

# THE WAGWORKER

VOL. 5

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA, SEPTEMBER 26, 1908

NO. 26

## Bunch of Live Ones Hold Bully Session

There was a bunch of live ones seated in the Wagworker office Friday afternoon of last week. First in walked S. J. Stearns, the label booster of the United Garment Workers. Before he had fairly seated himself, Colonel Steiner of the local Cigarmakers' Union pranced in, escorting Organizer Dermody. Before they had finished their greetings in walked General Tom Kelsey, who has carried a union card more years than a majority of Lincoln union men have lived. Before General Kelsey had been searched and all bombs and infernal machines removed from his person, the doorway was darkened once more and in walked H. C. Peate, who would rather miss a meal than a chance to boost the label.

There wasn't chairs enough to go around, so Peate perched himself on a bulging mail sack, Stearns pre-empted the editorial chair, Steiner occupied a chair that had about as much bottom as Taft has love for organized labor, and Dermody was given the "guest chair." The editor perched precariously on the corner of the typewriter table.

And then and there was pulled off a talkfest that listened good to all present.

Dermody told a lot of experiences as a journeyman cigarmaker, and explained the difficulty with the La Azora cigar company in Kalamazoo. "Some of our fool members," said he, "went around town bragging about the big wages they made, and as a result every time we went into a store to purchase something we had the price cracked up on us. I tried to rent a small cottage and when the landlord told me what the rent would be I said, 'all right, but who will I beat, you or the grocer?' He asked me what I meant and I told him that if I had to pay that much rent I would have to beat somebody out of a part of the money. Then he said, 'Why, you cigarmakers are making from \$28 to \$30 a week.' And yet the average wage of the cigarmakers in Kalamazoo was less than \$15 a week.

Stearns related some of his experiences as a label booster, and said that the United Garment Workers were in better shape today than ever before in their history.

Kelsey told of his experiences while he was on the blacklist for nine years. "I was offered a dozen jobs if I would work under an assumed name, but I told 'em I had never done anything to disgrace the name of Kelsey, and I'd be gosh-hanged if I'd trade it for any other name I ever heard. As a result I didn't pull a stitch for nine years, but I managed to make a living by soliciting subscriptions for labor papers, selling books, doing odd jobs and making a few speeches now and then."

Peate told how Templeton of the Buck Stove and Range Co. came all the way from St. Louis to warn him against "knocking" VanCleave's "scab" stoves, and then gave a lurid description of what he conceived VanCleave to be.

Steiner told of some experiences in Lincoln, and the editor sat and listened with satisfaction while that bunch of live ones talked singly, in duets, trios, quartets and choruses. The whole union labor game was played to the final button, and the session might have been going yet if the janitor hadn't shown up and raised such a dust that everybody had to skidoo.

### GOING TO OMAHA.

Musical Union Band of Lincoln Will Be in Ak-Sar-Ben Parade.

Lincoln unions will be represented in the great Ak-Sar-Ben parade in Omaha on September 30 by the Musical Union band. This organization, twenty-five strong, uniformed in union-made uniforms, will leave for Omaha on the 4:30 Burlington train, and before departing will parade a few blocks in Lincoln.

The Wagworker has no fears about Lincoln's showing in that great electrical parade. The Musical Union band will reflect credit on Lincoln, on the union and on the good judgment of the Ak-Sar-Ben management that secured its services.

The indications are that Lincoln will send a thousand or more visitors to Omaha next Wednesday, just to show the Omahans a bunch of live people

from a real city, and incidentally to see the finest electrical parade ever pulled off in the country.

### THE MUSICIANS.

Some Bits of News About the Boys of String, Brass and Reed.

The Musicians' Protective Union met Sunday, it being the regular semi-monthly session, and transacted a lot of business. One of the important things was to issue notices to other jurisdictions to steer clear of the Lincoln jurisdiction for the time being, business being rather dull.

Since Labor Day the appropriate committee has been doing some tall hustling with a view to increasing the membership, and in pursuance of that plan several visits were made to Havelock.

It having been reported by Secretary Kates of the Central Labor Union that the Musical Union's delegates had been remiss in their duties, the old

delegates were discharged and new ones elected with instructions to get busy and keep busy on penalty of severe displeasure.

From Kansas City comes the report that there are three roller skating rinks in that city, all of which employ union musicians.

After several attempts to make Ellery, manager of the Royal Italian Band, keep faith with the union, the musicians made him put up a bond of \$1,000 to keep his contract with the association.

### BARTENDERS' PICNIC.

Enjoy a Pleasant Outing With Their Wives and Little Ones.

Last Sunday the Bartenders' League enjoyed its annual picnic, and the outing was a success in every way. The picnic was held at Bruse's park and was confined strictly to the membership of the union and their families and to their employers and their families. The weather was of the genuine picnic brand, and as the committee in charge had attended to the arrangement of every detail, there was nothing to stand in the way of a full enjoyment of the outing.

The day was spent in dancing, games, and social intercourses, and at

just the psychological moment the well filled baskets were opened and the contents spread upon snowy cloths. The luncheon was ample and thoroughly enjoyed. The recreation continued until a late hour, and on the trip home all joined in the expression that the outing had been a splendid success.

The Wagworker is in receipt of another card from the irrepressible Jere Sullivan. Jere is always boosting. This time he sends us a card bearing the inscription, "Don't let the devil divert your attention from patronizing skilled union labor wearing these buttons." Then follows the four buttons of his craft. It's a cold day when Jere can't think up something new in the advertising line.

"Well," said "Sunny," "if there'd been a prize offered for the biggest flag in the Labor Day parade, the Bartenders would have won it."

### SAMUEL GOMPERS.

Mr. Gompers is 58 years of age, and has been a member of organized labor forty-three years. He was born in London and came to America at the age of 13 years. At 11 years he began to work in a cigar factory, and since he was 15 years old has been a member of the cigarmakers' union.

## Lincoln Bakers Get Into the Union Game

Last Sunday afternoon Herman Ross, organizer of the Bakers and Confectionery Workers' International Union, instituted a local of that organization in Lincoln. Mr. Ross came to Lincoln about two weeks ago and proceeded at once to arouse interest among the bakers of the city. He found them ready to listen and to act, and results were soon achieved.

Several years ago there was an organization of the bakers in Lincoln, but owing to internal strife and the wiles of some of the employers the local was disrupted. Happily these conditions have all been changed, and everything is now plain sailing for the new organization, provided its proceeds along well charted union lines. This, if there is any reliance to be placed on the evidence, will be the case.

Last Sunday's meeting was held at Carpenters' hall, and upwards of twenty bakers were present when Organizer Ross called the meeting to

order. It had been arranged beforehand to organize, and the real work of the meeting was to perfect organization and elect officers. This was proceeded with at once after the preliminaries had been attended to. The following officers were elected and duly installed:

President, John Snow. Vice-president, Sid Drew. Recording secretary, Tom Wheeler. Financial secretary, George DeVore.

Treasurer, J. J. Johnson. Trustees, Messrs. Wissler and Hubster.

The new union will at once enter upon the work of getting every eligible worker in the city into the fold, and an active label campaign will be inaugurated.

Organizer Ross left on Wednesday for St. Joseph, Mo. He was present at the meeting of the Central Labor Union Tuesday night and made a short and interesting talk on the subject of his craft organization.

### LABOR TEMPLE ASSOCIATION.

Directors Expect to Resume Regular Meetings First of October.

The board of directors of the Lincoln Labor Temple Building Association has not held a meeting for five weeks. This, however, was not due to any lack of enthusiasm, but due wholly to the fact that the weather was warm and Labor Day coming on to divide attention. As the weather since Labor Day has been unusually hot it was thought best to wait until cooler weather set in, and then resume meetings and go ahead with the full determination to get everything in shape so as to begin building operations next spring. It is expected that the secretary will issue a call for a meeting on the first Monday evening in October, and from that time forward the directors will meet regularly every week.

During the vacation of the directors, however, something was being done every day to boost the Temple project along. As a result, when the board meets again several projects will be submitted. One of them will be to start the winter campaign off with a grand ball at the auditorium. It is believed that practically every expense will be taken care of by donation of services, and that a handsome sum can be cleared while at the same time arousing great enthusiasm in favor of the undertaking. A gentleman who has had great experience in the work has offered to direct and produce a minstrel entertainment that will be worth going many miles to see and hear, and this will add materially to the building fund. The various local unions will be asked to make their annual balls "feeders" for the building fund.

Just as soon as the election is over an effort will be made to secure a lecture from some noted labor leader, and charge a small admission fee, the idea being to not only arouse a greater interest in unionism and set its principles clearly before the people, but to add some more to the building fund.

But it must be remembered that the directors can do nothing unless they have the undivided support of the rank and file of the unions of the city.

### CENTRAL LABOR UNION.

Anticipated Visit of Business Man Was Not Realized.

The delegates who were present at the meeting of the Central Labor Union Tuesday night were disappointed in not being allowed to listen to a Lincoln business man who had agreed to come before them and explain certain things. The business man was called out of town, but has assured The Wagworker that he will be present at the next meeting.

Herman Ross, organizer for the Bakers and Confectionery Workers' International Union, was present and made an interesting talk which was heartily applauded. Considerable routine business was transacted and the available time left was devoted to talking politics without trenching on partisan grounds.

## HOW TAFT CONVICTED FRANK PHELAN

Stung by the flashing of his official record as a prosecutor of organized labor, William Howard Taft has undertaken to prove the righteousness of his now famous injunctions in labor disputes. His first departure from glittering generalities in referring to labor was taken at Chicago last Wednesday, when he undertook to justify his actions by citing the case of Frank Phelan.

Frank Phelan was an organizer of the American Railway Union who was sent to Cincinnati to organize the railroad employes of that city and to enlist their support of their striking brethren in other parts of the country. Phelan was cited to appear before Judge Taft on the charge of contempt in that he had violated an order not to interfere with the operation of the Cincinnati Southern Railway, then in the hands of a receiver appointed by the United States court.

Phelan was not allowed a jury trial. It was not charged that he had committed a crime, save that contempt of court is a crime as defined by the judges of the Taft brand. In the decision handed down by Judge Taft, Phelan was abused worse than the average prosecuting attorney abuses a criminal on trial before a jury. On the evidence adduced at the hearing, Phelan was sentenced to jail for six months.

What was the evidence? In his Chicago speech last Wednesday Mr. Taft said:

"On an affidavit charging him with contempt in attempting by such methods to defeat the order of the court directing the receiver to run the road, he was breaking into court. The evidence clearly established his guilt. It therefore sentenced him to jail for six months."

And now for the evidence that "clearly established" Phelan's guilt:

Phelan and several other members of the American Railway Union testified that Phelan had done none of the things

charged against him. The witnesses for the prosecution were a reporter for the Cincinnati Enquirer and a man named Dormer. The reporter's evidence was mostly hearsay and a repetition of some conversations he had with Phelan. Dormer was the chief reliance of the prosecution. Who was Dormer? **DORMER WAS A DETECTIVE IN THE EMPLOY OF THE FIELD DETECTIVE AGENCY OF ST. LOUIS, AND IN THE EMPLOY OF THE RECEIVER OF THE CINCINNATI SOUTHERN RAILWAY. DORMER WAS GIVEN A POSITION AS BRAKEMAN BY THE RECEIVER. HE JOINED THE AMERICAN RAILWAY UNION AND MADE DAILY REPORTS TO THE RECEIVER. IT WAS UPON THE TESTIMONY OF THIS HIRED SPY—KNOWN BY JUDGE TAFT TO BE SUCH—THAT FRANK PHELAN WAS SENTENCED TO JAIL FOR SIX MONTHS.**

How do we know that Dormer was a detective in the employ of the Field Detective Agency?

**— BECAUSE JUDGE TAFT SPECIFICALLY SAYS HE WAS, AND THE STATEMENT IS MADE BY JUDGE TAFT IN THE VERY DECISION IN WHICH HE ADJUDGED PHELAN GUILTY.**

And Judge Taft admits that he knew Dormer was a detective, that he knew Dormer was masquerading under the name of Williams, and that Dormer joined the strikers under orders from the receiver, who thus became a party to Phelan's alleged crime and was therefore equally guilty with him.

And this Judge Taft who sentenced a man to jail for the crime of contempt on the testimony of a man whom he knew to be a hired spy, is the same William Howard Taft who is now posing as the friend of organized labor and the chief hope of salvation for the toilers of this country.

The union man who is deceived by such pretensions is deceived because he would rather be wrong than to make any mental exertion in an endeavor to be set right.

## THEY DO NOT UNDERSTAND

### Robert Hunter in New York Daily Call

If trade unionists only understood the FULL meaning of union and solidarity, their power would be invincible.

Today union men often spend \$40 a month to destroy unionism, where they give up one dollar a month to build up unionism.

Union men as a body spend no less than \$1,500,000,000 a year to purchase the necessities of life.

Every dollar of that immense sum spent for non-union goods is spent to break down unionism!

If a strike is on in a shoe factory, union men all over the country send their contributions to support the strike. If the strike fails and seabs are employed, union men often buy the product of that seab labor.

What with one hand they try to build up, with the other they try to tear down.

If a union man gives a dollar a month to support his union he thinks he has done a great deal. By paying these dues he expects to build up a powerful trade union movement. At the same time he often uses his immensely more powerful purchasing power to defeat the aims of unionism.

Suppose every man of the 3,000,000 trade unionists in this country considered it a crime to buy non-union products.

Suppose the merchants and employers knew that and were trying to attract union buyers. Suppose they knew that every penny of this billion and a half dollars would be SPENT ONLY FOR UNION-MADE GOODS. What would you see?

Every store patronized by workmen would have a union label sign at its door. The merchants themselves would advertise the union label; the employers would advertise that their shop is a closed shop. All the industries that produce products for working class consumption would employ union labor or go bankrupt.

This great lesson is constantly preached by labor leaders. It is the lesson of unity and solidarity. It means instead of a few million dollars going to the support of unionism that over a billion dollars every year would go to the support of unionism.

Back of every union fighter, back of every strike, back of every industrial battle, would be the power of this billion and a half.

The dues paid to your union are nothing compared with the immense purchasing power—power now often frittered away and wasted when it is not ACTUALLY USED to break down unionism itself.