

THE WAGEWORKER

Vol. 1,

Lincoln, Nebraska, April 27, 1904.

No. 3

A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER WITH A MISSION AND WITHOUT A MUZZLE THAT IS PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WAGEWORKERS EVERYWHERE.

THE SHAME OF UNION LABOR

Blight of "Graft" has Again Humiliated It Through The Actions of a Man Who was Chosen as Its Representative in This City.

How Thomas Hoskins, Elected Member of the Excise Board by Virtue of the Support of Union Voters, Has Injured the Cause of Unionism and Betrayed His Supporters.

Again has Organized Labor been shamed and humiliated by one of its chosen representatives. Once more a member of Organized Labor put up to represent unionism has humiliated the cause he was selected to represent, and brought the blush of shame to every honest union man's cheek.

One year ago Thomas Hoskins, a member of the Carpenters' and Joiners' Union, was nominated by the republican city convention for the office of excise man. The union men of the city had asked the republicans and democrats to give the labor unions representation upon their tickets, and Hoskins was the man selected by the republicans. He was recommended by his brother carpenters, and endorsed by members of other unions as a man worthy of confidence and well fitted to perform the responsible duties of excise man, the position to which he aspired.

In spite of strong opposition from certain elements of the city, Hoskins was elected by an overwhelming majority, and in due time assumed the duties of his office.

With the views held by Hoskins upon politics The Wageworker has nothing to do. With his position upon the license question, the regulation of the social evil, or any other public question coming within the duties of a member of the excise board, The Wageworker has nothing to do. This newspaper was well defined opinions upon all of these questions, and at proper times will not hesitate to make them known. But with the actions of Hoskins, the chosen representative of organized labor, The Wageworker has something to do, and disagreeable as that duty is, it will be performed.

Thomas Hoskins has humiliated the union men who supported him, has added shame to union labor, and injured the cause of unionism to a degree that years may not be able to overcome. It is the shame and sorrow of organized labor that so many of its accredited leaders and chosen representatives have proved themselves unworthy of the trust reposed in them, and by their actions have caused millions to think that organized labor's ranks are made up of thugs, thieves, tools and grafters. One Sam Parks in the ranks of unionism has cast more shame and disgrace upon unionism than a John Mitchell can remove in a lifetime.

And Thomas Hoskins, elected by union labor votes on a ticket which gave him a place because of his unionism, has done more to discredit unionism in Lincoln than a dozen earnest, responsible and honest union men can overcome in a half decade.

The Wageworker does not undertake this task willingly. It undertakes it in sorrow and humility. But the case is so flagrant, the injury to organized labor so great, that the task must be performed.

When Thomas Hoskins permitted a member of the police force to circulate a subscription paper among saloonmen who were gone to come before the board of which he is a member to a renewal of their licenses, he was guilty of a piece of criminal folly, as well as of a bit of dishonesty, that no seemingly sane man would be guilty of. It is claimed that Hoskins' family was sick and that he really needed the money to care for them. The claim is too silly to be considered for a moment. Hoskins is a carpenter by trade, and for several years he has been foreman for one of the largest contractors and builders in Lincoln. If his family was ill and in need, certainly W. B. Hester, his employer would have come to his assistance. Every man who knows W. B. Hester knows that he is not the kind of a man to let an employe, or even an acquaintance, suffer for the necessities of life.

The assertion that Hoskins had contracted considerable indebtedness in order to meet campaign and election expenses is the purest moonshine. Those who did not know at the time of the campaign and election that Hoskins' expenses were more than met by the contributions of men in whose interests he was working, know it now. Dare Hoskins make out his campaign expense list and

make affidavit to it? If his campaign expenses were over \$60 he perjured himself when he took the oath of office. If they were less, what becomes of the excuse that he contracted a heavy indebtedness by reason of his candidacy?

It is charged, openly and above board, that Hoskins has been "grafting." Detective Mitchell circulated a subscription paper, asking donations to a fund for the relief of Hoskins, whose family was said to be sick and in need. And yet Hoskins bought a well established restaurant not long ago. Where did the money come from? Did he deprive his family or order to purchase the restaurant?

Mitchell says that he took the paper out on his own responsibility. Perhaps he did, but up to date the story seems especially well suited for marine consumption.

Manager Richards of the Lincoln hotel declares on oath that he was asked for \$50 for Hoskins. Councilman Bauer admits that he subscribed to the "Hoskins relief fund," and Richards and Bauer are both holders of saloon licenses and in a position to be sadly hampered and bothered by an excise man who does not feel kindly or even fairly disposed toward them.

Even if Mitchell circulated that paper with the most humanitarian motives, and wholly without the knowledge or consent of Hoskins, he was guilty of an act so foolish as to come dangerously near to pure idiocy. And if Hoskins accepted a penny of the money thus raised he was guilty of an act that should warrant his impeachment.

If the charges against Hoskins were of recent origin there might be some grounds for believing that they have been exaggerated. But the rumors have been flying for months. Not until Manager Richards of the Lincoln hotel had the courage to refuse to be held up did others tell what they knew. But more than a year ago the first rumor of "graft" made its appearance. Tom Keane, a would-be politician, in a burst of confidence, said he had paid a designated sum for his appointment. The matter was hushed up in some way or other, but it set parties on watch, and there has been enough developed during the last three or four months to indicate that Keane was not talking through his hat.

The Wageworker has no particular admiration for Excise man Wolfe's theories of how saloons and "dives" should be controlled, but it takes this occasion to say that it admires Wolfe's open methods of stating his position. He did not hesitate to tell where he stood before election. But Hoskins carried water on both shoulders, and while pledged to certain interests made claims of independence. And as soon as elected he delivered the goods, and then began accepting money that he knew was contributed by men who did not dare incur the enmity of a member of the excise board.

Some people may not look upon that sort of thing as "graft," but The Wageworker so considers it—and an almighty petty and mean "graft," too. By his actions Thomas Hoskins has given Organized Labor a blow beneath the belt. He has demonstrated his unworthiness as a representative of the interests of union labor. He has proved his unfitness for the position he occupies. Union men who have striven earnestly to make unionism synonymous with honesty and fairness have been humiliated by a man who has abused his office and who is pointed to with sneers by opponents of unionism as "a sample of what union men are."

If Thomas Hoskins does not immediately resign he should be impeached and removed. And union men should take the initiative in the work of seeing to it that the man who has proved his unfitness to represent them or to be entrusted with official position is no longer allowed to stand as the representative of organized labor. Union men should repudiate him, apologize for their mistake and take steps to show that their repentance is heartfelt.

This is not the first time that organ-

ized labor has been betrayed; not the first time that one whom it trusted has been false to the trust. It will not be the last time, for human nature is fallible and organized labor is made up of men who are as fallible as any other body of men. But Lincoln union men can and should set the seal of their disapproval upon men who misrepresent them as Hoskins has done.

Hoskins has proved his unfitness either as an official or as a representative of the interests that selected him as its representative. He has an opportunity to resign. If he refuses to avail himself of it, he should be impeached and removed, and if possible to reach him with the strong arm of the law, he should be vigorously prosecuted.

IS COLORADO IN AMERICA?

A pasteur in the form of an American flag, printed in red, white and blue, bearing the following sentences, has reached The Wageworker:

Martial law declared in Colorado! Habeas corpus suspended in Colorado!

Free press throttled in Colorado! Bull pens for union men in Colorado!

Free speech denied in Colorado! Soldiers defy the courts in Colorado!

Wholesale arrests without warrants in Colorado!

Union men exiled from homes and families in Colorado!

Constitutional right to bear arms questioned in Colorado!

Right of fair, impartial and speedy trial abolished in Colorado!

Citizens' alliance resorts to mob law and violence in Colorado!

Militia hired to corporations to break the strike in Colorado!

It is the same with a body of men as it is with an individual. In the struggle for an existence the best faculties are exercised and developed, and when the object of that striving is attained the healthful activities are slackened and decline sets in.

That is why the unions in their early stages often prove more capable of withstanding opposition than when their membership becomes large and meets with a degree of success.

Unions that have started full fledged through the effort of other unions, and have gained the benefit of unionism without struggle, are often without stability and really a hindrance to the general movement. They contribute numbers, but that is only a dead weight.

Such members accept the fruits that others have labored for as something that is due them, and when the artificial props that have supported them are withdrawn they fall away.

If unionism is to endure and fulfill its highest mission, the dangers that have been pointed out must be taken into consideration.

Individual development must be allowed full play and allowances made for special abilities.

Instead of trying to keep all down to a dead level, every member should be put upon his merits and not limited in his earnings. In brief, the workman should be permitted the same play as when unorganized, while being reinforced with the combined strength of his fellow workmen.

The function of the union is to insure fair play and to enforce a standard of wages and hours based upon the average abilities. There should be a grading upward and not downward. No limitations should be put upon capacities except for reasons of health.

By observing these rules the unions would make their position impregnable.

Personal ambition today has comparatively little outlet unless collectively expressed. The single workman in order to advance himself is obliged to help improve the lot of his fellows. Organization comes to his aid. In so far, therefore, as combination enables him to do that it is beneficent.

The immediate object of organization is to obtain for the individual member more freedom, in order to enable him better to cope with hard conditions and thereby increase his chances in an unequal contest; but when unions gain a foothold and feel secure they relax in their vigilance and soon lose the virile qualities which enable them to withstand adversity.

Their object then is to make things easy for the members to diminish their personal alertness and discourage the ambition to excel that makes for efficiency.

Longer cigars of a more uniform design are promised to tobacco users by the union cigarmakers of Chicago, who are asking their brethren throughout the United States and Canada to endorse a new bill of prices and working agreement, which would mean better pay and changes in working conditions.

By a vote of 231 to 134 the union cigarmakers decided to submit the proposition to the international association, and in less than a month the result will be known. The proposed agreement also contains a provision, which would mean a closed shop for the union cigarmakers in Chicago. If its terms all union men would be required to demand union wages whenever they work. This would have the

effect of drawing all union men away from non-union shops, as it is not expected that non-union employers who hire union men would pay them union wages. The closed shop proposition was defeated several months ago, but it is believed by the union men that the same end can be obtained indirectly. The proposed agreement includes a demand that a uniform gauge be used for regulating the thickness of cigars. On moist work the proposed pay is \$9 a thousand, whereas heretofore the pay has been \$8. Under the \$9 scale the length of cigars would be increased one-fourth of an inch, and the old size of four and three-quarters inches would be abolished.

For hand workers an increase from \$9 to \$10 a thousand is asked, but the scale would affect only the makers of domestic brands.

It also is asked that the employers pay \$2 more a thousand to union men who make "open head" cigars.

A HUSTLING SECRETARY.

T. W. Evans, Cigarmakers' Union, is a busy man. Dues are collected each week by the secretary and Mr. Evans stands second to none when it comes to looking after union matters. Mr. Evans will next week begin to conduct a column of cigarmakers' news in The Wageworker.

AGREED.

The Lithographers, numbering nearly one thousand men throughout the country, have returned to work after being on strike since March 15. The New York city federation brought about a settlement of the difficulty, and an agreement satisfactory to all parties has been reached.

Unions Should Level Up, Not Down

(By Henry White, Secretary United Garment Workers of America.)

The chief test of unionism is its effect upon the character of the individual workman.

It is not sufficient to show that unionism has advanced the worker materially.

If the labor struggle tends to make the laborer self-reliant and develop his faculties, it is of inestimable value. If, however, it tends ultimately to suppress the individual, lessen his capacity and make him subordinate to the mass, it not only fails of its purpose, but works serious injury.

The individual workman under modern methods of industry is unable to assert himself. He is subject to conditions upon which he is unable to make an impression.

Alone he is a nonentity. His individuality is that respect is submerged. He regains it by acting with other workmen having allied interests. Individual striving then gives way to joint endeavor.

Personal ambition today has comparatively little outlet unless collectively expressed. The single workman in order to advance himself is obliged to help improve the lot of his fellows. Organization comes to his aid. In so far, therefore, as combination enables him to do that it is beneficent.

The immediate object of organization is to obtain for the individual member more freedom, in order to enable him better to cope with hard conditions and thereby increase his chances in an unequal contest; but when unions gain a foothold and feel secure they relax in their vigilance and soon lose the virile qualities which enable them to withstand adversity.

Their object then is to make things easy for the members to diminish their personal alertness and discourage the ambition to excel that makes for efficiency.

CIGARS MAY BE LONGER.

Longer cigars of a more uniform design are promised to tobacco users by the union cigarmakers of Chicago, who are asking their brethren throughout the United States and Canada to endorse a new bill of prices and working agreement, which would mean better pay and changes in working conditions.

By a vote of 231 to 134 the union cigarmakers decided to submit the proposition to the international association, and in less than a month the result will be known. The proposed agreement also contains a provision, which would mean a closed shop for the union cigarmakers in Chicago. If its terms all union men would be required to demand union wages whenever they work. This would have the

COWARDLY DODGING.

The senate committee by a vote of five to three has decided to postpone consideration of the eight-hour bill until the beginning of the session next December. Evidently they realize that they have more to fear from the resentment of capital than from the resentment of organized labor. Capital has a habit of standing together, while labor dissipates its strength by failing to vote as a unit in its own interests.

ASK PARDON FOR PARKS.

An effort is being made to secure a pardon for Sam Parks, the notorious labor grafter of New York who is serving a sentence of four years and six months in Sing Sing. He is said

to be critically ill. Delegates of the various labor organizations have been asked to sign the petition, but many of them have refused. Sam Parks was the business agent of the Structural Iron workers, and was found guilty of conspiracy and caught red handed in "grafting" on the employes. His case attracted attention throughout the country and brought disrepute upon union labor everywhere.

A LITTLE HISTORY.

The Wageworker wants to recall a little bit of history for the benefit of the "open shop" advocates who are trying to wreck unions, and who never lose an opportunity to denounce organized labor as "anarchists," "thugs," etc. For obvious reasons names are suppressed, and the main question will be called Blue because that is nothing like his real name.

Several years ago a man named Blue, a printer, but not a union man, came to Lincoln. He secured work in a "rat" printery that would not employ union men at the scale, and whose manager often said he had to use for labor unions. Blue drew the magnificent wage of \$7 a week, and for this sum tried to support a family of five including himself, and educate the three little ones born to him. Of course he couldn't do it. He fell into debt, became discouraged at the sight of his loved ones suffering, and in fit of despondency went out to the fair grounds and blew out his brains.

Did the opponents of unionism step forward? Did they do anything to save Blue from being buried in a pauper's grave? Did they extend the helping hand to the widow and orphans?

Of course they did not. They never do.

But the union printers of the city, with whom Blue had never affiliated, and whose interests he had opposed for months, raised a fund and gave Blue a Christian burial, not in the Potter's field, but in the cemetery where their own loved ones sleep. They raised enough to provide for the widow and orphans for several weeks, and then enough more to carry them back to an eastern state where the widow had relatives who would care for her.

This little bit of history is familiar to union men in Lincoln. It is only one of the many incidents of like nature that are taking place all over this broad land every day. When union wreckers and opponents of organized labor can point to similar deeds of thoughtfulness and kindness, when the wreckers and opponent of organized labor can show workmen equally good—then, and not till then, will they be entitled to recognition for honesty of purpose and kindness of heart.

PRINTERS' AUXILIARY.

Thursday evening Capital Auxiliary No. 11, Lincoln Typographical Union No. 209, gave a "hard times" social at Red Ribbon hall. It proved one of the most successful socials yet engineered by the auxiliary. A system of fines for wearing apparel inconsistent with the idea of "hard times" was adopted, and the women, with an eye to business, managed to detect violations of the rules in the case of nearly every one present. Some of the costumes were comical in the extreme. Swallowtail coats were worn with flannel shirts and overalls, and "dickies" that knew not soap and water shone dimly from beneath the shade of jackets that long since outlived their usefulness. And some of the women wore frocks that would make a ragpicker green with envy. A buffet lunch was served "a la carte," and the familiar "coffee and sinkers" and "hot wienies" played a conspicuous part.

OMAHA PAINTERS' STRIKE.

The Painters' and Decorators' Union of Omaha has declared a strike against the master painters, and not a union paint or paste brush is being wielded for wages in that city. There was no question about wages, but the difficulty arose over the master painters refusing to sign an agreement to continue the scale and recognize the Union. The master painters claim that they can get enough non-union men to take care of the business, and say that they have the backing of the Omaha branch of the D. M. Parry Union Wrecking association. The striking painters and decorators asked only for recognition of their union, but this was refused. Members of the Painters' and Decorators' Union are warned against responding to well disguised advertisements for painters in Omaha.

BOOMS THE LABEL

Women's League Starts off With Promise of Success.

Five Hundred Women Organized for the Purpose of Stimulating a Demand for Union Made Goods.

One of the most successful social and business affairs ever undertaken in Lincoln was held at Red Ribbon hall last Tuesday night. It was held under the auspices of the Central Labor Union, and was for the purpose of furthering the organization of the Women's Label League. More than 500 union men and women attended, and it was reported after the meeting that nearly 500 women in Lincoln had enrolled themselves as members of the league.

President Kelsey of the Central Labor Union called the meeting to order, and in a clear and concise manner told what unionism means and what union men and women should do to further the interests of labor organization. His comments on labor's tendency to march solidly on Labor Day and then divide its strength at other times met with hearty applause, as did his appeals to workingmen to stand together for their own interests.

Will M. Maupin, spoke briefly on what energetic work would do for organized labor. He urged every union man and the wife of every union man to insist upon the label when purchasing goods. When he asked how many union men in the audience could show a union label under the sweat band of their hats, less than one-third present raised their hands. And when he asked how many could show the union label in the inside pockets of their coats, still fewer responded. When he asked how many women could truthfully say they had not swept their houses with a convict made broom, a score arose to their feet amidst the cheers of the union men present.

Mr. Shelly, Cigarmakers' Union, made an earnest appeal to the women to stand by the union label and pointed out that the label meant good wages and sanitary conditions for those who made the goods, while the absence of the label indicated sweat shops and contract labor, and that these things mean sapping the lifeblood of women and children. Mr. Shelly won generous applause from the women by declaring that women should receive equal pay for equal work, and that they did receive equal pay in the trade at which he is employed. His remarks were listened to with close attention, and his evident earnestness impressed all who were present.

The object of the Union Label League is to further the demand for union made goods, and to encourage organized labor in every way possible. The organization is international, and is being urged by women who are engaged in the professions and trades, as well the wives of men who hold membership in labor unions. There is a benefit feature to the organization which commends itself to all.

At the close of the business session refreshments were served by the Central Labor Union, and then those present who desired to do so enjoyed themselves in dancing for a couple of hours.

The women who are pushing the work of organization express themselves as well-pleased with the progress they are making, and will continue to work until they have enrolled every union sympathizer among the good women of Lincoln.

A DISASTROUS FIRE.

Monday morning at 1 o'clock a fire was discovered in the barber shop in the basement of the Burr block, and before the blaze could be extinguished the whole interior of this model barber shop was scorched to such an extent that it was a total loss. "Billy" Shannon, proprietor of "The Burr," although carrying some insurance, suffered a heavy loss. But he is not discouraged, and says that he will soon have a "home" for all of us union barbers.

STRIKERS ARRESTED.

Sheriff Wilcox and forty deputies of Carbon county, Utah, swooped down on a body of striking miners and arrested 120 Italians. The strikers are charged with resisting an officer, but there is a well defined opinion that the charge was trumped and the men arrested in order to clear the way for strike-breakers.