factory sixteen Indian boys from the Carlisle Indian School arrived and took their places in the factory. Among them were Flatheads, Diggers, Blackfeet, Choctaws and what not. Surely according to all accepted rules of "fitness" a Digger or Flathead Indian is just about as "unfit" for highly paid labor as one can imagine, yet Ford welcomes them all and makes a nice, fat profit on their labor

GIRL

Rose Snyder is a stenographer in a large hardware house in St. Louis. She has held down the selfsame desk for twenty years and never earned more than eighteen dollars per week. That is just enough by close scrimping to support Rose and her widowed mother and buy the natty clothes demanded by her

position. Long years ago Rose knew that Jimmie Sullivan loved her and as she was a normal woman, she longed to marry him, but Jim only drew \$75.00 a month as bill clerk, and Jim has never graduated to a better position in that house. Of course three could not live on \$75.00 a month when butter is forty cents a pound and beefsteak twenty-eight, so over the swiftly clicking keys, youth and beauty and womanhood has faded and the keys must click on, ever and ever faster, for the hardware firm has placed speedometers on every typewriter and every Saturday night a clerk makes a record of just how many keys have been tapped and when the average falls, a newer and fresher girl takes the job.

Christie Larson was a stenographer in the Ford Motor Company, but Christie was also a nuisance. Her eyes were blue as flax flowers, her ankles trim and her form well rounded and a nice looking young man was always more thrilling to her than a dictaphone. Sometimes Henry Ford prowling about the great plant would notice a look that is not good to see in the eyes of Christie's boss and when she tripped down the long office two hundred male clerks forgot their work and gazed at Christie.

Over in the paint shop where they squirt black paint from an air brush onto the auto bodies Carlo Anato works. Carlo is just an average young Italian-American no better and no worse than thousands like him and when one day at the little restaurant where some Ford employees eat their lunch his black eyes met Christie's blue ones there was spontaneous combustion. Carlo put forth a little extra effort and qualified for his "profits." When he proudly displayed his pay envelope with five per day in it, Christie handed in her time and trotted out to hunt a flat. Henry Ford missed Christie, drew a sigh of relief and said to the department head: "Put a man on in her place, give him a chance to earn five dollars a day and maybe he will marry another of our girls. Nature don't know a single thing about the necessity of cheap labor to tap typewriters, but she has been reproducing the race so long that she understands that job perfectly. I can't fire our girls, but I certainly would like to buy about a carload of wedding presents for them." Of course all the girls in the Ford factory did not marry at once, so they were given a three dollar per day minimum wage and the opportunity to share in all the advantages the men have even the "profits" if they are the support of blood relatives, but every time a girl leaves a man takes her place

HELP THE OTHER FELLOW

Henry Ford is not socially prominent, neither is he pious; he is not "educated," he is not a Christian according to church standards and certainly he is not a Socialist. So far as I could learn his whole religious creed is expressed in the motto that hangs over the entrance to the Ford English School, "HELP THE OTHER FELLOW." Not only is Mr. Ford not a Socialist and the "Ford plan" not Socialism, but so far as I could discover there was only one official in the plant who had the slightest glimmering of the Socialist philosophy or knowledge of the literature of Socialism. If every Capitalist in the United States

were to suddenly become converted to Ford's ideas and put the "Ford plan" into operation in their industries it would not solve the social problems, eliminate the class struggle or inaugurate the co-operative commonwealth, BUT it would advance the cause of social justice, demonstrate the soundness of the socialist theories and bring the mighty pressure of education to hasten the final and complete emancipation of the working class. The chief librarian of the Public Library of Detroit told me that the Ford men were the most frequent and intelligent readers who patronize the library and that they read books on history, civil government and sociology. Even the Capitalist world today knows that Henry Ford has knocked the sacredness of the established order into splinters, upset traditions hoary with age, smashed the college brand of political economy, slapped conventions in the face and rampaged about the economic china shop like the proverbial bull and with every rampage Henry has knocked a great chunk out of the underpinning of the capitalist system. Not this alone, but Henry Ford has brought the joy of living to thousands of sordid, dreary work-worn lives and made labor in one little corner of the economic world a boon and not a curse.

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