

# THE WAGEWORKER

A Newspaper with a Mission and without a Muzzle that is published in the Interest of Wageworkers Everywhere.

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## A "Friendly Critic" Given Answer

Miss (or Mrs.) Letitia Patterson used the columns of the Lincoln Journal one day last week to tell the people of Lincoln what a benevolent institution the Lincoln Overall and Shirt company is, and incidentally to make it appear that The Wageworker did not know what it was talking about when it referred to the business as a species of sweatshop.

Far be it from The Wageworker to engage in disputation with a lady. Rather than do such a thing we will admit that the Lincoln Overall and Shirt company is a grand institution and that its manager, Mr. L. O. Jones, thinks nothing of personal profit so long as he can pay the highest wages to working women. The editor of this family newspaper is the son of one woman, the brother of another and the husband of another, and long years ago he learned the foolishness and the impoliteness of getting into a dispute with a member of the female sex.

But Miss (or Mrs.) Patterson's figures regarding wages are so utterly at variance with those given in the Evening News the day after the fire, and known to have been given by Mr. Jones himself, that The Wageworker is impelled to believe that Miss (or Mrs.) Patterson performed the most of her figuring with Mr. Jones' pencil, and that Mr. Jones had another thought before he handed over the pencil.

Our friendly critic of the Journal tells us that many of the employees of the Lincoln Overall and Shirt company made from \$12 to \$15 a week. If this be true—and it must be, because a lady said so—then God help the remainder of the employees of a firm that pays an "average wage" of \$6.60 a week. Mr. Jones, the manager, says the company employs 75 people and has a pay roll averaging \$500 a week. Miss (or Mrs.) Patterson says many of the employees make from \$12 to \$15 a week. The Wageworker prefers to leave this little disagreement to Mr. Jones and Miss (or Mrs.) Patterson.

This newspaper is informed that Mr. Jones, while forming the company, held out as an inducement for stock subscriptions the agreement on his part to accept a certain per cent of the net earnings of the company in lieu of a salary as superintendent. On this basis he was made superintendent. Mr. Jones, in his inspired statement in the Evening News the day after the fire, said that the margin of profit was small, owing to the keen competition. Now, Mr. Jones is opposed to union labor, and his chief competitors in the western overall and shirt field is McDonald of St. Joseph, a union factory that pays good wages. This being true, where would Mr. Jones, opponent of organized labor, make his first attempt at economy in an effort to bring the net profits up to a point that would enable him to draw a comfortable salary?

Of course it would be economy in the matter of wages, and he would cut wages to the lowest possible point in order to make the largest possible showing of profit and thus make his own salary larger.

Clearly our friendly critic and Mr. Jones' gallant defender is sadly twisted in her logic, else biased in her judgment.

Miss (or Mrs.) Patterson says that "many of the employees make from \$12 to \$15 a week." How many? Twenty out of the seventy-five? Well, let us call it twenty who make \$12 a week. That's \$240 a week for twenty of the seventy-five employees, leaving \$260 to be divided among fifty-five employees—an average of \$4.72. And the greater the number who earn "from \$12 to \$15 a week" the smaller the average wage of the balance.

Again, Miss (or Mrs.) Patterson says that one reason for the smallness of the wage of many is that there are so many "inexperienced" or "new employees." That does not sound good. If the wages are so good, as our friendly critic of the Journal claims, how comes it that there are so many inexperienced employees? Why do not the experienced and skilled employees remain at the factory instead of giving place to "inexperienced" help?

The more we dive into this matter the more complicated it becomes. Wages are very good, but so many of the employees are unskilled that wages are small. That's feminine logic for you.

The Wageworker still insists that a manufacturing company whose average wage scale is \$6.60 a week for a nine hour day six days a week, is not a credit or a profit to any western city. And it further insists that such a company that asks the citizens to rally to its support is exhibiting a species of nerve that ought to be sufficient assurance that it has little or nothing to fear from "keen competition" of similar factories in neighboring states.

### THE OPEN SHOP.

There are ten thousand reasons why union men oppose the open shop. The open shop means that the better will be brought down to the level of the weakest and poorest.

But there is one overshadowing reason why the union man objects to working alongside the non-union worker of the same craft. Every move made for the uplift of labor has been made by labor unions. Every dollar of expense incurred in securing better laws, better conditions and better hours has been paid by union men. The unionists have performed all the work and footed all the bills in every movement calculated to uplift the wage earner and make his lot easier and happier. In these benefits the non-union man has participated without sharing any of the work or expense. And the union man who has paid it all has too much self-respect to work alongside the selfish, narrowminded, heartless and ignorant man who insists on sharing the benefits of unionism's actions without doing his share towards paying the expense.

That's why union men hate the "scab" and refuse to work alongside the non-union man. The man who will insist on sharing benefits without paying his share of the expenses is too mean, too selfish, too low in the moral scale, to be a fit companion for a man who is big enough and broad enough to give of his time and money to better the conditions of the toilers of earth. And this is the nub of the whole business. The "open shop" is an idle dream in the field of skilled trades. The men who are working for it are chasing a phantom.

### THE EIGHT HOUR DAY.

The eight hour working day is coming, and coming soon. The industrial world may as well make up its mind that this is a fact and begin preparations to meet the new conditions. The argument advanced against the adoption of the eight hour day are the same old arguments that were used against the thirteen hour day, the twelve hour day, the eleven hour day, the ten hour day and the nine hour day. All the underhanded scheming will not avail. Its opponents work in the dark. Those who favor it work in the open.

Those who oppose child labor, sweat shops and unsanitary factory conditions make their fight in the broad open light of the day. Those who favor these things resort to trickery, misrepresentation, bribery and corruption. Labor organizations rear up patriots by giving

ing their members time and opportunity to acquaint themselves with existing conditions and seek the remedy. The opponents of organized labor would debase citizenship by compelling ignorance and undermining health. Labor organizations are continually working for the uplift of humanity. Parry associations and the like are continually working for the uplift of the dollar and the debasement of labor. All their fine talk and pretensions of interest in labor's welfare will not conceal this ironclad fact.

The eight hour day is another step forward, and labor is going to take it. Those who get in the way will be stepped on. The step will be taken peacefully, too, for the sentiment of humanity is behind it.

## A Matter of Grave Personal Interest

At last Sunday's meeting of Lincoln Typographical Union No. 209, it was unanimously voted to fine any member who purchased cigars at any cigar store handling the Henry George and George W. Childs cigars the sum of \$1.

Union printers are opposed to "scab" cigars on principle, but there are other reasons for the fight that they are making on the Henry George and George W. Childs cigars. In the first place, it is an insult to any printer to name a "scab" cigar for either of these great friends of unionism. Henry George was a printer, a square-toed union man, and a man whose whole life was spent in an effort to uplift his fellows. George W. Childs proved his friendship for union printers on more than one occasion, and it was Mr. Childs who solved for the printers a very grave problem by donating \$10,000 as a nucleus for the fund that afterwards built the magnificent Union Printers' Home at Colorado Springs. To name a "scab" cigar after such a man is an insult that every union printer must resent as forcibly as possible. And the cigar dealer who persists in handling the Henry George and George W. Childs "scab" cigars in the face of these facts is not deserving of the patronage of any printer—and by the same token he is not going to get it, either. It is not enough that the dealer should handle a large line of union made cigars. If he wants the trade of the printing fraternity he will have to remove the two brands that insult printers and defame the memory of two of the best friends the printer and all other laborers ever had.

### UNION LABOR IN POLITICS.

The Wageworker is not authorized by any labor union to make this announcement. But this newspaper knows union labor well enough to make it, just the same, without fear of contradiction:

The labor unions are not going to take any part in the city election—as unions.

If any politicians are figuring on that sort of thing they may just as well put up their pipes.

But union laborers are going to take a hand, and don't you forget it.

## See Both Sides of the Shield

**FOR THE RICH.**  
James J. Hill, president Great Northern Railway.—"The general business of the country is satisfactory."

Lucius Tuttle, president Boston and Maine.—"Conditions for the future are in a most wholesome state."

E. Van Etten, second vice president New York Central.—"The war in the east will make a demand for manufactured products which will necessarily be of benefit to this country."

W. C. Brown, vice president Lake Shore and Michigan Southern railway.—"The prospect for next year was never better than now."

B. L. Winchell, president Rock Island system.—"Business men are encouraged and are buying more liberally."

E. P. Ripley, president Atchison system.—"Everything points to good conditions."

H. U. Mudge, general manager Atchison system.—"Prospects, in my judgment, were never better."

E. H. Gray, president United States Steel Corporation.—"The outlook at present is bright."

S. P. Colt, president United States Rubber Company.—"I have never known the underlying conditions to be better than they are at the present time."

John Stanton, president of several large copper companies.—"The prospects for a large consumption of copper during the coming year are very bright."

John Claffin, president H. B. Claffin Company.—"The increase of the wealth of the whole country during the last twelve months has been marked, and confidence in the future seems now completely restored."

Eben D. Jordan, Boston merchant.—"The year to come will be one of the greatest prosperity."

Daniel G. Wing, president First National Bank, Boston.—"With fair crops I believe we shall have for several years to come expanding business and general prosperity."

—From the Boston Journal.

**FOR THE POOR.**  
Peter Stewart, wife and twin girls, 17 months old, found starving in an attic at No. 10 Rochester street, Boston. No work.

A thousand applicants besieged Powers' department store, Minneapolis, in response to advertisement for clerk wanted. A riot ensued in the scramble to get in first and the police had to be called.

The Boston Journal says: "Poor of the city suffering from sudden cold snap. Ragged clothing, dilapidated tenements, gaunt bodies, pinched faces, hungry children crying for bread, empty coal hods, unpaid grocery bills and utter helplessness due to lack of employment and sickness."

McClure's Magazine says there are ten times as many murders in the United States as in any other country. The Cincinnati Post says they are caused by bad government.

Every day people come to me and complain that they must have work or starve.—Mayor of Portland, Ore.

Nora Clem, Omaha, out of work, attempted suicide rather than prostitute herself to keep from starving.

Seven thousand worthy families in Boston fed by Salvation Army—all paupers but willing and able to work.

Chas. Draper, Omaha, broke fourteen window lights to get back to jail to keep from starving and freezing.

Cleveland (Ohio) Leader: "There are five thousand men in Cleveland who are out of work and don't know where the next meal is coming from, right now."

Mrs. C. O. Erickson, Duluth, Minn., worn out with work to keep her children, had to give up the struggle. Before she was succored it was too late and she died from starvation, and her little ones were saved only with great difficulty. See St. Paul Press, December 16th.

Tacoma News: "Recorder Goff, of New York, has sentenced John Crane and Arthur Nagle to nine years in prison for stealing thirty cents. Mr. Mispiegel, late cashier of the St. Charles savings bank, stole \$78,163.00 and is living in luxury at his home in St. Charles, Mo. How slow is justice when dealt out by judges against their own kind!"—Compiled by Appeal to Reason.

## When the Sleeper Is Awakened

There is a prevailing notion among a large number of people that when a person is found under the influence of strong drink, the saloonkeeper should be arrested in order to reform the drunkard.

There is another class of people who think that by prohibiting the sale of whisky, men will stop drinking it.

And still another class think that by distributing charity they will remove poverty.

Some there are who believe that sacrificing one's self in fighting other men's battles will give those for whom a battle is fought, a self-consciousness of having achieved victory, and the ability to defend forts taken by those championing their cause.

Some imagine that because they waken early in the morning that all other men are light sleepers; and the reason all men do not get out of bed early is because they need assistance to rise; not because they are still sleeping.

Experience has taught us that unless the muscles are exercised they will wither and die; and if men ceased to use their strength in getting out of bed by depending upon others to assist them, they would eventually be unable to walk after they were assisted to get up. Men's brains need exercise to be developed, just as surely as do the muscles need exercise to develop.

Let us apply this to the industrial question.

Some men, a very few, are awake to the fact that conditions are wrong and need radical changes before they are righted, but the great majority of men and women are yet asleep to this fact. What is to be done; are they first to be awakened, or, get out of bed while still in a state of coma? In short, are we to explain to the workers a plan for radically changing conditions that they do not as yet know exist, or should we apply methods of restoring consciousness and let them use their own brains and their own muscles in helping themselves out of the difficulty?

Persons as a rule who seek charity rarely ever become self-reliant, but again appeal for assistance when the first supply is exhausted. The result is degeneration. On the other hand persons who are refused charity or are not reached by the charitably inclined, but forced to devise ways and means of self-help, become more and more able to provide for themselves. They become self-conscious and progressive.

Awakening persons out of a sound sleep before tired nature has been fully refreshed, is not always conducive to sound health in those disturbed. To arouse working people to attempt to bring about those things which can only be accomplished through a natural development of society, is not only a thankless but a useless task.

The working people are indeed in the mud. There have been many improvements in the world's history, led by those on the surface, that aimed at "assisting" the workers to get out of the quicksand. They have told them how to back up the team here, take up a trace there, give this mule the advantage or pry on that wheel; with the result that the workers have got stuck in the next mud hole and were as helpless as before, unless the same brains managed the business of getting out. Not until the industrial conditions so shape themselves that the workers will be forced to solve the problem without the aid or guidance of others, will they be able to establish a cooperative commonwealth, or to maintain it if they do.

In the meantime let us take the world as it is; understand the conditions not only of industry, but the state of mind of the workers and others resulting from such industrial conditions and do the best we can with the material at hand. When they want anything different the working people will let us know. They will awake refreshed and strong because nature is satisfied. We need not worry about the outcome, nor be afraid of their oversleeping. They and the world will be ready.—George A. Eastman in Detroit People.

### MAKING THE LAW RIDICULOUS.

The state child labor law should be enforced without fear or favor. It should not be relaxed, no matter whom it affects.

But that is not to say that it should be enforced with an eye keen to spectacular effect.

When the manager of the young violinist, Von Vecsey, was arrested for violating the law by causing the lad to play upon the concert stage after 7 o'clock in the evening it is plain that a mistake was made. Von Vecsey gives but a single evening concert in Chicago. Common sense must be given a serious strain before such playing as his can be described as "child labor."

State Factory Inspector Davies should have thought of these things before he began suit.

For all that Mr. Davies does to make the law rigorously effective he deserves praise. But his occasional outbreaks on a line that can have no other effect than to make the law ridiculous must be strongly condemned.—Chicago Record-Herald.

### OUR LABOR LEADERS.

Certainly no magazine has a higher standing among the reviews than the American Reviews of Reviews, and no writer is read more closely than Dr. Albert Shaw. In its remarks upon the recent meeting of the National Civic Federation, the magazine has this to say: "There remain some heads of great corporations and some large employers of labor in this country, who regard with distrust and even with abhorrence the leaders of organized labor; yet no impartial judge at the Civic Federation dinner would have assigned to the labor leaders any lower rank, either in character or capability, than the capitalists and financiers who sat at the same table with them, or the numerous representatives of the press, the church and the university. Undoubtedly, in directness and force, the labor leaders were better public speakers than any of the other elements that made up the party."

### THE FACT IN THE CASE.

Dr. Minot J. Savage, pastor of the Unitarian Church of the Messiah, New York, in a recent sermon said: "I believe in labor unions. If I could have my way I would have all the workers of the world organized instead of partially so. I should have them held legally responsible for their actions, for the keeping of that which they undertake. When the members of a trade union have, by the expenditure of their own time and means, created certain conditions necessary to their safety and well-being in a given industry or institution, it is morally their right and logically their duty to insist that the non-unionist who seeks to share these conditions shall first agree to share the labor and expenditure necessary to their maintenance; in other words, to insist that he shall join the union."