The third attempt to bring into one order men employed in different vocations was the American Railway Union, organized in Chicago on the 20th of June 1893. It included all railway employés bom of white parents. It was organized for the protection of members in all matters relating to wages and their rights as employés, and affirmed that such employés were entitled to a voice in fixing wages and in determining conditions of employ- ment. The union won a great victory on the North-Western railway in April 1894, but its action in the great strikes in Chicago in 1894 cost it its life. Its membership reached at one time 150,000.

The separate unions found that the co-operation of other unions was needed to perfect and extend their work, and attempts were made from time to time to organize a federated body. The initial steps were taken in 1866, when the trades assemblies of New York City and Baltimore called a national labour congress, the 100 delegates sent by 6o secret and open organizations from different trade unions meeting on the 20th of August. In 1867 a second convention was called to meet in Chicago, the aim being to form a Trades Union Congress like that existing in Great Britain. The National Labour Union held two conventions in 1868, the first in May and the other in September; it met again in Chicago in 1869, in Boston in 1870, in Philadelphia in 1871 and in Columbus, Ohio, in 1872. This closed the experience of the National Labour Union. During 1873, owing to the industrial depression, many of the trade unions were suspended. An industrial congress met in Rochester, N.Y., in April 1874, consisting of some of the leading trade unionists of the United States, and on the 14th of that month a convention was held representing the Sovereigns of Industry. The expectation was that the old National Labour Union should be taken up. The Industrial Brotherhood of the United States, another secret order, partaking largely of the character of the Knights of Labour, was represented in that convention. As might have been expected, the two ideas—that on which the Knights of Labour was organized and the trade union idea—immediately became antagonistic, yet a platform containing most of the principles of the Knights of Labour was adopted. The movement ended with the Rochester meeting. The years 1875 and 1876 saw other attempts; hut they were chiefly political in their character and the temporary orders then organized were disbanded. Be- tween 1876 and 1881 other attempts were made at federation. A call issued jointly by the Knights of Industry and a body known as the Amalgamated Labour Union, consisting of some dissatisfied members of the Knights of Labour, resulted in a convention held at Terre Haute, Ind., on the 2nd of August 1881. The chief purpose was to supplant the Knights of Labour by the creation of a new secret order. The membership of the convention, however, had trade union proclivities and did not believe in multiplying labour societies. The secret organization was not effected. Another convention was held in Pittsburg, on the 19th of November 1881, as the result of the following statement:—

We have numberless trades unions, trades assemblies or councils, Knights of Labour, and various other local, national and international labour unions, all engaged in the noble task of elevating and improving the condition of the working classes. But great as has been the work done by these bodies, there is vastly more that can be done by a combination of all these organizations in a federa­tion of trades and labour unions.

It is claimed that the 107 delegates represented 262,000 workmen. Their deliberations resulted in the Federation of Organized Trades and Labour Unions of the United States and Canada. Its platform differed but very little from that of the Knights of Labour, although it was in some respects more comprehensive. It demanded eight hours as a day’s work; called for national and state incorporation of trade unions; favoured obligatory education of all children, and the prohibition of their employ­ment under the age of fourteen; favoured the enactment of uniform apprentice laws; opposed bitterly all contract convict labour and the truck system for payment of wages; demanded laws giving to working men a first lien on property upon which their labour had been expended; insisted upon the abrogation of all so-called conspiracy laws; advocated the establishment of a national bureau of labour statistics; urged the prohibition of the importation of foreign labour; opposed government contracts on public work; favoured the adoption by states of an employers’ liability act; and urged all other labour bodies to vote only for labour legislators. The second convention was held at Cleveland, O., on the 21st of November 1882.

The American Federation of Labour is the largest labour organization in the United States. It was organized at Columbus, O., on the 8th of December 1886, under the name it now bears. In 1888 it was declared that it owed its existence to the Fcdera- tion of Organized Trades. &c., founded in 1881 at Pittsburg, and that the American Federation meetings or conventions should date from that year; hence it is generally stated that the Federation was founded in 1881. From the start in 1δ81 the Federation had a constitution, but it revised it at the convention held in Baltimore on the 16th of December 1887, under the name of the American Federation of Labour. The order is not secret, nor do individual members, through local trades unions or otherwise, owe any allegiance to it. Its object is the encourage­ment and formation of local trades and labour unions and the closer federation of such societies through the organization of central trades and labour unions in every state, and the combination of such bodies into state, territorial or provincial organizations for the purpose of securing general harmony not only in the interests of the working masses, but of legislation. While it is a federation, it cannot be called a federal body, like the Knights of Labour, although there are local trade unions, trade assemblies in cities and state federations; nevertheless, there is not the hierarchical character of the other body. Most of the trade unions in the United States are affiliated with the American Federation. The great railway brotherhoods are not so affiliated, except the Amalgamated Association of Rail- road Employés of America, the Order of Railroad Telegraphers and the Brotherhood of Railroad Trackmen.

The federation has affiliated with it 117 international unions, 37 state federations, 574 city central bodies and 661 local trade and federal labour unions. The international unions are made up of approximately 28,500 local unions. The average membership on which dues have been paid was 264,825 in 1897, and ten years later the number was 1,538,970.

The chief officers of the federation are a president, first, second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth vice-presidents, treasurer and secretary. Samuel Gompers of New York was the first president, holding that position till 1894, when he was defeated through the endeavours of the Socialist Labour Party, and John M’Bride elected. At the next session, however, he was re-elected. The numerical strength of the American Federation of Labour is probably not far from 1,600,000. It maintains a journal called *the American Federationist,* published at Washington, D.C. The doctrine of the federation relative to strikes is that each affiliated society has its own government, distinct from the government of the national con­vention, which has no power to order strikes, such matters being left to the affiliated societies, but is advisory and not conclusive in its action.

Unions are often organized for temporary purposes, their existence ceasing as soon as the purposes succeed or fail. The total number of members of all kinds of labour organizations cannot be stated. There are many local societies and associations other than those belonging to the Knights of Labour or those affiliated with the American Federation of Labour, but which are distinctly labour bodies. According to the best possible classification there are 20,000,000 wage-earners in the United States, including men, women and children. The most liberal estimate of the membership of all labour organizations places the total at 2,000,000. This would be about 10% of the whole body of wage-workers; but in some occupations, like that of the printing trade, the organization probably includes from 75 to 90%.

The law relating to trade unions varies somewhat in the different states. Both the federal legislature and several of the states (Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Maryland, Iowa, Kansas and Louisiana) have passed laws permitting the incorporation of unions. Michigan, Wyoming