

IN THE FIELD OF LABOR

It is not at all surprising that the finance, ways and means committee of the house declined to recommend the requests of the workers for better recognition of the labor bureau. There isn't a union man in the house, although there are enough union men in Douglas and Lancaster counties to elect fourteen representatives and five senators. The workers asked that the deputy labor commissioner receive as much salary as the fish and game commissioner. Refused. They asked that provision be made for a couple of factory inspectors. Refused. But we have hog cholera inspectors, and dairy inspectors, and cattle inspectors galore. Thirty-five thousand Nebraska men and women working in factories and shops, many of them equipped with dangerous machinery, and our solons decline to expend a few hundred dollars in seeing to it that those workers are protected. But, you bet, the hogs and the cattle and the sheep are protected. Thousands to protect the hogs not a dollar to protect the life and limb of Nebraska's rapidly growing army of workers. Thousands for the farmers' benefit; not a dollar for the benefit of the industrial army whose membership makes farming profitable. And the workers have nobody but themselves to blame. They'll never get recognition until they compel it—and they'll never compel it by dividing along partisan lines. That's all right for Mr. Farmer; but it's industrial suicide for Mr. Mechanic.

The labor bills are all prepared, and by this time next week all of them will have been introduced. One of the most important is the one amending the present law establishing the labor bureau, and the influence of every industrial worker should be brought to bear to compel its passage. It will make the labor bureau of real service to the men and women who work for wages. As long as present conditions exist the labor bureau is little more than a statistical gathering machine for the benefit of the agriculturists. The proposed law puts some authority into the hands of Deputy Commissioner Guye, and affords a measure of protection to the wage earners.

One of the labor bills will make embezzlement from a labor union or fraternal society a felony. Under the present statutes the treasurer of a union or a fraternal society may rob it blind, and the organization has no recourse. The unions should have the thorough co-operation of the fraternal societies in pushing this measure through.

One cheering sign of awkward interest in the claims of the workers is the readiness of members of the legislature to stand sponsor for the bills labor representatives have prepared. It was not always so. Now there is little if any difficulty in securing their introduction. If the wage earners would only get together like other interests, and provide some way of exerting a steady pres-

sure in behalf of the bills, something tangible would show. The State Federation of Labor is doing its best, but it is hampered by the fact that a number of unions refuse to affiliate, offering the paltry excuse of expense. This leaves the Federation's legislative committee with no finances to support an active campaign in behalf of the measures so badly needed. But the committee is doing the best it can under the circumstances—and angels could do no more.

The railroad brotherhoods have shoved a couple of their bills thru the senate, and have gratifying promise of getting them through the house. The "caboose bill," which will put the dangerous and uncomfortable four-wheeler and the dilapidated box-car caboose out of business, is one of the bills that went through the senate, after fierce opposition from the representatives of the railroads. The "sixteen-hour bill," which merely repeats the provisions of the federal law, with one or two improvements, is the other one. Routt and Omstead, representing the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen, are on the job all the time, and they are getting results. And they are able to be on the job because their organization comes across with the expense money. A lot of trades unions that ought to be affiliated with the State Federation of Labor and are not, should sit up and take notice.

There isn't a single reason in the world why the factory inspection and safety appliance bills should not be enacted into law without opposition. But they will meet with opposition. The one provides for factory inspection that is worth while to the workers; the other compels all dangerous and unhealthy machinery to be properly guarded. We compel farmers to kill their glandered horses in order to protect other horses, but to date we have permitted sordid employers to put the lives of their employes in jeopardy by using machinery far more dangerous to humanity than glanders is to horses.

The task of drafting an employers' liability bill worth while is really gigantic. Representative Evans of Adams has drafted one that is far and away ahead of any ever yet proposed in Nebraska, but even Mr. Evans admits that it is susceptible to improvement. He has asked the advice and suggestions of men who are most vitally interested in the matter, and a lot of good work has been put in. When the bill is finally prepared it will mean something.

Another important bill drafted by the State Federation's legislative committee is designed to put a stop to grafting employment bureaus by providing for state license and inspection, the license and fines for violations to go into a fund for the maintenance of the state's free employment bureau. It is high time to put a stop to the robbery practiced by shysters conducting fake employment bureaus, and the enactment of this bill will accomplish the purpose.

The World's Greatest Invention.

A party of men were discussing inventions. "I think the steam engine is the greatest invention," said one. "I think the dynamo is the greatest invention," said another. So it went; one man suggesting one thing, another man another. Finally an Irishman closed the discussion by saying: "Bedad, O'I t'ink th' greatest invention wus intrust." Think that over! If Adam had invested a dollar at 5 per cent compound interest the day he and Eve left Eden, there wouldn't be money enough in the world today to square the account. Study it over, then decide to make interest work for you, instead of you working to pay interest. You can do it by depositing your savings with us. We pay **Four Per Cent Interest**. Come in and let us explain our system of business.

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