October 1865, the United States Wool Hat Finishers’ Association from 1869 and the National Union of Horseshoers of the United States from 1875. The Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers resulted, as its name signifies, from the consolida­tion of various other orders and societies, the present order being organized at Pittsburg in August 1876. The consolidated societies were known previously to the new order of things as the United Sons of Vulcan, the Associated Brotherhood of Iron and Steel Heaters, Rollers and Roughers of the United States, and the Iron and Steel Roll Hands’ Union. The oldest was the United Sons of Vulcan, originating in Pittsburg on the 17th of April 1858, and afterwards called the Iron City Forge. The organization is now known as the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers. The Granite Cutters’ National Union was organized in 1877, the Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners in 1881 and the Journey­men Bakers’ National Union in 1886.

There have also been attempts to organize labour on a general or universal plan. The first of these was the International Association of Working-men, known as the “ Inter- national,” which was organized in London in the autumn of 1864. This society sought to associate working-men wherever manufacturing has been extended. The International grew for a while, but never at any time had a member­ship exceeding 100,000 and probably never over 50,000. It did not extend to the United States with much force; certainly no large number of the working-men of the country were involved in it, and branches were not organized in the union until 1870 or 1871.

The second attempt was the Noble Order of Knights of Labour of America, which was founded in Philadelphia on Thanks­giving Day 1869, through the efforts of Uriah S. Stephens and six associates, all garment-cutters. For several years the garment-cutters of Philadelphia had been organized as a trade union, but failed to maintain satisfactory rates of wages. Dissatisfaction prevailed, and resulted in the autumn of 1869 in the disbandment of the union. Stephens, who was a far-seeing man, and anticipated the dis­ruption of his union, had prepared the outlines of a plan for an organization embracing, as he said, “ all branches of honourable toil.” He advocated education, co-operation and an intelligent use of the ballot as the proper means for gradually abolishing the present wage-system. The order had a varied career. Mr Stephens, himself a Mason, brought into the ritual of the new order many of the features of speculative Masonry. The obligations were in the nature of oaths, taken with much solemnity upon the Bible, and the members were sworn to the strictest secrecy. The order was known for a long time as “ Five Stars,” that designation being used in printing and writing. Many expressions taken from Greek literature were introduced into the ceremonies. The instructions given to every person admitted into the order are perhaps the best exponent of the nature of the ritual:—

Labour is noble and holy. To defend it from degradation; to divest it of the evils to body, mind and estate which ignorance and greed have imposed; to rescue the toiler from the grasp of the selfish—is a work worthy of the noblest and best of our race. In all the multifarious branches of trade capital has its combinations; and, whether intended or not, they crush the manly hopes of labour and trample poor humanity in the dust. We mean no conflict with legitimate enterprise, no antagonism to necessary capital, but men, in their haste and greed, blinded by self-interests, overlook the interests of others and sometimes violate the rights of those they deem helpless. We mean to uphold the dignity of labour, to affirm the nobility of all who earn their bread by the sweat of their brows. We mean to create a healthy public opinion on the subject of labour (the only creator of values), and the justice of its receiving a full, just share of the values or capital it has created. We shall, with all our strength, support laws made to harmonize the interests of labour and capital, and also those laws which tend to lighten the exhaustiveness of toil. To pause in his toil, to devote to his own interests [*sic*], to gather a knowledge of the world’s commerce, to unite, combine and co-operate in the great army of peace and industry, to nourish and cherish, build and develop, the temple he lives in, is the highest and noblest duty of man to himself, to his fellow men and to his Creator,

The ritual was neither printed nor written, and in all probability there is not now in existence a copy of it. So long as the utmost secrecy was retained the order did not grow rapidly; gradually it lost its secrecy and worked on more general plans. From the best evidence that can be secured it is probable that the first local assembly of the Knights of Labour was organized as early as 1873 in Philadelphia. Attempts at outside organization had been unsuccessful. The second assembly consisted of ship carpenters and caulkers employed in Cramp’s shipyard. After this the order spread quite rapidly, 20 assemblies being organized in Philadelphia during 1873. A district assembly, consisting of delegates from local assemblies in Philadelphia, met in that city on Christmas Day 1873 and organized District Assembly No. 1. The order increased during the years following this action, and in 1877 delegates were chosen to organize a general assembly. These delegates met at Reading, Pennsylvania, on the 1st of January 1878, and organized the first general assembly, Mr Stephens, the founder, presiding as temporary chairman. Seven states were represented. General assemblies have been held each year since that time, and changes in the constitution or work of the order have been the subject of warm discussion. At the meeting of the first general assembly the membership must have been small, probably only a few thousand. It did not reach 50,000 till five years later. The general assembly of 1880, at Pittsburg, denounced strikes as injurious and not worthy of support except in extreme cases. At the fifth session, at Detroit, in 1881, the most important actions in the history of the order were taken, and from this session the rapid growth of the order may be dated. The assembly then declared that on and after the 1st of January 1882 the name and objects of the order should be made public. It also declared that women should be admitted upon an equal footing with men, and a strong committee was appointed to revise the constitution and the ritual. At the next general assembly, September 1882, in New York, the revised constitu­tion was adopted, as well as laws and regulations for support­ing strikes. After this the order began to grow rapidly. It antagonized the trade unions, the contention being that the order embraced higher and grander principles than those underlying the organization of the former. The trade unions in existence at that time struggled to preserve their organiza­tions against what they considered the encroachment of the Knights of Labour. The high-water mark of the order was probably during 1883, 1884, 1885 and 1886, when, according to the very best information, it numbered not less than 1,000,000 members. In 1900 its membership was estimated at about 130,000.

The order of the Knights of Labour is based on the federal plan, and has a hierarchy of assemblies—the local assembly, the district assembly, the state and the general assembly. The officers of the local assembly consist of a master workman, worthy foreman, venerable sage, recording secretary, financial secretary, treasurer, worthy inspector, almoner, statistician and some minor officers. These are elected semi-annually by ballot or by acclamation. The district assembly is composed of duly accredited delegates from at least five local assemblies, and is the highest tribunal of the Knights of Labour within its jurisdiction under the general laws of the order. It has the power to levy assessments for its maintenance upon all locals, and has also the power to establish locals in the territory governed by it. The officers and their duties are similar *to* those of the local assembly, except that the master workman is called the district master workman. The constitution of the general assembly is a very imposing document, containing twenty articles. The assembly consists of representatives chosen by the district assemblies, and has full and final jurisdiction, being the highest tribunal of the order. It alone possesses the power and authority to make, amend or repeal the fundamental and general laws of the order, to decide finally all controversies arising, and to issue charters to state, district and local assemblies. The officers are elected at each annual session, and their titles correspond almost completely with those of the local and district assemblies, with the exception that the word “ general ” takes the place of “ dis- trict,” as “ general master workman,” &c. The general master workmen have been Uriah S. Stephens (the founder of the order), Terence V. Powderly, James R. Sovereign, John N. Parsons and Henry A. Hicks. The order has a publication known as the *Journal of the Knights of Labour,* published at Washington, D.C.