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EDITORIAL

## HAYWOOD'S LUMINOUS THOUGHT.

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**I**N the course of the debates at the recent Chicago Convention of the Industrial Workers of the World, the chairman, Wm. D. Haywood, dropped a thought, that, however incidental it was, should not be lost sight of. The passage will appear in due time in the course of the stenographic report.

The discussion being on the constitution, Haywood suggested that the several industrial Unions should be considered in the structural scheme in the same light as the several States of the United States, and the several craft organizations as the counties in the States. The thought is luminous.

“State Autonomy” cut one time no little figure in the history of the Nation; it was a nuisance in the days of Jackson, when Calhoun attempted his “nullification” theory in South Carolina; before that it threatened the Nation’s integrity when Rhode Island proposed to “go it alone”, and worse yet when Vermont threatened to rejoin England; finally in 1860 it placed the very existence of the Nation in jeopardy. Time, experience, good judgment and stalwartness stripped from the theory of “State Autonomy” all the evils with which it was fraught, and left intact all the virtues inherent in it and requisite in a country of such vast dimensions and such multiplex qualities and requirements as this. To-day, each State administers its own local affairs according to its own genius, while above them all the National administration harmonizes all the States into a united whole; to-day no State can exert an autonomy at variance with matters that concern the Nation, and in many respects the Nation’s province is supreme. On more than one subject, notably that of divorce, the autonomous idea still prevails; but an enlightened sense is asserting itself with the view of removing existing incongruities through National legislation. As with the States, so with the counties; within their sphere the counties attend to what is properly their own concerns; and thus the wheels within wheels of the whole National mechanism move without friction towards a common end. As political demarkations, the Statehood divisions are make-shifts; the form of Government that they are the constituencies of is a political, consequently, a

capitalist Government; the one and the other must pass away when Government becomes the administrative, the central directing body of an industrial, that is, the Socialist Republic. Nevertheless, the general mold may serve under the Socialist Republic, if "States" are translated into "Industrial Unions" and "Counties" into "Crafts". Moreover, the history of the world furnishes inestimable warnings against pitfalls.

As in the framing of the American Constitution, when existing States claimed autonomous rights, existing Trades Unions are to-day likewise seen to lay claim to sovereign autonomy in the framework of that coming National Administrative, that Socialist Government, which—pure and simple though they be, but acting obedient to sociologic laws that they themselves know nothing of—they instinctively gravitate towards, and tend to help erect. And again, as in the early days of the country's experience, the autonomous idea of the States occasionally ran riot to the extent that schemers sought to rip a State in twain so as to set up themselves autonomously, crafts within existing Trades Unions are to-day likewise seen to scheme after, and not infrequently succeed in secession, and setting themselves up as sovereign autonomous entities. The experience that the country went through in its political formation is an experience that this generation must profit by in the pending re-organization of society. The wisdom of this generation, firmly applied, must pull out betimes the sting of autonomous vanity. Neither may Industrial Unions of the category of States have Calhounist nullification autonomy, nor may crafts of the category of Counties presume to exercise the functions of industrial bodies. As the County has its sphere within the State and the State within the Nation, with the Nation supreme, so has the subsidiary Craft its sphere within the Industrial Union, and the Industrial Union within the Socialist Republic.

The skeleton of the constitution of the Industrial Workers of the World, drawn up at Chicago, followed the principle of Haywood's luminous thought. By doing so it may have clipped the wings of some soaring vanities, but it builded wisely for the future—who knows how near a future?

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