

# THE WAGEWORKER

State Historical Society

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

## IT IS A PRETTY SIGHT

### St. Louis Retail Clerks in Good Condition.

#### Employers Well Satisfied and Insist On Having Their Clerks Belong to the Union.

Not all the pretty sights in St. Louis are within the exposition grounds. There is enough within the grounds to keep the average sightseer busy to a mouth—and then not get all of it. But one of the prettiest sights is not inside the grounds, and it cost but a few cents in Uncle Sam's money. How much of labor and sacrifice it costs no one will, perhaps, ever know. This sight is small. It is probably 10x14 inches in size and is in two colors—white and red. It looks something like this:

UNION STORE.  
St. Louis Retail Clerks' Union.

Nearly every big store in St. Louis—and there are many big stores—show this pretty little sign prominently in the front windows. It may be seen on every side, and that the retail clerks appreciate their strength, and that the public is benefited, is evidenced by the fact that nowhere in America are patrons treated with more courtesy; nowhere is the service better, and nowhere is a stranger greeted more kindly and waited on with more skill. St. Louis is thoroughly union. The St. Louis public insists upon unionism. This was discovered by the St. Louis Rapid Transit company several months ago when it undertook to break up the Street Railway Employees' Union. The general public refused to patronize the trolley cars, and the carmen reaped a harvest. The street railway people came to time. The teamsters struck for better pay and shorter hours, and the imported strike breakers found themselves drawing pay and doing nothing. Every available horse, mule, cart, dray, wagon and buckboard was pressed into service by union teamsters, and the bosses saw their profits fading away. The public insisted on having union teamsters, and the teamsters soon won their contention.

The newspaper stories of rioting during the teamsters and street railway strike were grossly exaggerated. A few hotheads threw some stones, and once or twice concerted attacks were made on strike breakers, but the officials of the unions refused to stand by the rioters and lent every assistance to the police in preserving order. The unions won out by having public sentiment behind them. The editor of The Wageworker talked to a member of one of the largest retail firms in St. Louis—in fact, one of the largest in the country. He freely admitted that the retail clerks' union had been of mutual benefit. The members of the union were spurred to better efforts; the employers could deal directly with committees representing the employees instead of trying to deal with a thousand separate individuals.

"We opposed the union idea at the start," he said, "and even went so far as to post notices that we would discharge any employee who joined. We were compelled by public sentiment and by business reasons to submit. Now we insist that every new employee shall become a member of the union. It has been beneficial to our business."

Last Tuesday a party of twenty or thirty Nebraskans were making the rounds. A big shoe manufacturing company of St. Louis has a complete plant in operation, showing the entire process of making shoes. The Nebraska crowd started with the man who cut the leather and followed that particular bit of leather until it came out in the finished shoe. A man went along explaining each process. When the shoe was complete the editor of The Wageworker innocently asked: "Where is the machine that puts on the union label?"

"We do not use the label, sir," said the guide.

"Good-bye," said the editor, starting away. And the entire Nebraska delegation followed, leaving the guide staring into vacancy.

There is a too general public understanding that labor unions are organized merely for the purpose of forcing employers to pay higher wages. Careful investigation of the facts at St. Louis disproves this idea. The carpenters' scale in St. Louis today is no higher than in the average city of 150,000 or more. Yet the demand for carpenters is enormous and every good one draws far more than the scale.

But the sight of that little card, neatly framed and appearing in nearly

every retail store's display windows, is one of the prettiest sights in St. Louis to the union man.  
It would look even prettier in Lincoln, Nebraska.

## RETURNS FROM THE COAST

E. Blake, a well-known Kansas City union carpenter, is home from a trip to the Pacific coast. Last November Mr. Blake went to the coast because of the many advertisements saying men of all crafts were wanted on the coast.

Mr. Blake says the labor field is glutted and that there are several men for every job. He says many men are working for a place to sleep and two meals a day. The feeling is very bitter toward the members of the citizens' alliance, who were parties to the contemptible scheme which caused so many workmen to go to the coast in the hope of securing employment.

The plans were deliberately laid by the members of the citizens alliance to so glut the market with workmen that the men out of work would

## CONSUMERS' LEAGUE

### A National Organization Doing Great Good.

#### Working to Abolish Sweat Shops in Big Cities and Secure Good Wages for All.

A companion organization to the Women's Label League is the National Consumers' League, with headquarters in New York city. This league is organized for the purpose of securing equal pay for equal work, shorter hours, sanitary conditions and better safeguarding of life. The officers are as follows:

President, Mrs. John Graham Brooks, Cambridge, Mass.  
Vice presidents, Mrs. Robert H. Gardner, Boston, Mass.; Mrs. Frederick C. Nathan, New York.  
Treasurer, Mr. John Sheehy Ward, Jr., New York.

shops and child labor and is meeting with gratifying success.

## A. T. PENTZER, DELEGATE

A. T. Pentzer of the local Typographical Union was elected delegate from Lincoln to the international convention of the union to be held in St. Louis in August. O. C. Fodrea was chosen alternate.

This result followed an exciting election held Wednesday afternoon by the union in its headquarters in the Fraternity building. Candidates were numerous and the pool officers were busy all the afternoon until the closing hour, 6:30.

Officers of the international union were voted upon at the same time. James M. Lynch of Syracuse for president received the larger vote as against Charles E. Hawtes of Chicago. J. W. Bramwood of Denver got a majority over W. A. Graham of St. Joseph for the office of secretary-treasurer. The two high candidates for trustees of the Printers' Home in Colorado Springs were F. A. Kennedy of Omaha and Eugene Kirk of Kansas

reader the true condition of affairs in the industrial field on the Pacific coast.

There is nothing to encourage working people to come to California except the misrepresentations of those who wish to break up the unions on this coast, or make a profit by supplying and transporting help for that purpose. Yours fraternally,

G. B. BENHAM,  
Secretary-Treasurer California State Federation of Labor.

## THE LIBERTY BELL

The "Liberty Bell" is about to leave Philadelphia for a tour of the west. Everybody should see it. Everybody should take a lesson and an inspiration from it. Not only does it tell what has been done, but it tells what shall be done. It rang the knell of political despotism, and it should nerve Americans to overthrow industrial despotism. The bell is dangerously near a mockery when one remembers that wage slavery worse than African slavery ever was, exists in this country today. There are men

## THE SWEAT SHOPS

### Spreaders of Misery, Disease and Death.

#### Some Plain Facts for Chronic "Bargain Hunters" to Ponder on for a Little While.

You women who are forever hunting "bargains"—seeking to buy the cheapest! Did you ever stop to think that your desperate hunt for bargains is a source of misery, despair and death to hundreds of your sex every year? The cheap things you make such a desperate effort to buy are usually made in sweat shops by hollow-eyed women and children who already bear the death damp upon their brows. Every time you chuckle and congratulate yourself on having secured a wrapper at a bargain, just stop and think that the poor woman in the sweat shop receives the magnificent wage of 49 cents a dozen for making them—4 cents each.

You buy a cambric dress, with lined waist and some trimming at what you consider a great bargain. Do you know that the life blood of one of your sex is sewed into the seams of that "bargain"? Some sweat shop worker is making those dresses for 10 cents each.

That pretty nightgown, with tucked yokes and insertion—you got it at a great bargain. Much cheaper than you could buy the material and make it yourself. Some poor woman in a New York sweat shop is making those nightgowns for one dollar a dozen—less than 10 cents each.

Those pretty aprons you got at such a "bargain." Some poor sweat shop worker had to make a dozen of them in order to earn 22 cents.

Sweat shop workers are making slick shirt waists and receiving the miserable wage of 98 cents a dozen in order that you may get a "bargain."

Neckties are being made at \$1.25 a gross—less than a penny each.

Trousers are finished for from 2 to 10 cents a pair.

Men's coats and overcoats are being finished at from 5 to 10 cents a garment.

The competition of helpless children and overworked women cuts wages until tenement workers are practically made paupers, outside of the short rush seasons.

Thus home work in the tenements is turned into a curse. It invades all the privacies of life; it robs the child of its schooling, its parents, its very home. It breaks down the adult years before his time by its grinding pressure; it kills the weak. In the sweated trades a man is old at thirty-five; his trade life probably shorter than that of men in any other occupation, the factory inspectors tell us. Tuberculosis is the characteristic disease of both men and women.

Yet all these tenement industries exist to supply a demand; for these goods there is always a purchaser, ignorant, as a rule, of the antecedents of his purchase.

In God's name, good women of America, cease this mad rush for "bargains." Give women and children a chance to live a little better than gutter rats. Give them a chance to get a breath of pure air once or twice a year. Give them a chance to see grass growing and leaves rustling in the breeze.

Join the Woman's Union Label League and insist upon seeing the label upon all you buy. The label means health and strength and happiness to all who work upon the article bearing it.

Stop and consider the fact that your craze for "bargains" is starving women by the hundreds, killing infants by the score, stunting children mentally and morally, filling the almshouses, recruiting the houses of prostitution and piling up rich fees for the coroner and the undertaker.

The sweat shop is one of the greatest evils of the present day, and women who love their God and their fellows can drive it out forever if they will but try.

## BUILDING LABORERS

International Hod Carriers' and Building Laborers' Union held an enthusiastic meeting last Monday night in their hall, between 8th and 9th on O street. John McDonald, president; Oscar Moore, corresponding secretary; Walter Swanson, treasurer.

The Omaha Credit Bureau is publishing the names of 1,000 delinquents who have failed to pay their bills. If the dinner pails down that way are full, then the contents have never been paid for. The same sort of thing seems to be true in the higher circles, for Dun and Bradstreet do not fail to remark each week that "collections are bad."

## A Friendly Word With The Commercial Club

The Wageworker has not asked any members of the Commercial club whether the club intended butting into the plumbers' strike.

In the first place The Wageworker was loath to risk insulting the intelligence of the club's membership by asking the question. It has been rumored on the street that the club—or a portion of its membership—was considering the propriety of butting into the strike and taking the part of the boss plumbers. It may be only rumor. The Wageworker will not believe the Commercial club is so foolish until it has been demonstrated by actual exhibition.

The Commercial club has plenty to do without butting into this strike. It can find opportunities for all of its activities in looking out for Lincoln's trade expansion, in searching for new industries that will employ more labor, and in spreading Lincoln's fame abroad. It can accomplish but one thing by butting into a labor dispute—TROUBLE.

The plumbers and the bosses will settle this matter. They always have. This is not their first little tiff. But out of the trouble has grown an understanding and an agreement. The Wage-

worker could have jumped in and written a lot of sensational stuff about the present strike, but it is not in the sensation business. Its mission is to prevent strife—not to foment it. Its mission is to cultivate a better understanding between employers and employees—not to make each believe that the other is its enemy. For this reason The Wageworker has said very little about the present difficulty in the plumbing business.

But if the Commercial club wants to stir up strife; if it wants to breed trouble, if it wants to endanger the present era of peace and comparative prosperity; if it wants to incur the enmity of organized labor instead of cultivating its friendship—in fact, if the Commercial club wants to measure swords with organized labor in this town it will get a game that will keep it guessing.

The Commercial club has done good work for Lincoln by attending to its legitimate functions. It can do more in the future by keeping right on attending to its legitimate functions. But just the minute the organization allows itself to be used as cat's paw to pull some other organization's chestnuts out of the fire, just that soon it will cease to be a factor in Lincoln's upbuilding.

The Wageworker does not believe that the Commercial club will be so unwise as to butt in.

It will not believe it until the butt-in is pulled off—and even then it will be hard work. The Wageworker will not insult the intelligence of any member of the club by asking him if he thinks the club should butt in. But the rumor is growing, and The Wageworker takes time by the forelock and submits these few remarks. Not by way of threats—O, no! We abhor braggarts and have no earthly use for agitators. We deplore strikes, denounce violence and counsel peace and forbearance. But perhaps some members of the Commercial club are not aware of what the club would go up against if it butted into this little game which in no wise concerns it.

Let the plumbers and the bosses settle their little disagreement. They'll get together some time or other. Perhaps both sides are a little inclined to bow their necks just now. That's only natural. But just about the time the public thinks hades is going to break loose, the plumbers and the bosses will fix it all up, raffle on each other's necks and embrace; and the dove of peace will flap her wings in joyous mood and settle down for a long roosting spell.

But there's no telling when she will go to roost if the Commercial club makes the mistake of playing the part of Mr. Buttinsky.

be forced to fight for a living. The scheme turned out just as was planned and there are more idle men in Southern California than there are at work and the advertisements are still bringing more men to the coast.—Kansas City Labor Herald.

## OUTRAGED

Every American right continues to be outraged by the authorities in Colorado. Outrages that set American blood on fire in the ante-revolution days is winked at in the mining districts of Colorado, and scenes are enacted every day that would, were they enacted in some foreign country, arouse American sympathy and call forth American denunciation. And yet these crimes against liberty are winked at and receive only a passing notice from the metropolitan press.

In Las Animas county a military order was promulgated commanding every striking miner to register at military headquarters. One hundred strikers, all American citizens, refused to comply with the order and were arrested by the military satraps in control. They were marched eighteen miles across the country and thrown into a "bull pen" without being accorded a trial by a jury and without warrant of law. In this "bull pen" they are being herded like cattle, only they do not receive the treatment that the average cattleman gives to his steers.

Will workmen in this country ever arouse to a sense of the danger that confronts them? Will they never awaken and demand their rights under the law? How long is civil law to be ignored and the rights of freemen to be violated by the corrupt, beastly and law-defying oligarchy that is now controlling things with a high hand in Colorado?

## THINK OF IT

The National Consumers' League reports that it has found in New York city hundreds of sweat shop rooms which have no windows or skylights, and whose only opening is a door leading into a dark hall. The tenant is compelled to work by gaslight all the time, and go without a breath of fresh air save when going after or delivering work. Women who are always hunting for "bargains" should think of this appalling state of affairs.

## GARRICK DEAD

General Secretary Garrick of the International Painters' and Decorators' Union is dead. Mr. Garrick died at San Francisco on Wednesday, May 11. He had been an official of the union for a number of years and was actively allied with the union labor movement.

Recording Secretary, Mrs. Henry P. Bailey, East Orange, N. J.

Corresponding secretary, Mrs. Florence Kelley, New York.

The National Consumers' League has adopted a standard for a "fair house" employing both men and women, and this standard should be the object and aim of every man and woman interested in the cause of labor. The standard is as follows:

**Wages—A Fair House** is one in which equal pay is given for work of equal value, irrespective of sex. In the departments where women only are employed, in which the minimum wages are six dollars per week for experienced adult workers, and fall in few instances below eight dollars.

In which wages are paid by the week.

In which fines, if imposed, are paid into a fund for the benefit of the employees.

In which the minimum wages of cash girls are two dollars per week, with the same conditions regarding weekly payments and fines.

**Hours—A Fair House** is one in which the hours from 8 a. m. to 6 p. m. (with three-quarters of an hour for lunch) constitute the working day, and a general half-holiday is given on one day of each week during at least two summer months.

In which a vacation of not less than one week is given with pay during the summer season.

In which all overtime is compensated for.

**Physical Conditions—A Fair House** is one in which work, lunch and retiring rooms are apart from each other, and conform in all respects to the present sanitary laws.

In which the present law regarding the providing of seats for saleswomen is observed, and the use of seats permitted.

**Other Conditions—A Fair House** is one in which humane and considerate behavior toward employees is the rule.

In which fidelity and length of service meet with the consideration which is their due.

In which no children under fourteen years of age are employed.

In addition to making a list of "fair dealers" the league is making a list of "fair manufacturers" and this list is being increased rapidly, owing to the fact that the league is exerting a growing influence with those who buy and who desire to further the interests of workmen and women. These are called "white lists," and all entitled to a place thereon are provided with a label. This label on any article means that it was made by people receiving fair wages and working in sanitary stores and factories. The league is also making war on sweat

City. For printer delegates to the American Federation of Labor—William M. Garrett of Columbia, Frank Morrison of Chicago. For allied crafts delegates to the A. F. of L.—Victor L. Berger of Milwaukee Newspaper Writers and P. G. Nuerberger, Chicago Typefounders' Union. For allied crafts trustee of the Union Printers' Home, H. H. Rogers of the Chicago Typefounders' Union, received the high vote.

## TO TRADES UNIONISTS

TO THE TRADES UNIONISTS. — Brothers and Sisters: This circular is sent you to make known to you the true condition of labor on the Pacific coast.

The citizens' alliance the California Promotion society, and the ever-ready agents of the enemies of trades unions—the employment agencies—have for some time been busy flooding the eastern states and foreign countries with lying and misleading advertisements regarding the Pacific coast, and California in particular. The transportation companies, eager for profit, have aided greatly in these frauds perpetrated upon the working people.

The convention of the California state federation of labor, held in Fresno, Cal., Jan. 4-9, 1904, having in view the facts of this important matter, adopted the following resolution, and ordered its circulation among the workers of the country:

Whereas, Through scarcity of work there are at present hundreds of workmen in Fresno and thousands on the Pacific coast who cannot obtain employment; and

Whereas, By the false representations of real estate brokers, railroad companies, merchants' exchanges and other boomers and promoters, there is a constant influx of workmen from eastern and middle states, often consuming all their limited means to reach the coast, relying on the alluring misrepresentations above referred to, they expect to find immediate and remunerative employment, but instead they are in the sad plight of strangers without work or money; and

Whereas, Said deceit works great injury both to our brothers of the east as well as to the overstocked labor market of the coast; therefore be it Resolved, By the Laborers' Protective Union of Fresno, that we call the attention of the State Federation of Labor, now in session in this city, to this evil, and request said honorable body to take such action as in their judgment is necessary to counteract this imposition which is working untold injury to labor east and west.

This resolution, emanating from the Central Labor Body of California, is an expression of the sentiments of the workers, and bring forcibly to the

who will throw their hats into the air when they see this bell, and then go back to their offices and traffic in the blood and tears of widows and orphans. There are men who will cheer when they see it, and then go back to their offices and crack the lash over the bowed necks of sweat shop slaves.

The old bell has told us a great deal. If we listen it may tell us a great deal more.

## NOT JUST NOW

A subscriber who has been of material assistance in increasing the circulation of The Wageworker, and who is one of the leading socialists of Lincoln, asks The Wageworker to publish the national socialist platform. The request cannot be complied with at this time. The Wageworker is not a political organ. If it publishes the socialist platform it will be in honor bound to publish the republican and democratic platforms. Space is too valuable and composition too expensive. That is—just now. Later we may publish all the platforms.

## OMAHA PAINTERS WIN

The Painters and Decorators' Union of Omaha is no longer on strike. The strike was declared off last week, and on Monday the men went back to work for the master painters. Both sides made concessions, but the strikers won their main contentions. There was no disagreement as to wages or hours, the bosses merely refusing to sign the old scale and insisting upon the "open shop." The shops are not "open," and the scale has been signed. In some details the master painters won out, and the settlement is satisfactory to all concerned.

## CIGARMAKERS

A Herminghaus and Farney Hawkins are spending the week at Milford fishing. Fred L. Kutzer was in Beatrice Saturday and Sunday visiting friends. Frank Smith and Otto Schulz left Monday evening for Denver. They will go to work in that city. Charles Rose returned to Creston, Ia., this week. T. W. EVANS.

## BOGUS LABELS

Look out for bogus labels. Articles manufactured in the Missouri penitentiary are being sold with a bogus label attached. The St. Louis Central Labor Union is collecting evidence against the perpetrators of the fraud, and have asked that everybody help in the work.

The very best Country Butter, 25c per lb. The Butter Store, 143 So. 13th.