

# THE WAGEWORKER.

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## CURT CURRENT COMMENTS

THE SAME CONTAINING A FEW UNBIASED OPINIONS ABOUT MATTERS OF MORE OR LESS INTEREST TO THE PUBLIC

Begging pardon of my ministerial friends for the presumption, but I am going to make a suggestion to them. As they perhaps know Sunday, September 4—the day before Labor Day—has been designated by the American Federation of Labor as "Labor Sunday." The Federation has asked the ministers of the United States and Canada to observe the day by delivering sermons appropriate to the idea of industrial organization and expounding the principles of trades unionism. But I have a better scheme, even if I do say it as shouldn't. I wonder how many Lincoln ministers will drop me a note saying that they will gladly give some representative trades unionist the opportunity of standing in the pulpit on Labor Sunday for the purpose of telling the people what trades unionism really stands for? A note addressed "Editor Wageworker, 240 North Thirty-third street," will reach me.

I know a number of trades unionists in this community who are abundantly able, and I believe willing, to occupy Lincoln pulpits and endeavor in the short space of thirty-five minutes to outline the real principles upon which trades unionism is based. Among the number I recall the names of such unionists as Fred Mickel, who is no stranger to the pulpit, and whose unionism is of the right brand. Then there is Frank M. Coffey, president of the State Federation of Labor. He is well grounded in unionism, and could if he would, and I believe he will if given the opportunity, speak by the card and with credit to any minister who invites him to the pulpit. Then there is General Tom Kelsey, than whom there is no better union man in this country, and who can talk to the edification and interest of any assembly. "Doug" Smith of Havelock is a church worker as well as a worker at the anvil and forge, and I know that "Doug" would reflect credit upon any pulpit he occupied. He is zealous, earnest and tireless in his unionism and with him unionism means the practical Christianity of doing good. Another Havelock man who could deliver the goods from a pulpit is my good friend Greenwood.

W. S. Brown might be persuaded to occupy a pulpit, and if he could talk as interestingly to a congregation as he can to me in private, he would accomplish a good work while reflecting credit upon the pulpit and upon his union. But it is difficult to recall names offhand in connection with a matter like this, and I can only add that if a dozen ministers will agree to step aside for one service on Labor Sunday and let some union man occupy the place, I'll undertake the task of finding that many men for the assignments. And I'll guarantee the selections will make good. Doubtless they would tell some wholesome truths that would not "set well" on the minds of some of the pewholders, but I am of the opinion that it wouldn't hurt church work a bit in this city to have a few home thrusts delivered from behind the pulpits of the city.

Wouldn't it be fine to hear some eloquent minister get up and denounce some of the abuses that exist right here in Lincoln, and instead of doing it in general terms do it specifically, pointing the ministerial fingers straight at the pews and saying "thou art the man!"

You've doubtless heard the story of the minister who was preaching a trial sermon in a country village. He thought it would be wise to get a little information before hand, so he inquired of a good brother. "Well, parson," said the good brother, "you'd better be easy on the Methodists, for there a lot of them in this community. And on the Presbyterians, too, for they are not scarce. And the Baptists are pretty strong, too, so don't say much about them. But there ain't a Mormon in the county and you can give them hell straight from the shoulder without doing a bit of harm."

Isn't that too often the ministerial rule—denouncing the wrongs that exist far away, and skating away from any particular reference to the wrongs that abound at home?

If the charge against Roy Wilseam is true, and he really did try to destroy his home as charged by the authorities, then he ought, in my humble judgment, be cited to appear before the lunatic inquisitor instead of a magistrate. Any man who would be guilty of trying to commit arson as Wilseam is charged with doing certainly is too crazy to be wholly responsible.

Now that it is all over, will somebody please tell me what it mattered whether Will Hayward did or did not own a little stock in a brewery. I have rather a poor opinion of a man who owns stock in a brewery in Nebraska these days and wouldn't sell it at a fair price if he got a chance, but so far as owning it is concerned I'm blest if I can see any high crime in that. People who are well acquainted with me know something about the opinions I hold on the liquor question, but right here and now I desire to state that I'd rather own stock in a brewery than to hold stock in a manufacturing concern whose profits were wrung from the underpaid toil of women and children. The man who manufactures whisky is a mighty good man in comparison with the man who "sweats" the life out of helpless womanhood and childhood in order to enrich himself. I've seen "sweat shoppers" by the score who could pray loud enough to raise the roof, and who would pass the box for a collection for the heathen with a snug and sanctimonious air that would shame a house cat guilty of having swiped the cream.

A few years ago, while I was doing the "federal run" on the Omaha World-Herald, I saw a lawyer step forward as a case was called and state that he represented the defendant. Just as he was well started in the presentation of his case Judge Dundy asked: "Have you been admitted to practice in this court?" The lawyer blushing admitted that he had forgotten that little matter. Whereupon Judge Dundy made him sit down, and the defendant would have been forced to secure another lawyer had not a well known member of the Omaha bar moved to admit the forgetful lawyer, testifying to his legal ability. Whereupon the lawyer was sworn in and given his "union card." Every lawyer in the country will insist that this is all right, and yet ninety-nine per cent of them will denounce the "closed shop" idea in trades unionism. It beats thunder how easy it is for a lawyer to argue himself into believing both sides of almost any question.

Here's a rich joke. The merchants

## A QUIET TIP TO SOME MERCHANTS

AN OKLAHOMA PAPER HANDS OUT A FEW THAT MERCHANTS IN LINCOLN MIGHT THINK OVER WITH PROFIT TO THEMSELVES AND TO THE CITY AT LARGE

Already the talk is current that a movement is on foot, under cover, to make Oklahoma City an "open shop" town, and there is a probability that a whole lot of merchants and other business men might be jerked into such a fight who are sincere yet entirely innocent. Leaving aside all question of justice and whether it is the merchant's business to trouble about the "open shop" still, merely, as a business hunch, it might be well to remember that shoes and groceries and patent medicines and clothing are used chiefly by men who earn a living, and as these humble chaps are about ninety-nine hundredths in the majority over the fellows who exploit workers, and make profits by paying less than a man should get, it might be possible that a declaration for the "open shop," whatever that is, would have a very perceptible effect on trade.

The average retail merchant gets his money by hard work and business ability; he has little time to study or worry over wage and hour problems and chiefly takes the higher-ups for it. We would suggest, for simple business reasons, it would be well for the business man to discover what the workers of any town thought about the open shop before they were coaxed

of Fort Smith, Arkansas, organized a "home patronage" club, and proceeded to plaster the billboards of the city with four-sheet posters urging everybody to "patronize home industry." And the posters were printed in Memphis, Tenn. That's almost as good as Clinton R. Lee heading the list when an attempt was made to organize a "patronize home industry" club in Lincoln. For the benefit of my out-of-state readers I'll say that Mr. Lee is the man who has the Nebraska penitentiary broom contract.

While The Wageworker was for Metcalfe, as between Burkett and Hitchcock, there is one thing about Hitchcock that commends him to the support of organized labor. He employs an army of union men, has never had a strike, has never had even the symptom of a strike, has always been the first to sign increased wage scales, and has been in every way a fair employer. In addition to that, his record in congress is, insofar as it relates to the principles espoused by organized labor, absolutely clean. He has voted for the things that organized labor favored, and has voted against these things that were calculated to injure the army of toil. He is the real father of the postal saving bill—although he may not now be able to recognize his progeny. The Wageworker simply asks union men to scan the official records of Hitchcock and Burkett, and then vote without partisan bias and with an eye to the best interests of organized labor.

There is no use mourning over the result, but when the democratic voters of Nebraska turned "Met" down they did an ill turn to a man who has made more sacrifices for democracy than any man in the west—and who, at the same time has done more for Nebraska democracy than any other one man. There are no exceptions to that statement.

A. E. Cady got into the race too late. His vote is an indication that if he had started sooner he would have won out. But Aldrich had too great a lead to overcome. There is one plank in the Aldrich platform that ought to condemn him in the eyes of union men—his declaration in favor of compulsory arbitration. A governor wields a powerful influence over legislation, and if elected Aldrich might be able to secure a compulsory arbitration law. The enactment of such a law, under existing conditions, would be a calamity to every wage earner. Union men, no matter what trade or occupation, ought to consider this matter very carefully.

The attempted assassination of Mayor Gaynor means that this same Mayor Gaynor is going to be a mighty big factor in the next presidential campaign. BILLY MAJOR.

## HITTING THE POLITICAL PIPE

A FEW STRAY BITS OF GOSSIP CONCERNING MATTERS THAT HAVE TO DO WITH RUNNING THE CITY, COUNTY AND STATE

There need be no surprise over the defeat of County Attorney Tyrrell. There were powerful special interests arrayed against him. Not because those special interests believed they could expect any favors from Mr. Strode, but because those special interests were out for revenge. And the way Tyrrell was traded and exchanged in certain sections of the city was something fierce. Some mighty funny things have happened in some of the "God and morality" precincts within the past few days.

While this little newspaper was hoping for the re-nomination of Mr. Tyrrell because of good work he had done and of still better work that he had under way, it felt confident that whatever the result, the next attorney of Lancaster county would be a man of ability and integrity. Mr. Strode will be the republican candidate and Mr. Meier will be the democratic candidate. Voters who are unable to get to the polls on election day need not worry about the county attorneyship—it is a cinch that it will continue to be in the hands of a competent man. While we regret that it will not be Mr. Tyrrell, we are mighty glad that his successor will be either Mr. Strode or Mr. Meier.

Dahlman's vote in Lincoln and Lancaster county is the surprise of the primary—yet why should it be? There are always enough men ready to express their resentment against officials in power even to the extent of sacrificing those who have proved faithful and efficient. The trouble with Lincoln is that it is now in the control of a lot of goo-gos. The city is so thoroughly sissified, so completely dominated by a lot of effeminate reformers, that almost any man with red blood in his veins would be excused for registering a protest. So thorough has this resentment permeated the rank and file of Lincoln citizenship that it found expression at the polls Tuesday by votes against the best governor Nebraska has ever had. The "drys" of Lincoln have only themselves to blame for the predicament in which they now find themselves. If they expect to keep Lincoln out of the "wet" column next spring they would better begin perfecting their organization and soliciting subscriptions right away.

Ten days before the primary it looked as if George E. Tobey had a cinch on the republican congressional nomination. Then began the usual foolish breaks in the shape of personal attacks on a rival candidate. As a result the Hayward forces got busy—

and they were sure busy. The prettiest local machine that ever turned its wheels in Lincoln was the Hayward machine last Tuesday. It ran rough-shod over the Tobey forces; it mangled them beyond hope of identification. In addition to being some smooth politician himself, Will Hayward had the assistance of some mighty clever politicians, to say nothing of a lot of warm personal friends who showed their friendship in a substantial way—meaning that a lot of primary expenses were provided for.

Mr. Hayward advocates some things that this newspaper opposes, but little things like these will not prevent The Wageworker from being fair. The fact is that Will Hayward is a mighty able young man. But why should he not be? He comes of mighty good stock. Senator Hayward was one of the big men of Nebraska and the west. It was the good pleasure of The Wageworker's editor to have known personally and enjoy the friendship of the older Hayward, and no finer gentleman, no more loyal Nebraskan, no more enthusiastic builder of the west, ever lived than ex-Senator Hayward. If the son measures up to the standard of the father—or even approximates it—there is no danger that the First Congressional district will be misrepresented in congress, be it either John Maguire or Will Hayward.

Just as soon as the sore spots are healed the writer is going around to the Commoner office and hear "Dick" Metcalfe repeat the old story that we have so often exchanged: "Don't begin countin' yet; this is me again."

After all, it would seem, too, that county option was considerable of a political issue last Tuesday. And the returns indicate that those who thought that by both parties endorsing it the question would have been taken out of politics were sadly mistaken.

Though defeated C. O. Whedon made a race that was surprising in the face of what he had to meet. Firstly, he had to meet the opposition of the entire federal machine. Secondly, he was handicapped by a late entry into the race on account of private and personal matters that could not be resited. And thirdly, he had no newspapers back of him, his opponent having the newspaper support because he had postmaster-editors behind him. But the Whedon vote is evidence that the "insurgent" feeling in Nebraska is growing, and that two years from now Whedon will be a bigger factor than ever in the republican senatorial equation.

The whole primary was a queer mix-up. The political prophets and seers were all at sea. The only thing of which we may all be reasonably sure is that under the open primary system party lines are going to be shot all to thunder, no matter how solid they may be on election day. Maybe the open primary will educate the voters up to independent voting on election day. If it does, it will have served at least one good purpose.

One will search in vain through the primary returns for any mention of the Sorenson vote. While in Omaha the other day the writer heard a man offer to bet a dollar that Al Sorenson wouldn't even vote for himself. If that man offered now to bet that Sorenson didn't vote for himself I wonder if Sorenson would take it?

It seems an immortal cinch that a "wet" legislative ticket, nominated by petition, will be put up in Lancaster county. A week ago it would have been considered a crazy notion to say that there was any possible show of electing anti-county optionists to the legislature from Lancaster. Today the "wets" have every reason to believe that they can elect more than one "wet" representative. Indeed, the primary returns would seem to indicate that the "wets" have caught Lancaster county where Caleb caught the hen.

Does any one to this day know how Elmer J. Burkett stands on county option?

—Oklahoma Labor Unit.