The Local Women's Labor Leagues at Work

The Federation of Women's Labor Leagues was formed to create a working-class women's movement dedicated to the long-term process of socialist revolution under the leadership of the Communist Party. The Leagues were linked to a political party with a great deal of centralized power. The Federation itself, and its locals, were expected to respond to Soviet and Canadian Communist directives on the nature, methods, and priorities of their work with women. In practice, however, the Leagues were able to assert some measure of independence, bending the party line on many issues to include discussions on issues like birth control, male-female marital relations, sex education, and childrearing. The WLLs also asserted themselves, as we have seen in earlier chapters, by not immediately or completely cutting their ties to bourgeois feminists and pacifists as they were directed after the Stalinist turn of the Party in 1928. Both the Federation and the WLL locals in fact operated with a surprising amount of autonomy and decentralization up until the 1930s when they were absorbed and restructured under the male dominated Workers Unity League.

As secretary of the Federation and editor of the Woman Worker, Florence Custance herself may have had more control over the WLLs than the Communist Party leadership was able to assert. Certainly it is Custance's ideas and perhaps those of other members in the Toronto WLL to which she belonged that dominate in the pages of the Woman Worker. Custance used the paper to pass on the Party's, the Federation's, and her own directives and advice for educational and agitational work, imposing on the Leagues in this way some ideological consistency and common directions. But each League shaped this advice according to its own resources, beliefs, and lo-
The ethnic composition of locals also influenced their priorities. As a result, activities varied between communities and provinces. The Toronto League, for example, was much more focused on birth control and wage-earning women than were the WLLs in the coal districts of Glace Bay, Nova Scotia and Coleman and Blairmore, Alberta where the women were preoccupied by the struggles of their husbands in the mines. The Finnish Leagues had a special interest in the unionization of Finnish domestic workers and in certain family reforms such as the recognition of civil marriages. The Montreal League was the only one to report interest in setting up a "Children's Home," (day care) for mothers wanting to work outside the home.

Local Leagues sometimes met in regional conferences to pass resolutions and share strategies, but one of the most important avenues for the sharing of information was through the Woman Worker, especially the short reports that locals were urged to submit monthly. For much of the paper's duration these were printed in a section called "Our Labor Leagues at Work." In the absence of a national convention—a dream that never materialized—these reports provided a crucial way for the Federation executive to stay abreast of local happenings across the country. For WLL members themselves, the reports helped counter the political and geographic isolation that occurred when locals were scattered across the country in communities often hostile to their purpose. A sense of national political sisterhood could be kindled as members from east to west had the chance to read about what their comrades in small and large communities were doing. Individual League reports were considered a crucial part of the paper and an important way of stirring women to action. Not only do these columns suggest how the ethnic orientation of the Leagues and the nature of their local communities shaped their work, they also permit insights into Communist women's diverse concerns and methods of organizing in the 1920s. We can see, for example, how traditional female political experience in support work through auxiliaries and fundraising were utilized to draw women into the socialist movement. Many of the Leagues' activities were related in some way to the domestic work performed by the housewives who dominated the membership. Organizing Communist summer camps for children, for instance—a particularly strong focus in Montreal—was an extension of women's childrearing duties. Similarly, taking advantage of housewives' role as household managers, several Leagues emphasized consumer actions. The Toronto League, for example, attempted a boycott of non-unionized bake shops in the fall of 1926. The political mobilization of women's
domestic interests and skills proved indispensable in drawing women out of the home and into the streets, although their organization around women's domestic skills was not used as a springboard to unseat the traditional assignment of gender roles.

By economic necessity, fundraising work received high priority within Leagues. Much of this work was done through social events which were useful not only to raise money but also to keep members connected and draw in new people. Almost every local report contained references to events like tea parties, whist drives and euchre nights, plays, dances, and picnics. Sewing circles were also popular, providing members with more items for the bazaars they also hosted. There was no shortage of activities and causes inspiring their fundraising efforts. Leagues had a host of costs connected to local initiatives for speakers, public meetings, summer camps, and special celebrations like International Women's Day. Locals also contributed to the campaigns of municipal Labour candidates and sometimes paid for local delegates to attend regional conferences. Some, responding to the pleas of the Federation, raised money for the *Woman Worker*. Not surprisingly, Custance’s own local in Toronto was most vigorous in its fundraising for the paper. In demonstrations of national and international solidarity, Leagues supported the Canadian Labor Defence League in its work with imprisoned radicals and trade unionists, often sending contributions to relieve the plight of Canadian, American, and British workers and their families hurt by strike actions or industrial accidents in Canada.

Most League members were also keen to educate themselves about socialism, something the Party certainly encouraged. Study groups were popular forums for the discussion of current issues and theories of socialism, and some classic texts, like August Bebel's *Woman Under Socialism*, were read in some Leagues. Lectures, by Communist and non-Communist speakers, both male and female, raised awareness too, and Custance herself addressed Leagues whenever she could. In northern Ontario a travelling library was started, aimed especially at young people in isolated areas.

While the League reports tell us a lot about the nature of the various locals and what they were up to in these years, it should be remembered that members tended to stress the positive side of their operations, giving few glimpses into the problems they encountered. Individual Leagues sometimes admitted periods of declining activity (see the Edmonton report in October 1926), but there is no direct acknowledgement of the difficulties they faced among themselves as they tried, for example, to bridge the linguistic and cultural barriers...
that divided women into separate Finnish, Ukrainian, English, Jewish, and sometimes Russian branches. Reports of various events organized to bring women together across their differences make no mention of the tensions that inevitably surfaced when, for example, members who did not speak English were invited to attend an evening featuring an English-language lecturer. Because the paper only printed English-language contributions, a great many voices went unheard and perspectives unreported.

Despite these tensions, the local WLL reports printed most months in the paper convey the high hopes women had for the work of their individual Leagues, the strength of their commitment to revolutionary politics and practice, and the excitement women felt at being part of a national network of like-minded souls working with a common vision of class and gender liberation. The female-centred nature of activities, and the combining of the social with the political—all of which are apparent from the local reports—clearly strengthened the Leagues and the women themselves. Sophia Mackie, from Nakina, Ontario, likely spoke for many others when she observed in her May 1928 report the growing confidence of women in her League: "We are no longer asking our men how we should think or how we should have to say aloud our thoughts."

Further Reading:


- Steven Penfold, “Have You No Manhood in You?: Gender and Class in the Cape Breton Coal Towns, 1920-26,” Acadiensis, 23, 2 (Spring 1994), 21-44.

CALGARY


Calgary League reports through its secretary, Mrs. M.L. Parkyn, that the League got three new members, and that each of these at once became subscribers to “The Woman Worker.” There was a women’s conference held in Regina and the League was able to raise enough money to send a delegate. The League was satisfied that the money spent was worth while. Now and then when a comrade has been in great need, a Whist Drive was run in order to give some assistance.

A study class has been organized, and the members meet in each other’s houses. The women are planning to attend a special meeting being arranged for women to be addressed by Professor Scott Nearing. The members of the Calgary League are determined to go forward and make their organization a success.

EDMONTON


The secretary, Mrs. Pallot, reports that things have not gone well with the League in Edmonton. Active members have left the city and consequently the work has gone down.

We ask our Edmonton secretary not to despair, and certainly not to give up. We feel sure the League can be built up again. New blood will come into it. Edmonton is too important a place to be without a Women’s Labor League.

CALEDONIA AND NEW ABERDEEN LEAGUES

November 1926, pp. 11-12.

The secretaries of these leagues report that they joined forces and organized a Tag Day for the British Miners. They sent committees to the office of the collieries and collected $85.00. This they sent on to England.

The leagues also worked together in organizing a picnic. They raised about $40.00. The Caledonia League gave its quota over to the Labor party to help the Labor candidate in the Federal election. All the leagues worked hard for the Labor candidate, D.W. Morrison. But he was defeated.

Both leagues sell their bundles of The Woman Worker regularly, and the money is sent to the office just as regularly.
Mary Campbell, secretary of the Caledonia League, writes about The Woman Worker: "The Woman Worker is becoming more interesting each issue, it is easy to read and understand."

We take this opportunity to thank Mrs. Dobson, the secretary of the New Aberdeen League, and Mary Campbell, secretary of the Caledonia League, for their regular reports, and also the membership of the leagues for their loyal support of THE WOMAN WORKER.

We want also to congratulate the leagues for the splendid work done on behalf of the British miners. They will be pleased to see that the secretary of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, J.A. Cook, acknowledged the resolution sent by the executive of the Federation to the miners' wives.

TORONTO LEAGUE

November 1926, p. 12.

The Toronto League reports that it is going to do its part in helping the Toronto Trades and Labor Council organize the bakers. After hearing their delegate's report on this matter the following decision was made, "That we discontinue dealing with those bakers that have prevented their workers joining the union, and purchase bread from those who have not interfered with their men organizing; and that we notify the bakers why we take this action; further, that we inform the Trades and Labor Council of our action and urge the Council to prevail upon the delegates to ask their wives to take similar action."

This action of the Toronto League shows how the Leagues can use their influence. Actually the Leagues are UNIONS OF HOUSEWIVES, but because of the social character of the home, their work as producers is lost sight of. As the Leagues increase in membership, and signs are pointing this way, their influence will be strengthened, and they will become a force to be reckoned with.

WINDSOR


A very successful euchre was held in the Machinists' Hall Saturday, Dec. 11th. The hall was packed. A personal canvass of the women present was made with the view of getting new members. The result was that eight new members were added to the League.
Comrade F. Custance, from Toronto, gave a short address on "The Importance of Women's Activity in the Labor Movement."

The following evening (Sunday) Com. Custance addressed the Labor Forum. Her subject was "Women's Part in the Labor Movement." The result of this week-end activity was encouraging. The W.L.L. was able to help meet the travelling expenses of Com. Custance and give a donation of $5 to the Woman Worker.

The secretary continues her report:
"We have enrolled 15 members now, but do not expect to stop at this small number, but hope to enroll many more after the new year. We have had two busy meetings since Com. Custance's visit, and another euchre party, which was well attended.

We are going to canvass the whole of the Border Cities to try to get subscriptions for our Woman Worker. Also we intend to take up educational work, so that when the need arises for one of us to speak we can do so."

Last Sunday at the Open Forum the speaker failed us. But there were a few members of the C.L.P. present, and these entered into discussion and did fairly well. The women who belonged to the Labor League were asked to speak. I went on to the platform, but as this was my first try I guess I was not a great success. But I will sure keep trying. There was a lot I wished to say, but could not say it as it should be said.

Well, dear comrades, we are sending another $5 to the Woman Worker. We know you are wishing us every success.

Alice Cray, Secretary.

SOINTULA

January 1927, p. 15.

Our group is gathering new members, and the pleasant side of such a fact is that the new members are young women. Previously, older women have taken all the interest in the organization of groups and reading circles, etc., but now it seems to change, which is as it should be, isn't it?

Young mothers in bringing up their youngsters should know how to train them, and the mothers, if they don't study working people's lives, will not know what to teach their children. These circles and groups really teach one an awful lot. Every working woman should attend.

Our group put up an entertainment on the 27th November, a big play being staged and, a splendid program given out.

A. MALM, Secretary.
The annual meeting of the League was held on Sept. 1st, with a sign-up of twenty members. Our numbers are small, but we are all active members, and I think we can call ourselves pretty live ones. We have delegates to the Canadian Labor Party, Trades and Labor Council, Labor Temple Co., and Local Council of Women, and our delegates are always present at the various meetings.

During September our activities included running a refreshment booth at the Labor Day sports, which netted us a nice little sum to start our year’s work. Whist drives and dances were held the last two weeks. We decided to have these, not with the idea so much of making money, but with the idea of getting people interested in the social side of the work.

Prof. Scott Nearing spoke to us one afternoon on the coal strike situation in Great Britain. We had decided to [...] have a special roll call on the first meeting of the month, so October saw this installed. Each member is expected to answer her name with an interesting “Item of Labor News.” We think this is a splendid idea. It gives each one of us a chance to really take part in the meeting.

In November we staged a tea in aid of the miners’ wives and children in England. We were able by this means to send $70.00 to the Fund.

In November we had a visit from Miss Jessie Stephens, who spoke at two meetings, and we were all very interested in what she had to say on her subjects—The Nine Days which shook Britain, and, Labor’s Bid for Power.

We had decided to send up a candidate for election at our municipal elections to the School Board. We did all we could to get her elected, but were not successful. We shall have to try again this year.

Another speaker we had the pleasure of hearing at one of our meetings in November was Miss Becky Buhay. It was a surprise visit so were unable to give her much time.

Our work for 1926 terminated with our Christmas Tree entertainment for the children of our members and members of the Unions. We had a splendid time, the children enjoying themselves to the hilt.

Sandwiched in between all these special activities were discussions on reports of the delegates to affiliated societies, social afternoon the 3rd week of the month, and the study of Trade Unionism, by Karl Marx.

We are continuing the whists and dances through the winter.

E.E. CARVETH, Secretary.
LETHBRIDGE

April 1927, p. 13.

Our newly formed League received the three dozen of The Woman Worker and these were all sold. Our members enjoy the magazine very much. Would it be possible to outline a study course? Some of our women feel the need of this very much. We have so few who feel like speaking. A full report will be sent later when I have recovered from sickness.

Mary M. Cameron, Secretary.

BLAIRMORE

April 1927, p. 13.

We held our last monthly meeting on March 17th, and we then decided to have a social and sale of work some time in the spring when the times are expected to get better.

For this purpose we have started a sewing circle, getting work ready for the spring sale. The money we get from it we decided to send to The Woman Worker. What do you think about it?

We celebrated International Women’s Day with the Coleman Finnish and Ukrainian women. Comrade W. Moriarty, who happened to be in this district, was asked to speak for us, and he did so in a clear and interesting way.

I might report that we have to thank Com. Moriarty for giving us advice about our work. He is acquainted with what is being done in the east of Canada by the Leagues. This was very helpful to us.

One suggestion, and which we think a very good one, was that in order to interest the wives of the miners in their conditions of life, that we bring before the notice of the Miners’ Union the suggestion that they form a Women’s Auxiliary of some sort.

At all times, we try to explain the object of the Women’s Labor Leagues and to get the women to think for themselves.

Mary North, Secretary.

MONTREAL LEAGUE

December 1927, pp. 13-14.

It is nearly two years since our League came into existence, and we may say that during this time we tried to carry out the program of our movement. Our members have certainly learned what a working class organization is,
what it means to be in the labor movement, and especially have they learned what it means for women to be organized.

The League has taken part in two conferences, one in connection with the Sacco-Vanzetti Release Campaign and the May Day Unity Conference. The League also helps the Co-operative Bakery.

Most of our work was connected with the Camp during the summer months. During the season we had 85 children at the Camp. Most of the children came from working class homes, and most of the mothers joined the League. We are planning to have our Camp for the coming summer in a most beautiful place and with more conveniences.

Our meetings are well attended. Out of 75 members 40 attended regularly.

For this winter we have worked out a plan of work which includes entertainments—a concert, a tea-party, banquet, and educational work—lectures on co-operative work, the women's movement, the bringing up of children and group study, using the book Women and Socialism by Bebel. We are also helping in the bazaar for the Kamf, a Jewish working class paper.

We are planning to open a Children's Home so as to give a possibility to working mothers to go out to work. At this moment we are carrying on a campaign for new members. It is in the interest of every working woman to join the League, for only by organizing can we carry on the struggle for a better and fuller life for the whole of the working class.

B. Shacter.

LABOR LEAGUES AT WORK, NAKINA, ONT.

May 1928, p. 15.

The Nakina W.L.L. (Finnish) held its regular monthly meeting on March 25th. At this meeting we elected new officers. Our meetings are held regularly the last Sunday of each month. Our sewing circle meets every Thursday evening at each of the members' homes in turn. At these meetings an educational book is read and discussed. It is interesting to listen how each of us voices our thoughts. We are no longer asking our men how we should think or how we should have to say aloud our thoughts.

Our Finnish organization made a trip to Long Lac with a one-act play on April 21st, where also the sewing circle disposed of its fancy work to the highest bidders. We realized a good sum for our work. For this we have to thank Hugo Siren, our auctioneer; Katri Matson, our cashier, and all the people of Long Lac who bought our goods.

Now we are all busy again with our needles for another sale at the end of the summer.
We have no hall here where we can hold concerts and so forth. But we have a spacious pavilion where, when summer comes, we are able to hold dances and concerts.

We send our best wishes to all the Women’s Labor Leagues.

Sophia Mackie
Nakina W.L.L. Organizer.

OUR LEAGUES SUPPORT THE MINERS OF THE U.S.A.

June 1928, p. 13.

Meadow Portage League sent $15.00 and the Sudbury League $20.00 to the relief fund of the Pennsylvania miners.

This help we know is appreciated by the Miners’ Relief Committee. The fight the organized miners are putting up is for a living wage and better conditions.

The miners have very good reasons for fighting. We have read only during the past few days what happened in those mines which were manned by non-union workers. Explosion. Over 200 men killed.

SUMMARY OF THE WORK OF THE THIRD ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE B.C. DISTRICT OF THE CANADIAN FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S LABOR LEAGUES, FINNISH BRANCHES HELD ON MAY 20th, 1928, AT CLINTON HALL, VANCOUVER, B.C.


The following branches were represented by delegates—from Vancouver, Webster’s Corners, Ladysmith, Cob Tree, Chase River, Salmon Arm, Carlin, Sointula, each one delegate. The Vancouver Finnish Domestic Help had also one delegate.

The report of the secretary was read and accepted with a few remarks.

Many important resolutions were read from the different branches represented and fully discussed, among which were:

1. All branches to do their utmost in distributing and getting subscribers for The Woman Worker. 2. All branches to take an interest in youth education, and in youth and the War Danger. 3. Against intoxicating drink and drugs. 4. Militarism and women taking part in school meetings. 5. All branches in B.C. to do their best in helping the domestic servants to organize
and to help them get their own home, where they can meet and discuss con­
ditions relating to their work. 6. Demand for Civil Marriage in Canada.

The Dominion Convention was discussed, but was tabled until word was
received from the E.C. concerning same.

The next convention to be held at the time when the C.L.P. convention
(B.C. section) is held in Vancouver. The meeting closed with the singing of
The International.

A. Vakeva was elected to deal with English correspondence.

H.M. Sillanpaa, Reporter.


Mrs. Florence Custance,
211 Milverton Blvd.,
Toronto 6, Canada.

Dear Comrade:

We have received the 50 Woman Workers and the membership cards for
the Domestic Servants’ Union. We would wish another 50 membership
cards, if possible, by return mail. Comrade Mrs. Lievonen has been out on a
tour again and has succeeded in organizing a Women’s Labor League at
Garson Mine, with 11 members to begin with. We have also great hopes of
being able to organize a Women’s Labor League at Copper Cliff. Comrade
Mrs. Lievonen is leaving shortly for Sault Ste. Marie and vicinity to help
those Leagues out that way on with their work, and she would like to take
some of those membership cards with her.

The Domestic Servants’ Union seems to be growing nicely. They have
well over 30 members. Perhaps I mentioned before that they held a very
successful social dance some time ago. Last Tuesday evening they invited
the Women’s League to a pleasant social and comradely evening, the mem­
bers of both organizations being privileged to bring a friend. They are
collecting a membership fee of 15 cents a month, and intend to start two
funds, one to aid members happening to be in need on account of sickness or
unemployment and another towards getting a home or headquarters, where
girls can meet and rest during off hours and when not in employment. They
are not very clear yet about all this, neither are we, and we would be very
glad of your opinions and suggestions in this matter.

We have a committee here, elected at the last district convention, whose
business is to begin a traveling library, mainly for children and young folks.
We are that far with the work that we have planned to start with five cases or
boxes, built for the purpose, and plan to place them in five different places at
a time in care of members of the Women’s Labor League, each League to elect a reliable person to have charge of the loaning of the books and of, in due time, sending the case on. We have a fund of about $50.00, have ordered the cases, and now need books. We are asking all Leagues in this district to contribute to this fund by holding a social event of some kind for the benefit of it.

Now, we are asking your help, and the help of any one you can suggest, to aid us in getting and selecting suitable books. The idea is to obtain books that young people will read willingly, working class books, especially in story form and in fiction, both in Finnish and English, but mainly in English. We understand that it is not very easy to find such literature, for there is so very little of it, and we shall be very glad of all the help we can have from any source.

This is rather a long letter and is perhaps demanding more time than you could probably waste for anything like this, for we can imagine how busy you must be with the convention coming, etc. By the way, have you figured out or formed any plan that we should use to collect means towards the convention fund? Or are we to go about this in any way we find best in this district? Have you any estimates of about how much per member would be needed, etc.? We have very near 300 members in this district, counting Sault Ste. Marie and Bruce Mines.

Please let us hear from you and please send us the bills for the Woman Workers, pamphlets and the membership cards.

With comradely greetings.

Elizabeth S. Este.

TORONTO WOMEN’S LABOR LEAGUE


Affiliations

February 1929, pp. 13-14.

The League maintained its affiliations with the Central Council of the Canadian Labor Party and The Canadian Labor Defense League. It also affiliated during the year with the Miners’ Relief Committee, organized by the Toronto Trades and Labor Council, for the purpose of raising assistance, money, clothes, etc. for the striking miners in the United States. The League donated, through collection, five dollars ($5.00) to this fund, and some of our members contributed clothing.
Organizing Work Among Women

There is not much to record in this direction. The task of approaching and organizing women workers in industry remains one of our problems and the lack of results in this direction is one of our shortcomings. During the strike or lock-out, in the York Knitting Mills in Toronto, in the early summer, the League attempted some work in this field, without any appreciable success. The League has also interested itself in the organization of domestics and waitresses in hotels and restaurants. This work is still in hand, with the prospects of better results.

Educational

In January, 1928, Com. Custance spoke to the League on “The Local and Trade Union Movement.” In March, Dr. Marty gave a talk on our Educational System. In May the League endeavored to widen interest among working class women by calling a meeting in the EarlsCourt district, one afternoon. The turnout, however, was poor and no further attempt was made in this direction. Lectures were also given during the year by Mr. Fester, of the Minimum Wage Board of Ontario, and by Mr. Kingston, of the Workmen’s Compensation Board.

International Women’s Day

Early in the year a “Women’s Labor Council” was formed prior to the meetings for International Women’s Day. Hopes were entertained that the Council might be of a permanent character. After the Women’s Day meeting, however, which was held in the Don Hall, the Council has practically disbanded. This is regrettable, and an attempt ought to be made to revive this Council.

Support for Woman Worker

The League has good results to record here. From the Raffle held for this purpose, approximately sixty-six dollars were raised.

A very successful bazaar was held before the close of the year, which netted about $150.00 for the Woman Worker. A few of the comrades held affairs in their homes, which, while being highly enjoyable socially, also served the very useful purpose of assisting financially. Affairs were held at the homes of Comrades Trenchard, Machin and Macdonald. The league has taken the opportunity presented at mass gatherings of labor organizations to introduce the Woman Worker. Com. Kalmicoff has been particularly serviceable in this work. More must be done by the League members to secure subscribers for the Woman Worker.
League Meetings

The League has met regularly during the year with the exception of three months in the summer. The attendance has been fairly well sustained, although sickness at the latter part of the year affected the attendance somewhat.

Membership

In the year 1927-1928 the League membership increased considerably. This was due to the interest taken in the subject of "Birth Control" at that time. When this discussion ceased most of the new members dropped off. The work of the General Labor Movement failed to hold them. The total membership of the Toronto League in good standing is just a little over thirty members. A recruiting campaign ought to be put on soon to increase our membership.

General

During the year the League sent delegates to the Social Hygiene Council’s annual meeting. Comrade Mrs. Machin attended this meeting. Arising from the report to the League a discussion on Mother’s Clinics ensued and a resolution was adopted on "Maternal Mortality." Comrades Campbell and Morton attended, as delegates from the League, a conference of women’s organizations in the interests of the League of Nations Society. A report signed by Com. Campbell was published in the November issue of the Woman Worker.

In general, the work of the League has been fairly well sustained. The evident world-wide preparations for war and the general attack on the militant labor movement, with the co-ordination of the forces of reaction, demands that we put forth greater efforts than ever to rouse the working women and draw them into the circle and organizations of the labor movement. In this the Womens’ Labor League can perform great service to the working class movement.

Submitted by,
B. MacDonald, Secretary.

VANCOUVER


Dear Comrade—

The Vancouver Branch of the Canadian Federation of Women’s Labor Leagues held a whist drive and social on Saturday, December 15th, in the Jubilee Labor Hall, for the purpose of raising funds for The Woman Worker, and also with the object of trying to form another branch at Jubilee.
This was very well attended, and the proceeds amounted to $15.00, which you will find enclosed.

During the course of the evening, Comrade Mrs. Stevenson gave a very instructive and able talk on "The aims and purposes of the Womans' Labor League." She emphasized the fact that in the past most women's organizations have been dominated by the women of the leisure class, such as I.O.D.E. which uses its influence entirely for the ruling class. It holds itself en masse from the working women, yet it is none the less determined to bring that mass to its way of thinking. Then there is the different church societies. The daily papers, also, have a page wholly devoted to women and her doings, and our comrade asks, "Is it any wonder we find working women on the side of those who are fighting against the working class for the preservation of the present capitalist system?"

The question of war was also introduced, and the men and women present urged to understand that war had an economic basis, and it could not be abolished simply by talking peace and signing peace-pacts.

In conclusion, the speaker made a strong plea for all working women to join the Womans' Labor League, to study the economic and social conditions, and to work side by side with their men comrades in the labor movement and so bring about the New Social Order.

The organization in Vancouver is yet very young, but we are determined to make it a real live working women's organization. We are very enthusiastic about our paper, the Woman Worker, and will do all in our power to increase the circulation, and so directly benefit those whom it represents.

The League joins in sending to you their heartiest and sincerest wishes for renewed success, and trust that this new year upon which we have just entered will indeed be filled with an increased enthusiasm and zeal for making our organization a power for good which will be felt when any industrial crisis takes place.

With Comradely greetings,

Yours for success,

ISABEL WHITE,
Financial Secretary.