

LABOR LEGISLATION BY THE LAST LEGISLATURE

Just two years ago next June the Nebraska State Federation of Labor was organized in the city of Lincoln by men representing eighty-three different local labor organizations within the state. Many were pessimistic, believing that previous failures to maintain a state organization would make it impossible to rally the workers into another compact state body. But the effort was made, and success was accomplished.

The first convention after the organization was held in South Omaha in January, 1910. The second convention was held at Havelock last January, at which time it was decided to meet hereafter in September, and Omaha was selected for the next convention city. At the Havelock convention it was decided to get into the legislative game and make an effort to secure some legislation in the interests of the wage earners.

For the first time in the history of Nebraska unionism an organized effort was made to secure legislation and the results of this initial effort were so great that the future of the State Federation is assured. That success will impel unions not now affiliating to get into the fold and have a part in a work that is bound to push further and further ahead. Today less than one-half the local organizations in the state are affiliated with the state body, yet despite this lack of interest and support the Federation took the plunge—and it has made good. What shall be accomplished in future depends wholly upon the support accorded the state body by the local organizations.

At the Havelock convention a legislative committee was appointed, and the president, as chairman of that committee, was empowered to make selection of men whom he thought best fitted to attend to the work. It was understood that the finances of the organization would not permit keeping the entire committee at work, but there was enough money to keep one man on watch all the time, and two men a goodly part of the time. President Maupin selected H. M. Bridwell of Omaha and Frank M. Coffey of Lincoln as the men best fitted to attend to the work. Mr. Bridwell performed efficient service until ill health and a pressure of duties in connection with his Omaha work compelled him to retire. Mr. Coffey, whose experience as a lawyer peculiarly fitted him for the work remained on duty day and night while the legislature was in session, and he drew most of the labor bills introduced. President Maupin gave the work all the attention possible, and in this way it was pushed to the limit. The success that crowned the efforts of the committee is a source of pride to its members, and should be appreciated by the rank and file.

In all four good laws were secured, two of them being of especial value, and one law aimed solely at the wage earners was defeated by an appeal to Governor Aldrich.

The law providing for the proper safeguarding of the lives of workers on buildings, bridges, and viaducts is of especial importance. This bill was drafted at the instance of the men in the building trades, and it met with fierce opposition from the start. A misunderstanding caused the bill to lie in committee for several weeks, but

as soon as the legislative committee was permitted to exercise a free hand it was speedily brought to the front. By almost superhuman efforts it was put through the senate only to get into the ruck in the house. At the session's nearing close it was still far down, and was nowhere in sight when the sifting committee of the house was appointed. Then Coffey and Maupin got busy and by working day and night had it lifted, put on its merits and ordered to third reading. The opposition was well organized, but the legislative committee had worked a bit, and when the bill came up for passage it went through with a whoop. Coffey followed it to the engrossing room and by reason of his persuasive manner soon had it before the governor for his signature. It is now the law of the state.

The factory inspection bill had easier sailing. It is not all that could be desired by any means as the labor commissioner has no money with which to make it really effective. But it is a long step in the right direction and means a great deal to the wage earners in Nebraska mills and factories. It provides for factory inspection, the proper safe guarding of dangerous machinery and proper sanitation.

The state printing bill provided that the governor should be the commissioner of printing, with power to appoint a deputy at a salary of \$1,500 a year. The deputy must submit bids in accordance with specifications, and the law requires that when an official or department specifies any "trade marks, monograms, designs or ornaments" the deputy must see to it that the same appears on the printed work. In this connection it may not be out of place to mention that all union labels are registered as trade marks. It is now possible to demand and secure the label of the allied printing trades on all printed matter, and the label of the papermakers on all paper. While the grave and dignified senators were wrangling over a union label bill, and listening to the complaints of those opposed to such a law, the state printing bill was making its way without much trouble. It was introduced in the house and went through with only three opposing votes. But it was among the last of the bills considered and it took some tall hustling to get it over to the senate and lifted by the sifting committee. The legislative committee succeeded, however, thanks to the interest shown by Senators Tanner, Talcott, Bartling and others. There was not an adverse vote against it in the senate.

Another bill backed by the Federation was one providing for inspection and safeguarding of moving picture theaters. The compensation bill drawn by the committee, with the help and counsel of Representative Evans of Adams, was bitterly fought before the committee by representatives of organized employers. The legislative committee knew from the beginning that there was no hope of securing such a law at this session, but it believed that by agitating it strenuously people would be set to thinking and the matter would be more thoroughly investigated. The bill was practically withdrawn before an adverse report could be made, but

a resolution was secured providing for a commission to investigate the entire subject and submit a report to the next legislature. By getting such a resolution through the legislative committee will be able to secure the services of the state reference bureau thus eliminating any expense to the Federation for postage, stationery and stenographer's services. The governor will appoint a board of investigators who shall serve without remuneration. The Federation and the National Civic Federation will cooperate in sharing the small expense incident to the work.

The garnishee law, aimed solely at the wage earners, was passed despite the opposition of the legislative committee. The committee owes much to Representative Grossman of Douglas for his splendid fight against this iniquitous measure. When the bill finally passed the committee, together with Mr. Grossman, appealed to the governor. The appeal was not in vain, for Governor Aldrich vetoed the bill. He voted against the same kind of a measure when he was a member of the senate four years ago.

This, in brief, is a synopsis of what was accomplished the first time trying. If as much may be done in proportion after all the local organizations realize the benefits of affiliation and get into the fold, a very few years will see Nebraska in the forefront of the states having wise and humane laws in the interests of the great army of wage earners.

The list of legislators who gave splendid assistance to the Federation's legislative committee would be a long one, but especial mention should be made of Representative Grossman and Holmes of Douglas, Representative Evans of Adams, Representative Lawrence of Dodge, Representative Leidigh of Otoe, Senators Tanner and Reagan of Douglas and Senator Bartling and Talcott. Without the assistance of these gentlemen at the latter end of the session, the public building bill and the state printing bill would have failed.

Last fall, while serving as deputy labor commissioner, Will M. Maupin secured the conviction of two Omaha employers on the charge of violating that section of the female employment law which prohibits the employment of women in stores and factories after 10 o'clock p. m. The cases have been appealed to the higher court and the Woman's Trades union league and the National Consumers league have pledged their assistance in prosecuting the cases through to the court of last resort. Deputy Commissioner of Labor Guye will enlist the services of the attorney general of the state and push the prosecution.

Richard Metcalfe Maupin is con- to his bed by a severe attack of measles and as a result the editorial home is under quarantine.

Secretary Chrisman of the State Federation of Labor will come to Lincoln in a few days, and with the assistance of Messrs. Coffey and Maupin of the legislative committee will make out a full and complete report of legislative work for the information of all local unions in the state.

F. R. Lintner, formerly a member

of the local Electrical Workers, has removed to Fremont. Mr. Lintner is an expert in his business, a true blue unionist, and a hustler for the good of the organization. He will be a great acquisition to the ranks of unionism in Fremont.

H. C. Peate announces his candidacy for delegate to the San Francisco convention of the International Typographical union.

The Lincoln Typesetting Co. has installed the latest model linotype in the basement at 1201 M street, and is prepared to do commercial composition on short notice.

That it pays for organized workers to forget their partisan differences and elect representatives to the legislatures from their own ranks, is evidenced by the work of Representative Charley Fear of the Joplin, Mo., district. Fear, a union printer and a republican, was elected to the legislature from a democratic district. He introduced a number of labor bills, among them the bill abolishing the leasing of convicts, and secured the enactment of seven in all, the convict bill among the rest. Among the laws he secured are the following: Compelling the timbering of mines when needed, inspection of bakeries and prohibiting children from working therein, and prohibiting employers from paying in checks when they have no money in bank. There were others, all good. More might have been accomplished had Fear been

Articles of Incorporation of the LINCOLN TYPESETTING CO.

Notice is hereby given of the incorporation of the Lincoln Typesetting Company in conformity with the following articles:

I
The name of this company shall be the Lincoln Typesetting Company.

II
The principal place of business of this corporation shall be Lincoln, Neb.

III
The purpose of this corporation shall be to engage in any or all of the various branches of the general printing business; to own, lease or operate any or all kinds of machinery used in the general printing business; and to own, lease or control any real estate necessary to the pursuit of the purposes of this corporation.

IV
The capital stock of this corporation shall be \$10,000 divided into 1,000 shares of a par value of \$10 each. This stock shall be preferred stock and in voting on matters of business, policy or management each share shall entitle its owner to one vote. Any such owner may, by proxy duly filed with the secretary of this corporation, authorize any other stockholder to vote for him. Immediately on the filing of these articles of incorporation, the incorporators shall proceed to the election of a president, vice president and secretary-treasurer who shall hold their respective offices for the term of one year. The annual meeting of the stockholders of this corporation shall be held on the Saturday next preceding the expiration of the terms of the officers of said corporation.

V
The business of this corporation shall begin as soon as 50 per cent of the authorized capital stock shall have been subscribed. The term of the existence of this corporation is fixed at thirty years from the date hereof.

VI
The officers of this corporation shall be those enumerated in section 4 of these articles and their duties shall be those ordinarily entrusted to such officers. This corporation may adopt such by-laws for its management as a majority of the stockholders shall at any time determine at the annual meetings or at any meetings called by the president, notice of which shall have been duly served on all stockholders.

VII
The limit of indebtedness of this corporation shall be two-thirds of its subscribed capital stock. By

GEORGE W. KLINE,
G. A. MOSSHART,
O. H. KLINE

Incorporators.