

Chapter Six

FANATICS OF THEIR PURE IDEALS



WE took an apartment way uptown. It was the old-fashioned railroad type—big, high-ceilinged, with plenty of room, air, and light. The children's grandmother came to live with us and her presence gave me ease of mind when I was called on a case, my children were utterly safe in her care.

Headlong we dived into one of the most interesting phases of life the United States has ever seen. Radicalism in manners, art, industry, morals, politics was effervescing, and the lid was about to blow off in the Great War. John Spargo, an authority on Karl Marx, had translated *Das Kapital* into English, thus giving impetus to Socialism. Lincoln Steffens had published *The Shame of the Cities*, George Fitzpatrick had produced *War, What For?*, a strange and wonderful arraignment of capitalism, which sold thousands of copies.

The names of Cezanne, Matisse, and Picasso first became familiar sounds on this side of the Atlantic at the time of the notable Armory Exhibition, when outstanding examples of impressionist and cubist painting were imported from Europe. But there was so much of eccentricity—a leg on top of a head, a hat on a foot, the *Nude Descending a Staircase*, all in the name of art—that you had to close one eye to look at it. The Armory vibrated, it shook New York.

Although Bill had studied according to the old school, he could see the point of view of the radical in art, and in politics as well.

His attitude towards the underdog was much like father's. He had always been a Socialist, although not active, and held his friend Eugene V. Debs in high esteem.

A religion without a name was spreading over the country. The converts were liberals, Socialists, anarchists, revolutionists of all shades. They were as fixed in their faith in the coming revolution as ever any Primitive Christian in the immediate establishment of the Kingdom of God. Some could even predict the exact date of its advent.

At one end of the scale of rebels and scoffers were the "pink" parliamentary socialists and theorists at whom anarchists hurled the insult "bourgeois." At the other were the Industrial Workers of the World, the "Wobblies," advocating unionization of the whole industry rather than the craft or trade. This was to be brought about, if need be, by direct action.

Almost without knowing it you became a "comrade." You could either belong to a group that believed civilization was to be saved by the vote and by protective legislation, or go further to the left and believe with the anarchists in the integrity of the individual, and that it was possible to develop human character to the point where laws and police were unnecessary.

The mental stirring was such as to make a near Renaissance. Everybody was writing on the nebulous "new liberties." Practically always people could be found to support leaders or magazines, although many of the latter lived for hardly more than a single issue.

Upton Sinclair was utilizing his gift for vivid expression and righteous wrath in trying to correct social abuses by the indirect but highly effective method of story-telling. *The Jungle* was a powerful exposé of the capitalist meat industry responsible for the "embalmed beef" which had poisoned American soldiers in '98. Courageous as he was, he was yet mistrusted by the Socialist Old Guard as being a Silk Hat Radical who retained his bourgeois philosophy. Furthermore, he had been divorced, and divorce at that time was something of a scandal. Though anarchists minded such details not a whit, Socialists were imbued with all the respectabilities, to most of these home-loving Germans, only the form of government needed change.

In the United States the party was trying to separate itself from this German influence, and the standard bearer of the American concept was the magnetic and beloved Debs. Not himself an intellectual, he did not need to be, he was intelligent. Risen as he had from the ranks of the railroad workers, he knew their hardships from experience. Though I am not sure he actually was tall, he gave the illusion of height because of his thinness and stooping shoulders. He was all flame, like a fire spirit. That was probably why the members of his coterie followed him so gladly.

Our living room became a gathering place where liberals, anarchists, Socialists, and I W W 's could meet. These vehement individualists had to have an audience, preferably a small, intimate one. They really came to see Bill, I made the cocoa. I used to listen in, not at all sure my opinions would be accepted by this very superior group. When I did meekly venture something, I was quite likely to find myself on the opposite side—right in a left crowd and vice versa.

Any evening you might find visitors from the Middle West being aroused by Jack Reed, bullied by Bill Haywood, led softly towards anarchist thought by Alexander Berkman. When throats grew dry and the flood of oratory waned, someone went out for hamburger sandwiches, hot dogs, and beer, paid for by all. The luxuriousness of the midnight repast depended upon the collection of coins tossed into the middle of the table, which consisted of about what everybody had in his pocket. These considerate friends never imposed a burden either of extra work or extra expense. In the kitchen everyone sliced, buttered, opened cans. As soon as all were replenished, the conversation was resumed practically where it had left off.

Both right-wingers and left-wingers who ordinarily objected to those in between loved Jack Reed, the master reporter just out of Harvard. He refused to conform to the rule and rote of either, though his natural inclination appeared to be more in harmony with direct action.

Behind this most highly intellectual young man loomed an uncouth, stumbling, one-eyed giant with an enormous head which he tended to hold on one side. Big Bill Haywood looked like a bull about

to plunge into an arena. He seemed always glancing warily this way and that with his one eye, head slightly turned as though to get the view of you. His great voice boomed, his speech was crude and so were his manners, his philosophy was that of the mining camps, where he had spent his life. But I soon found out that for gentleness and sympathy he had not his equal. He was blunt because he was simple and direct. Though he was not tailor-made, he was custom-made.

Because Big Bill's well-wishers saw so much that was fine in him, they wanted to smooth off the jagged edges. When they tried to polish his speeches, Jack Reed objected, saying, "Give him a free hand. He expresses what you and I think much more dramatically than we can. Don't try to stop him! We should encourage him."

One of Big Bill's best friends, Jessie Ashley, was, without meaning to be, a taming influence. These two were the oddest combination in the world—old Bill with his one eye, stubby, roughened fingernails, uncreased trousers, and shoddy clothes for which he refused to pay more than the minimum, Jessie with Boston accent and horn-rimmed glasses, a compromise between spectacles and lorgnette, from which dangled a black ribbon, the ultimate word in eccentric decoration.

Jessie was one of the most conspicuous of the many men and women of long pedigree who were revolting against family tradition. She was the daughter of the President of the New York School of Law, and sister of its dean. When her brother had organized the first women's law class, she had been his pupil and later had become the first woman lawyer in New York City. Her peculiarly honest mind was tolerant towards others, but uncompromising towards herself. It was said of her truly that she was always in the forefront when it took courage to be there, always in the background when there was credit to be gained. A Socialist in practice as well as theory, she spent large portions of her income in getting radicals out of jail, and her own legal experience she gave freely in their behalf. Nevertheless, her appearances at strike meetings were slightly uncomfortable, class tension rose up in waves.

Many others were trying to pull themselves out of the rut of tradition. Alexander Berkman, the gentle anarchist, understood them

all He had just been freed after fourteen years' imprisonment for his attempt to assassinate Henry Clay Frick during the Homestead Steel strike of 1892 His emergence had stirred anarchism up again, and particularly its credo of pure individualism—to stand on your own and be yourself, never to have one person dictate to another, even parent to child

Berkman's appearance belied his reputation—blond, blue-eyed, slightly built, with thinnish hair, and sensitive, mobile face and hands He was a thoughtful ascetic, believing sincerely that the quickest way to focus attention on social outrages was to commit some dramatic act, however violent or antipathetic it might be to his nature—and then suffer the consequences He was not at all embittered by his sojourn in jail, and had a great sense of humor, coupled with his most extraordinary understanding of the strange congeries of people who were about to be melted down into his glowing crucible of truth

Elizabeth Gurley Flynn had made the transition from Catholicism, Jack Reed from being a "Harvard man," Mabel Dodge from being a society matron They all had had to get over being class conscious, and acquire instead the consciousness of the class struggle Berkman made friends with all, and when they were faced by problems apparently insurmountable, he advised them on their spiritual journey, and supported and backed them For this reason he was beloved by all who encountered his most gracious charm

This was not the way of Emma Goldman, whose habit was to berate and lash with the language of scorn She was never satisfied until people had arrived at her own doorstep and accepted the dogma she had woven for herself Short, stocky, even stout, a true Russian peasant type, her figure indicated strength of body and strength of character, and this impression was enhanced by her firm step and reliant walk Though I disliked both her ideas and her methods I admired her, she was really like a spring house-cleaning to the sloppy thinking of the average American Our Government suffered in the estimation of the liberal world when she and Berkman were expelled from the country

Of all the strange places for these diverse personalities to meet, none more strange could have been found than in Mabel Dodge's

salon, which burst upon New York like a rocket Mabel belonged to one of the old families of Buffalo, but neither in thought nor action was she orthodox Only in the luxurious appointments of her home did she conform

Among the sights and memories I shall never forget were her famous soirees at Ninth Street and Fifth Avenue A certain one typical of all the others comes to mind, the whole gamut of liberalism had collected in her spacious drawing-room before an open fire Cross-legged on the floor, in the best Bohemian tradition, were Wobblies with uncut hair, unshaven faces, leaning against valuable draperies Their clothes may have been unkempt, but their eyes were ablaze with interest and intelligence Each knew his own side of the subject as well as any scholar You had to inform yourself to be in the liberal movement Ideas were respected, but you had to back them up with facts Expressions of mere emotion, unleashed from reason, could not be let loose to wander about

Listener more than talker, Mabel sat near the hearth, brown bangs outlining a white face, simply gowned in velvet, beautifully arched foot beating the air For two hours I watched fascinatedly that silken ankle never ceasing its violent agitation

The topic of conversation turned out to be direct action Big Bill was the figure of the evening, but everybody was looking for an opportunity to talk Each believed he had a key to the gates of Heaven, each was trying to convert the others It could not exactly have been called a debate, because a single person held the floor as long as he could Then, at one of his most effective periods, somebody else half rose and interposed a "But—" The speaker hurried on, at his next telling sentence came other "But—s," until finally he was downed by the weight of interruptions In the end, conversions were nil, all were convinced beforehand either for or against, and I never knew them to shift ground

It is not hard to laugh about it now, but nobody could have been more serious and determined than we were in those days

Just before the argument reached the stage of fist fights, the big doors were thrown open and the butler announced, "Madam, supper is served" Many of the boys had never heard those words, but one and all jumped up with alacrity from the floor and discus-

sion was, for the moment at least, postponed. The wide, generous table in the dining room was burdened with beef, cold turkey, hot ham—hearty meat for hungry souls. On a side table were pitchers of lemonade, siphons, bottles of rye and Scotch.

Mabel never stirred while the banquet raged, but continued to sit, her foot still beating the air, and talked with the few who did not choose to eat.

The class contrasts encountered in a gathering there were not unique. They were to be found elsewhere, even in matrimony. When the wealthy J. G. Phelps Stokes married Rose Pastor, the Russian-Jewish cigar maker, both families felt equally outraged, he was practically sent to Coventry by his former associates and the Jews regarded her as a renegade because she wore a silver cross about her neck. William English Walling, the last word in Newport, married Anna Strunsky, the last word in the Jewish intelligentsia, and himself became a leading literary critic on the radical side.

Harvard had been turning out liberals by the dozen, and all of them were playing hob with accepted conventions in thought. One of these was Walter Lippmann, others were Norman Hapgood and his brother, Hutchins. "Hutch" was then working on the *Globe*, a paper which because of its broad editorial policy was preferred by many radicals to the *Call*. He stood by Bill Haywood and Emma Goldman, although he had much more to lose economically and socially than the out-and-out reds.

The anarchists seldom initiated anything, because they did not have the personnel or the equipment, but when something else was started which appeared to have any good in it, they came right in. This they did with the Ferrer School on Twelfth Street near Fourth Avenue, in the founding of which Hutch, with the liberal journalist, Leonard Abbott, and the author, Manuel Komroff, were moving spirits. The object was to provide a form of education more progressive than that offered by the public schools, and its name was intended to perpetuate the memory of the recently martyred Spanish libertarian, Francisco Ferrer, who had established modern free schools in Spain in which science and evolution had been taught.

Lola Ridge, intense rebel from Australia, was the organizing secretary, Robert Henri and George Bellows gave lessons in art, and

a young man named Will Durant was chosen to direct the younger children, combining in his teaching Froebel, Montessori, and other new methods Under him we enrolled Stuart

Will Durant was of French-Canadian ancestry His mother had worked hard to put him through a Jesuit seminary, but just before taking the vows he had abandoned the priesthood While he had been studying he had read Krafft-Ebing and Havelock Ellis and was prepared to acquaint New York with the facts of sex psychology Sitting nonchalantly to deliver his lectures, which evidenced scholarly background and research, he advanced to his small but serious audience practically the first public expression of this intimate subject

The young instructor created rather a problem for the directors by unexpectedly marrying a pupil, Ida Kaufman, commonly called Puck I remember one Saturday when she was romping with Stuart, and my laundress said to her, "Why, you're so young to be married Do you like it?"

Puck replied, "Oh, I don't care, but I'd much rather play marbles"

Intellectuals were then flocking to enlist under the flag of humanitarianism, and as soon as anybody evinced human sympathies he was deemed a Socialist My own personal feelings drew me towards the individualist, anarchist philosophy, and I read Kropotkin, Bakunin, and Fourier, but it seemed to me necessary to approach the ideal by way of Socialism, as long as the earning of food, clothing, and shelter was on a competitive basis, man could never develop any true independence

Therefore, I joined the Socialist Party, Local Number Five, itself something of a rebel in the ranks, which, against the wishes of the central authority, had been responsible for bringing Bill Haywood East after his release from prison The members—Italian, Jewish, Russian, German, Spanish, a pretty good mixture—used the rooms over a neighborhood shop as a meeting place and there they were to be found every evening reading and discussing politics

Somebody had donated a sum of money to be spent to interest women in Socialism As proof that we were not necessarily like the masculine, aggressive, bulldog, window-smashing suffragettes in England, I, an American and a mother of children, was selected

to recruit new members among the clubs of working women. The Scandinavians, who had a housemaids' union, were the most satisfactory, they already leaned towards liberalism.

Grant, who was as yet too young to go to school, whole-heartedly disapproved of my political activities. Once when I was about to depart for the evening he climbed up on my lap and said, "Are you going to a meeting?"

"Yes."

"A soshist meeting?"

"Yes."

"Oh, I hate soshism!"

Everybody else was amused when the Sangers went to a Socialist meeting. If I had an idea, I leaned over and whispered it to Bill, who waved his hand and called for attention. "Margaret has something to say on that. Have you heard Margaret?" Many men might have labeled my opinions silly, and, indeed, I was not at all sure of them myself, but Bill thought if I had one, it was worth hearing.

John Block and his wife, Anita, were ardent workers for the cause. She was a grand person, a Barnard graduate and editor of the woman's page of the *Call*. She telephoned me one evening, "Will you help me out? We have a lecture scheduled for tonight and our speaker is unable to come. Won't you take her place?"

"But I can't speak. I've never made a speech in my life."

"You'll simply have to do it. There isn't anybody I can get, and I'm depending on you."

"How many will be there?" I asked.

"Only about ten. You've nothing to be frightened of."

But I was frightened—thoroughly so. I could not eat my supper. Shaking and quaking I faced the little handful of women who had come after their long working hours for enlightenment. Since I did not consider myself qualified to speak on labor, I switched the subject to health, with which I was more familiar. This, it appeared, was something new. They were pleased and said to Anita, "Let's have more health talks." The second time we met the audience had swelled to seventy-five and arrangements were made to continue the lectures, if such they could be called, which I prepared while my patients slept.

The young mothers in the group asked so many questions about their intimate family life that I mentioned it to Anita "Just the thing," she said "Write up your answers and we'll try them out in the *Call*" The result was the first composition I had ever done for publication, a series under the general title, *What Every Mother Should Know* I attempted, as I had with the Hastings children, to introduce the impersonality of nature in order to break through the rigid consciousness of sex on the part of parents, who were inclined to be too intensely personal about it

Then Anita requested a second series to be called *What Every Girl Should Know* The motif was, "If the mother can impress the child with the beauty and wonder and sacredness of the sex function, she has taught it the first lesson"

These articles ran along for three or four weeks until one Sunday morning I turned to the *Call* to see my precious little effort, and, instead, encountered a newspaper box two columns wide in which was printed in black letters,

WHAT EVERY GIRL SHOULD KNOW

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BY ORDER OF
THE POST-OFFICE DEPARTMENT

The words gonorrhoea and syphilis had occurred in that article and Anthony Comstock, head of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, did not like them By the so-called Comstock Law of 1873, which had been adroitly pushed through a busy Congress

on the eve of adjournment, the Post Office had been given authority to decide what might be called lewd, lascivious, indecent, or obscene, and this extraordinary man had been granted the extraordinary power, alone of all citizens of the United States, to open any letter or package or pamphlet or book passing through the mails and, if he wished, lay his complaint before the Post Office. So powerful had his society become that anything to which he objected in its name was almost automatically barred, he had turned out to be sole censor for ninety million people. During some forty years Comstock had been damming the rising tide of new thought, thereby causing much harm, and only now was his hopeless contest against *September Morn* making him absurd and an object of ridicule.

But at this same time also John D. Rockefeller, Jr. was organizing the Bureau of Social Hygiene, in part to educate the working public regarding what were politely termed "social evils." A fine start was being made although no surveys had been completed. Lacking data, lecturers had to speak in generalities. Nevertheless, to me, who had sat through hours of highly academic exposition expressed in cultivated tones, their approach seemed timorous and their words disguised with verbiage. I saw no reason why these facts could not be given in a few minutes in language simple enough for anyone to understand.

When my series was finished it was printed in pamphlet form. I sent a copy to Dr. Prince Morrow of the Bureau, asking for his opinion and any corrections he might suggest for the next edition, to my delight he replied he would like to see it spread by the million. The Bureau had names and backing but was not proceeding very fast towards educating working people regarding venereal disease, the articles in the *Call*, on the other hand, were reaching this same class by the thousand—yet the one which mentioned syphilis was suppressed.

I continued assiduously to write pieces for the *Call*. One of these reported the laundry strike in New York City in the winter of 1912, unauthorized by Samuel Gompers and his American Federation of Labor, which claimed it alone had the right to declare strikes. To get the details I went into the houses of the Irish Amazons, who with their husbands had walked out without being called out, simply

because they could not stand it any longer. They were the hardest worked, the poorest paid, had the most protracted and irregular hours of any union members. One man described his typical day: he rose at five, had ten minutes for lunch, less for supper, and dragged himself home at eleven at night. I was glad they had the courage to rebel, and it took courage to be a picket—getting up so early on bitterly cold mornings and waiting and waiting to waylay the strikebreakers and argue with them. The police were ready to pounce when the boss pointed out the ringleaders.

This was the only time I came in contact with men and women on strike together. I could see the men had two things in their minds: one economic—the two-dollar extra wage and the shorter hours they might win, the other political—the coming of the social revolution. The women really cared for neither of these. Dominating each was the relationship between her husband, her children, and herself. She might complain of being tired and not having enough money, but always she connected both with too many offspring.

Some of the strikers thought I might help them out, but I was not at all sure. I believed either in direct action or legislation as a remedy for their difficulties. This lack of conviction prevented me from having the necessary force to aid them organize themselves, and in such an emergency a forceful leader was called for. The night of their rally I was amazed at the complete confusion. Anybody could speak—and was doing so.

I felt helpless in the midst of this chaos, and distressed at their helplessness. But I knew the person who could manage the situation effectively, and so I sent for Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, a direct actionist identified with the I W W. Her father, Tom Flynn, a labor organizer, was the same type of philosophical rebel as my father, long on conversation but short on work. Elizabeth had been out in the logging camps of the West, where she had won the complete adoration of the lumberjacks. At her tongue's end were the words and phrases they understood, and she knew exactly the right note to stir them.

Elizabeth stood on the platform, dramatically beautiful with her black hair and deep blue eyes, her cream-white complexion set off

by the flaming scarf she always wore about her throat. Nothing if not outspoken, she started by saying it was folly for the strikers to give up their bread and butter by walking out. They could achieve their ends more quickly if they threw hypothetical *sabots* into the machinery. "If a shirt comes in from a man who wears size fifteen, send him back an eighteen. Replace a dress shirt with a blue denim. That's what the laundry workers of France did, and brought the employers to their knees."

The audience was being held spellbound by this instruction in the fine art of sabotage when some of Gompers' strong-arm men appeared, and the battle was on. They tramped up on the stage, moved furniture and chairs about, made so much noise Elizabeth's voice could not be heard, and finally ejected some of her sympathizers.

It was probably better in the end that the American Federation of Labor eventually took the laundry workers under its wing, because the I W W was not an organized body, but merely an agitational force which scarcely had the necessary strength to lead a successful strike in New York City. Its influence in Lawrence, Massachusetts, was far more potent. Joe Ettor, once bootblack in California, with Arturo Giovanitti, scholar, idealist, poet, and editor of *Il Proletario*, had been stirring up the unorganized textile strikers with impassioned eloquence. So compelling were the words of these two that workers of seven nationalities, chiefly Italian, had walked out spontaneously.

The accidental shooting of a girl picket provided an excuse, far-fetched as it may seem, to jail the firebrands, Ettor and Giovanitti, who were charged with being "accessories *before* the fact," which meant they were accused of having known beforehand she was going to be shot by the police and were, therefore, responsible. Now, the strikers had martyrs, and the I W W heroes of the West poured in to help. Bill Haywood, William E. Trautman of the United Brewery Workers, Carlo Tresca, editor and owner of an Italian paper in New York, contributed to put on the biggest show the East had ever seen—parades, banners, songs, speeches.

The entire Italian population of America was aroused. These were then a people unto themselves. For much longer than the two

generations customary among other immigrant races they retained their habits, traditions, and language, ate their own type of food and read their own newspapers

Italians in New York who were in accord with the strikers decided on a step, novel in this country although it had been tried in Italy and Belgium. The primary reason for the failure of all labor rebellions was the hunger cries of the babies, if they were only fed the strikers could usually last out. It was determined to bring the children of the textile workers to New York, where they could be taken care of until the issue was settled. This resolution was made without knowing how many there might be, provision would be forthcoming somehow.

Again because I was an American, a nurse, and reputed to be sympathetic to their cause and the cause of children, the committee asked me with John Di Gregorio and Carrie Giovanitti to fetch the youngsters. As soon as I agreed, telephone calls were put through to Lawrence, and a delegate took the midnight train to make the preliminary arrangements.

We found the boys and girls gathered in a Lawrence public hall and, before we started, I insisted on physical examinations for contagious diseases. One, though ill with diphtheria, had been working up to the time of the strike. Almost all had adenoids and enlarged tonsils. Each, without exception, was incredibly emaciated.

Our hundred and nineteen charges were of every age, from babies of two or three to older ones of twelve to thirteen. Although the latter had been employed in the textile mills, their garments were simply worn to shreds. Not a child had on any woolen clothing whatsoever, and only four wore overcoats. Never in all my nursing in the slums had I seen children in so ragged and deplorable a condition. The February weather was bitter, and we had to run them to the station. There the parents, with tears in their eyes and gratitude in their hearts, relinquished their shivering offspring.

The wind was even icier when we reached Boston, and money was scarce. I had only enough for railroad fares and none for chartering buses or hiring taxis. Consequently, again we had to scurry on foot from the North to the South Station. But, once more on the train, great was the enthusiasm of the boys and girls, who en-

tertain themselves by singing the *Marseillaise* and the *Internationale*. All knew the words as well as the tunes, though the former might be in Polish, Hungarian, French, German, Italian, and even English. The children who sang those songs are now grown up. I wonder how they regard the present state of the world.

As we neared New York I began to worry about our arrival. We were all weary. Would preparations have been made to feed this hungry mob and house it for the night? But I should have trusted the deep feeling and the dramatic instinct of the Italians. Thousands of men and women were waiting. As my assistants and I left the train, looking like three Pied Pipers followed by our ragged cohorts, the crowd pushed through the police lines, leaped the ropes, caught up the children as they came, and hoisted them to their shoulders. I was seized by both arms and I, too, had the illusion of being swept from the ground.

The committee had secured permission to parade to Webster Hall near Union Square. Our tired feet fell into the rhythm of the band. As we swung along singing, laughing, crying, big banners bellying and torches flaring, sidewalk throngs shouted and whistled and applauded.

At Webster Hall supper was ready in plentiful quantity. Many of our small guests were so unused to sitting at table that they did not know how to behave. Like shy animals they tried to take cover, carrying their plates to a chair, a box, anything handy. Almost all snatched at their food with both fists and stuffed it down, they were so hungry.

Socialists had not initiated this fight but they were in it. Many had come to offer shelter for the duration of the strike—perhaps six weeks, perhaps six months, perhaps a year—with visions in their minds of beautiful, starry-eyed, helpless little ones. Instead they were presented with bedraggled urchins, many of whom had never seen a toothbrush. But they rallied round magnificently, I cannot speak too highly of them.

It was a responsibility to apportion the children properly, but I had willing and intelligent help. The Poles had sent a Polish delegate, the French had sent a French delegate, and so on, in order that all might be placed in homes where they could be understood.

Luckily several families were willing to take more than one child so that we were usually able to keep brother and sister together. Each, before it was handed over, was given a medical examination. The temporary foster-parents had to promise to write the real parents, and also to send a weekly report to the committee of how their charges were getting on. The tabulation was thorough, and not until four in the morning did the last of us go to bed.

The next week, ninety-two more children were brought down, but I had no part in this, because I was on a case. Hysteria had now risen to such a height that some of the parents at the Lawrence Station were beaten and arrested by the police. Victor Berger of Wisconsin, the only Socialist member of Congress, asked for an investigation of circumstances leading up to the walkout. Although I had not been identified with it, he requested me to be present at the hearings.

When Gompers testified, he literally shook with rage, and it seemed to me he was about to have apoplexy. The mill owners charged that the whole affair had been staged solely for notoriety and that the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children should step in.

Unfortunately, the witnesses for the strikers were not well-documented. When it was obvious that the Congressional Committee was not receiving the correct impression, Berger asked me to take the stand and describe the condition of the children as I had seen them. Writing up statistics on hospital reports had given me the habit of classification. I was able from my brief notes to answer every question as to their nationalities, their ages, their weights, the number of those without underclothes and without overcoats. Senator Warren Gamaliel Harding led the inquiry, and I could see he was in sympathy with my vehement replies.

The publicity had been so well managed by the Italians and their leaders that popular opinion turned in favor of the strikers, and they eventually won. At the end of March the little refugees, who had endeared themselves to their foster-parents, went back to the mill district. It was hard to recognize the same children of six weeks before, plumped up and dressed in new clothes. In November Ettore and Giovanitti were acquitted.

The Paterson silk strike of the next year, in which the workers were again predominantly Italian, may have been as important as the one at Lawrence, but it was by no means so obviously dramatic. Paterson was a gloomy city, and, as a river, the Passaic was sadder than the Merrimac. Though the leadership was far more cohesive, caution was evidenced on every hand. Its chief interest to me lay in Bill Haywood's participation. At Lawrence he had only been one of the committee, whereas at Paterson he was in charge for the first time in the East. Always before he had advised strikers to "take it on the chin" and not be too gentle in hitting back. But here, before ten thousand crowding up to the rostrum, I heard him warn, "Keep your hands in your pockets, men, and nobody can say you are shooting."

An American was apt to be at a disadvantage in handling foreigners, particularly when they felt aggrieved. They objected to his manner of going about things, so different from their own, and he, on the other hand, could not fully understand their psychology, and had the added obstacle of being compelled to work through an intermediary in language.

At Paterson the Italian groups were not behind Bill. As soon as he began to temper his language and sound a more wary note of advice, his once-faithful adherents repudiated him. His clarion call of "Hands in the Pockets," which was intended to create favorable popular opinion by proving them "good boys," had actually *tied* their hands, and detectives beat and bullied them just the same. The public was not impressed and they were resentful. They claimed he did not have the old fighting spirit he had shown when directing the miners of the West, he was getting soft, he was a sick man. Although he had actually progressed tactically and left them where they were, from that time on he lost his power of leadership.

Following the method which had been so successful at Lawrence, Jack Reed endeavored to dramatize direct action in an enormous pageant at Madison Square Garden. He even had pallbearers carry an actual coffin into the hall to pictorialize the funeral of a worker who had been shot at Paterson. I could feel a tremor go through the audience, but, on the whole, conviction was lacking.

The pageant was a fitting conclusion to one period of my life

I believe that we all had our parts to play. Some had important ones, some were there to lend support to a scene, some were merely voices off stage. Each, whatever his role, was essential. I only walked on, but it had its influence in my future.

No matter to what degree I might participate in strikes, I always came back to the idea which was beginning to obsess me—that something more was needed to assuage the condition of the very poor. It was both absurd and futile to struggle over pennies when fast-coming babies required dollars to feed them.

I was thoroughly despondent after the Paterson debacle, and had a sickening feeling that there was to be no end, it seemed to me the whole question of strikes for higher wages was based on man's economic need of supporting his family, and that this was a shallow principle upon which to found a new civilization. Furthermore, I was enough of a Feminist to resent the fact that woman and her requirements were not being taken into account in reconstructing this new world about which all were talking. They were failing to consider the quality of life itself.